

ADULT SOCIAL CARE, CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE
5 OCTOBER 2017

Present: Councillor McElligott (Chair)
Councillors Eden, Gavin, Hoskin, Jones, Khan, Maskell, McKenna, O'Connell, Pearce, Robinson, Stanford-Beale, Vickers and J Williams.

21. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

The Minutes of the meeting held on 12 July 2017 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

22. MINUTES OF OTHER BODIES

The Minutes of the following meeting were submitted:

- Children's Trust Partnership Board - 19 July 2017

Resolved - That the Minutes be noted.

23. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND COUNCILLORS

A question on the following matter was submitted, and answered by the Lead Councillor for Children's Services & Families:

Questioner	Subject
Leslie McDonald	Proposal to reduce Information Advice & Support Service

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

24. PRESENTATION - ABC TO READ

Sarah Browning, Trustee, and Mike Edwards, Fieldworker and Lead Trustee for Safeguarding, ABC to Read, gave a presentation on the work of ABC to Read, the aim of which was to transform children's lives through reading skills. The vision of ABC to Read was for every child to be a reader, with the self-confidence and skills to make positive life choices and contribute to their wider community.

Sarah explained that 34% of children left primary school last year unable to read to the required level, 25% of those in Young Offenders' institutions had literacy levels below that expected of a 7 year old and 70% of pupils permanently excluded from school had difficulties with basic literacy. Sarah talked about the importance of reading and that a failure to learn to read could lead to poor behaviour, truancy, poor job prospects and possibly crime.

Sarah explained how ABC to Read operated and the work they undertook to recruit, train and support volunteers who visited primary schools twice a week to work with three children individually. Sarah told the Committee that they currently had around 130 volunteers, working with 500 children across 80 primary schools in Berkshire. Mike reported that schools had said 96% of children worked with had

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improved their attitude to reading and 96% had showed an increase in general self-confidence and self-esteem. ABC to Read also ran a Ready to Read course and a parent helper course, which was adaptable for training Teaching Assistants.

Resolved - That Sarah Browning and Mike Edwards be thanked for their presentation.

25. READING SCHOOLS: OFSTED JUDGEMENTS AS AT 31 AUGUST 2017

The Director of Children, Education and Early Help Services submitted a report providing the Committee with a summary update on schools' current Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) status. A table setting out Ofsted Judgements as at August 2017 by grade for Reading schools was appended to the report.

The report stated that Ofsted ratings for Early Years settings in the Borough were strong, as was expected given the good performance of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. However, settings elsewhere in the south east and nationally had improved at a more rapid rate and therefore there had been a fall in ranking.

The performance of the Borough's schools in their latest Ofsted inspections had improved strongly between 2015 and 2017. However, the percentage of schools that had been rated as good or better was slightly higher nationally. The report included a table that set out the number of maintained schools and academies by each Ofsted grading, using the most recent data available, and the main points were as follows:

- Maintained schools overall had improved strongly in terms of the percentage that had been graded good or better, 93% compared to 89.8% nationally, which was 51st out of 152 top tier local authorities nationally and was in the second quartile;
- Of the academy schools only six out of nine had been inspected and three of the six had been judged as 'requires improvement' with two yet to be inspected and one having been judged 'outstanding';
- Overall, the Borough's primary schools were close but not quite at the national average.

The report stated that the improvement that had been made over the previous two years as measured by the percentage of the Borough's primary schools that had been judged to be good or better was significant, from 73% to 86%. Challenges going forward included:

- Supporting the good maintained schools that were vulnerable to a judgement of 'requires improvement' or worse so that they stayed at 'good';
- Supporting the remaining 'requires improvement' school to progress well through its section 8 Ofsted inspection to become 'good' at its next Section 5 Full Inspection;
- Assisting the Regional Schools Commissioner (RSC) to ensure the primary school that was in 'special measures' was matched with a strong sponsor;
- Supporting and challenging the RSC to support, challenge and intervene where necessary.

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Far fewer secondary schools were currently rated as 'good' or better than had been the case two years previously. The Borough's academy schools were only 63% 'good' or better; the authority's single maintained school was 'good'. Officers would ask the RSC what action was being taken with regard to academies that were not yet 'good', or vulnerable at their next inspection to being graded as less than 'good'.

The report stated that the Borough's special schools had all been rated at least 'good' and were ranked first along with many local authorities. The Borough's only alternative provision, Cranbury College, had been graded 'requires improvement' in its last inspection.

The authority had identified 13 schools as system leaders, 28 as developing capacity, two as requiring support and eight schools as causing concern.

It was reported at the meeting that Caversham Children's Centre was now graded 1 (Outstanding) and The Palmer Academy was now rated 2 (Good).

