

**ADULT SOCIAL CARE, CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE  
4 MARCH 2015**

**Present:** Councillor D Edwards (Chair)  
Councillors Ballsdon, Eden, Ennis, Gavin, Jones, O'Connell, Orton,  
Pearce, Singh, Stanford-Beale, Vickers and R Williams.

**Apologies:** Councillors McElligott and White.

**23. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 6 November 2014 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

**24. MINUTES OF OTHER BODIES**

The Minutes of the following meeting were submitted:

- Children's Trust Partnership Board, 21 January 2015.

**Resolved - That the Minutes be noted.**

**25. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND COUNCILLORS**

A question on the following matter was submitted, and, in the absence of Councillor White, a written answer was provided by the Chair:

<b>Questioner</b>	<b>Subject</b>
Councillor White	Support Living

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

**26. WEST OF BERKSHIRE SAFEGUARDING ADULTS PARTNERSHIP BOARD ANNUAL REPORT 2013-14**

Michelle Tenreiro Perez, Service Manager Adult Social Care, submitted a report providing the Committee with a summary of the information contained within the West of Berkshire Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board (SAPB) Annual Report 2013-14, a copy of which was attached to the report at Appendix 1.

The report explained that the SAPB Annual Report 2013-14 provided an overview of the Board's activity and progress during 2013/14 and its priorities for 2014/15. The data within the report had been sourced from the statutory Abuse of Vulnerable Adults (AVA) return for 2012-13.

The report summarised the key developments in 2013-14 that included participation in a pilot run by the Social Care Institute for Excellence on the Learning Together Model and the commissioning of a Learning Together Review into the death of "Mrs E". The report also summarised performance in 2013-14 and stated that across the three local authority areas the total number of referrals had continued to increase

**ADULT SOCIAL CARE, CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE  
4 MARCH 2015**

in 2012-13. The referrals for Reading had been high at 560 compared to 220 (comparator group average) and 260 (national average).

The report detailed the priorities for 2014-15 that included the development of expertise amongst a wider group of staff to become accredited Lead Reviewers for Social Care Institute of Excellence (SCIE) Safeguarding Adult Reviews. The Board had also recognised the need to manage the pressure on safeguarding teams from the increase in the number Deprivation of Liberty Safeguarding applications.

**Resolved - That the contents of the West Berkshire Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board Annual Report 2014-13 be noted.**

**27. CARE ACT IMPLEMENTATION FROM APRIL 2015**

Further to Minute 22 of the last meeting, Suzanne Westhead, Interim Director of Adult Care and Health Services, submitted a report summarising how Reading's Adult Social Care Services would change from April 2015 to meet the duties set out in the Care Act 2014 and apply the discretionary power conferred on the local authority by the Act. The following appendices were attached to the report:

Appendix 1	Consultation Report - February 2015
Appendix 2	Equality Impact Assessment
Appendix 3	Care and Support Charging and Financial Assessment Framework
Appendix 4	Direct Payment (Family Member Support) Policy 2015
Appendix 5	Prevention Framework 2015 - Presentation
Appendix 6	Adult Social Care Information and Advice Plan - Presentation

The report also set out how the Council would meet its requirement under the general responsibilities of the local authority to integrate health and social care using the Better Care Fund.

The report explained that where the local authority had discretionary powers under the Act, local policies had been prepared or refreshed to describe how these would be used. These local policies had been developed in the light of feedback that had been gathered through a public consultation on the local implementation of the Act and an Equality Impact Assessment of the proposed approaches. The report did not detail how the Council's Adult Social Care Services would change to meet requirements of the Act as further national consultation was expected on the detail of how these aspects would operate and local approaches would be developed on these issues subsequent to this. A significant element of the Care Act Programme Office work for the remainder of 2015 would be preparing for the 2016 changes.

