

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

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 Friday, 22 January 2016.

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

ALSO PRESENT: Mr G K Gibbens, Mr R W Gough, Mr P M Hill, OBE and Mr P J Oakford

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr A Ireland (Corporate Director Social Care, Health & Wellbeing), Mr James Beamish (Principal Accountant), Ms Samantha Bennett (Public Health Consultant), Dr F Khan (Interim Deputy Director of Public Health), Ms K Ray (HR Business Partner - Social Care, Health and Wellbeing), Mr P Segurolo (Director of Specialist Children's Services), Ms K Sharp (Head of Public Health Commissioning), Mr D Shipton (Head of Financial Strategy), Mr M Thomas-Sam (Strategic Policy Adviser) and Mr A Saul (Democratic Services Officer)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

102. Introduction/Webcast announcement
(Item A1)

103. Membership - Election of a new Chairman

- 1) Mrs Allen opened the meeting and announced she was standing down as Chairman of the Children's Social Care Cabinet Committee. She invited Members to nominate a new Chairman.
- 2) Mr Lymer nominated Mrs Whittle as Chairman; this was seconded by Mrs Wiltshire.
- 3) RESOLVED that the Children's Social Care Cabinet Committee agree to Mrs Whittle's election as Chairman.

104. Election of a new Vice-Chairman

- 1) Mrs Whittle took the chair and asked for nominations for the position of Vice-Chairman of the Children's Social Care Cabinet Committee.

- 2) Mrs Crabtree nominated Mrs Allen to the position of Vice-Chairman; this was seconded by Mrs Wiltshire.
- 3) RESOLVED that the Children's Social Care Cabinet Committee agree to elect Mrs Allen Vice-Chairman.

105. Apologies and Substitutes

(Item A2)

- 1) Mrs Cribbon gave her apologies and Mr Cowan attended as her substitute.

106. Declarations of Interest by Members in items on the Agenda

(Item A3)

- 1) Mr Cowan declared an interest in item B2, Proposed Revision of Rates Payable and Charges Levied For Children's Services In 2016-17, and confirmed he would leave the meeting for this item.

107. Minutes of the meeting held on 2 December 2015

(Item A4)

- 1) Mr Vye highlighted that the Minutes confirm that Mr Wilson would provide Members with figures on the sudden increase in caseloads in the Canterbury and Coastal area in June. He asked that those figures be distributed amongst Members as promised.

- 2) RESOLVED that the minutes be agreed as a correct record.

108. Minutes of the meeting of the Corporate Parenting Panel held on 23 October 2015

(Item A5)

- 1) RESOLVED the minutes of the meeting of the Corporate Parenting Panel held on 23 October 2015 were noted.

109. Verbal updates

(Item A6)

- 1) The Chairman confirmed Mr Gibbens and Dr Khan's Verbal Updates, item B1 and item D2 would be brought forward. This was to accommodate Mr Gibbens and Dr Khan's limited availability.

- 2) Mr Gibbens gave the following information as verbal updates;
 - a) He informed Members he had recently spoke at an event of the Family Nurse Partnership. Families helped by the partnership also attended. This was an encouraging event and Mr Gibbens stated he was looking to see how the Family Nurse Partnership could be rolled out across all of Kent.
 - b) He also informed Members he attended a West Kent and Medway singing event for people with mental health conditions. Mr Gibbens expressed a view that singing can be very helpful for these individuals and have a wonderful impact.

- 3) Dr Khan gave the following information as verbal updates;
 - a) Members were informed of a new campaign called “Sugar Smart” aimed at tackling child obesity. This includes an App for parents to download and use to measure and inform them of the amount of sugar they were buying for their children.
 - b) Dr Khan brought Members attention to the initiative in Canterbury where signage was being used to ask the public not to smoke in the nearby vicinity of public parks. This is of course to benefit the health of Children in the park. This had been funded by Mr Gibbens local Member grant.

110. Commissioning Public Health Services for Children and Young People *(Item B1)*

1) Samantha Bennett, Consultant on Public Health, introduced the update on the re-procurement of Public Health Services to Members and progress on reviewing these services. Ms Bennett also shared further information that was ascertained from focus groups and explained that lack of clarity about what their services offer was found to be an issue. In regards to the public consultation held in November and December 2015 it was also found that a priority issue amongst the public was emotional well-being. Ms Bennett confirmed that Public Health was working closely with the local CCG on the commission of new adolescent Health Services.

2) Karen Sharp, Head of Public Health Commissioning, explained that as a part of reviewing Public Health services they had explored their alignment with other parts of the system such as with colleagues in the NHS. Mrs Sharp explained that they were aware of interdependencies in the system and that procurements would be made in line with the whole service.

3) A view was expressed that this was a very good outline of commissioning in the Public Health Services.

4) Ms Bennett confirmed that in regards to recruiting Health Visitors although anecdotally it had proven more difficult in East Kent there was no evidence of a big disparity between different parts of the County.

