

DONCASTER METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

WEDNESDAY, 5TH SEPTEMBER, 2018

A MEETING of the CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL was held at the COUNCIL CHAMBER - CIVIC OFFICE, DONCASTER on WEDNESDAY, 5TH SEPTEMBER, 2018 at 10.00 AM

PRESENT:

Chair - Councillor Neil Gethin

Councillors Lani-Mae Ball, Jane Cox and Frank Tyas

Co-optee – John Hoare (Diocese of Sheffield Church of England) and Bernadette Nesbit (Diocese of Hallam Roman Catholic Church)

Invitee: - Jim board UNISON

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Damian Allen, Director of People, Learning and Opportunities Children and Young People and Adults Health and Wellbeing Directorates

Leanne Hornsby, Assistant Director, Commissioning and Business Development

Robin MacNeill, Doncaster Opportunity Area Programme Manager

Paul Ruane, Head of Education

Paul Thorpe, Quality and Service Improvement Manager

Dr. John Woodhouse, Chair Children's Safeguarding Board

Mark Douglas, Doncaster Children's Services Trust, Chief Operating Officer

Tony Holmes, Doncaster Children's Services Trust, Principal Social Worker

Dawn Jones, Doncaster Children's Services Trust, Customer Experience Manager

Pauline Turner, Doncaster Children's Services Trust, Director of Performance, Quality and Innovation

APOLOGIES:

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Nick Allen, Sean Gibbons, Nikki McDonald, John Mounsey and Sue Wilkinson and

		<u>ACTION</u>
105.	<u>TO CONSIDER THE EXTENT, IF ANY, TO WHICH THE PUBLIC AND PRESS ARE TO BE EXCLUDED FROM THE MEETING.</u>	
	None	
106.	<u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST, IF ANY.</u>	

	There were no declarations made.	
107.	<u>MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 24 JULY, 2018</u>	
	The minutes of the meeting were agreed as a correct record.	
108.	<u>PUBLIC STATEMENTS</u>	
	There were no public statements made.	
109.	<u>DONCASTER CHILDREN'S SAFEGUARDING BOARD ANNUAL REPORT</u>	
	<p>Doncaster Caring Theme</p> <p>The Chair of the Doncaster Safeguarding Children's Board thanked all those people involved in this area of work, and outlined that it was his first report, having only taken up post half way through the reporting year.</p> <p>He explained that the Safeguarding Board was active and highlighted its positive position, raising the following issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Signs of Safety Model – the service led on this model, which had now been extended for use in Adult Safeguarding to provide a more consistent approach for service users.</li> <li>• Excellent areas of work, for example, Youth Offending provision and taking a robust approach to Child Sexual Exploitation issues and preventative methods. This successful partnership work had been successfully achieved and acknowledged by Ofsted;</li> <li>• High number of cases that were meeting the threshold for referral;</li> <li>• Children that required a high level of care being placed outside the borough and associated costs;</li> <li>• Aggressive investigation following 3 child deaths as a result of parents falling asleep on their child;</li> <li>• Large number of children and young people from other authorities being cared for in small independent homes and the requirement and ability to ensure they were safe. Reports of missing children were stretching resources within South Yorkshire Police and Health Services feeling the impact.</li> </ul>	

- Working Together – all partners were moving to a much simpler model removing duplication ensuring a more effective service. All services would be aligned to ensure they were properly integrated.

The following issues were raised by the Panel:

Referrals – concern was expressed that there were so many cases being presented at the referral stage where no further assistance was required, and questioned whether this was being done as it was easy to pass the problem to the Children’s Trust. It was acknowledged that there had been a clear problem with systems that sift the children and young people prior to referral. For example, the Police have national procedures to follow when a child or young person presents themselves as a child of concern, and therefore a referral was required, but the system needed to take account of whether they were at immediate risk or suffering from an unpleasant incident. Therefore the requirement of early help support was essential.

It was explained that part of the problem was the concept that a referral was encouraged however training was an essential element to ensure that thresholds were clear and culturally embedded. Concern was expressed that the ability to spend time learning was compromised due to the system being overwhelmed, with approximately 1200 cases per month requiring triage prior to a referral being required. It was stressed that it would also be helpful for the Police to have national guidance from ACPO to assist with referrals. The Board Chair stressed that the Trust’s relationship with South Yorkshire Police had greatly improved.

It was also reported there was a feeling from front line practitioners that they did not have the tools to address certain issues and that some referrals were more a feature of traumatised communities. This was noted as a strategic issue that required consideration.

Early Help – the need to make families more resilient was imperative, with partners providing assistance with early recognition of issues that required addressing, for example, from assessments undertaken in a school settings. It was stressed there should be a role for schools to assist parents but it was recognised that education establishments were already under a lot of pressure. It was acknowledged that roles in the pre-school environment had the biggest impact.