**Resolved -**

- (1) That the following be noted;**
  - (a) the outcome of public engagement on local implementation of the Care Act;**

ADULT SOCIAL CARE, CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE  
4 MARCH 2015

- (b) the contents of the Equality Impact Assessment in relation to adopting the local policies proposed to govern the implementation of the Care Act by the Council;
  - (c) the development of a Market Position Statement for Adult Social Care, which would play a significant part in discharging the Council's new market shaping obligations under the Act;
- (2) That the following local policies and frameworks be adopted to govern the operation of the Council's Adult Social Care Service from April 2015 in compliance with new statutory requirements:
- (a) Care and Support Charging and Financial Assessment Framework (2015), incorporating:
    - (i) Deferred Payment Agreements Policy;
    - (ii) Interim Funding Policy;
    - (iii) Choice of Accommodation and Additional Payments Policy;
    - (iv) Charging and financial assessment policies for care and support (in care homes and non-residential care);
    - (v) Charging schedules relating to the above;
  - (b) Direct Payments (Family Member Support) Policy (2015);
  - (c) Prevention Framework (2015), incorporating:
    - (i) Provision of Free Preventative and Carer Support Policy;
  - (d) Adult Social Care Information and Advice Plan (2015);
- (3) That the Interim Director of Adult Care and Health Services, in consultation with the Lead Councillors for Adult Social Care and Health and the Head of Legal and Democratic Services, be granted delegated authority to enter into Section 75 (Health Act 2006) agreements that supported the delivery of Better Care Fund plans.

## 28. READING'S MARKET POSITION STATEMENT

Further to Minute 21 of the last meeting, Brigid Day, Head of Commissioning and Improvement, submitted a report presenting the final version of Reading's Market Position Statement, following consultation with providers across the statutory, private and voluntary sectors, services users and carers. The final version of the Market Position Statement was attached to the report at Appendix 1.

The report explained that a second Care and Support Conference had been held in January 2015 for representatives from providers across statutory, private and voluntary sectors to give feedback on the draft Market Position Statement. A Market Position Statement Reference Group with representatives from across the group had met in October and December 2015 and January 2016 to comment on the

**ADULT SOCIAL CARE, CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE**  
**4 MARCH 2015**

draft document and inform the final version. As a result a short executive summary of the Statement and a longer version with more background information that would be published on the Council's web site would be produced and the Council's typical costs for different types of services would be included in the Statement.

The report explained that Market shaping was an ongoing exercise and the Council's intentions would continue to develop over time and through further work with providers on implementing the plans set out in the Market Position Statement. It had been proposed to update the document regularly and a notification sent to providers when a revised version was published on the Council's web site. The quarterly meetings of the Reference Group and the regular provider forums and Care and Support conferences would all be used as opportunities to promote these updates and to involve providers in the ongoing work.

**Resolved -**

- (1) That the final version of Reading's Market Position Statement for publication from April 2015 be endorsed;**
- (2) That the ongoing work with local providers to develop Reading's care and support market in line with the Market Position Statement be supported.**

**29. ETHICAL CARE CHARTER**

Brigid Day, Head of Commissioning and Improvement, submitted a report providing the Committee with an update on the work that had been carried out to implement the provisions of UNISON's Ethical Care Charter which had been signed by the Council following a decision of Policy Committee on 17 March 2014 (Minute 101 refers).

The report explained that by signing the Ethical Care Charter the Council had committed to work to implement a variety of standards in home care services that were commissioned by the Council. Currently the Council spent approximately £6m per year on services that were delivered to over 600 older people in the Borough by externally contracted providers. The contracts for providing these home care services were being retendered for a period of four years to start from Spring 2015 and this had provided the Council with a valuable opportunity to work in partnership with care providers, care service users and their representatives to look at how these improvements could be implemented. The Charter had adopted a phased approach and Councils signing up to the Charter were not expected to implement all of the provisions immediately, but work over time to achieve the full requirements. There were three stages to the implantation that were set out in the report.

The report explained that the Council had carried out an extensive consultation exercise with existing and potential providers during summer 2014 to assess the capability of suppliers to meet the standards in the Charter. Providers had been supportive of the Charter and had provided valuable information about their day to day operations which had enabled the Council to structure new contracts in a way that met the Charter requirements and provided financial viability for the

**ADULT SOCIAL CARE, CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE  
4 MARCH 2015**

providers. Resulting from the exercise the new Home Care Framework would implement from the outset all of the requirements of stage one and most of stages two and three. The implementation of the new Framework had provided the impetus for suppliers to review their operating models and bring their practices into line with the Charter.

