

Medway Council
Meeting of Children and Young People Overview and
Scrutiny Committee

Thursday, 5 October 2017

6.30pm to 9.05pm

Record of the meeting

Subject to approval as an accurate record at the next meeting of this committee

Present: Councillors: Aldous, Cooper, Fearn, Franklin, Johnson, Joy, Kemp, Opara, Purdy, Royle (Chairman), Saroy, Wicks (Vice-Chairman) and Williams

Added members without voting rights:

David Laming (Healthwatch Medway CIC Representative) and Fay Cordingley (Teacher Representative)

Substitutes: Councillors:
Gilry (Substitute for Price)

In Attendance: John Drew, Independent Chair of Medway Safeguarding Children Board
David Ballard, Interim Manager Aut Even (Short Breaks Service)
Ann Domeney, Deputy Director, Children and Adults Services
Michael Griffiths, Partnership Commissioning Lead, Children and Families
Sameera Khan, Assistant Head of Legal Services
Jade Milnes, Democratic Services Officer
Dr John Rodriguez, Consultant in Public Health, Kent and Medway Screening and Immunisation Lead
Caren Smith, Deputy Manager Aut Even (Short Breaks Service)
Ian Sutherland, Director of Children and Adults Services
Michael Turner, Democratic Services Officer
James Williams, Director of Public Health

345 Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman sent the Committee's condolences and thoughts to Councillor Price whose partner, Eileen, sadly passed away on 24 September.

The Chairman announced the resignation of Paddy Powell and Dan Hill as the Healthwatch Medway CIC Representative and Substitute respectively. On behalf of the Committee he thanked Paddy and Dan for their contribution to the work of the Committee. The Chairman welcomed David Laming as the new

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Healthwatch Medway CIC Representative. He noted the Substitute Medway Healthwatch CIC post remains vacant.

The Chairman informed members that Medway Youth Parliament had now changed their name to Medway Youth Council. He noted George Perfect and George Peck remained on the Committee as representatives of Medway Youth Council.

346 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Price, Tina Lovey (Headteacher Representative), Clive Mailing (Roman Catholic Church Representative), George Peck (Medway Youth Council Cabinet Member) and George Perfect (Medway Youth Council Chairman).

347 Record of meeting

The record of the last meeting of the Committee held on 31 August 2017 was agreed and signed by the Chairman as correct.

348 Urgent matters by reason of special circumstances

There were none.

349 Declarations of interests and whipping

Disclosable pecuniary interests

There were none.

Other interests

There were none.

350 Medway Safeguarding Children Board (MSCB) Annual Report 2016-17

Discussion:

The Chairman of the Medway Safeguarding Children Board (MSCB), John Drew C.B.E., presented the MSCB Annual Report 2016-17.

The Chairman of the MSCB drew the Committee's attention to the findings of audits, case reviews and regular reporting which had demonstrated that there had been significant problems with recruiting and retaining experienced and able staff to work with children. This problem was reflected nationally and was most serious amongst social workers, health staff and those working in the custodial estate. Going forward, as one of six priority areas, the MSCB would be supporting a local recruitment strategy to facilitate improvements in this regard.

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The Chairman of the MSCB continued there two key issues. Firstly referring to three Serious Case Reviews (SCRs) which were held or initiated in 2016/2017, the Chairman of the MSCB offered that the conclusions of 2 reviews and an update on the third, of which would not be concluded before such time, would be presented at the half yearly update.

Secondly, in relation to two custodial centres in Medway, Cookham Wood Young Offender Institution and Medway Secure Training Centre (STC), the Charmain explained that the MSCB would launch a new way of reviewing the treatment of children in these establishments and the Council had reformed the operation of the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) service to improve safeguarding.

In the next year the MSCB would also be prioritising links to Medway's schools and the impact of domestic abuse and exploitation.