Resolved - That a report be submitted to Committee in the Spring term 2018 setting out the validated attainment and progress of pupils, including disadvantaged groups, at the end of their 2017 key stage assessments and examinations and any changes in Ofsted gradings of schools at that time.

26. CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE, EARLY HELP AND EDUCATION SERVICES IN READING

The Director of Children, Education and Early Help Services submitted a report providing the Committee with an update on the current status and future direction in the creation of 'The Company' that would run all of Children's Social Care, Early Help and Education Services in Reading.

The report explained that in August 2016 Ofsted had published their inspection findings following an inspection of Children's Services in Reading and Children's Services had been rated as 'Inadequate'. As a result, and in line with the Government's reform programme, 'Putting Children First', the Department for Education had issued a statutory direction notice in September 2016 to the local authority and had appointed a Commissioner. The direction notice had required the Council to comply with any direction of the Commissioner in improving services for children. The Commissioner had submitted his final report to the Secretary of State which had been published by the Department for Education (DfE) in September 2017 and his recommendation had been that Children's Services should come out of the direct control of the Council for the period of their intervention. A second statutory direction notice had been issued in September 2017 to the local authority and a Commissioner had been appointed. The direction notice had required the authority to develop and draft, in consultation and agreement with the Children's Services Commissioner, the following:

- (i) A business case for the agreed alternative delivery model and outline implementation plan by 30 September 2017;

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- (ii) An updated long-term improvement plan to address the findings of the 2017 report by 30 September 2017 and to include the proposed arrangements for monitoring progress and reviewing the improvement plan as appropriate.

The report explained that the local authority had submitted a Transition Project Business Case to the DfE which had outlined the intentions of the Council in line with the statutory direction notice. The document had identified the costs that would be associated with establishing a new company to deliver Children's Social Care, Education and Early Help Services. The Council had requested £2.869m from the DfE to enable the set-up of the company. The cost to the Council had been estimated at an additional £577k which related to staff time.

An initial mobilisation meeting had taken place on 14 September 2017 and had been attended by representatives from the DfE with the Commissioner, the Council's Chief Executive and the Director of Children, Education and Early Help Services. The authority expected to receive a 'letter of comfort' that would indicate that they would receive a grant from the DfE to 'set-up' the company. This letter would be followed within approximately eight weeks with the conditions of grant. Timescales for the set-up of the company were indicative at this stage but the expectation from the DfE was that the company would 'go live' on 1 October 2018.

Resolved - That regular updates on the progress of the Children's Company be submitted to future meetings.

27. ANNUAL COMPLAINTS REPORT 2016 - 2017 FOR CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE

The Director of Children, Education and Early Help Services submitted a report providing the Committee with an overview of complaints activity and performance for Children's Social Care for the period from 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017.

The report stated that during the period the service had received 132 complaints, which was an increase of 45 (51.7%) compared to 2015/16. Of the 132 complaints that had been received:

- 46 were resolved through Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) by the Social Care Teams;
- 86 had progressed to a formal investigation.

During the same period 13 complaints had progressed to a Stage 2 investigation. The Customer Relations Team had continued to raise awareness of the complaints process and in accord with recommendations from Ofsted had in particular worked with operational teams to encourage children and young people to submit complaints where they had been dissatisfied with the service they had received.

A copy of the Children's Social Care Complaints 2016/17 - Summary Report was attached to the report at Appendix A and provided an analysis of the data. The report explained how complaints were managed and how what had been learnt was used to improve services.

Resolved -

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- (1) That the report be noted and the intended actions to further improve the management of representations and complaints in 2017/18 for Children's Social Care;
- (2) That the continuing work to raise awareness of the complaints process and encourage its use by children and young people be noted.

28. CHILDREN'S WORKFORCE STRATEGY - UPDATE

The Director of Children, Education and Early Help Services submitted a report providing the Committee with an update on the progress and achievements of the Children's Services Workforce Strategy 2016-2018.

The report stated that the Children's Workforce Development Strategy 2016-2018 had been agreed at the meeting of ACE Committee on 2 March 2016 (Minute 56 refers) and had been relevant at the time of agreement to meet the demands of the service. The Strategy had been divided into three themes, Recruitment, Retention and Developing and Supporting Staff, and although the themes were still relevant it had been necessary to adapt the Strategy to respond to current demands, the recommendations that had been set by Ofsted and changes to the management structure. As part of the Strategy an Action Plan had been developed to measure and monitor the progress of the initiatives that had been identified to meet the objectives of the Strategy.

The report stated that it had been recognised that there was a need to adapt and refresh the current Strategy to reflect further feedback from Ofsted and the planned changes and status of Children's Services going forward. It had therefore been proposed that a revised Strategy, and Action Plan, should be developed and submitted to the Committee in early 2018.