It was stressed that support at the right level was essential ensuring the best outcome for families who were referred, avoiding unnecessary alarm.

Child Protection Conferences – following concern, it was stressed that South Yorkshire Police were now in attendance at the first conference

meeting and subsequently when their presence was appropriate. It was noted that South Yorkshire Police and Children's Trust were in the same building and operating a daily duty system, therefore information was more up to date.

With regard to South Yorkshire Police it was explained that they were better informed through their own internal training. It was noted that the Police sit on the Partnership group and they were a crucial addition to the system.

Mental Health – It was noted that there was a local transformation plan containing this issue, including targeting schools and monitored by the NHS. It was noted that the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Panel would be giving consideration to the Mental Health Strategy and Delivery Plan on 27<sup>th</sup> September, which the Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel had been invited to. It was noted that the Safeguarding Board had addressed young people who were arriving at Accident and Emergency with alcohol and high level need issues.

Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children – It was confirmed that some children and young people had turned up spontaneously and had not been part of a resettlement programme, had varying needs and must be cared for. The needs of these children and young people were wide-ranging and funding fell short of the costs to cover their requirements. It was stressed that partners must work on the assumption that they were being trafficked or that they had been abused.

Modern Slavery – In response to Members' questions, it was the opinion that this issue had not raised itself as a problem in the Doncaster area however, partners were aware of the position and underlying signs.

It was confirmed that Health partners were aware of the issues around Female Genital Mutilation but only became aware of cases when someone sought medical help. If a case arose then the Safeguarding Board would undertake an investigation into such cases. With regard to training, this and awareness raising has been undertaken , particularly with the change in population.

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) – Members were satisfied with people being aware of how to raise concerns and noted that this was a crucial function across the Children's Services partnership. It was stressed that receiving complaints was a positive, each of which was investigated. It was explained that if investigations found that suitable arrangements had not been put in place for the identified case, these were rectified. If establishments were not meeting the criteria, depending on the nature of the issue, improvements plan to a ban on working with children in future could be made. If there were unsatisfactory trends being highlighted by providers then they would be

	<p>investigated.</p> <p>To conclude the discussion the Safeguarding Board Chair thanked the Panel for the opportunity to discuss the work of the Safeguarding Board and Members' scrutiny and critique, which had been very helpful.</p> <p>RESOLVED:- that the report and discussion, be noted and thanks be provided to the Chair of the Safeguarding Board for attending the meeting.</p>	
110.	<p><u>ANNUAL COMPLAINTS (DCST)</u></p>	
	<p>Doncaster Caring Theme</p> <p>The Panel gave consideration to the Annual Report 2017/18 for complaints and compliments. It was noted that the Trust was continuing to take measures to maximise the potential learning from complaints to drive service improvements.</p> <p>The Customer Experience Manager had been providing a consistent 'right first time' response to complaints. This had been acknowledged as a positive during the re-inspection of 'Services for Children'. Only one complaint had escalated to Stage 2. There was also only one complaint upheld by the Local Government Ombudsman and this related to a complaint originally raised within the period 2015/16.</p> <p>It was also confirmed that if there were any trend to complaints, due to strong monitoring, this would be recognised and escalated if required. Any issues of concern were raised with managers and improvements required taken on board.</p> <p>Additional to complaints received, it was stressed there had been many compliments.</p> <p>In response to Members queries, it was confirmed that the Customer Experience Manager was responsible for deciding whether to escalate a complaint to Stage 2 of the complaints procedure but there were thresholds to meet before this could happen. It was stressed that the Trust was confident that complaints were robustly dealt with at Stage 1.</p> <p>With regard to a number of issues raised by Members, the following were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• With regard to the title of Customer Experience Manager, the suggestion was taken on board with regard to the description and that it could be more children service focused ensuring service users were aware of the role;</li> <li>• Only one complainant had been dealt with under the Persistent</li> </ul>	