Members thanked the Chairman of the MSCB for the report and then raised a number of questions and comments, which included:

- **Wood Review and Children and Social Work Act 2017** – At the request of a Member, the Chairman of the MSCB advised that the supporting guidance on the Act, in particular the degree of freedom allowed by the Act, had not been published. A consultation on the guidance would commence imminently, circa. 2 weeks. The Chairman of the MSCB undertook to provide the Committee with an update report at a future meeting of the Committee.
- **Domestic Abuse Campaign** – A Member commended Medway's nomination for a Community Engagement Award at the National Municipal Journal (MJ) Awards. In response to a question requesting further information on the campaign and the award, the Chairman of the MSCB undertook to provide more detailed information.
- **Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) waiting list** – Asked whether a 33 week wait for an assessment was typical, the Chairman of the MSCB advised that this was the longest wait and not a reflection of the average wait. He noted this was a reduced waiting time but that there remained a problem.

In response to a query about how the Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust had reduced assessment waiting times, the Chairman of the MSCB noted that the Sussex Partnership had been able to retain staffing levels and streamline the process.

- **Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) training** – In response to a question whether compliance with Level 3 Safeguarding Children Training and PREVENT training by Medway CAMHS staff should be 100%, rather than the reported 86% and 71% respectively, the Chairman of the MSCB agreed and explained in part this figure was due to staff turnover.

- **NHS funding for Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs)** – When asked why the NHS would not be providing funding to any LSCBs, the Chairman of the MSCB noted this was the national position of the NHS. Funding from the NHS would go directly to the Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs).
- **Custodial centres** – In response to a question pertaining to the review of child treatment, the Chairman of the MSCB explained there would be a more comprehensive review of child restraint, other than just the present annual review, aimed at improving how people could raise issues and concerns. This approach had support from both the governor of Cookham Wood Young Offender Institution and the Director of Medway STC.
- **Role of social workers at Cookham Wood and Medway STC** – In response a question regarding the role of the Medway Social Work Team in the custodial centres, the Chairman of the MSCB agreed with concerns by the Council about the support and direction available to the 3 social workers at Cookham Wood. Unlike other models in Medway these social workers were not part of a Hub, with access to the same level of supervision. The Deputy Director, Children and Adult Services added it is unclear how the social workers inform the work of case workers.
- **Link with schools, youth and social groups** – Asked whether the MSCB had a role in safeguarding children at youth and social groups e.g. sports and events, the Chairman of the MSCB explained that the focus of the MSCB at present would be on schools as this was where they spent more time. He noted that these groups were subject to child protection requirements. The Chairman of the MSCB undertook to consider the future role of the MSCB in this regard.
- **Targets** – A Member observed that many of the statements regarding progress towards targets within the report were procedural or administrative and did not describe the impact or measure the outcome. The Chairman of the MSCB agreed with the critique and undertook to see how this information could be included.
- **Children missing from care and home** – highlighting that the number of children who had gone missing from care or home was large and increasing, a Member asked whether this was a local trend or reflected nationally, further whether there was a strategy to safeguard these children. The Chairman of the MSCB explained that it was not clear whether the rise in numbers was due to a true increase or whether it was due to improved reporting and recording. He also noted the data included Looked After Children (LAC) that had been placed in Medway by other authorities and who had gone missing. The numbers were an indication of the high level of vulnerability especially sexual exploitation; with improving data and associated knowledge of the children at risk

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tackling the issue had been improved. The Deputy Director, Children and Adults Services added the Council utilised a Graded Care Profile Tool which assisted professionals to measure the quality of care given to a child and any risk of harm. The tool involved different aspects of the family life being graded utilising a questionnaire. A family would be visited a number of times to track progress.