Discussions were underway with providers looking at the wider adoption of guaranteed hours contracts and the early stages of the work that had been carried out had identified that there were ways in which greater security of employment and earnings could be achieved without creating additional cost burdens for providers and commissioners. One of the most significant developments that would be implemented in the new framework was the payment of a living wage for care workers, this had been incorporated at the start of the contract. Following detailed discussion and analysis of the position in the Borough it had proved possible to establish, within the minimum specification of the services to be provided, that the living wage could be paid to all care staff from the outset of a new contract. The Council had also worked with providers to establish an adequate funding level that would enable providers to meet the living wage, pay travel time in full, meet travel expenses and ensure staff were paid to attend the required training courses.

Pat Kenny, UNISON Branch Secretary, attended the meeting and addressed the Committee about the implementation of the Ethical Care Charter in the Borough.

(Councillor Jones declared a pecuniary interest in the item, left the meeting and took no part in the debate or decision. Nature of interest: Councillor Jones was employed by a Trade Union).

**Resolved - That the progress made in implementing the UNISON Ethical Care Charter be noted.**

### **30. OLDER PEOPLE'S DAY SERVICES IN READING**

Further to Minute 13 of the meeting held on 7 November 2013, Suzanne Westhead, Interim Director of Adult Care and Health Services, submitted a report providing the Committee with an update on the day services improvement programme. The draft consultation paper on Improving Day Services in Reading was attached to the report at Appendix 1.

The report explained that following Reading's Modernising Day Services Consultation a neighbourhood offer had grown steadily in order to provide support for residents in the community. A full-time Neighbourhood Coordinator had been appointed in November 2013 and had been joined by a full-time assistant in November 2014. There were two older people's social clubs in Caversham and information about opportunities for over 50s in Southcote had been collated into a neighbourhood resource pack. In addition a volunteer-led older people's social club had been launched in Southcote in February 2015 and had been closely followed by the launch of a fourth older people's social club in Whitley.

In keeping with the duties of the Care Act to promote the holistic well-being of individuals the over 50s clubs had been structured to provide varied opportunities

**ADULT SOCIAL CARE, CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE**  
**4 MARCH 2015**

with the aim of ensuring that all individuals were engaged rather than just attending and to create an inclusive and welcoming atmosphere. The growth of the team had helped to develop a more equitable offer throughout the Borough and the financial and administrative self-sufficiency of the social clubs had been developed to enable the resources of the team to be used most efficiently. The growth of the service had also required the recruitment of additional volunteers and officers had worked closely with Reading Voluntary Action. Recruitment had continued to be on-going to ensure there was always an available 'pool' of people to call upon.

The report stated that improvements had also been made to the current centre based offer for service users with high care needs whose care could not be met in a neighbourhood setting. The service was based at the Maples Centre and although it was adequate for the current offer but service users and carers had acknowledged that the building was not welcoming and too big for the number of people using the facility. Carers and staff had been taken on a site visit to Rivermead Leisure Centre that had been identified as a possible alternative site for day services in order to understand how a move to a different site could open up new possibilities for the day service and allow for improvements in the current offer.

As part of an ongoing commitment to provide a day service which was responsive to the needs of service users and integrated within the wider community it had been proposed to consult with older people, and their families, using the Maples Centre as well as potential future service users and community partners. The consultation would seek views specifically on the facilities that people would like to see in a centre based day service and how to continue the improvements underway especially for users with complex needs and how to ensure the service was equipped to meet their needs. The report summarised the approach to the consultation, stakeholders would be engaged and stated that the outcomes of the formal consultation would be used to develop proposals for further improvements to older people's day services in the Borough.

Michelle Brown, Neighbourhood Coordinator for Older Persons' Services, attended the meeting and addressed the Committee about the day services improvement programme and presented a short film on the over 50s club in Caversham which was held at the Milestones Centre. Malcolm and Jean Spargo also attended the meeting and told the Committee about their experience of the club and why it was important to them.

**Resolved -**

- (1) That Jean and Malcolm Spargo be thanked for attending the meeting;
- (2) That the update on the neighbourhood day services programme for older people be noted and the continuation of this approach be supported;
- (3) That the launch of a formal consultation on the centre based day services offer for older people in Reading be approved.

