

CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

At a meeting of the **CHILDREN'S SERVICES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** held in Council Chamber, Priory House, Monks Walk, Shefford on Tuesday, 10 July 2018

PRESENT

Cllr K Ferguson (Chairman)
Cllr D Shelvey (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors:	N B Costin P Hollick K Janes Cllr M Liddiard	Councillors:	A Ryan B Saunders P Smith
Parental Co-optees:	Mr S Court Mrs G Deans Mrs E Rowlands		
Church of England Co-optee:	Absent		
Roman Catholic Co-optee:	Absent		
Apologies for Absence:	Cllrs	Mrs D B Gurney Mrs D Main Mr D Morton	
Substitutes:	Cllrs	R D Berry	
Members in Attendance:	Cllrs	D Bowater K M Collins S Dixon Mrs A L Dodwell Mrs S A Goodchild Ms C Maudlin	Deputy Executive Member for Corporate Resources and Vice- Chairman of Licensing Committee Executive Member for Families, Education and Children and Lead Members for Children's Services Deputy Executive Member for Families, Education and Children Deputy Executive Member for Adults, Social Care, Housing Operations (HRA) and Volunteering

	B J Spurr	Executive Member for Health and Chairman of the Health and Wellbeing Board
	Mrs T Stock	Deputy Executive Member for Health
	B Wells	Deputy Executive Member for Community Services
Officers in Attendance:	Mr P Fraser	Assistant Director, Education
	Mrs S Harrison	Director of Children's Services
	Mr K Harvey	Head of Services for Disabled Children
	Mrs R Preen	Scrutiny Policy Adviser
	Mrs B Rooney	Head of Public Health
	Mrs M Scott	Director of Public Health
Public:	3	

CS/18/13. **Minutes**

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 22 May 2018 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record, subject to the following amendments:-

That Cllr Shelvey gave his apologies for the meeting and that Cllrs Dixon and Spurr were in attendance.

CS/18/14. **Members' Interests**

None.

CS/18/15. **Chairman's Announcements and Communications**

None.

CS/18/16. **Petitions**

None.

CS/18/17. **Questions, Statements or Deputations**

None.

CS/18/18. **Call-In**

None.

CS/18/19. **Requested Items**

None.

CS/18/20. **Executive Members' Updates**

The Executive Member for Children, Education and Families advised the Committee that the reintroduction of health visitors within multi agency teams would support improvements in early intervention and support for families. Key Stage 2 results would be available from 11 July 2018 with Key Stages 4 and 5 results available from 16 August and 23 August 2018 respectively. Delays to the expansion of Fairfield Lower School had been addressed with the developer and robust financial sanctions levied against them with alternative arrangements made for those children affected to ensure minimal disruption to their education. The Executive Member echoed the frustration of Members, acknowledging that this particular development was out of the control of the Council with the developer solely responsible for the project. Officers working on the Domestic Abuse agenda had reported no increase in cases over recent weeks and were formally thanked for their effective campaign during the recent World Cup.

The Executive Member for Health advised that an increase in budget for the NHS had been confirmed by Central Government and he was hopeful that additional funds would be made available for public health in order that improvements could be made locally. A recent report had highlighted concerns at the low resilience in young people nationally and locally which had been identified as a priority for the public health team. There was a need to increase the number of schools feeding into the Central Bedfordshire pupil health and wellbeing survey in order to improve the quality and accuracy of data and the goal was to ensure that all schools in the region took part.

CS/18/21. **Progress Report on the Transformation of Short Break Provision for Disabled Children**

The Deputy Executive Member for Children, Education and Families introduced the report and advised that positive progress had been made since the previous inception. Constructive engagement had been undertaken with parents, carers and service users in order to ensure they were fully involved in feeding their views into shaping future universal services.

The Head of Service for Disabled Children delivered a presentation which outlined the transformation of short break provision agreed by Executive in October 2017. This included a progress update, a three year transformation

programme, the legislation underpinning the approach, the model of delivery and next steps in order to strengthen the provision of services in the long term.

In light of the report and presentation Members discussed the following in summary:-

- Concerns that parents and carers weren't aware of those services and provision available to them or how to access them.
- The importance of working with parents in order to ensure the legal offer was as robust as possible, also ensuring that the dissemination of information to all relevant stakeholders was appropriate and accurate.
- A need to strengthen networks and partnership working across Central Bedfordshire and ensure provision of services was joined up and as local as possible.
- That the initial assessment of a child's needs and effective dialogue with parents and carers was key in order to ensure accuracy of diagnosis and the need for flexibility within the tiered model in order that a child could access appropriate provision.
- That efficiencies had been delivered within the first year and that the current resource was sufficient in order to deliver the remainder of the plan.
- That parental and carer feedback had been very positive and all partners were in agreement that services were heading significantly in the right direction with much more service user involvement.