There had been significant progress with regards to the three themes in the original Strategy, this included:

- Regular benchmarking of salaries had been carried out and salaries and market supplements had been adjusted accordingly to remain competitive;
- A bespoke recruitment microsite for Children's Services had been launched in Summer 2017;
- An updated, bespoke, coordinated and facilitated induction had been put in place which had been supported by an extensive range of on-line tools and e-learning;
- Monitoring of caseloads of social workers had been carried out by the senior management team;
- Development of the Institute of Management level 5 and 7 courses would be delivered in early 2018;
- Staff consultation had been carried out to establish a preferred practice model.

The current recruitment initiative had seen four Team Managers, one Higher Specialist Social Worker and two Social Workers recruited externally to permanent

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positions and five Service Managers, four Team Managers, one Higher Specialist Social Worker and six Social Workers who had been converted to permanent contracts having previously been agency staff. The report stated that it was likely that these figures would increase significantly due to the current recruitment initiative.

Resolved -

- (1) That the progress and achievements of the Children's Workforce Development Strategy 2016-18 be noted;
- (2) That the proposal to review and refresh the strategy and action plan in readiness for reporting in January 2018 be approved.

29. BERKSHIRE WEST 10, BUCKINGHAMSHIRE, OXFORDSHIRE AND BERKSHIRE WEST SUSTAINABILITY TRANSFORMATION PLAN (BOB STP) AND WEST BERKSHIRE ACCOUNTABLE CARE SYSTEM

The Director of Adult Care and Health Services submitted a report that sought to clarify the links between the Berkshire West 10 (BW10), the NHS Buckinghamshire Oxfordshire and Berkshire West, Sustainability Transformation Plan (BOB STP) and Berkshire West Accountable Care System (ACS), including the current work streams which Reading Borough Council were involved in, and the impact on the Council and residents of Reading. A diagram showing how the ACS programmes fitted with other initiatives in the region was attached to the report at Appendix A and a copy of the BOB STP Prevention Dashboard - Delivery Summary was attached to the report at Appendix B.

The report explained that the BW10 Integration Board comprised of lead officers from Health and local authorities and met every two months to agree a collaborative strategic approach. The Board was chaired by Nick Carter, Chief Executive Officer of West Berkshire Council, and a Delivery Group acted as a Programme Board to oversee the efficient and effective implementation of joint projects to enhance integration of health and care. The Delivery Group was chaired by Sam Burrows from the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and also met every two months. The local Reading Integration Board (RIB) oversaw work on projects within Reading and this included the efficient use of the Better Care Fund which supported some of the integration programme and it met on a monthly basis. This body was jointly chaired by the Council and the CCG. Update reports were provided to the BW10 Integration Board on a regular basis that related to the programmes detailed in the report.

In April 2017 following the development of the West Berkshire, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Sustainable Transformation Plan (STP), West Berkshire CCGs had launched their local Accountable Care System (ACS). The Berkshire West ACS was in the early stages of development.

The ambition of the Berkshire West ACS was that all parties, including social care through local authorities, would be full members. However, this was at a "mutually agreeable pace". In April 2017 Wokingham Borough Council had joined the ACS Programme and it was envisaged that commissioners and providers

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operated under a single capitated budget, which would be based on collaboration and built on a combination of both formal statutory governance and agreements.

The report explained that the Public Health Team were leading from a local authority perspective on the STP Prevention work stream that covered key areas of work including obesity, physical activity, tobacco, improving workforce health and digital self-care. In terms of joint working the Reading Wellbeing Team were leading on the cancer work stream at an ACS level, jointly commissioning the Carers Services, developing alcohol services, making every contact count, blood pressure initiative and Healthy Life Style Choices.

Although the Council had not formally entered into the ACS there were positive contributions and impacts in terms of the joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy and the Public Health programmes of obesity, physical activity, making every contact count, tobacco, improving workforce health and digital self-care. The Council was currently the lead authority on other key areas of cancer, obesity and making every contact count.

Some members of the Committee expressed their concerns regarding the system.

Resolved -

- (1) That the Council was not part of the Berkshire West Accountable Care System be noted;
- (2) That the continual lack of engagement and involvement on the delivery and development of the Sustainably Transformation Plan be noted;
- (3) That the Director of Adult Care and Health Services be mandated to be fully involved and present at BW10 Integration Board Meetings;
- (4) That a report on the impact of Berkshire West Accountable Care System, including options and risks for the Council be submitted to the next meeting of the Committee.

(The meeting commenced at 6.30 pm and closed at 8.00 pm).