**ADULT SOCIAL CARE, CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE**  
**4 MARCH 2015**

**31. SAFEGUARDING ACTIVITY REPORT - QUARTER 3 (SEPTEMBER - DECEMBER 2014)**

Vicki Lawson, Interim Head of Children's Services, submitted a report providing the Committee with an update of the key activity areas for quarter three within Children's Social Care and on auditing activity.

The report stated that the headlines for Children in Need/Child Protection were as follows:

- The number of referrals to Children's Social Care had remained fairly stable with a rise from 359 in quarter two to 436 in quarter three;
- The percentage of referrals going into Assessments had shown a decrease from 59.3% in the last quarter to 56% in the current quarter;
- In December 2014 86.9% of Single Assessments had been completed within timescale;
- The number of Section 47 enquiries in the last quarter had risen to 133 compared to 119 in the previous quarter;
- In the year to date 85.9% of Initial Child Protection Conferences had been held within the 15 day target;
- Child Protection Plans lasting two years or more had continued to decrease;
- In December 2014 187 children and young people had Child Protection Plans;
- In December 2014 88% of Child Protection visits had been completed within timescale.

The headlines for Looked After Children (LAC) were as follows:

- In December 2014, 202 Reading children were LAC;
- Of the LAC, 102 were male and 100 female and 121 of these children were noted to have special educational needs;
- In December 2014, 35 were aged 4 or under with 117 aged between 5 and 15 and 46 aged 16 and over;
- 29% of LAC were placed more than 20 miles away from their home address; work continued to be required to find more local placements;
- 83.8% of children and young people were in stable placements;
- Currently 70 young people were entitled to services under the Children Leaving Care Act 2000 and 35.7% were not in suitable employment, education or training;
- 16 children had been adopted in the current reporting year.

The report stated that an audit plan remained in place and had been reviewed. Results from audits were discussed individually with teams, within team meetings and at quarterly assurance meetings. Individual, team and service learning needs were shared and action plans implemented at individual and team level. The quarterly quality assurance and performance meetings considered quantitative data that had been produced by the knowledge management service, qualitative information obtained from internal and external audit and 'softer' information from service user and social worker feedback as well as information from complaints and compliments. Audit moderation meetings with managers and assistant managers took place on a monthly basis giving managers the opportunity to discuss individual

**ADULT SOCIAL CARE, CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE**  
**4 MARCH 2015**

audit findings, to grade performance and to develop further understanding of shared standards and 'what good looked like'. The audit process and moderation which was in place for Children's Social Care had recently been extended to the Children's Action Teams and it was planned to continue so that Children's Services had one overarching methodology for auditing.

The report provided details of the findings from the internal and external (independent) audits that had taken place and the priorities for the coming months that included the development and embedding of the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), facilitating step up/step down work between Early Help Services and the MASH and completion of the LAC Strategy.

**Resolved -**

- (1) That the report be noted and the social workers and staff in Children's Social Care be thanked for their hard work and for continuing to safeguard children in this vulnerable group;
- (2) That the Annual Trends Report be submitted to the next meeting.

**32. MULTI AGENCY SAFEGUARDING HUB - PROJECT UPDATE**

Further to Minute 15 of the last meeting, Vicki Lawson, Interim Head of Children's Services, submitted a report providing the Committee with an update on the progress being made in developing the co-located the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH).

The report stated that the project to set up a fully co-located MASH had commenced in August 2014 and the following implementation activity was required or had taken place:

- Physical co-location of the Reading key safeguarding partners;
- Dedicated accommodation to enable the co-location had been identified; this would be in the Civic Offices;
- Agreement of job descriptions;
- Agreeing the process or risk assessment and analysis to inform decision making for safeguarding purposes;
- Creation of a confidential environment for secure information sharing;
- Agreement of commissioning the necessary IT to support the above.

The project aimed to go live by June 2015 which was earlier than the January 2016 date that had originally been reported. The MASH processes and systems would be reviewed by September 2015. The project was governed by a MASH project board that included representatives from partner agencies involved, either physically or virtually, in MASH information sharing.

