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DONCASTER METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

MONDAY, 29TH FEBRUARY, 2016

A MEETING of the CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL was held at the 008 - CIVIC OFFICE, DONCASTER on MONDAY, 29TH FEBRUARY, 2016 at 10.00 AM

PRESENT:

Chair - Councillor Rachel Hodson
Vice Chair – Councillor Neil Gethin

Councillors Nick Allen, Nigel Ball, Bev Chapman, Sue McGuinness and Sue Wilkinson

Co-optees – Damien Thorpe and John Hoare

Invitee: - Jim Board (Unison)

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

John Harris, Independent Chair - Doncaster Safeguarding Children's Board (DSCB)
Rosie Faulkner, Manager of the DSCB
Suzannah Cookson, Head of Quality for Children and Designated Nurse for Safeguarding and Looked After Children Nurse, (Vice Chair)
Superintendent Neil Thomas from the South Yorkshire Police
Rianna Nelson, Director of Children's Commissioning at DMBC
Anne Chester-Walsh, Head of Service at the Doncaster Children's Service Trust (DCST)
Jim Foy Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)
Damien Allen, Director of Learning, Opportunities and Skills at Doncaster Council
Peter Featherstone - Business Manager, Learning, Opportunities and Skills at Doncaster Council
Jackie Wilson, Director of Performance, Quality and Innovation
Dawn Jones, Customer Experience Manager

APOLOGIES:

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors James Hart and Alan Jones

		<u>ACTION</u>
	NOTE: In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 4, the Panel resolved to combine two items on the agenda, Quarterly Performance And Progress Against Ofsted Action Plan - Trust Update Report/Annual Report Of The Doncaster Children's Services Trust, detailed at number 32 below.	

25.	<u>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</u>	
	Apologies for absence were received from Councillor James Hart and Councillor Alan Jones.	
26.	<u>TO CONSIDER THE EXTENT, IF ANY, TO WHICH THE PUBLIC AND PRESS ARE TO BE EXCLUDED FROM THE MEETING.</u>	
	None	
27.	<u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST, IF ANY.</u>	
	There were no declarations of interest made.	
28.	<u>MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 8TH DECEMBER, 2015</u>	
	The minutes were agreed and approved as a true record.	All to note
29.	<u>PUBLIC STATEMENTS</u>	
	There were no public statements made.	
30.	<u>CSE ASSURANCE UPDATE</u>	
	<p>The Chair welcomed John Harris, Independent Chair from the Doncaster Safeguarding Children’s Board (DSCB), Rosie Faulkner, Manager of the DSCB, Suzannah Cookson, Head of Quality for Children and Designated Nurse for Safeguarding and Looked After Children Nurse, (Vice Chair) Superintendent Neil Thomas from the South Yorkshire Police, Rianna Nelson, Director of Children’s Commissioning at DMBC, Anne Chester-Walsh, Head of Service at the Doncaster Children’s Service Trust (DCST) and Jim Foy Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) at the DCST to the meeting.</p> <p>It was explained that the purpose of the item was to provide an updated assessment of the response to child sexual exploitation (CSE) in Doncaster. Members were reminded that since the initial report had been brought to the Panel in December 2014, there had been an OFSTED review of the DSCB, published in November 2015 which found that there had been ‘good coordination by agencies in order to tackle child sexual exploitation in Doncaster.....a child sexual exploitation sub-group and work stream chaired by a Police Superintendent coordinates well the operational partnership working’.</p> <p>The Panel held discussions which included the following areas:</p> <p><u>Faith and Culture Sub-Group</u> – It was reported that the Faith and Culture Sub-Group has led the work to link with wider communities. It was outlined that most faith culture groups worked with individual</p>	

communities such as the Polish community. Members were informed that the sub-group had made good progress in identifying and engaging with a broad range of Faith groups and providing training and advice on a range of safeguarding issues including safe guarding policies and safer recruitment. It was added that training had been provided in some communities on CSE and further training was planned. It was added that there was an intention to expand the work with black, ethnic and minority ethnic groups, targeting those not linked in through faith groups. Members were informed that further work was looking to be undertaken with the deaf community, children schooled at home and the Roma Slovak population. It was commented that engaging with such groups could be challenging and that engaging with individuals who were viewed as being influential proved particularly useful.

Training – Concern was raised by the Panel regarding the development of specific training programmes with faith and community groups. Members were informed that there were no barriers to the training being undertaken but just that there hadn't been the time and capacity to do it. Members were assured that this was now been looked at as a priority.