- **Modern day slavery** – A Member raised a concern that the report did not address modern day slavery; the Chairman of the MSCB undertook to provide a position within the half yearly report.
- **Child Protection Plan (CPP)** – At the request of a Member, the Chairman of the MSCB clarified there was an error at paragraph 1.20 of Appendix A, the 506 figure at April 2017 should read April 2016.
- **LADO referrals** – In response to a question enquiring why there had been an increase in LADO referrals, the Chairman of the MSCB explained that the majority of the referrals were from Cookham Wood Young Offender Institution and Medway STC and agreed a greater scrutiny of the data was required. The Chairman of the MSCB undertook to provide the data.
- **Child offender numbers** – In response to a comment of a Member, the Chairman of the MSCB noted Medway had a high proportion of all child offenders nationally owing to past closures of other facilities, including in London. He added at his last known count only 1 child from Medway was in custody.
- **School engagement** – Asked why some schools were not engaged with the MSCB and what action would be taken to resolve this, the Chairman of the MSCB noted that potential reasons may be that the schools were unaware of what resource was available, the increasing autonomy of schools and the school may have felt the resources were not relevant. He followed that the Board had appointed a part time officer solely responsible for schools and that the Board would undertake a more periodic check regarding the degree of engagement.
- **Gang violence** – In response to question over how the MSCB were raising awareness of attacks, particularly acid attacks, the Chairman of the MSCB confirmed it was remit of Community Safety Partnerships and Youth Offending Boards.

Decision:

The Committee noted the report.

351 Council Plan Performance Monitoring Report Quarter 1 2017/18

Discussion:

The Deputy Director, Children and Adults introduced the report which summarised the performance of the directorate in Quarter 1 of year 2017-18 for the two priorities relevant to this Committee; 'supporting Medway's people to realise their potential' and 'maximising regeneration and economic growth'.

Members raised a number of questions and comments which included:

- **Social worker retention rates** – At the request of a Member, the Deputy Director, Children and Adults clarified that the data to May 2017 showed that 41% of children's social worker posts were not filled by permanent workers since the last quarter; however there had been a 14% improvement in the retention of social workers over the year.
- **Exclusions** – At the request of a Member, the Deputy Director, Children and Adults Services undertook to provide, in future reports, the number of exclusions broken down by children with Special Educational Needs (SEN), in addition to confirming whether managed transfers were reflected in exclusions, and if not provide the relating data.

In response to a question from a Member concerning when the outcome of the 8 students awaiting appeals against exclusion would be known, the Deputy Director, Children and Adults Services confirmed it would conclude before the quarter 2 results and would be included in the next report.

A Member asked what would happen to the 8 children subject to the permanent exclusions, the Deputy Director, Children and Adults Services advised they would go to the Pupil Referral Unit (PRU).

- **Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)** – At the request of a Member, the Deputy Director, Children and Adults Services confirmed the criteria for measure had changed to bring reporting in line with the Department for Education methodology and year on year comparisons were not valid. The Deputy Director, Children and Adults Services undertook to find out the rationale for the change.

A Member commented a 6% increase in the number of young people not in education, employment or training was too much; this was echoed by the Deputy Director, Children and Adults Services who undertook to look into this.

- **Looked after Children (LAC)** – Owing the target being reached in the preceding year, at the request of a Member, the Deputy Director, Children and Adults Services undertook to review the following target 'the percentage of LAC who achieve the expected standard in GCSE English and Maths'.

Decision:

The Committee noted the report.

352 Ofsted Inspection of Aut Even

Discussion:

The Director, Children and Adult Services, introduced the report which provided Members with a reminder of the inspection findings from the unannounced inspection of Aut Even – Short Breaks Service which was carried out on 25 and 26 July 2017, set out in Appendix A to the report and updated Members on the progress of actions within the action plan initially presented to the Committee on 31 August 2017.

The Director noted that Ofsted had given the service a rating of ‘inadequate’ and that the Council had been given until 25 September 2017 to fulfil the Compliance Notice. As set out in Appendix B to the report, the Director explained that the actions were largely completed or ongoing.

He explained that a further unannounced inspection of Aut Even – Short Breaks Service was carried out on 26 and 27 September 2017 by Ofsted. The informal feedback was positive and the directorate had received notification that the Compliance Notice had been lifted. The Director advised that a new inspection findings report would be issued by Ofsted.