The report stated that the MASH had a number of benefits including helping to alleviate issues around information being held separately by professionals where concerns had tended to be viewed as separate events rather than an emerging picture, it helped achieve better assessment of risk and need and to gain a better understanding between professions, it also avoided duplication of process across



**ADULT SOCIAL CARE, CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE**  
**4 MARCH 2015**

agencies and ensured that risks and children's needs were assessed quickly and were referred to the most appropriate service.

**Resolved - That the progress made in developing the MASH be noted and a further update on the progress of the MASH co-location project be submitted to a future meeting to provide assurance that the revised launch date of June 2015 is achieved.**

**33. TROUBLED FAMILIES PROGRAMME**

Nigel Denning, Interim Service Manager, submitted a report providing the Committee with information on the Troubled Families Programme.

The report explained that Phase one of the Troubled Families Programme was coming to a conclusion with 80% of the families having successfully achieved improved outcomes with 100% expected to have achieved the outcomes by May 2015. The Council would now be invited to enter into Phase 2 of the extended National Troubled Families Programme starting from April 2015 for a five year period. The target number of families for Reading would be 1,220 over the five years. Phase 2 would require the development of a Troubled Families Outcome Plan which would provide the opportunity for localised outcomes to be determined that met local priorities.

The implementation plan for Phase 2 included developing the outcomes framework with the Council's partners, the voluntary and community sector and the national Troubled Families Programme Team prior to April 2015. To ensure that Phase 2 of the programme had a successful start a launch event had been scheduled for 15 May 2015 which would include an input from the National Troubled Families Programme Team.

**Resolved -**

- (1) That the invitation to join into Phase 2 of the Troubled Families Programme be accepted when it was received;**
- (2) That a comprehensive Troubled Families Report be submitted to the next meeting to include the analysis of Phase 1 and the detailed plan for Phase 2;**
- (3) That the launch of the Reading Programme on 15 May 2015 be noted.**

**34. READING BOROUGH COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION - UPDATE**

Vicki Lawson, Interim Head of Children's Services, submitted a report providing the Committee with an update on the progress made by Children's Services and key partners in respect of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE). A copy of the CSE Strategy 2014 - 2017 was attached to the report at Appendix 1.

**ADULT SOCIAL CARE, CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE**  
**4 MARCH 2015**

The report stated that the CSE Strategic Group, chaired by the Director of Children, Education and Early Help Services/Superintendent Thames Valley Police had developed an updated CSE Strategy which had been agreed by the Reading Safeguarding Board (RSCB) on 17 December 2014. The RSCB would be the body that would oversee the delivery of the multi-agency action plan. The Strategy set out the partnership intent to improve the delivery of services to prevent children becoming at risk of CSE, protect children who were at risk or were victims, pursue and disrupt the activity of individuals and/or groups of perpetrators and help victims and their families to recover from the abuse. The actions against the priorities would ensure that partners addressed all of the dimensions of CSE and deliver improved outcomes for children. The priorities and actions reflected the recommendations from the published enquiry into Rotherham, Ofsted thematic inspections and the voice of children.

The exact size and scale of CSE was difficult to quantify because not all young people disclosed information. Good partnership work across the Borough was helping to establish a more comprehensive picture and as this work progressed the resource implications would be reviewed to make sure that the ambitions to tackle CSE, as set out in the Strategy, could be achieved.

The report explained that a comprehensive Action Plan would be drawn up to ensure the Strategy was implemented and a coordinator would be appointed to oversee the strands of work. Discussions were ongoing to see if this could be joint funded through the RSCB.

The report explained that the Children Who Go Missing and CSE Panels were combined in July 2014 and was initially co-chaired by Thames Valley Police and the Council, but since December 2014 it had been chaired by a Detective Chief Inspector and the Council's Interim Head of Service. On 22 January 2015 a development day had been held with a range of key partners, including the third sector, to review and refresh the Terms of Reference of this meeting to ensure alignment to the strategic group.

The Council was in the process of commissioning an organisation to conduct interviews with young people who had gone missing and subsequently been found which was seen as good practice and would offer insight and intelligence as well as support to this group of vulnerable children and young people. A supplier day had been held in February 2015 and Thames Valley Police training on intelligence sharing took place in November 2014.

**Resolved -**

- (1) That the Child Sexual Exploitation Strategy be agreed;
- (2) That a report on progress and outcomes be submitted to the Committee annually.

