

**CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE AND HEALTH CABINET  
COMMITTEE**

MINUTES of a meeting of the Children's Social Care and Health Cabinet Committee held in the Darent Room, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Wednesday, 2 December 2015.

PRESENT: Mrs A D Allen, MBE (Chairman), Mrs M E Crabtree (Vice-Chairman), Mr R E Brookbank, Mrs P T Cole, Ms C J Cribbon, Mrs V J Dagger, Mrs M Elenor, Mrs S Howes, Mr G Lymer, Mr B Neaves, Mr C P Smith, Mr M J Vye, Mrs J Whittle and Mrs Z Wiltshire

ALSO PRESENT: Mr G K Gibbens and Mr P J Oakford

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr R Fitzgerald (Performance Manager), Ms S Hammond (Assistant Director of Specialist Children's Services, West Kent), Mr A Ireland (Corporate Director Social Care, Health & Wellbeing), Mrs M Robinson (Management Information Unit Service Manager), Mr A Scott-Clark (Director of Public Health), Mr P Segurola (Interim Director of Specialist Children's Services), Ms K Sharp (Head of Public Health Commissioning), Mr T Wilson (Head of Strategic Commissioning (Children's)) and Mr A Saul (Democratic Services Officer)

**UNRESTRICTED ITEMS**

**89. Introduction/Webcast announcement**  
*(Item A1)*

**90. Apologies and Substitutes**  
*(Item A2)*

1. There were no apologies.

**91. Declarations of Interest by Members in items on the Agenda**  
*(Item A3)*

1. No declarations of interest were received.

**92. Minutes of the meeting held on 8 September 2015**  
*(Item A4)*

1. RESOLVED that the minutes of the previous meeting were agreed.

**93. Minutes of the meeting of the Corporate Parenting Panel held on 3 September 2015**  
*(Item A5)*

1. RESOLVED that the minutes of the Corporate Parenting Panel held on 3 September 2015 were noted.

**94. Verbal updates**  
(Item A6)

1. The Chairman and the Cabinet Committee gave their congratulations to Theresa Grayell on winning the ADSO Democratic Services Officer of the Year award. They also have their thanks for exceptional service to the Council that Theresa has given over the years.
2. Peter Oakford, the Cabinet Member for Specialist Children's Services, made the following comments and announcements:
  - a) He confirmed there was 1383 Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) in KCC's care. 356 have been placed outside of Kent, of which 151 were in Medway.
  - b) He confirmed that he had a recent meeting alongside Paul Carter and The Right Honourable James Brokenshire, the Minister of State for Immigration. As a consequence £5 million had been secured from Central Government to help respond to the deficit following the unprecedented increase in UASC in Kent and to meet budget pressures caused by this.
  - c) On 24 November 2015 Theresa May and two other Secretaries of State sent a letter asking all other Local Authorities in the United Kingdom to assist Kent in finding a good settlement for the large numbers of UASC that are now in KCCs care. The support that was requested is still voluntary. Since this letter has been distributed four expressions of interest from other Local Authorities had been received by the time of this meeting. Of these only Wolverhampton had offered KCC help.
  - d) He expressed a view that if the rise in UASC in KCC's care follows the same pattern in 2016 then KCC would struggle.
  - e) Following a second LILAC assessment KCC has passed 6 of the 7 standards. He stated that overall he was impressed by our results. Since this assessment Mr Oakford has attended a Children in Care workshop and had the opportunity to meet with the assessors. He stated that following this he had a better understanding of why KCC didn't meet all 7 of the assessed standards.
  - f) He informed the Committee that he had recently visited all of the Gravesend Children's Centres with Karen Sharp, the Head of Public Health Commissioning.
3. Margaret Crabtree gave her thanks to Mr Oakford and staff for their help with UASC and asked for further information as to how they are faring in KCCs care.
4. The Director of Specialist Children's Services, Philip Segurolo, confirmed that KCC are determined to ensure UASC are appropriately cared for but not to the detriment of the care that is provided to Kent children.
5. Graham Gibbens, the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health made the following comments and announcements:
  - a) He welcomed Samantha Bennett as the new Consultant in Public Health.

