

ADULT SOCIAL CARE, CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE
7 JULY 2014

Present: Councillor D Edwards (Chair)
Councillors Eden, Ennis, Gavin, Jones, McElligott, O'Connell, Orton, Pearce, Singh, Vickers, White and R Williams.

Apologies: Councillors Ballsdon, Stanford-Beale.

1. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meetings of 5 March and 24 April 2014 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

2. MINUTES OF OTHER BODIES

The Minutes of the following meetings were submitted:

- Children's Safeguarding Panel, 27 February 2014;
- Children's Trust Partnership Board, 8 April 2014.

Resolved: - That the Minutes be noted.

3. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND COUNCILLORS

A Question on the following matter was submitted, and answered by the Chair:

Questioner	Subject
Lesley Horton on behalf of John Popplewell	School Places in North West Caversham

(The full text of the question and reply was made available on the Reading Borough Council website).

4. PRESENTATION - URGENT CARE AND A&E

Dr Cathy Winfield, Chief Officer, Berkshire West Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) Federation, gave a presentation on Urgent Care and the Berkshire West System.

Dr Winfield explained that the Keogh Report had included five elements in respect of national urgent care policy, the main one being that all urgent and emergency care services were connected together so that the overall system became more than the sum of its parts. She also provided the Committee with details of performance against the national four hour standard for A&E attendances and for ambulance handover delays. Dr Winfield explained how the acute front door worked at the Royal Berkshire Foundation Trust (RBFT) and how the system front door should work. The system was subject to scrutiny and work had been carried out to identify why breaches occurred and what had been achieved.

Dr Winfield stated that A&E four hour performance had improved slowly and although real dips in performance were still being experienced the Trust recovered

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more quickly than it had done in the past. The Medically Fit list at the Trust had reduced consistently in the last quarter of 2013/14 but numbers had been higher in quarter one of 2014/15 and the need to increase discharge numbers at weekends had remained.

Dr Winfield informed the Committee that process improvements were as important as funding and that the Better Care Fund (BCF) would be applied to develop services that would support the urgent care system and improve access to primary care. Hospitals would also have to transform and change the way they provided care and care pathways would have to be redesigned.

The Committee discussed the presentation and expressed concern over 'top slicing' of the BCF and requested that an update report be submitted to a future meeting.

Resolved -

- (1) That Dr Winfield be thanked for her presentation;**
- (2) That an update report be submitted to a future meeting.**

5. UPDATE ON CHANGES TO SEN PROVISION 2014 - 16

Further to the meeting on 24 April 2014, Chris Stevens, SEN Service Manager, submitted a report providing the Committee with an update on changes to Special Education Needs (SEN) Provision 2014-16. A draft copy of the Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND) Action Plan was attached to the report at Appendix I and a copy of a leaflet that had been sent to all parents who had a child with a Statement of SEN was attached to the report at Appendix II.

The report stated that the action plan had been drafted by representatives from Parents Forum and officers and was currently being reviewed by officers, parents and schools prior to completion. The action plan included what needed to be done to meet the statutory requirements of the Children and Families Bill and also described the objectives that needed to be completed in order to meet the agreed four SEND strategy priority areas. The action plan would be populated with owners and dates once the tasks listed under each priority area had been finalised. The action plan would then be circulated to stakeholders for information, a SEND action planning operations group would be formed and progress would be reported to the SEND Strategy Group and future meetings of the Adult Social Care, Children's Services and Education Committee.

The report explained that a short life working group had been set up to report by the end of July 2014 on a transparent system for the allocation of SEN funding beyond that provided in base budgets. The group had agreed to produce a draft procedure for consultation by 1 September 2014 that would initially introduce a process for the distribution of 'top-up' SEN funding for children and young people who had a current SEN Statement. Over time it was envisaged that there would be a reduction in children with statements or plans, with the procedure offering additional resources for schools facing exceptional demands. The budget reserved for the High Needs Block would not alter but it was expected that the working

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group would suggest a model of allocation that had greater Head Teacher accountability and ownership.

The Local Offer was on track for being in place by 1 September 2014 and all the Borough's schools, colleges and nurseries were in the process of completing, by 7 July 2014, an online questionnaire that would become their Local Offer as published within the Reading Local Offer website.

The report stated that the Education, Health and Care Plan had been completed, the format of which had developed after extensive discussions with families and with representatives from local authorities who had been appointed as Pathfinders to develop the Plan, the Local Officer and the process for the allocation of Personal budgets. The Plan had been signed off by Health colleagues and a trial was underway with two families and the SEN team to complete the Plan.

The Committee discussed the report and requested that an update report be submitted to the next meeting.

Resolved -

- (1) That the progress made to date with regard to previously agreed actions be noted;**
- (2) That an update report be submitted to the next meeting.**

6. SAFEGUARDING ACTIVITY REPORT - QUARTER FOUR (JAN - MAR 2014)

Vicki Lawson, Interim Head of Children's Services, presented a report by Karen Reeve, former Head of Children's Services, providing the Committee with an update of the key activity areas within Children's Social Care and related services between January and the end of March 2014. Quality and Performance reports were attached to the report at Appendices A to E.