Data – In terms of the data, members were informed that this was complex area as the data came from a range of different places and collected in different ways. Members were informed that there was no intelligence or data gaps but that the challenge was bringing the information together and using it to present one clear picture. Members were informed that there was a lack of a single IT collection point and that IT issues were being reconciled to find an appropriate solution. It was further explained that it was challenging to identify the headline information to go in the report to be able to draw out an overall analysis of impact (an issue experienced with other safeguarding boards).

Local Problem Profile – Members were informed that there was no local organised criminality dealing in CSE at this time. It was explained that a national initiative was being created to develop local problem profiles. Members were told about THRIVE meetings where the Police were enabling information to be shared effectively with partners to ensure that vulnerable children and young people were supported and that offender behaviour was disrupted. Members were informed that Doncaster was unique in the way it was working with partners and that it had proved to be very positive.

Outreach Work – Members were informed that outreach work had taken place at venues where young people were likely to congregate and steps taken to discuss this issue with them in those settings. It was explained that with outreach work, it was a case of distributing leaflets and making initial contacts with young people, with the view that this might build up to more of a discussion. Members were

	<p>informed that social media was one of the biggest issues that was faced in prevention and keeping young people safe. Members were informed that in its recent review, Ofsted had commended the contact that had been made with bed and breakfasts.</p> <p><u>Communication Plan</u> – Members expressed their concern that there was no communication lead in post. Members were assured that this area was still moving forward and that there will be a final version of the communication plan in place within the next four weeks. It was agreed that a link to the published version on the website would be circulated to the Panel.</p> <p><u>LGBT</u> – The Panel was informed that there was no work being currently undertaken to specifically engage with LGBT groups although the new communications plan would help raise awareness.</p> <p><u>Future Progress</u> – It was explained to Members that the work being undertaken and progress made against actions identified in the action plan were all part of a ‘journey’ to improve the work being taken forward to tackle children sexual exploitation in Doncaster. It was noted that only a small number of LSCBs had received a rating from OFSTED that was better than that for the host local authority – and Doncaster was one of those LSCBs.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the Panel: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Note the analysis of progress against the DSCB CSE Assurance Questions. ii. Note the summative report on the CSE Action Plan 2015-16. 	Independent Chair (DSCB)
31.	<p><u>DONCASTER SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD (DSCB): SUMMATIVE REVIEW OF BUSINESS PLAN 2014-16</u></p>	
	<p>The Panel was reminded that at its meeting on the 17th September 2015, when the Panel considered the draft Doncaster Safeguarding Children Board (DSCB) Annual Report 2015, it requested an updated Business Plan to be presented at its February meeting as a number of actions had been shown to be incomplete or off track.</p> <p>It was explained that the OFSTED’s report in 2015 assessed the DSCB as ‘requires improvement’; Members were informed that only 8 safeguarding boards nationally were assessed higher than the authorities that they served.</p> <p><u>Quality of Audits</u> – Members were informed that the quality of audits had steadily improved and that the audit process had been tightened up. It was added that a more coordinated approach had been adopted to ensure that there was it was more focused with smarter actions and that the quality of the auditing tool was being developed. Members</p>	

	<p>were informed that a recent audit of ‘Missing Children’ had been looked at in-depth and included views of young people.</p> <p><u>Early Help</u> – It was stated that early help arrangements were shown to be not good enough but there were now new arrangements at the Children’s Services ‘front-door’ that would help this. It was also mentioned that the inclusion of a health professional in the ‘Early Help Hub’ was improving the multi-agency response and coordination of early help support.</p> <p><u>Children and Young People Mental Health (Self Harm/Attempted Suicide)</u> – Members were alerted to the high number of children and young people admitted to hospital for self-harm and attempted suicide which had been noted in the Ofsted review. It was explained that as a result of this, there had been a performance challenge session focussing on young people’s mental health. Members were informed that good work was being undertaken although there was a lack of clarity regarding the cohort of young people. It was added that there had been an agreement to the scrutiny and analysis of data to be able to better understand this. Members were told that cases would be further considered to ensure that responses have been robust and data validated. Reference was made to the development of support for emotional health and well-being at an earlier stage rather than when concerns have escalated and come to light through presentation at A&E. It was added that A&E staff were in need of training to raise awareness.</p> <p><u>DSCB ‘Walk the Floor’</u> – it was explained there was a desire by the Board to have a better link to frontline services and practice. Members were informed Board members were undertaking visits to safeguarding services in partner agencies. To ensure a consistent focus for visits a standard questionnaire was being used to help the Board understand better the challenges facing frontline practitioners. It was added that so far it had been very useful and positive feedback had been received from practitioners.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the Panel: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Note the summative report on the DSCB Business Plan 2014-16; ii. Note the DSCB Progress Report on the response to the recommendations in OFSTED’s review of the Board published in November 2015; iii. Note the DSCB Strategic Priorities for 2016-17 	
32.	<p><u>QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE AND PROGRESS AGAINST OFSTED ACTION PLAN - TRUST UPDATE REPORT/ANNUAL REPORT OF THE DONCASTER CHILDREN'S SERVICES TRUST</u></p>	

The Chair welcomed James Thomas, Head of Performance and Business Intelligence from the Doncaster Children's Trust and Peter Featherstone, Business Manager, Learning and Opportunities at Doncaster Council to the meeting to provide an overview of the Quarterly Performance and Progress against OfSTED Action Plan Trust Update Report and the Annual Report of the Doncaster Children's Services Trust.