- b) He gave detail on the Public Health Conference he attended in September 2015 in Warwick. He had been invite to meet with Jade Ellison where they had discussed strategies towards keeping people active and tackling obesity, as it is feared it could become the single biggest killer in the UK by 2050. Mr Gibbens stated that there was an opportunity for Local Authority to make a real difference in tackling obesity and that Health and Wellbeing Boards (HWB) would come up with an obesity plan in every Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG.) He also confirmed that he was very supportive of these efforts.
6. The Corporate Director of Social Care, Health and Wellbeing, Andrew Ireland made the following comments and announcements:
- a) He confirmed he had attended the national children and adults services conference in Bournemouth in September with Mr Gibbens and Mr Oakford. There was a presentation from Ofsted on the inspection of framework. Kent has not yet received its SIF inspection and it is clear it is due to receive one in 2016. This presentation also explained that Ofsted had reframed the judgement of 'requires improvement' to be much more specifically 'requires improvement to be good'. Ofsted were still working through the next inspection framework which favoured multi inspectorate models as opposed to only inspections from the Local Authority.
  - b) He explained that in the weeks preceding the meeting he had visited all three reception centres and all found them all to be in a state of calm. Mr Ireland gave congratulations were given to the Property Team for getting the facility up and running so quickly. In terms of day to day care and management members were reassured it was being managed effectively.
  - c) He had also visited the central referral unit in Kroner House. They had a good system in place, a comprehensive multi agency environment and a good quality of very experienced staff.
  - d) It was confirmed KCC had a finalist for the mental health social worker of the year. We also sponsored an award as an issue of raising our profile in terms of recruitment and being more visible in this field as an authority. Mr Ireland confirmed he will take stock over the coming months of whether that has been a valuable exercise.
7. In regards to the award KCC has sponsored the Chairman stated she has always been happy to sponsor a particular category Triangle Award and that Members could consider such an investment as an option for their Local Members Grants.
8. The Director of Public Health, Andrew Scott-Clark, made the following comments and announcements:
- a) He also welcomed Samantha Bennett to the meeting.
  - b) He confirmed that he had attended the Public Health England conference earlier in the year. New models for the Health Visiting and School Public Health Service and Health Improvement Services were out to consultation and a good response has been received so far. The closing date for both is 14th December. Mr Scott-Clark asked members

to remind constituents they have the opportunity to participate in the consultation.

- c) In regards to childhood obesity Mr Scott-Clark informed the Committee that the latest childhood measurement program results have been announced. The results have shown a mixed picture for Kent. Growth in childhood obesity has halted since the early 2000s. This hasn't yet turned into a downward trend. As Mr Gibbens mentioned earlier the Directorate will work closely with local HWBs in establishing an obesity plan to respond to this.

## **95. Update on Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children** *(Item C1)*

1. The Chairman gave thanks to the staff for their diligence in Kent's work with Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC).

2. The Assistant Area Director for West Kent, Sarah Hammond, gave the Committee an update on the contents of the report in regards to the steps KCC has taken since July 2015 in responding to the unprecedented rise in UASC in Kent. She confirmed the following;

- a) The large numbers of UASC arriving have tailed off following increased security on the French side. Despite this the numbers are still higher than they were this time last year.
- b) A letter was distributed to all Local Authorities from three Secretaries of State that gave praise to Kent for its response to what is considered a national emergency. It asked other Local Authorities to volunteer to assist KCC in taking statutory responsibility for some of its UASC. They were also offered an enhanced rate to take them on. The first response has been received from Wolverhampton City Council who has offered to take either 2 or 3 children.
- c) The amount of UASC KCC has a statutory responsibility for is still close to a thousand. In addition to this KCC has responsibility to close to 450 care leavers. More than 200 have been moved into placements outside of Kent.
- d) In regards to reception centres she reported that they had been able to make sure that they were safe despite the fact these are far more heavily occupied than usual.
- e) That there had been close work with health in ensuring the wellbeing of UASC. The most common ailment they have had to deal with was scabies.

3. In response to comments made and questions raised by members, Ms Hammond gave the following information;

- a) It was recognised that having too many young people in too small an area needed to be avoided.
- b) In regards to teaching English to these young people it was confirmed that colleges choose their own courses and Gravesham, although it used to have an excellent facility for teaching English, no longer does this.
- c) It was confirmed that 180 children are still unallocated to Social Workers. Additional support for them is being commissioned.

4. In response to comments made and questions raised by members the Corporate Director of Social Care, Health and Wellbeing, Andrew Ireland, also gave the following information;

- a) In regards to teaching English there were programs up and running. He has had further discussion on their broader strategy with the CEOs of Kent's Districts.
- b) That a large proportion of UASC in Kent were Eritrean Christians.
- c) The response from other Local Authorities following the letter from three Secretaries of State had been disappointing, particularly from the larger Local Authorities.
- d) It was emphasised that although other Local Authorities had been incentivised with a financial offer there been no clear expectation of their providing assistance to KCC.
- e) He confirmed contingency plans were being developed in case the substantial response does not materialise.

