

**ADULT SOCIAL CARE, CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE  
2 MARCH 2016**

**Present:** Councillor McElligott (Chair)  
Councillors Ballsdon, Eden, D Edwards, Ennis, Gavin, Hoskin,  
Jones, O'Connell, Pearce, Stanford-Beale and White.

**Apologies:** Councillors Orton and Vickers.

**46. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meetings held on 5 November 2015 and 3 February 2016 were confirmed as correct record and signed by the Chair.

**47. MINUTES OF OTHER BODIES**

The Minutes of the following meeting were submitted:

- Children's Trust Partnership Board - 20 January 2016

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

**48. MENTAL HEALTH SCRUTINY UPDATE**

Further to Minute 23 of the meeting held on 5 November 2015 the Director of Adult Care and Health Services submitted a report providing the Committee with an update on the work of the Mental Health Task and Finish Group and to recommend future actions that could be overseen by the continuation of the Task and Finish Group. The key lines of enquiry and questions for the independent review were attached to the report at Appendix A.

The report explained that the task and finish group had met on 11 January 2016 to re-evaluate its actions and determine whether there was any future role for the group. The group felt that the original remit of the task and finish work had been achieved but that further work should be carried out to ensure that the view of individuals who were detained within Prospect Park Hospital were captured. Areas of particular interest were whether the smoking ban had had an adverse impact on patient care and whether patients were aware of their rights as to when they were able to leave the hospital.

The task and finish group had recommended that the Council and Berkshire Healthcare Foundation Trust (BHFT) looked at ways of working together to avoid delayed discharges and this had led to a further recommendation for an understanding of the experience of those who had been delayed in Prospect Park Hospital awaiting discharge and whether patients who had been delayed were more likely to leave the hospital and be recorded noted as either having Absconded or AWOL. The group therefore recommended that an organisation independent from the Council or BHFT should be commissioned to carry out user experience interviews with Prospect Park Hospital patients.

The report stated that the aim would be for the interviews to be completed and presented to officers in order to develop an action plan that would be submitted to the Committee at its meeting in December 2016.

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The Committee discussed the report and requested that the report to be submitted to the meeting in December 2016 be submitted to an earlier meeting if possible.

**Resolved -**

- (1) That the Task and Finish Group commission an independent organisation to:
  - (a) Review the experience of patients who had stayed at Prospect Park Hospital to understand their experience of being delayed in hospital whilst their onward care needs were planned for;
  - (b) Review the experience of those who had left the hospital setting either as an 'absconder' or classed as AWOL;
- (2) That an update report be submitted to the December 2016 meeting, or to an earlier meeting if possible.

**49. TRANSFORMING CARE FOR PEOPLE WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES AND BEHAVIOUR THAT CHALLENGES**

The Director of Adult Care and Health Services submitted a report providing the Committee with an update on the progress of the Transforming Care for People with Learning Difficulties and Challenging Behaviour project.

The report explained that Berkshire West CCGs had been leading a working group forming local proposals to meet objectives that had been set nationally by NHS England. The working group had representatives from the CCGs, BHFT and Reading, Wokingham and West Berkshire local authorities and had produced a Joint Transformation Plan.

NHS England required a plan and governance arrangements to cover the whole of Berkshire and a Berkshire Transforming Care Partnership Project Board had been created. This Board would be responsible to NHS England and would oversee two operational groups. A joint plan, co-ordinated by the CCGs and BHFT, had been drafted by NHS England and proposed that staff currently employed by BHFT would develop an Intensive Support service for community provision. This would happen alongside commissioning new care services and accommodation for this high need cohort of people. This should reduce the reliance on in-patient beds and would start in September 2016.

The report stated that there were approximately six Reading resident in-patients of this cohort at any one time, of which some were long term patients. These patients had been admitted to Prospect Park wards or placements in hospitals in other Boroughs. There was a lack of suitable community based accommodation and specialist care provision in Berkshire for these people and as the numbers needing this very specialist provision were low it was planned to attract providers either to move into the area or to upskill existing services and staff in partnership with wither neighbouring local authorities. The Joint Transformation Plan proposed joint Personal Health and Care Budgets for people leaving assessment and

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treatment units and a partnership of the local authorities to commission new services together. This would run alongside the BHFT development of the new Intensive Support service which would help people to remain in the community.

The Committee discussed the report and requested that an update report be submitted to the meeting in July 2016.

**Resolved -**

- (1) That the report and project update be noted;**
- (2) That an update report be submitted to the July 2016 meeting.**

**50. RIGHT FOR YOU**

The Director of Adult Care and Health Services submitted a report providing the Committee with a summary of the pilot being run in Adult Social Care to transform the approach to social care to promote independence, wellbeing and improved customer satisfaction.

