

SOCIAL & HEALTH CARE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
15 NOVEMBER 2018

Minutes of the meeting of the Social & Health Care Overview & Scrutiny Committee of Flintshire County Council held in Llys Raddington, Flint on Thursday, 15 November 2018

PRESENT: Councillor Carol Ellis (Chair)

Councillors: Mike Allport, Marion Bateman, Jean Davies, Gladys Healey, Kevin Hughes, Rita Johnson, Mike Lowe, Dave Mackie, Hilary McGuill, Martin White, and Ian Smith

SUBSTITUTIONS: Councillor Dave Healey (for Andy Dunbobbin)

APOLOGIES: Councillor Christine Jones, Cabinet Member for Social Services, Chief Officer (Social Services), and Councillor Cindy Hinds

CONTRIBUTORS: Senior Manager - Safeguarding and Commissioning, Senior Manager Integrated Services Lead Adults/Early Years, Safeguarding Unit Service Manager, and Resources Services Manager

IN ATTENDANCE: Social & Health Care Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator and Democratic Services Officer

31. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING DECLARATIONS)

There were no declarations of interest.

32. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 4 October 2018 were received.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

33. PROGRESSION MODEL – LEARNING DISABILITIES

The Senior Manager Integrated Services Lead Adults/Early Years introduced the report to highlight the work being undertaken through the Progression Model to support people with disabilities to be more independent and rely less on paid support services.

The Senior Manager provided background information and explained that the Progression Model was based on strength based assessments which maximised opportunities for independence, helping service users to acquire independent living skills. The model aimed to maximise independence and make care affordable through reduced reliance on longer term care. Trained workers at all levels, including social workers, occupational therapists and the direct workforce, develop a plan with an individual taking small steps to independence. The Senior Manager reported that the Authority had worked in partnership with

three young men and their families to develop a model of supported living aimed at increasing independence, positive risk with an enablement culture, using assistive technology and individually tailored support. The three young men currently lead varied, independent and interesting lives.

The Senior Manager gave an update on the current situation and advised that 44 individuals had been supported using the Progression Model. Use of the Model was being expanded across Learning and Physical Disability Services and the aim was that all support staff would be trained and it would become normal practice.

The Chair thanked the Senior Manager for her report and invited Members to raise questions.

In response to a question from Councillor Hilary McGuill concerning ongoing use of assistive technology to support individuals, the Senior Manager explained that the electronic support arrangements remained in place to ensure individuals were able to undertake daily activities in their home effectively to maintain their well-being and safety.

Councillor Gladys Healey expressed a concern on the need for social compatibility to exist where a number of people lived together. The Senior Manager explained that the Progression Model operated in a fully inclusive co-produced environment with individuals and their families being in full control of plans. She commented on the comprehensive preparatory work which was undertaken by social workers around placements and the duty of care which remained throughout the arrangement.

RESOLVED

- (a) That the Committee recognises the benefits of a system of support that promotes independence and uses short-term enabling support where appropriate;
- (b) That support is regularly reviewed to ensure responsiveness to changes in needs and aspirations; and
- (c) That the Committee supports the expansion of the Progression Model based on the principle that services are co-produced with people with learning disabilities and their parents/carers to ensure shared responsibility for achieving the best possible outcomes.

34. SAFEGUARDING – ADULTS & CHILDREN

The Senior Manager - Safeguarding and Commissioning introduced a report to provide key statistical and performance related information regarding the Joint Adults and Children's Safeguarding provision within the county boundaries. She advised that the report also highlighted the variety of work covered by the Safeguarding Unit and the activity it undertook. The report summarised some key learning from Child and Adult Practice reviews and Domestic Homicide Reviews.

The Senior Manager Safeguarding and Commissioning, reported on the main considerations, as detailed in the report, and invited the Safeguarding Unit Service Manager to provide an overview of the work related to the responsibilities of the Safeguarding Unit in relation to child protection, adult safeguarding, adults at risk, Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DOLS), and Looked After Children (LAC).

The Chair thanked officers for their joint report.

Councillor Kevin Hughes commented on the issues of online safety, social media abuse, and online gambling addiction, and asked what measures were being taken to address these problems and how victims could access information and help. Councillor Hughes congratulated the Safeguarding Unit on their excellent work. He said he could not see any reference to online safety within the report, which he felt would fall under safeguarding. Referring to the Homicide Review report and the reference to a silent 999 call, Councillor Hughes asked that the Committee write to the Welsh Government to ask it to publicise the fact that if a 999 call was silent, then it was likely there would be no emergency response.