	<p>complainant Procedure;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Case recording ensured robust responses being made to complainants; and</li> <li>• It was a statutory requirement to provide advocacy support to complainants raised by children and young people when requested. The Trust has Children’s advocates available to do this.</li> </ul> <p>To conclude the Chair thanked the officers for presenting the information and taking on board the Panel’s comments.</p> <p>RESOLVED: that the report, be accepted.</p>	
111.	<p><u>"STORING UP TROUBLE" - PRODUCED BY THE NATIONAL CHILDREN'S BUREAU</u></p>	
	<p>Doncaster Caring Theme</p> <p>A report was presented to the Panel providing a summary of a significant major national report for which, along with a small number of other local authorities, Doncaster had been a major contributor. The report was entitled, “Sorting Up Trouble”, examining the current state of social care in England and how the current pressures within the sector could be addressed and delivery improved. Whilst it was a national report Members were being given the opportunity to give consideration locally with the ability to influence spending and national policy.</p> <p>The report highlighted that more support was required for early intervention and children in need, due to the inconsistency across local authority areas which had resulted in inequity of access to care and support and a variation in outcomes for children. It was confirmed that in Doncaster early help was provided by the Local Authority, Children’s Trust and partners and that that only 10% of cases at the front door required early help support.</p> <p>It was noted that the local authority now had responsibility for recommissioning health for early help therefore had the ability to ensure joined up support at the appropriate level.</p> <p>Members were pleased to note that the report recognised and highlighted poverty as having a negative impact on some young children therefore nationally a large piece of work was required to tackle better outcomes.</p> <p>It was noted there was financial pressure across the UK with a predicted overspend of £800m nationally this financial year. As a result of less money to spend on essential services and less resources for early help and change in demographics created additional issues. Doncaster’s partners were however working together to provide the</p>	

	<p>best service they could.</p> <p>It had been recognised by Ofsted that in Doncaster thresholds were well understood with the right children receiving the correct response.</p> <p>Members expressed concern that in recent years more complex safeguarding systems had been required, adding to traditional child protection services, thus creating additional pressures on staff and the increased demand for quality social workers.</p> <p>Doncaster was focusing on the whole system approach, with work currently being undertaken between Adult Services and the Trust ensuring a whole family robust system was in place, maximising the limited resources available.</p> <p>It was stressed that children in need were on the edge of risk and when issues were highlighted they must be addressed. It was therefore recommended that continuity of funding for the Troubled Families programme was required.</p> <p>RESOLVED: that the Government be asked to consider:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The continuation of funding towards the Troubled Families programme post 2020;</li> <li>2. Young People being engaged in commenting on the report both locally and nationally, particularly through Youth and Children in Care Councils; and</li> <li>3. A Central Government spending review to address better outcomes for children in Poverty.</li> </ol>	
112.	<u>EDUCATION AND SKILLS THEMATIC UPDATE</u>	
	<p>Doncaster Learning theme</p> <p>The Panel considered a report relating to the Education and skills thematic update detailing progress since January, following the publication of the Doncaster Opportunity Area Delivery Plan.</p> <p>It was noted that stakeholder engagement had increased and as a Partnership there was a lot to be proud of. Due to time pressure on the programme and a desire to maximise impact, activity was being agreed on a rolling programme rather than on an annual basis, therefore offering greater flexibility.</p> <p>It was noted that at the current time, it seemed that more money had been allocated than being spent. This was due to activity planning, which would be start in October with benefits identified and making an</p>	

	<p>impact by the end of the year.</p> <p>With regard to the Expect Youth programme and Summer programme thanks were provided by a Member follow praise and feedback received from parents.</p> <p>RESOLVED that:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Members be made aware of activity as a ward level; and</li> <li>2. Progress with the item, be noted.</li> </ol>	
113.	<p><u>DONCASTER EDUCATION ATTAINMENT SUMMARY 2018</u></p>	
	<p>Doncaster Learning theme</p> <p>The Assistant Director, Commissioning and Business Development presented a report providing provisional data of achievement and improvement from Early Years through to Key Stage 5 (A Level). It was noted that that the formal validated data would be released by the DFE later in the autumn term.</p> <p>Members addressed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Early years good uptake and the requirement to keep improving;</li> <li>• Key Stage 2 had seen a wider improvement and focus would now be on how this could be sustained. For example, increased work being undertaken with opportunities for improved reading and writing which in turn leads to improvement in other areas;</li> <li>• GCSE results – an improvement in maths with significant improvement for five schools;</li> </ul> <p>In response to a question relating to how boys were being targeted with the issues that interest them, it was noted that over the coming weeks discussions would be undertaken with schools to congratulate them on achievements and identify what lessons could be learnt and shared.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the report and discussion, be noted.</p>	
114.	<p><u>OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PLAN 2018/2019 - AUGUST 2018</u></p>	
	<p>The Panel gave consideration to the current work plan position and requested that an item addressing Child Poverty be added to the December meeting.</p> <p>The Senior Governance Officer outlined that she had arranged for Members of the Panel to take part in learning to cook session with Children in Care, as part of their Corporate Parenting Role. This would take place on Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> December, at 4pm</p>	



	<p>RESOLVED that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. The Child Poverty be added to the December agenda; and</li><li>2. A Learn to Cook session be held on Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> December at 4pm with children in care.</li></ol>	
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