5) Mrs Sharp responded to questions raised by Members by providing the following information;

- a) That in regards to the procurement plan set in February she was confident there will be a good and competitive market.
- b) That the figures in the report are in line with previous figures that relate to the substance misuse contract. Mrs Sharp emphasised that members could be confident that the market would provide strong competitive options for this contract.

6) RESOLVED Members endorsed the proposed decision as detailed in the report.

111. Public Health Performance - Children and Young People *(Item D2)*

1) Karen Sharp, Head of Public Health Commissioning, introduced the Public Health Performance report and confirmed the following;

- a) Figures for smoking during pregnancy were not where Public Health had wanted them to be. Members were reassured that figures continued to progress in the right direction of travel.
- b) Performance of health visiting services has been a concern. In response to this Public Health have put into effect performance incentivisation measures to improve the service.
- c) Mrs Sharp also explained she had been reassured that health visiting services performance would continue to be recorded accurately and it has been made clear that improvement is expected.
- d) In regards to the Child Measurement Programme participation rates were progressing in the right direction of travel.
- e) In regards to the substance misuse service performance figures the direction of travel is down. However, the service still performs well above national average in terms of young people leaving with a planned exit.

2) In response to a question raised by the Chairman Mrs Sharp explained that the police, as a partner, have stressed very strong concern about the use of legal highs. At the moment services are trying to respond to this through an outreach approach. A huge amount of research has been done on legal highs as a team and Mrs Sharp stated she was very happy to share this with Members.

3) Mr Gibbens informed Members that new strategies in response to childhood obesity in the County will be going to Kent Health and Wellbeing Boards in the near future.

4) Following further discussion on legal highs and their impact in Kent the Chairman asked Mrs Sharp that a piece focused on legal highs is included in the next public health performance report.

5) RESOLVED that the Children's Social Care and Health Cabinet Committee note the report.

112. Verbal Update

- 1) Peter Oakford gave the following information as verbal updates;
 - a) He had recently visited the Canterbury district early years project. Mr Oakford expressed a view that the set up for this project was very impressive and interacted across generations.
 - b) He informed Members that he had attended the first meeting of the new Tunbridge Wells Local Children's Partnership Groups. He confirmed these groups would each have a small budget to use. Mr Oakford encouraged Members to attend and further reassured the Committee that it was open to Kent County Council Members of any party.
 - c) An update was provided from the Corporate Parenting Panel all 10 Members had agreed to donate money to the BSK apprenticeship group.
 - d) Members were informed that Mr Oakford had arranged for a child in care apprentice to work in his office.
 - e) There had been a decline in migrants arriving in Kent over the winter months.
 - f) At the time of the meeting there were a total of 1390 UASC in KCC care, approximately 929 of which are under 18. Mr Oakford reminded members that

their allowance will change as they reach 18, the financial pressure on KCC will therefore increase as time goes on.

- g) Response from other Local Authorities in offering to take UASC from Kent has been slow and no children have moved over the last three months. One other Local Authority offered to take a child from KCC care on the condition they are below the age of 5. As no UASC in KCC care is below the age of 5 this offer cannot be taken.
- h) Confirmation was given that he would continue to lobby national government for further assistance in responding to the increase in UASC and that Kent MPs were supporting these efforts.

2) In regards to the change in cost for care leavers Mr Cowan asked Members to have a thought about our own foster carers who have children and then cannot afford to keep them after the age of 18.

3) Andrew Ireland, Corporate Director of Social Care, Health and Wellbeing, gave the following verbal updates;

- a) He informed Members that Ofsted had recently published their new inspection frameworks. This includes a multiagency inspection framework.
- b) The current single SIF inspection framework will still be applied to Kent for the next inspection, which shall occur between now and March 2017.
- c) He also reported that the multi-agency child sexual exploitation team between KCC and police is now fully operational.

113. Proposed Revision of Rates Payable and Charges Levied For Children's Services In 2016-17 *(Item B2)*

1) Mr Cowan had declared an interest earlier in the meeting and left the room for the entirety of the discussion on item B2.

2) James Beamish, Principal Accountant, introduced the report highlighting to members the proposed revision to the rates payable and charges levied for children services for 2016-17. He confirmed CPI in September was at 0% and brought Members attention to the rates and charges as detailed in Appendix 1.

3) In response to questions raised by Members Philip Segurola, Director of Specialist Children's Services, gave the following information;

- a) In regards to the pay structures for Independent Fostering Providers are generally slightly different and provide an overall payment and as such are less prone to break it down in the same way. Local Authorities generally cannot compete with these.
- b) In terms of maintenance Kent County Council follows Department of Education (DFE) guidance.
- c) In regards to the hourly assessment rate on page 34 the figure shown is the minimum and that it is very rarely applied.

4) Andrew Ireland, Corporate Director of Social Care, Health and Wellbeing, explained in response to questions raised by Members that most of these charges relate to Fostering Agencies. Issues relating to minimum wage will apply more in price determination for the independent sector and that will be given consideration of that issue in the final determination.