Members were informed that at the end of Quarter 3 there were two inter-related financial measures remaining outside tolerance, both relating to forecast expenditure against budget and one measure relating to the social care pathway for Children in Need which was in reference to monthly case file audits rated as "required improvement" or better which was reported as off target.

The group discussed the following areas:

Re-referrals – It was reported that this was on target and that the performance of this should show an improvement was the national average data is obtained. It was agreed that a session should be made available to the Panel to help them understand measures and when data is issued.

Child Protection Visits within Timescale – It was explained to Members that there had been a decline in the reported figure to 93%; this was because the measure had been subject to a monthly flux. It was explained that there was an aim to see all children within 2 calendar weeks and some had been missed by a day or two.

Children on CPP for more than 2 years – The question were raised about how long a child should remain within protection. Members were informed that contract targets were reviewed annually.

LAC Stability – 3 placement changes in one year – Members were informed that there were 2 cohorts within this measure which included; 1. Younger Children experiencing up to 5 quick placement changes and 2. Older and more troubled teenagers – experiencing multiple placement breakdowns. Members were reminded of the higher costs associated with specialist care for outside of authority residential placements. Members were informed that there was an ambition to repatriate childcare where appropriate and it was acknowledged that it was a difficult balancing act. Members acknowledged that our own children's homes were now good. Officers considered it as a challenging situation placed on the Children's Trust and one that was under constant attention including through monthly finance meetings.

The Panel's Co-optee offered that his own school placements were always made with school and undertaken when appropriate. It was supported that one long term placement might be ideal but it was better for the child to be in the right placement for the right reasons.

Head of Performance and Business Intelligence (DCT)

Percentage of Frontline FTE posts covered by Agency Staff - Members were informed that successful work had been undertaken to convert agency to permanent staff. Members were told that agency staff had reduced and that confidence in Doncaster as an authority had improved but some authorities were paying premium salaries which were making the market more competitive to be able to attract and retain staff. It was added that it was a challenge for the trust but that staff stability was developing in different ways.

Regarding staff satisfaction, Members raised concern that there had been 5 cases of live grievances (including Bullying and Harassment) during the last three quarters. Members were informed that the Department of Education had undertaken a separate study group to assess the journey of what it was like now at the trust compared to before. It was reported that this study had provided an independent assurance that staff had a high level of satisfaction and were highly motivated. Members were also informed that there were many initiatives being undertaken including work with University Sheffield and Step Up (the largest regional partnership in Yorkshire). Members were also informed that a robust approach was being undertaken to improve the quality of social workers. Members were also reminded that rises in sickness were often during the winter months. Reference was made to the 17 cases of live "Conduct/Capability/Suspensions" (that included 16 cases relating to sickness). Members were assured that processes were in place and cases were considered by Human Resources and a sub-group of the Board. It was clarified that sickness was a mix of chronic and surgery related sickness and support was being provided where necessary.

Monthly case file audits rates as "requires improvement" or better (Off Target) – Members were informed that there was a strategy improving the utilisation of what is in place within the trust. Members were informed that audit files had recently been revisited with appropriate challenges and judgements made and training provided where necessary. Members were informed that some of the issues were around the level of detail recorded within the case files. It was noted that the level of standards set by the trust were higher than those set by Ofsted.

ANNUAL REPORT - Regarding the annual report, Members were informed that it was a requirement for this to be submitted to the Secretary of State. It was explained that the report highlights progress and changes made to the agreement between Parties.