The report stated that the Right for You model focused on wellbeing as well as eligible need by "helping people to help yourself" by connecting to local and neighbourhood services so preventing the need for further state funded provision. The Care Act had created a new statutory duty for local authorities to promote the wellbeing of individuals and this was a guiding principle for the way in which local authorities should perform all of their care and support functions.

Right for You was an approach which officers were currently piloting which promoted a personalised approach through different conversations with people to connect them to their local community and provide timely support in crisis or short term situations before planning for the longer term. It would support the transformation of the service by fundamentally shifting the organisational culture from one of providing services and meeting needs, to focusing on what would make a difference to the individual concerned and connecting them with their local community. By doing so it would inform a reshape of Adult Social Care Services.

The report explained that the Right for You model had been co-produced with the community teams to shift radically the approach based on a three tier conversation model. Although owned by Reading professionals it had been based on tried and tested methodology and other local authorities had reported both service improvements and effectiveness. Phase one of the project would involve the approach being tested in two innovation sites and phase two would involve setting up further innovations sites to test the approach in different circumstances. Evaluation would take place and if the evidence continued to support the approach, phase three would involve an upscaling to Adult Social Care Services with a provisional implementation of 2017.

The Committee discussed the report and requested that an update report be submitted to the meeting in July 2016.

**Resolved -**

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- (1) That the Right for You approach and the potential customer care and financial benefits it had to offer the way the Council delivered Adult Social Care Services be noted;
- (2) That reports providing the Committee with an update as the project developed be submitted to future meetings;
- (3) That the progression of the project to Phase 2 be approved;
- (4) That an update report be submitted to the July 2016 meeting.

51. UPDATE ON EDUCATION PERFORMANCE 2014-15

The Director of Children, Education and Early Help Services submitted a report providing the Committee with an update on education performance 2014-15.

The report explained that the academic year 2014/15 had been another year of extensive change in Education with schools preparing for the introduction of the new benchmarks for GCSE performance. Following the publication of the nationally validated data in January 2016, the report considered the performance of schools in the Borough for the academic year 2014/15 at the following two Key Stages:

- Key Stage 4 (end of compulsory secondary age, typically GCSE qualifications)
- Key Stage 5 (end of sixth form education, typically GCE A Level)

The report also focused on the attainment of Looked After Children (LAC) and on the gaps in attainment between certain vulnerable groups of children and their peers.

The 2014/15 results had shown progress towards the goals that had been set in the Raising Attainment Strategy, with improvements against the national average in many areas. However, other parts of the country had been making accelerated progress and in some cases Reading's improvements had been out-stripped by other local authorities. Reading schools had been working with specific focus to reduce the attainment gaps between certain under-performing groups and their peers, as relevant to the individual school. Overall these gaps had not reduced during 2014/15, despite absolute levels of achievement improving for all groups of children, and more work was required to accelerate further the progress of these groups. Actions Plans for the most vulnerable groups of children were now being put in place.

The report stated that there had been a focused Ofsted inspection of the local authority's school improvement service early in the academic year 2014/15 that had identified the need for the local authority to be clearer about its approach to helping all schools achieve consistently good practice while supporting those schools where standards were not good. The Lead and Regional HMI had subsequently met with the Head of Education and the Senior Partnership Adviser and were now confident that the strategies being employed by the local authority were robust.

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The report explained that even though there was an increasingly diverse educational landscape the Council continued to be responsible for ensuring that all pupils in the Borough accessed a high quality education and achieved their full potential regardless of the type of school they attended. For maintained schools that included the responsibility and authority to intervene as required. For academies the local authority had no direct power of intervention but was working closely with Ofsted and the Regional Schools Commissioner and the DfE Academies Division to ensure that underperformance was effectively challenged and that schools were given the necessary support for the benefit of all pupils.

The Committee discussed the report and agreed that a report on what the Council was doing to support schools that had been rated as inadequate by Ofsted be submitted to the July 2016 meeting

**Resolved -**

- (1) That the levels of performance at each of the two Key Stages as set out in section 4 of the report be noted and the hard work of pupils in the previous academic year, along with the staff in the Borough's schools, be recognised;
- (2) That while Reading's absolute level of attainment in the secondary phase was above national average levels, the benchmark levels were declining in line with national trends and the requirement for more work to ensure Reading compared more favourably with other local authorities across all measures be noted;
- (3) That the national comparative information for children who were looked after by the local authority was yet to be published and that a further report would need to be submitted to a future meeting be noted;
- (4) That updated versions of the Raising Attainment Strategy and the School Effectiveness Guide be submitted to a future meeting before July 2016;
- (5) That a report on what the Council was doing to support schools that had been rated as inadequate by Ofsted be submitted to the July 2016 meeting.