### 35. FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION

Vicki Lawson, Interim Head of Children's Services, submitted a report informing the Committee of what would be in place to prevent, combat and tackle Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) in the Borough following a review by the Berkshire Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB).

The report explained that in February 2013 the Designated Nurse for Safeguarding for the four Clinical Commissioning Groups in Berkshire West brought to the attention of the LSCB an intercollegiate report that had been published by the Royal College of Midwives entitled Tackling FGM in the UK. Multi Agency Practice Guidelines that had been published in 2011 by the Government had identified Reading as an area of potential high prevalence of women and girls who might have suffered, or were at risk of suffering FGM because of the diverse population of the Borough. The Chair of the West Berkshire LSCB requested a task and finish group be formed to review the 2013 report with reference to the three areas across Berkshire West. The group was chaired by the Designated Nurse for Safeguarding and met on five occasions between May and October 2014.

The aim of the group had been to scope the local statutory responses to FGM and to develop recommendations for action based upon policy recommendations from the 2013 document to support a robust multi-agency and community approach to safeguarding children at risk of FGM across Berkshire West. The action plan that had been contained in the inter-collegiate document had been used as a starting point to review the local response to FGM.

The task and group had established that across Berkshire West there was some awareness of FGM amongst local agencies and that some agencies were developing good practice to recognise and respond to women who had suffered FGM. The Berkshire LSCBs Child Protection Procedures supported practitioners in referring girls at risk of FGM to Children's Social Care Services who then informed Thames Valley Police. However, there was much still to be done locally and the key policy recommendations that had been contained in the 2013 document had not been fully addressed locally.

A coordinated strategic direction was recommended to progress local developments that would ensure girls living in the Borough and Berkshire West who might be at risk of FGM were identified and protected. Existing models suggested that a coordinated approach would be required.

The report stated that a number of actions had already been taken including the amendment of Berkshire LSCBs Child Protection Procedures in June 2014, routine questioning about FGM being encompassed into pregnancy bookings at the Royal Berkshire Hospital (RBH) and a form had been adopted from the Bolton FGM Assessment Tool, developed at RBH and used to support referrals to Children's Social Care Services.

Issues that had been identified for further work included the establishment of a specific FGM clinic at RBH, increasing recognition and response to FGM throughout RBH other than just within maternity services, establishing routine enquiries about FGM in other healthcare settings and to establish a data set from a number of

**ADULT SOCIAL CARE, CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE**  
**4 MARCH 2015**

sources to provide data on actual incidences and allow for predicted incidence according to local demographics.

Finally, the report stated that the Reading Safeguarding Children's Board and The Berkshire West Safeguarding Adults Board would take responsibility for developing an action plan and overseeing its implementation and monitoring the outcomes in partnership with Public Health.

The Committee discussed the report and agreed that the Royal Berkshire Hospital Foundation Trust be asked to produce a report setting out what the Trust was doing to raise awareness of, and to prevent, FGM and detailing how it could set up a FGM clinic so that those people effected did not have to travel to London.

**Resolved -**

- (1) That the report be noted and the Committee receive regular update reports on progress made on tackling Female Genital Mutilation in Reading;
- (2) That the Royal Berkshire Hospital Foundation Trust be asked to produce a report setting out what services were in place to raise awareness of and prevent Female Genital Mutilation and detailing how it could become a hospital that included a specific Female Genital Mutilation clinic so that those people effected did not have to travel to London.

**36. PROPOSED FOSTER CARER ALLOWANCES AND POST ORDER SUPPORT PAYMENTS SCHEDULE**

Vicki Lawson, Interim Head of Children's Services, submitted a report requesting the Committee approve the new Foster Carer Allowances from 1 April 2015. Details of the new rates and financial impact data were attached to the report at Appendix 1.

The report explained that the Council had a range of foster carer types who provided placements for LAC this also included carers who provided short breaks, respite care and day care. The Council paid weekly allowances to the carers that were based on the age of the child and an hourly rate for short breaks, respite care and day care. The Children and Families Act 2014 had strengthened a young care leaver's right to stay on with their foster carer until they were 21, or 25 if in full time education. This was referred to as "Staying Put" and the Council required an agreed rate for financial support for staying put arrangements which were delivered by existing foster carers as supported lodgings. Expanding the Council's supported lodgings scheme with existing foster carers was part of the Sufficiency Strategy to deliver a range of placement provision for LAC and care leavers. The allowance rates for supported lodgings were also proposed to be aligned with the Fostering Network recommended fostering allowance rates which was a nationally recognised benchmarked cost.