The report stated that there continued to be a strong focus on ensuring consistent quality across Children's Social Care. The quarterly Quality and Performance meeting was a demanding forum for managers who were being challenged actively to be good the majority of the time in every case. Given the nature of their work this was a tough challenge and should not be underestimated. The focus on quantitative and qualitative information enabled the senior management team to scrutinise performance and to call managers to account. Action required from individual audits, overarching lessons and themes was shared with practitioners and managers to enable them to make the improvements necessary to ensure consistent, good practice with children, young people and families.

Vicki Lawson informed the Committee that performance against the 'good' benchmark had been rated as amber and confirmed that the auditing system in place in the service was strong with the child's lived experience at the centre.

The Committee discussed the report and expressed their thanks to the social workers and staff in Children's Social Care and requested that an update report be submitted to the next meeting.

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Resolved -

- (1) That the report be noted;
- (2) That the social workers and staff in Children's Social Care be thanked for their work and the progress being made to a 'good' rating;
- (3) That an update report be submitted to the next meeting.

7. INTRODUCTION OF UNIVERSAL INFANT FREE SCHOOL MEALS

Myles Milner, School Services Manager, submitted a report outlining the steps and costs involved in ensuring that infant age children would receive a hot free school meal from September 2014.

The report stated that in December 2013 the government had announced that every child of infant age in England should be entitled to a hot free school meal from September 2014. Existing arrangements for free school meals for disadvantaged pupils in nursery and Key Stages 2 to 4 would continue.

In a joint letter to all schools the Government had confirmed that revenue funding would be allocated at £2.20 per meal, with local funding per school based upon school census numbers. Capital funding to ensure school kitchens were equipped with sufficient equipment with associated building costs, had been provided in addition to the revenue funding and the Council was working with both community and voluntary aided schools to ensure that kitchens were ready for the increased demand in meal production.

A capital programme had been established to ensure that all schools within the scope of the programme had the kitchen capacity and suitable equipment to deliver the increased number of meals required to meet demand. The basis of this calculation was that 80% of the school population in Reception and years 1 and 2 would require a hot meal. This had been based on the results from pilot schemes. The estimated cost of the works was £591k, with Universal Infant Free School Meals (UIFSM) capital grant supporting £384k and the remaining £177k being made up from elsewhere within the Education Capital Programme.

The report explained that Pupil Premium allocation would continue to be calculated using data collected during the January 2014 census of schools and pupils and the amount a school would receive in the financial year 2014/2015 would depend on how many eligible pupils were registered for free school meals on the day of the school census. Schools had to continue to encourage parents of eligible children to register their child for free school meals to ensure each school received the maximum pupil premium allocation for that year. As part of discussions with schools, officers were collating examples of ways schools were planning to encourage parents of infant aged pupils to still complete the Free School Meal application. If an eligible parent did not register the pupil would still be able to have a free infant school meal but the school would not receive the pupil premium element of £1,300 the school could use to improve educational support.

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In preparation a contract variation had been raised to ensure that the contractor, Chartwells, would be permitted to make a change to the standard menu on census days in January, May and October to allow flexibility when promotions were planned for September 2014 - July 2015.

The report detailed the risks involved with meeting the September 2014 deadline that included equipment not being delivered on time from suppliers, building work not being completed in time and inadequate electricity supplies to meet the revised kitchen power demand.

Finally, the report stated that the UIFSM programme represented a significant increase in the number of children expected to participate in taking a hot meal, currently daily uptake stood at 3,277 rising to an expected 7,222 in September 2014.

The Committee discussed the report and requested that an update report be submitted to the next meeting providing details of the uptake of free school meals to November 2014.

Resolved -

- (1) That the proposals to prepare schools to meet the demand for increased numbers of school meals, as outlined in paragraph 3.6 of the report, be approved;
- (2) That the need for parents to continue to register their entitlement for low income support so that schools could access additional Pupil Premium funding in addition to the now free, to all infant children, school meal be noted;
- (3) That the scale of work going on across the Borough and the inherent risks, as set out in section 9 of the report, be noted;
- (4) That a report be submitted to the next meeting providing an update on free school meals to November 2014.

8. NEW EARLY EDUCATION/CHILDCARE PLACES FOR TWO YEAR OLDS IN READING

Theresa Shortland, Head of Early Years and Extended Schools Services, submitted a report providing the Committee with an update on progress to date of new early education/childcare places for two year olds in the Borough and seeking approval on the principles of funding on quality measures and the proposals to develop further work with schools in the Borough.

The report stated that the allocation of funding for places for two year olds to local authorities from the Department for Education (DfE) was based on estimates of the number of the least advantaged children living in the Borough. This was sourced from the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) and the data gave details of the parents that might be eligible for their child to take up a place. The initial estimates had established that there were 440 children in the Borough from

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September 2013 when the eligibility criteria was the 20% least advantaged children. When the eligibility criteria extended to the 40% least advantaged children in September 2014 it was estimated that 857 children would be eligible in the Borough.

From April 2015 the funding for two year old places would move to being participation based, which was the same as the early years single funding formula for three and four year olds. Until this time two year olds were being funded on a place led basis which depended upon estimates of children eligible to take up the places.