**52. NEW DIRECTIONS SERVICE UPDATE**

The Director of Environment and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report highlighting the sustained improvement in outcomes and value for money that New Directions, the Council's Adult Learning and Employment Service, had delivered over recent years, including its rating of 'Good' by Ofsted following an inspection in December 2015. A copy of the New Directions Narrowing the Gap document was attached to the report at Appendix A and a table showing Success Data for the Academic Year 2014/15 was attached to the report at Appendix B.

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The report set out the plans that were in place for the service to reduce costs further over the next three years whilst maintaining the quality of service and positive outcomes for Reading residents and outlined how the service was helping the Council to narrow the gap for more disadvantaged residents and communities. The report also highlighted the added-value provided by the service, its partners and sub-contractors, including volunteering opportunities, niche provision to meet the needs of vulnerable groups and help to meet the skills needs of other Council services.

The report stated that New Directions had over recent years demonstrably improved the targeting and quality of its offer whilst reducing costs, as had been demonstrated by the recent Ofsted assessment that the service was 'good' across all aspects of its provision. Going forward the service would seek to maintain the quality of its offer and the outcomes of residents whilst also carrying out the following:

- Diversifying its funding base;
- Integrating further with other Council services and initiatives;
- Developing the service offer in-line with the Council's priorities.

The service was planning to deliver more fee paying courses, increasing volumes of non-direct delivery, for non-regulated learning, extending a pilot research project with schools which supported children in receipt of free school meals whose attainment was lower than expected, continuing to lead on the Council's 'Employability Pathway' strategy, continuing to offer targeted provision underpinned with Maths and English skills and continuing to have a role in the quality improvement of Children's Centres.

**Resolved -**

- (1) That Ofsted's continued judgement of the New Directions Service as 'Good' be noted;
- (2) That the significant contribution New Directions made to help narrow the gap for residents be noted;
- (3) That the strategies in place to reduce costs whilst safeguarding the delivery and quality of services to Reading's more deprived and vulnerable communities, as set out in paragraph 4.2 of the report, be endorsed.

**53. CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION UPDATE 2016**

Further to Minute 34 of the meeting held on 4 March 2015, the Director of Children, Education and Early Help Services submitted a report providing the Committee with an update on the progress that had been made against the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) priorities from the CSE Strategy. A table setting out a CSE strategic priority update was attached to the report at Appendix 1.

The report stated that a review of the action plan by the LSCB CSE and Missing Children Sub-Group in January 2016 had identified significant progress against a

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range of priorities, particularly since the filling of the CSE coordinator role. The majority of actions had been completed or would be by the end of the financial year. However, there continued to be challenges that needed to be addressed in the refreshed plan for the next financial year. In particular the future priorities for a refreshed action plan would include the following:

- Development of a CSE and missing children dashboard and performance management arrangement;
- Increased staff knowledge and confidence;
- Improved intelligence sharing;
- Strengthening transaction arrangements between Children's and Adults Services for victims of CSE;
- Learning from other local authorities.

Progress had been made in the areas of Prevention and Protect and in particular governance arrangements had been established, with stronger partnership participation and there had been an improvement in the Sexual Exploitation and Missing Risk Assessment Conference in its delivery of safeguarding individual children at risk of CSE. Ongoing challenges included the collection and use of information and data to improve the response both strategically and operationally to CSE and providing an interview once a child had returned from being missing was also a critical step to safeguard vulnerable children. An improvement in performance had also occurred by September 2015 due to the early learning of delivering the service in quarter one that had resulted in a change to business processes.

The report stated that CSE national awareness day would take place on 18 March 2016 with the aim of highlighting the issues around CSE and encouraging everyone to think, spot and speak out against abuse and to adopt a zero tolerance to adults developing inappropriate relationships with children and children forming inappropriate relationships with their peers. An action plan of activities had been developed by the CSE Coordinator and the report invited senior leaders and the Committee to unite against CSE, to support the campaign and join in raising awareness on social media by doing the following:

- Writing a personal pledge on their hands so show support for the campaign then posting a photo of the message on social media;
- Retweeting, sharing or liking the NWG Network Twitter or Facebook;
- Retweeting, liking or sharing the social media messages supporting CSE Day that would be issued by the Council's Twitter and Facebook accounts on 18 March 2016.

**Resolved -**

- (1) That the progress made against the Local Safeguarding Children Board Child Sexual Exploitation strategic priorities be noted and an update report on further progress to tackle Child Sexual Exploitation and children going missing be submitted to a meeting in twelve months' time;

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- (2) That the Council's participation in the NWG national Child Sexual Exploitation awareness day 'Helping Hands' campaign be endorsed.