5. The Cabinet Member for Specialist Children's Services, Peter Oakford, stated that he did not find the letter from three Secretaries of State very encouraging where it asks other Local Authorities only to volunteer their assistance until the end of the financial year. There was no indication of any commitment past this. He also confirmed that they would continue to push for a more substantial response in Government in supporting Kent.

6. RESOLVED that the update and report be noted.

## **96. Action Plans Arising from and in Preparation for Ofsted Inspections** (Item C2)

1. The Director of Specialist Children's Services, Philip Segurola, introduced a report updating members on the progress made improving practice and developing services for children and young people. He gave the following information;

- a) It is expected Ofsted will take full account of the fact that KCC is working to respond to what is a national crisis in relation to an unprecedented increase in UASC arriving in Kent.
- b) In terms of recruitment and retention Senior Management positions there has been an appointment to the Corporate Parenting AD role. There is one vacancy at service manager level at this time. A number of appointments have also been made at Team Leader level. Candidates have been attracted from outside Kent in some instances.
- c) Transformation in Early Help and Preventative Services has continued and a standardised model has been developed with all Districts.
- d) KCC now has a full cohort of Practice Development Officers that are aligned to each of the areas. Quality of practice has increased and more than 50% of audited cases were graded as good or outstanding.
- e) Progress had been made in ensuring caseloads have become more manageable for each Officer. The overall County averages of individual caseloads have decreased.
- f) A case audit tracking exercise was undertaken in November in line with Ofsted inspection methodology.

2. In response to a question raised by members Mr Segurola confirmed the following;

- a) That reliance on agency staff remains a concern and is a key priority for next year. The mitigation would be having consistency of management and to maintain a grip in the planning of cases.
- b) A series of 10 workshops for all staff about feeding back on key headlines of transformation and progressing a dialogue with staff about their experience with transformation to date.
- c) In terms of the IT system it was confirmed the recent change was the introduction of the Early Help module Liberi which went live in East Kent and will go live in the rest of the County soon. This brings Early Help in line with other parts of the Directorate in having a shared recording system.

3. RESOLVED that the Committee note the progress update in the report.

**97. Update on the Children in Care Mental Health Service**  
(Item C3)

- 1. Head of Strategic Commissioning, Thom Wilson, introduced an update on the Children in Care Mental Health Service. He gave an overview of key points from the report as follows;
  - a) KCC fund a Children in Care CAMHS service with the aim to improve mental health outcomes. This service includes work with foster carers and a dedicated telephone contact line to support them.
  - b) He explained that Sussex Partnership has worked very closely with KCC in this, as has been discussed in recent Select Committees.
  - c) He confirmed that the service had been graded 'outstanding' for caring and 'good' for leadership. Both staffing and waiting times were graded as 'need improvement'.
  - d) There was no District level data gathered at the time of the meeting.
  - e) Confirmation was given that KCC were supporting 440 children at the time of the meeting.
  - f) The target waiting time for assessment has been 6 weeks. This slipped to 7 weeks in October. This is as 2 children took slightly longer to be assessed. The reasons for this will be explored.
  - g) A pilot scheme is in place to provide a 'wrap around' service to those who have been in multiple placements.
  
- 2. In response to questions raised and comments made Mr Wilson gave the following information;
  - a) In regards to the sudden increase in caseloads in the Canterbury and Coastal area in June it was confirmed Mr Wilson will come back with a specific answer.
  - b) He confirmed that the referral times in each area are followed as Performance Indicators. This can be used to measure whether an area requires more staff and through this it is ensured each area is staffed appropriately. He also confirmed at this time there were two vacancies.
  - c) He informed the Committee that other formats for the feedback survey would be explored to be more accessible to children.
  - d) A key focus in the new strategy will be in assisting care leavers in their transition from being in care.
  - e) He confirmed that as a significant proportion of USAC are aged 16 to 17 most of them will not access the Children in Care Mental Health

Service and be in the transition to moving to Adult Mental Health Service.

