

COUNCIL
25 APRIL 2019

OVERVIEW OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE PORTFOLIO

1. Since the last meeting of Council, the following are the main areas of work undertaken under the Children and Young People Portfolio.

Schools Admissions 2020-21

2. The Local Authority's admission arrangements for 2020/21 academic year for maintained schools in the Borough have been approved in accordance with our statutory duty.
3. The co-ordinated Admission Scheme for both primary and secondary schools for the 2020/21 academic year was returned to the Department for Education within the timescale.

The Children's Trust

4. At the meeting of the Health and Well Being Board (which is also the Children's Trust) held in January, a 'stocktake' of the Board's priorities was considered together with a review of its Terms of Reference, and it was agreed that the Board would continue with the 'life course' approach but that it would have a more strategic role, promoting joint working, where possible, with a focus on health inequalities, with the Integration Board dealing with the day to day issues. Several other amendments were made to the Terms of Reference including the frequency of meetings, and as a result, the next meeting of the Board will be held early in July 2019, with a focus of 'Starting Well'. This will provide an opportunity for the Board to understand progress on the Darlington Children and Young People's Plan.

Corporate Parenting Panel

5. The Panel met on 29 January 2019. This meeting focused on considering and agreeing the proposed revised arrangements for the Corporate Parenting Panel following a workshop held on 2 October 2018. Panel members agreed to amend the Terms of Reference accordingly and the revised arrangements are to begin at the next meeting in April.

Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB)

6. The Board met on 12 February 2019. Board acknowledged that this meeting would be the last for the current Chair, Simon Hart, as he is moving on to a new role in Surrey. Simon was thanked for his contribution and achievements over the past two and a half years the support he provided on the improvement work and how he enabled the DFE and Improvement Board to gain confidence in the Local Authority.
7. The Board received a presentation from Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (CAFCASS). Details of a pilot scheme that is being undertaken across the region to test a new resource to support parents/carers with an online

platform to support them through their child arrangement proceedings and beyond were shared. The resource, called Co-Parent Hub, enables parents to tailor the content to help support and help them to reach their goal, develop a parenting plan and an emotional readiness tool to assess whether they are ready to start making plans.

8. At the Board on 15 February 2019, a report was presented regarding the proposed structure for the new Safeguarding Partnership This must be in place by 29 September 2019 and replaces Local Safeguarding Children Boards. This will be a partnership covering both Children and Adult safeguarding, allowing the best use of resources, in the interests of delivering consistent standards. Plans will be finalised and submitted to DfE by the deadline in June. The Board were happy to support the direction of travel that is being proposed and requested details of the draft plan be shared at the next meeting.
9. Board was updated on a further meeting that took place between representatives of the Children and Adult Safeguarding Boards and British Transport Police (BTP), where several safeguarding issues were discussed. It was agreed the main point of contact with BTP should be through the Multi-Agency Problem Solving Group (MAPP) as there are members of that group who also sit on the boards. Several opportunities were identified to strengthen work between partners and BTP and board requested feedback on this work be provided by BTP in 12 months.

School Forum

10. The Forum met on 12 March 2019 and were provided with updates on :-
 - (a) The current Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) budget position;
 - (b) High needs/SEN(D) strategies and changes;
 - (c) Joint commissioning; and
 - (d) Children and Young People's mental health provision.

Locality Teams

11. Children Centres continue to offer a varied programme for families of Children under 5 and continue to support the development of Healthy Children by offering health drop in with local health visitors, as well as bespoke parenting programmes covering the full age range.

Child Protection/Looked After Children Statistics

12. As at 11 March 2019 the following figures were reported:
 - (a) 108 children were subject to a Child Protection Plan
 - (b) 262 children were in care

Commissioning and Contracts

13. The Contracts and Commissioning have participated in a Tees wide re-procurement for an Independent Visitors service effective from 1 April 2019. The provision of an Independent Visitor service is a statutory duty under the Children Act 1989 and provides volunteers who befriend Looked After Children who do not have family connections or adult interaction outside of care and support teams. The young person

and volunteer take part in leisure activities and activities of shared interest, this service provision has a key role in placement stability and the emotional wellbeing of children and young people. The new service will be delivered by Changing Futures.

14. Through the new burdens funding received to the Council, a new wellbeing service for Care Leavers is being piloted effective from 1 April 2019. The service will provide a Children's Psychological Wellbeing Practitioner (CPWP) through TEWV co-located within the leaving care service one day a week, the CPWP will provide direct support and interventions to Care Leavers with identified emotional wellbeing needs, the positive impact and outcomes for Care Leavers from this pilot will be closely monitored.

Meetings

15. Since the last meeting of Council, I have :-
 - (a) addressed the Soroptimist launch of Buddy Bookmarks at the Dolphin Centre;
 - (b) attended a Signs of Safety Meeting with key Children's Services officers;
 - (c) attended the quarterly meeting of the North East Migration Partnership to discuss the situation of unaccompanied child asylum seekers;
 - (d) attended the North East Child Poverty Commission in Newcastle to discuss a bid for a summer activity/ food programme throughout the region;
 - (e) attended a Healthy Lifestyle Survey meeting to discuss results from this year's survey of secondary school pupils throughout Darlington;
 - (f) organised a meeting with Jenny Chapman MP to discuss the Schools Funding Formula with Chairs of Governors from schools throughout Darlington;
 - (g) attended and formed part of the judging panel for The Mayor's Schools' Song Contest held at the Dolphin Centre;
 - (h) visited the Women's Refuge to discuss facilities for young people;
 - (i) met with apprentices to celebrate National Apprenticeship Week;
 - (j) compared the International Women's Day Event at Theatre Hullabaloo;
 - (k) attended the Darlington Partnership Executive Board;
 - (l) attended the Schools Forum;
 - (m) attended a Young Offenders Health Meeting which brought together the Youth Offending Service, CCG, Public Health and others;
 - (n) attended a Regional Lead Members for Children and Young People meeting at County Hall in Durham;
 - (o) attended Carmel College's "Carmel Does Strictly" dance competition and formed part of the judging panel;
 - (p) attended the Standing Advisory Committee for Religious Education (SACRE);
 - (q) attended the Tees Valley Combined Authority Education, Employment and Skills Partnership Board in Stockton;
 - (r) held monthly Young Person surgeries at the Dolphin Centre;
 - (s) took part in weekly discussions/ briefings with the Director of Children's Services and other relevant officers ;
 - (t) held discussions with children and young people about mental health issues, social media, self-harming and peer support; and
 - (u) held discussions with officers on the upcoming Darlington Pride event to be held this summer.

Councillor Cyndi Hughes
Children and Young People Portfolio