The report included a table that set out the funding available from 1 April 2014 and explained that a bidding process had been implemented in autumn 2013 which invited early years providers in the Borough to bid for funding to create new places for two year olds. The bids were assessed against a set criteria and it was agreed that nine bids would receive funding. This had created 187 new places for eligible two year olds at a cost of £273,636.

The report stated that the statutory guidance to local authorities for early education funding had changed in 2013 and would change again in September 2014. Local authorities were no longer able to apply any local quality requirements on the funding of early education places and the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) judgements were considered the only measure of quality. This was the measure that was used to fund all early education places and the funding for two year old places should only be given to early years settings that were deemed 'good' or 'outstanding' by Ofsted.

The Committee discussed the report and requested that an update report be submitted to the next meeting.

Resolved -

- (1) That the progress of the early education places for two year olds in the Borough be noted;**
- (2) That the proposed work with schools to create new places for two year olds on school sites be approved;**
- (3) That the principles of funding for new places for two year olds within the context of the Ofsted Inspection framework be approved;**
- (4) That an update report be submitted to the next meeting.**

9. ANNUAL ADOPTION REPORT 2013-2014

Dawn Gardner, Adoption Team Manager, submitted a report outlining the work carried out by the Adoption Service from 1 April 2013 to 31 March 2014.

The report stated that there had been a number of significant changes to the service during the previous year and provided an outline of the staffing changes

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that had taken place in the Adoption Team. The report also explained that a separate report on the Adoption Panel was compiled by the Adoption Panel Advisor as part of her role within the Berkshire Adoption Advisory Service and Consortium and provided an overview of adoption activity across the whole of Berkshire.

The report stated that the percentage of looked after children placed for adoption or with a Special Guardianship Order stood at 16.85%, with 26 children adopted and Special Guardianship Orders for 11 children; this was well above the target for the year of 12%. Of the 26 children who had been adopted in 2013/14 56% had been placed within 12 months of the decision that the 'child should be placed for adoption'. This was a slight improvement in performance from 50% for 2012/13.

With regard to recruitment, the ongoing challenge was to ascertain what the most effective recruitment method for future campaigns was. The service also routinely obtained feedback from service users at various stages of the adoption process and incorporated this within service development.

Resolved -

- (1) That the report be noted;**
- (2) That all those who worked in the Adoption Service be thanked for their hard work.**

10. ACCESS TO SCHOOLS FOR SEPTEMBER 2014

Kevin McDaniel, Head of Education, submitted a report outlining the allocation of places to pupils starting school in September 2014 in either, primary, reception year, or secondary, year 7, on the national offer day which gave rise to the published statistics.

The report stated that the 2,210 applications that had been received on time for primary school places had been the largest number ever received and all of the applications had received an offer on national offer day, 16 April 2014. The initial offers had included 50 places at The Heights primary school following the Department of Education's decision to enter a funding agreement on 8 April 2014 for an opening date of September 2014.

The overall demand had been in line with the Council forecast, but there were variations across the five planning areas used to ensure the Council met its statutory duty to provide sufficient spaces. There had been lower than expected demand in the east and south of the Borough but the demand in the north had been higher than expected. This shift had resulted in the provision of an additional class at The Hill Primary School in Caversham to ensure that all initial offers were made in line with planning areas or parental preferences.

Since the initial offer day there had continued to be many parents seeking alternative offers and the independent appeal process was in progress. There had also been a large number of late applications and by 13 June 2014 the Council had provided 71 offers for these late applications. The reception year was very full, with only five places remaining.

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The 1,496 applications that had been received on time for secondary school places this had also been an increase on the 2013 cohort and reflected the general rise in the population. All of the applicants had received an offer on the national offer day. There had continued to be a number of late applications and although some schools were full there were plenty of unallocated year 7 places across all the schools which served the area.

Finally, the report stated that pupils starting school in September 2015 would have even more choice as the Department for Education was planning to open two new secondary Academy schools in the Borough. One would be in the central west area, sponsored by the West Reading Education Network (WREN) group and the other would be in the east, sponsored by Maiden Erlegh Academy. They were expected to provide another 360 places between them each year.

Resolved - That the continuing high level of primary school demand which had been met for the third successive year by Reading's schools be noted.

11. ROYAL BERKSHIRE NHS FOUNDATION TRUST - CARE QUALITY COMMISSION (CQC) INSPECTION REPORT - SCRUTINY OF REPORT AND ACTION PLAN

Councillor Hoskin, Lead Councillor for Health, stated that the role the Committee took as a result of the CQC Inspection Report on the Royal Berkshire Hospital needed to be considered. The report had been published on 24 June 2014 and overall the hospital had been rated as 'requires improvement'.

The Committee agreed that potential scrutiny of the CQC report and action plan be added to the Committee's forward plan for consideration later in the Municipal Year.

Resolved - That potential scrutiny of the CQC report on the Royal Berkshire Hospital and resulting Action Plan be added to the Committee's forward plan for consideration later in the Municipal Year.

(The meeting commenced at 6.30 pm and closed at 8.50 pm).