The report explained that to reduce the impact on existing carers or children and young people in placement, it had been proposed that where an existing child was

**ADULT SOCIAL CARE, CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE**  
**4 MARCH 2015**

receiving more fostering allowance or day care rate than the proposed new rate, that those placements would have preserved rates of allowance until the existing placement had ended.

**Resolved - That the proposed new Foster Carer Allowances be recommended to Policy Committee, as set out in Appendix 1, for approval.**

**37. HEALTH VISITOR SERVICE TRANSFER**

Robert Poole, Corporate Finance Business Partner, Adult Care and Health Services, submitted a report that set out the proposed contracting arrangements for the Health Visiting and Family Nurse Partnership Service.

The report explained that the transfer of the commissioning responsibility to the Council for the public health of the 0-5 years Health Visiting and Family Nurse Partnership Service had been progressing steadily both nationally and locally. The national allocations of the resource had been confirmed and work was progressing to agree the service specification that would be provided from 1 April 2015. The first six months for 2015/16 would be commissioned by the NHS England Area Team and from 1 October 2015 the Council would become responsible for commissioning these services.

In order for the Council to deliver its responsibility from 1 October 2015 it had been working with the Public Health Shared Team and the NHS England Area Team to review the national specification and make adjustments for local variations. This work was progressing and to support it the Council was required to state its contracting intentions. The proposal for both the Health Visitor and Family Nurse Partnership Service were set out in the report.

**Resolved -**

- (1) That the contracting approach, set out in Section 4.1 and 4.2 of the report, for both the Health Visitor and Family Nurse Partnership Services be agreed;**
- (2) That the Director of Children, Education and Early Help Services, in consultation with the Lead Councillors for Children's Services and Families and Health, the Head of Legal and Democratic Services and the Head of Finance, be granted delegated authority to enter into the contracts for Health Visitor and Family Nurse Placements Services, referred to in sections 4.1 and 4.2 of the report.**

**38. SCRUTINY REVIEW INTO UNDERPERFORMING GROUPS**

Further to Minute 29 of the meeting held on 5 March 2014, Kevin McDaniel, Head of Education, submitted a report introducing the findings of scrutiny work that had been carried out by a task and finish group that had been set up to look at the reasons why some schools were more effective at narrowing the achievement gap for disadvantaged groups. A copy of the task and finish group's report was attached to the report at Appendix 1.

**ADULT SOCIAL CARE, CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE**  
**4 MARCH 2015**

The report explained that the task and finish group had focused their enquiry on schools whose data from 2012 and 2013 had suggested that underperforming groups were doing better than the national average. The group had identified three distinct areas where the successful schools had invested both time and resources including activities to improve self-esteem, multiple approaches to engage with the family and management focus on the progress of individual children.

The report explained that the scrutiny report included a number of illustrative case studies which demonstrated the use of many different specific actions to help individual young people succeed. The group had identified some common principles behind these actions and had summarised them as Children's Personal Development, Engaging with the Family or School Leadership and Management.

The group had suggested that the schools they had visited should be asked to share the good practice with other schools in order that they could learn from the best practice.

Finally, the report stated that while a large proportion of the work reviewed by the scrutiny group had been specific to the school there was a wide range of others, from family to partner agencies, who could make a real difference to the success of young people, especially those who were living with disadvantage and it was recommended that the scrutiny report should be circulated to the Children's Trust Partnership in order that all groups working together for the wellbeing of children appreciated the impact they could have on the level of attainment of children in the Borough.

The Committee discussed the report and the Councillors who had been members of the task and finish group who had visited schools reported on their experiences and findings and agreed that the report should be sent to the Chairs of Governing bodies of all schools in the Borough so that they were informed of the findings immediately. The Committee also requested that a report monitoring progress at schools be submitted to a future meeting.