**54. SECOND QUARTER REPORT CHILDREN'S SERVICES IMPROVEMENT BOARD**

Further to Minute 20 of the meeting held on 5 November 2015, the Independent Chair of the Children's Services Improvement Board (CSIB) submitted the second quarter report of the Board. A copy of the objectives of the CSIB was attached to the report at Appendix 1.

The report stated that the Board had continued to have good partnership representation, including schools, and provided a good level of challenge but Board members had also offered support which had been well received and had been helpful to the Council. The Board had seen an improvement in outcomes particularly in relation to LAC, with strategies being developed to deal with the right issues. At the January 2016 meeting the Chair had asked the Board members to consider the impact of the Board over the previous six months. The report set out their views including the fact that Board members felt more positive about recent meetings as reports submitted to the Board had been timely, informative and had enabled discussion to take place.

There continued to be good evidence to the Board that practice was improving, lessons were being learnt, that the strong and determined recruitment drive was paying dividends and that over time the pace of improvement would accelerate.

**Resolved -**

- (1) That the report be noted;
- (2) That Helen McMullen be thanked for her work as Independent Chair of the Children's Services Improvement Board;
- (3) That any issues which the Committee would like to see as a focus in the next quarter be sent to the Director of Children, Education and Early Help Services.

**55. REMODELLING THE YOUTH OFFER**

The Director of Children, Education and Early Help Services submitted a report setting out a remodelled Youth Offer.

The report stated that it had been proposed to reduce spend by £1.5m from the Early Help Offer and included in the savings were some direct management action as well as altering aspects of the family support and youth services offer. A review of the youth services and offer had been completed in late 2015, that had included work with staff and young people. As a result officers were able to identify the changes that had included a reduction in spend on a remodelled Youth Service offer; a public consultation on the revised youth offer was now being recommended. An overview of the changes that required consultation were as follows:



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- To reduce spend on youth services by £750k;
- To taper off the Council's universal youth service to a minimum offer within 12 to 18 months;
- To explore the option of creating a 'bridge' venue for vulnerable young people to use as a drop in site;
- To reduce but focus the targeted youth offer to come in line with statistical neighbours;
- To continue to offer respite care for both young carers and learning difficulty and disabled young people;
- To refocus the LAC youth offer to enabling these young people to access the community youth services like any other young person in the Borough;
- To continue to spend the same money in the Youth Offending service, but reducing the offer if partners reduced their contribution.

The report set out the detail of the offer which was for 13 year olds to 18 year olds and up to 25 year olds for LAC and young people with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities.

**Resolved -**

- (1) That the outcome of the youth offer review be noted;
- (2) That a consultation on the proposed 'Youth Offer' for local young people be carried out and a report detailing a set of recommendations/decisions submitted to a meeting in summer 2016;
- (3) That the approach and timetable for a 10 week consultation commencing on 7 March 2016 be endorsed.

(In accordance with Standing Order 38, Councillor White requested that his vote against resolutions (1) to (3) above be recorded)

**56. CHILDREN'S WORKFORCE STRATEGY 2016-2018**

The Director of Children, Education and Early Help Services submitted a report setting out and seeking approval for a Workforce Strategy for Children's services. A copy of the Children's Services Workforce Strategy 2016 to 2018 was appended to the report.

The report stated that the Strategy aimed to highlight the current issues relating to the workforce and proposed initiatives which responded to the need to ensure that the current and future workforce was recruited, retained and developed with the right skills and in sufficient numbers to meet the needs of children, young people and their families that looked to the Council for support. The Strategy had therefore been presented under the following three themes:

- Recruitment
- Retention
- Developing and Supporting Staff

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The Strategy was supported by an action plan which would be overseen by a Workforce Development Operational Group, chaired by the Interim Head of Safeguarding and Children's Social Care. This group would be responsible to the Corporate Organisational Development Group, chaired by the Managing Director. The Strategy covered staff working in Children's Social Care and Early Help Services only and, at this stage, did not cover Education staff.

The report stated that one of the biggest challenges the service was facing was the significant use of agency staff, currently the use of agency staff stood at 42%, and was particularly high in social work teams. A strategic, planned, targeted and monitored approach was needed to permanently recruit to social work practitioner and management posts and this had to be a priority for the Council to ensure agency costs were reduced in the long-term. The proposal was to reduce the use of agency staff to 10-15% by early autumn 2016 by a number of measures such as asking agency staff to become permanent and holding recruitment fairs during the summer.

**Resolved -**

- (1) That the Workforce Strategy, attached to the report, be approved;**
- (2) That a report monitoring progress and achievements be submitted to a meeting in twelve months' time.**

(Councillor Jones declared a non pecuniary interest, he remained in the meeting and took part in the discussion. Nature of interest: Councillor Jones was employed by a union that represented social workers)

(The meeting commenced at 6.30 pm and closed at 8.18 pm).