- f) That a Collaborative Commissioning Performance Board would be held on the Monday following this Committee meeting and Governance is on the agenda.
3. Andrew Ireland, Corporate Director of Social Care, Health and Wellbeing, explained that following his visit to the three reception centres for USAC in Kent he was concerned that the children were not bringing any Mental Health Problems to the front as young people and that this may emerge later in life. He advised that Adult Services needed to be ready to respond to this in the near future.
  4. RESOLVED that the Committee note the update and the report. It was also agreed Members would continue to encourage and express interest in the new Children in Care contract pursuing a better service for the public on behalf of the Childrens' Social Care and Health Cabinet Committee.

**98. Update on Specialist Children's Services 0-25 Transformation Programme**  
*(Item C4)*

1. The Head of Strategic Commissioning, Thom Wilson, introduced a report providing an update of the 0-25 Transformation Programme. He confirmed that the Transformation Programme has taken a huge amount of work from Early Help, Social Care and Commissioning. He gave the following further information in summary of the content of the report;
  - a) He confirmed the programme was being implemented in every part of the County. Massive improvements to the service have been made through this. The focus has now changed to sustainability and the delivery of service.
  - b) He explained that the chart on page 36 showed the caseload on Children's social work teams has reduced. This has been achieved through improved quality, rigour and understanding exactly where support required.
  - c) KCC's safeguarding and quality assurance service has been closely involved to keep quality at the core of the Transformation Programme.
  - d) A standardised model and a more efficient dedicated contact service was established in each area.
  - e) Implementation of the Transformation Programme has enabled Children across the county to get the same level of support. It has been a priority to maintain a stable service for the people of Kent alongside the unprecedented rise of UASC. There are 4 adult support teams across the county, one in each area. As of today 60 fewer children are in care as a result.
  - f) He confirmed progress in reunifying families was being tracked; dashboards were being used to make progress visible and transparent. Group supervision has also been used between members of the adolescent support teams to improve problem solving. Focus was also

being put on closing cases quickly work, he explained interventions should be time bound to prevent dependency on a caseworker.

- g) In regards to the fostering service, 90% of placements done with internal foster service, national average less than 65%. Each in-house placement costs approximately half the amount as an external placement a week.

2. RESOLVED that the report be noted.

## **99. Specialist Children's Services Performance Dashboard**

*(Item D1)*

1. Maureen Robinson introduced the report on the Specialised Children's Services dashboard.

2. Phillip Segurola emphasised that they were mindful there will be an impact from the unprecedented increase in UASC on the performance indicators. In response to this there will be an overall figure alongside a figure which does not include the UASC.

3. In regards to the performance indicator on page 56 that is Amber, Mrs Jenny Whittle advised that this performance indicator had been distorted by one specific case that she was very much involved with. This case had to take longer than expected were it to be pursued and Mrs Whittle stated she was happy to overlook this amber rating as it would likely been green if not for this very complex case. She also gave thanks to the staff that been involved in this case and achieving a good settlement for the child.

4. RESOLVED that the information set out in the Specialised Children's Services dashboard report be noted.

## **100. Public Health Performance - Children and Young People**

*(Item D2)*

1. The Head of Public Health Commissioning, Karen Sharp, introduced and detailed the content of the report outlining the performance of services delivered to children and services which aim to improve their health and wellbeing. She explained that the police were of the opinion that the smoking during pregnancy rate was moving in the right direction, where it has decreased at a reasonable rate. It was also confirmed there were some areas that required improvement, such as in new-born visits, Kent does not compare well in these areas outlined in the report and this is as were performance needs to focused on.

2. Mr Gibbens, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health, informed Members of the Committee that Ashford had recently been profiling a pilot scheme of smoke free play areas. He also advised that signs encouraging the Public to not smoke by said play areas would be a good use of their grant. He has put £5,000 towards this in Canterbury.

3. Jenny Whittle informed the Committee that she had recently visited four of Kent's prisons with Ms Sharp and Penny Cole. She was pleased to have found that the

Governor was able to confirm that at one of the prisons that was visited there were more jobs than women available to undertake them. Other Members were urged to visit the prisons as it was advised to be a very educational experience.

4. Mr Lymer expressed a view that the women in prison due to not having a TV licence are unfairly imprisoned and an unnecessary cost for the Country, he stated it was clear this should be decriminalised.

5. RESOLVED that the Committee note the report.

#### **101. Work Programme 2015/16**

*(Item D3)*

1. The Democratic Services Officer introduced the report and sought Members' comments on the items listed. Members requested the following;

- a) A report on Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) that were in KCCs care and are now over the age of 18.
- b) Success stories and positive case studies on UASC.

2. RESOLVED that the work programme for 2016 be agreed.