The Panel discussed the following;

Areas of Joint Focus – Members raised concern about the "proportion of children looked after who attend a school that is good or better is too low at 63%". The Panel was informed that the education offer was to

	<p>provide Children in Care placements where they leave with consideration taking into account the standard of schools. It was recognised that there was a need to improve standards of schools within the Borough, although it was recognised that the school itself might be good for that particular child.</p> <p>Members were reminded of Ofsted publishing their report on the inspection of services for children in need of help and protection; children looked after and care leavers on the 27th November 2015. It was noted that the report contained 20 recommendations based on findings from the inspection.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the Panel: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Note the Quarterly Performance Trust Update report. ii. Note the Ofsted Action Plan and progress made against it. iii. Note the Annual Report as submitted to the Secretary of State. 	
33.	<p><u>ADOPTION LEADERSHIP BOARD (ALB) BRIEFING HEADLINE MEASURES</u></p>	
	<p>The Panel welcomed Jackie Wilson, Director of Performance, Quality and Innovation and Sue May, Head of Service, LAC Provider Services to the meeting. The Panel received a report that provided information on the adoption process derived from the quarterly Adoption Leadership Board (ALB) Briefing Headline Measures. Members were informed that Doncaster continues to have twice the number of children waiting per 10,000 than the England, Statistical Neighbour and Yorkshire and Humber averages. It was reported that this figure shows an increasing trend, whilst the Yorkshire and Humber and England averages show a decreasing trend. It was explained that information from the regional consortia indicated that whilst Doncaster has continued to maintain a high number of placement orders; locally and nationally the number of placement orders made had reduced considerably. Members were informed that work was undertaken to recruit adopters and although there were a sufficient number of adopters there was a disparity between adopter request and children's needs. Members were told that there had been a decision made to not assess adopters who only wanted children under the age of 2 with no additional needs as we had sufficient number of adopters waiting.</p> <p>It was confirmed that the Trust had been judged as Good both as an Independent Fostering Agency and also as a Voluntary Adoption Agency. Members were informed that efforts were being made to find adoptive placements for harder to place children.</p> <p><u>Regional Adoption Agency</u> - The Panel was told that one of the strategic priorities that had been agreed on was to lead on the sub-</p>	

	<p>regional adoption agency project. Although it was recognised that there was a shared desire to bring children closer, it was accepted that many children could not be placed within Doncaster due to risks associated with such a placement. It was agreed that the Panel would receive an update once the Regional Adoption Agency was up and running.</p> <p><u>Wider Issues</u> - Reference was made to some of the wider issues such as quality of early help and innovation schemes that were being targeted in the right way. Reference was made to the 'Pause Project' and it was agreed for the Panel to receive an update. In summary, it was explained that that this was a programme of support for women who have experienced or are at risk of repeat removals of their children from their care. Members were informed that to date 21 women had been engaged with, with a combined total of 68 children. It was outlined that there would be a saving of £400,000 if 8 children were prevented from going into care.</p> <p>The Chair thanked officers and commented that it was an interesting report which outlined underlying reasons as to why adoption was needed.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the Panel notes the report and the efforts being made to improve service effectiveness.</p>	<p>Head of Service, LAC Provider Services</p> <p>Head of Service, LAC Provider Services</p>
34.	<p><u>DEVELOPMENTS IN TRUST COMPLAINTS MANAGEMENT SINCE 17 SEPTEMBER, 2015</u></p>	
	<p>The Panel welcomed Jackie Wilson, Director of Performance, Quality and Innovation and Dawn Jones, Customer Experience Manager to the meeting to present and update on Developments in Trust Complaints Management. Members were reminded that the report presented an update on the actions taken by the Trust to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of complaints management as requested at the Panels meeting in September 2015.</p> <p>It was reported that actions had been taken in 14 out of the 15 areas highlighted in the September report with action being planned to address the outstanding area.</p> <p>Members sought clarification about the complaints process and what stage the local authority would hear about complaints. It was explained that the authority linked into the Ombudsman directly and that the Trust would be involved by the Council at stage 3. It was explained that the local authority received information from the local Ombudsman but that there was no existing liaison arrangement within the Service Level Agreement.</p> <p>Reference was made to the Ombudsman finding in relation to a homelessness issue of a 17 year old where intensive work has since</p>	

	<p>taken place to wholly review the arrangements for dealing with homelessness in 16/17 years. It was reported that advice had been provided by St Basil's Trust, a national organisation which delivers a range of homelessness services and acts in an advisory capacity to government departments. It was explained that the new joint protocol between DCST, DMBC and the Trust was currently at its final draft stage and will be presented for final sign off in March. It was added that training events would soon be taking place.</p> <p>It was acknowledged that steps were being taken towards streamlining the two systems to prevent anything slipping through including a review of the Service Level Agreement (which will have been agreed and implemented by April 2016). The Customer Experience Manager informed Members that she had been trained on the Councils system as well as the Trusts.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the Panel: -</p> <p>i. Note the update on developments in Trust Complaints Management since the 17th September 2015.</p>	
35.	<p><u>OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S WORK PLAN REPORT 2015/16</u></p>	
	<p>The Panel noted the workplan and agreed for it to be discussed at its informal meeting on the 9th March 2016.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the Overview and Scrutiny Workplan report and update be noted.</p>	