The Senior Manager Safeguarding and Commissioning, confirmed that online safety was within the remit of the safeguarding unit and work was ongoing in this area. The Safeguarding Unit Service Manager acknowledged that online safety was not mentioned within the report, however, she advised that the unit were very aware of online safety and that any concerns around child safety would be considered within child protection plans and court plans. She also referred to the Missing Exploited Trafficked (MET) Panel which is a joint panel in conjunction with Wrexham addressing all issues relating to cases of exploitation. This would include concerns regarding online activity.

Councillor Hilary McGuill welcomed the multi-agency approach to information sharing. She praised the early intervention work and domestic abuse support and suggested that when incidents occurred then schools should be informed prior to the school day wherever possible. Councillor McGuill suggested that an app to report bullying on mobile devices could be a valuable tool.

The Senior Manager Safeguarding and Commissioning concurred with Councillor McGuill's comments. Referring to bullying, she commented that whilst this was very much in the area of education, it was also everyone's responsibility.

The Chair explained that she had sent a series of emails with regard to a person sleeping rough near a nursery school and had been unable to contact the Homelessness Team on the telephone. She had called 101 and had been advised to contact Social Services. When a member of the Homelessness Team had visited the area it was confirmed that the person was known to the police. Councillor Marion Bateman referred to a similar incident which had occurred in her Ward. She emphasised that safeguarding was everyone's responsibility and that multi-agency cooperation was vital.

In response to a concern by Councillor Gladys Healey on the issue of false allegations being made by a child or young person, the Safeguarding Unit Service Manager advised that when a referral was made action had to be taken in accordance with required procedures. If an allegation was made in school teachers were advised that they should not investigate cases and just take first accounts.

Councillor David Healey expressed praise for the service provided by the Homeless Team and said the Authority took a proactive stance in identifying homeless people. He advised of a telephone service and services on social media.

The Senior Manager, Safeguarding and Commissioning agreed to circulate a link to the streetlink website.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the report as relevant information in relation to Flintshire Safeguarding for the period 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018 be received;
- (b) That the Committee was satisfied that Safeguarding provision within the County was robust; and
- (c) The Committee urged the Welsh Government to promote the implications of silent 999 calls which may not generate a response.

35. BRIGHT SPOTS

The Resources Services Manager introduced a report to consider the findings and perspectives of looked after children in the survey 'Your Life: Your Care'. He advised that during February - March 2018 all children in care in Flintshire were asked to participate in a survey about their well-being. The survey 'Your Life: Your Care' was developed by Coram Voice and University of Bristol as part of the Bright Spots programme. The survey asked children in care about their life, based on the things that were important to them. The Resources Services Manager advised that the local authority would use the key findings to inform service development and support arrangements for children in care.

The Resources Services Manager provided background information and explained that the primary objectives of the survey were to identify where children appeared to be flourishing, where things could be improved, providing an evidence based analysis of children's experiences and well-being, and to inform service improvements. The survey published three documents which were appended to the report. The Resources Services Manager reported on the key findings and areas of development arising from the survey, as detailed in the report. He advised that work would be undertaken through the consultation and engagement forum for looked after children and with foster carers to develop an informed action plan to learn, and where appropriate, extend good practice as well as enhance support in areas for development.

Councillor Hilary McGuill commented on the statistic that 82% of children (aged 8-11) did not feel they were included in decision making about their lives and asked what was being done to address this. The Resources Services Manager explained that this information had been reported back to social workers and would feedback to the Independent Review service.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the findings and perspectives of looked after children from the 'Your Life, Your Care Flintshire full report' be noted; and
- (b) That the development of a co-produced action plan with looked after children, which sets out a local authority response to the key recommendations identified in the Bright Sports full report, be endorsed.

36. ROTA VISITS

There were no reports on rota visits.

37. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME (SOCIAL & HEALTH CARE)

The Facilitator presented the Forward Work Programme for consideration. She advised that the next meeting of the Committee would be held on Thursday, 13 December to consider the following items:

- Council Plan 2018/19 Mid-Year Monitoring
- Update on Flint and Holywell Extra Care facilities

Councillor David Healey referred to the item on Educational Attainment of Looked After Children which was scheduled for consideration by the Committee in May 2019 and suggested that this could be considered at a future joint meeting of the Education & Youth and Social & Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee to avoid duplication of work. The view of the Committee was sought and it was agreed to hold a joint meeting with the Education & Youth Overview and Scrutiny Committee at a future date to be arranged.

Councillor Hilary McGuill requested an update on decision making with young people following on from the findings of the Bright Spots report.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Forward Work Programme be updated accordingly; and
- (b) That the Facilitator, in consultation with the Chair of the Committee, be authorised to vary the Forward Work Programme between meetings, as the need arises.

38. MEMBERS OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC IN ATTENDANCE

There were no members of the press or public in attendance.

(The meeting started at 3.00 pm and ended at 4.30 pm)

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Chair