**Resolved -**

- (1) That the recommendation that the Council's School Improvement Plan should encompass the sharing of good practice within Reading in addition to the national good practice be approved;**
- (2) That the Scrutiny Task and Finish Group Report on Narrowing the Attainment Gap be circulated to the Children's Trust Partnership Board in order that all partners could ensure that their actions supported the raising of attainment of young people in Reading;**
- (3) That the report by the Task and Finish Group be sent to the Chairs of Governing bodies of all schools in the Borough;**
- (4) That a report monitoring progress at schools be submitted to a future meeting.**

**ADULT SOCIAL CARE, CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE  
4 MARCH 2015**

**39. READING STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION - ANNUAL REPORT**

Kevin McDaniel, Head of Education, submitted a report introducing the Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE) Annual Report 2014. A copy of the SACRE Annual Report was attached to the report at Appendix 1.

The Annual Report included a foreword by the Chair of the SACRE and information on the SACRE awareness campaign, teacher network meetings, the secondary RE conference, the second training day on location and the Pan-Berkshire Hub.

**Resolved - That the work of the Reading SACRE and the contents of the Annual Report be noted.**

**40. EDUCATION PROGRESS - UPDATE**

Helen McMullen, Interim Director of Children, Education and Early Help Services submitted a report providing the Committee with an outline of the steps that had been taken by the Council to improve the effectiveness of its School Improvement Services following a focused inspection by Ofsted and a peer review that had been requested by the Council and had taken place in January 2015. A copy of the Peer Review Findings was attached to the report at Appendix 1 and a School Visit Agenda Template was attached to the report at Appendix 2.

The report stated that Ofsted had sent a letter to the Council on 26 January 2015 following a focused inspection that had been completed on 23 October 2014. The letter was subsequently published on the Ofsted web site on 10 February 2015 with an accompanying press release and comments to the media. The letter stated that in the previous year progress had stalled in improving schools and some schools were declining. In Autumn 2014 the Director and Lead Councillor had agreed to seek a Peer Review to be carried out by a South-East region Director of Children's Services and a supporting team from other authorities, this was taken place in January 2015. The Director and Head of Service had met with the Council's School Improvement Teams to review the Ofsted letter and the Peer Review findings. These meetings had discussed options for the way forward which would be taken forward in the revised School Improvement Plan which was under development. The school categorisation approach had been widened to engage with all schools and this process had started with a model that had been based on attainment and improvement trajectory, this had been set out in a matrix and had been included in the report.

On 12 February 2015 the Director, Lead Councillor and Head of Service had met with Headteachers to outline the Ofsted and Peer Review feedback and had shared the attainment categorisation matrix. Headteachers had then taken part in a workshop to help describe what answers they would give to Ofsted questions when school improvement in the Borough was 'outstanding'. Eight Headteachers volunteered to take part in two task clusters, the first to develop an approach to joint practice development to be targeted on key issues and the other to look at recruitment and retention. The Director and Head of Service had set up 12 school visits to a range of schools and there would be a revised approach to routine school partnership visits with a clear agenda based on the local authority areas of priority

**ADULT SOCIAL CARE, CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE**  
**4 MARCH 2015**

and the specific issues faced by the school. The Director had also reviewed the proposal for a Black and Mixed heritage system review by an external organisation.

The report set out a number of actions that would be carried out including a visit by the Director, Head of Service, School Partnership Advisors and Lead Councillor to study the local authority with the highest Key Stage 2 ranking at the end of the 2013/14 academic year, an invitation from the Director to all Chairs of Governors to discuss ways in which the Council could work more effectively with governing bodies, the drafting of a revised School Improvement Strategy by the Joint Practice Task Cluster and strengthening links with the University.

The Committee discussed the report and asked that a copy of the revised School Improvement Strategy be submitted to the next meeting.

**Resolved -**

- (1) That the range of activities underway and planned to make rapid improvement to the School Improvement Service be noted;**
- (2) That the progress of School Improvement flowing through the quarterly performance management process be noted;**
- (3) That the development of a revised Strategy for raising attainment and building upon the improvement plans in place with all schools be noted;**
- (4) That a copy of the revised School Improvement Strategy be submitted to the next meeting.**

(The meeting commenced at 6.30 pm and closed at 9.10 pm).