5) RESOLVED that Members endorsed the proposed decision as detailed in the report.

114. Budget and Council Tax level for 2016-17 and Medium Term Financial Plan 2016-19

(Item C1)

1) Dave Shipton, Head of Financial Strategy, introduced the report on the Budget and Council Tax level for 2016-17 and Medium Term Financial Plan 2016-19 as it affects the remit of the Children's Social Care Cabinet Committee.

2) Philip Segurola, Director of Specialist Children's Services, stated that the savings targets are challenging. He further explained a heightened level of efficiency and rigour in reducing individual caseloads and avoiding drift is a very effective way his Directorate can respond to reaching the savings targets. He also explained that 92% of Children placed in foster care are now being placed in Kent which, as placements outside of Kent have additional costs to Kent County Council, has given additional savings.

3) RESOLVED that Members noted the Budget and Council Tax level for 2016-17 and Medium Term Financial Plan 2016-19 report.

115. Social Worker Recruitment and Retention

(Item C2)

1) Karen Ray, HR Business Partner for Social Care, Health and Wellbeing, introduced a report updating Members on recruitment and retention activity amongst Kent County Council's (KCC's) Children's Social Workers. She gave the following information;

- a) Member's attention was brought to the figure in regards to Children's Social Workers in permanent employment. This was at 75.4% which Ms Ray confirmed was fairly consistent to previous years.
- b) Ms Ray further explained that recruitment fairs, activity on social media and a greater internet presence have all been used to improve KCC's recruitment pool. It was confirmed that these efforts had all received good feedback.
- c) It was confirmed the reasons why staff leave is being both observed and recorded thoroughly.
- d) Ms Ray informed Members that a Memorandum of Understanding has been established with other South East Local Authorities in response to former Public Sector Social Workers becoming agency workers to charge more for their work. This should prevent other Local Authorities in the South East from employing agency workers who have recently left the Public Sector for this reason.
- e) It was confirmed that front facing Officers can be in receipt of a premium payment that was introduced to assist with the cost of transport.

2) In response to questions raised by Members Philip Segurola, Director of Specialist Children's Services, explained that staff that were leaving Children's Social Care were given exit interviews to ascertain why they are leaving. Mr Segurola confirmed that generally the reasons were not found to be financial.

3) RESOLVED that the Children's Social Care and Health Cabinet Committee note the report and, at the Chairman's request, that the next report explore the reasons behind why some social workers leaving KCC employment for agency work in more depth.

116. Cabinet Members priorities for the 2016/17 Directorate Business Plan
(Item C3)

1) Michael Thomas-Sam, Strategic Business Adviser, introduced a report on Cabinet Members' priorities to be reflected in the 2016/17 directorate business plans. He brought attention to the priorities around UASC where pushing and lobbying for adequate funding for national government would remain a priority, this would be critical in managing Kent County Council's (KCC) safeguarding responsibilities.

2) Mr Oakford explained to Members that bringing services closer together, to better accommodate young people who were on the edge of care of KCC services, was to be a priority.

3) Members expressed their support for lobbying national government for adequate funding to respond to the recent increase in UASC.

4) RESOLVED that the Children's Social Care Cabinet Committee has commented and taken note of the report.

117. Establishment of a Voluntary Adoption Agency
(Item C4)

1) Philip Segurola, Director of Specialist Children's Services, introduced the report on the progress of the earlier intention to establish a Voluntary Adoption Agency (VAA) for Kent in partnership with Coram. We were required to go through formal tendering process and there was only one formal submission from Coram. Sadly Kent County Council was unable to award the contract as the tender bid made was non-compliant in delivery of all the functions required by the contract. Because there was a sole bidder further dialogue was engaged but Coram did not want to proceed. Contractor arrangements with Coram concluded on 22 January 2016. KCC will reassume responsibility for the direct management of Adoption Services in Kent from 23 January 2016.

2) In response to questions raised Mr Segurola gave the following information;

- a) It had not yet been discussed who would chair the Adoption Development Board.
- b) That the Children's Social Care and Health Cabinet Committee could be updated on the establishment of a VAA at the March meeting.

3) RESOLVED the Children's Social Care and Health Cabinet Committee agreed to note the report.

118. Specialist Children's Services Performance Dashboard
(Item D1)

1) Chris Nunn, Senior Management Information Officer for Specialist Children's Services, introduced the Specialist Children's Services Performance Dashboard. He explained 6 of the Performance Indicators were now red. 5 of these had been red since November. The only additional red Performance Indicator is in regards to private fostering visits within 6 weeks.

2) Philip Segurola, Director of Specialist Children's Services, explained Performance Indicators in placement stability only showed as amber where UASC are included.

3) The Children's Social Care and Health Cabinet Committee agreed to note the report.

119. Work Programme 2015/16

(Item D3)

1) The Democratic Services Officer introduced the report and sought Members' comments on the Work Programme.

2) Members requested future updates on Coram come to the Children's Social Care and Health Cabinet Committee.

3) RESOLVED that Members agreed the Work Programme.