RECOMMENDED:-

- 1. That the Committee acknowledged the progress and supported the next steps of the short break transformation programme.**
- 2. That an update be delivered to the Committee at a future meeting on those areas still identified as requiring additional work.**

CS/18/22.

Director of Public Health's Annual report on Children and Young People

The Director of Public Health delivered a presentation which outlined the health outcomes of vulnerable children and young people in Central Bedfordshire and the effects of adversity on brain development in very young children impacting their health in later life. Members were advised of the key priorities for the service in delivering improved outcomes and the action plan required in order to minimise health inequalities, giving the child the best possible start in life.

In light of the presentation Members discussed the following in summary:-

- That the willingness of parents to engage was key and the need for professionals to find the most effective ways of working with them was vital.
- The necessity of improving resilience and self esteem in vulnerable children in order to combat, amongst other things, instances of child sexual exploitation (CSE).
- The need to ensure barriers to learning were minimised and positive choices were made by children and young people, with the support of their parents, carers and professionals.
- The importance of high quality personal, social and health education (PSHE) in schools.
- The need to analyse trends and outcomes and learn from best practice.

- That there had been a significant reduction in smoking locally with vaping recognised as part of the healing process.
- The importance of partnership working across all sectors in order to ensure a joined up and holistic approach.
- That data in relation to self harm would be shared when it had been made available, recognising the need to reduce these behaviours where possible.

RECOMMENDED:-

1. **That the Committee acknowledged the progress of the actions in the Director for Public Health's report in 2016;**
2. **That the Committee supported the areas and actions for further improvements;**
3. **That the Committee champion the implementation of defined actions across all services and organisations.**
4. **That the Health and Wellbeing Board include within their work programme a focussed approach in order to address the challenges around knife crime and drug and alcohol abuse in all children and young people.**
5. **That an associated timeframe be assigned to all targets in order that they be effectively monitored and tracked.**

CS/18/23. **The First 1001 Days of a Child's Life**

Agenda items 11 and 12 were considered together therefore comments on this item are contained in Minute reference CS/18/22 above.

RECOMMENDED:-

1. **That the Committee support the priorities and actions – aiming for the best for children, young people and families in Central Bedfordshire.**
2. **That the Committee champion the implementation of defined actions across all services and organisations.**

CS/18/24. **Schools for the Future**

The Executive Member for Children, Education and Families highlighted the challenges facing the local authority due to the mixed economy of schools within the region, acknowledging that similar challenges would arise due to future development in the area and increased pupil numbers. Therefore there was a need to address those issues in order to help shape the landscape of education for the future, working in close partnership with schools.

The Assistant Director (AD) for Education delivered a presentation which set out the development of a coordinated plan to meet growth in the longer term, ensuring alignment with the Council's strategic priorities. Measures were underway to work with each cluster of schools in order to understand their views and ambitions and ensure that their goals were in the best interests of local children in relation to their education. The local authority, the Regional Schools Commissioner (RSC) and schools all understood the importance of working collaboratively, achieving best value and assuring coherency and transparency when engaging with stakeholders.

In light of the report and presentation, Members discussed the following in summary:-

- How the Council proposed to engage with the 15% of schools indicating a desire to remain in the three tier model and the need to work collaboratively with them to ensure the best outcomes for those children.
- That the current hybrid of education provision was wholly confusing to parents and teachers and a need to move towards a simplified model with the council leading the process in a supporting role.
- That any transition would take time and was part of a long term model of change and that a new communications programme would support effective engagement with parents and stakeholders.
- The need to ensure that schools currently in the planning stage of development were realigned with the vision for the future.
- That the current schools estate could not accommodate any more children therefore it was essential that future development was of a flexible and intelligent design.
- The need to learn from past experiences and coordinate any changes to the educational landscape, rather than allow unstructured changes to occur.
- That educational outcomes should be a key focus for the new school improvement team regardless of any change in structure.
- The impact of any structural change on small rural schools.

RECOMMENDED:-

- 1. That the Committee acknowledged the position reached on planning for schools for the future.**
- 2. That the Committee supported the policy as set out in paragraph 19 of the report to be presented to Executive on 7 August 2018.**

CS/18/25.

Work Programme 2018/19 & Executive Forward Plan

That the Committee Work Programme be agreed subject to the following amendments: -

- **Aspiration and parental engagement – TBC**
- **Partnership working between key health workers and the Local Authority – TBC**
- **Travel Assistance Policy – 20 November 2018**
- **Children’s Centres – 20 November 2018**

(Note: The meeting commenced at 10.00 a.m. and concluded at 1.00 p.m.)

Chairman

Dated