Members raised a number of questions and comments which included:

- **Previous Ofsted judgements** – In response to a question as to how it was the case that Aut Even had received a rating of ‘good’ only a few months previously, but had now received a rating of ‘inadequate’, the Director, Children and Adult Services reiterated that the recent rating was adversely affected by the failure to address a concern regarding the reporting of a particular safeguarding incident which had only arisen in the last few months.
- **Future of the service** – Asked whether services would be transferred to Parklands, the Director, Children and Adult Services noted that a consultation to relocate the service to Parklands was being undertaken. This was because the Parklands facility had been designed as a children’s home, whereas in spite of some investment, the fabric of the Aut Even building was poor. The Director noted that it was not intended that the service would be reduced or that there would be staff losses.

In response to a query over what would happen to Aut Even, the Director, Children and Adults Services said it was too early to make a decision.

- **Remote supervision** – In response to a question from a Member whether supervision was robust enough to prevent reoccurrence, the Director, Children and Adults Services explained, there was a regular supervisory

arrangement between the registered manager and senior officer of the Council, in addition monthly Regulation 44 inspection visits undertaken by independent visitors did not identify concerns similar to that of Ofsted. He confirmed that responsibility for Aut Even would be moving from Adult Service to Children Services, and would be overseen by the Head of Provider Services.

- **Medway Safeguarding Children Board (MSCB)** – At the request of a Member as to whether a meeting had been arranged between the MSCB and Aut Even, the Director, Children and Adult Services undertook to look into this.

Decision:

The Committee noted the work to date on the service improvements and noted that an update report would be provided to the Committee in December 2017.

353 Tackling Racism in Medway

Discussion:

The Deputy Director, Children and Adults Services introduced the report which updated the Committee on ways racism could be tackled more actively across Medway. The report was provided in response to the findings and outcomes from the Medway Youth Parliament (MYP) Annual Conference held in November 2016, which was entitled, 'Race, Religion and You(th): United in Tackling Racism and Religious Discrimination' presented to the Committee on 30 May 2017.

The Deputy Director, Children and Adults Services recognised a need for the Council to improve their understanding of the levels of racism in schools and identified that any action would require a multi-agency approach.

Members raised a number of questions and comments which included:

- **MYP Conferences** – A Member commented that the MYP Conferences were very good and thought-provoking.
- **Annual report of racist incidents in school** – In response to a Member identifying a date error on page 3 of Appendix 1, the Deputy Director, Children and Adults Services, undertook to ensure the correct year would be utilised.
- **Timeliness** – In response to a question on timescales, the Deputy Director, Children and Adults Services noted input would be required from multiple agencies and as such undertook to report back to the Committee at key milestones of the project.

Decision:

The Committee noted:

- 1) The Council would develop an action plan with Medway Youth Council, in conjunction with its partners, to address the concerns raised at the Medway Youth Parliament Conference 2016;
- 2) The Council would work with Medway Youth Council to deliver workshops on the issues of social media and support for young people;
- 3) The Council would review guidance within schools around the following areas:
 - The legal requirements of schools to tackle racism;
 - Advice on policy development and curriculum issues;
 - Advice on dealing with racist incidents; and
 - Professional development and support for teachers.

354 Maternity Services Transformation

Discussion:

The Partnership Commissioning Lead, Children and Family Services provided the Committee with an overview of the maternity transformation work that had taken place across Kent and Medway. This included the development of a Kent and Medway Local Maternity System (LMS), as set out in appendix A to the report.

The Partnership Commissioning Lead, Children and Family Services explained the Kent and Medway LMS must submit a Better Births Transformation Plan to NHS England by 31 October 2017. As set out in Appendix B to the report, he concluded that the proposed change to maternity services in Medway was not a substantial health service development or variation.

Some Members sought further information on the LMS and Better Births Transformation Plan proposals, including the impact on Looked After Children (LAC). The Partnership Commissioning Lead, Children and Family Services advised the draft plan required formal approval from the Sustainability and Transformation Plan (STP) Strategic Board and undertook to report back to the Committee with the full plan following submission to NHS England.

A Member requested a similar report to be submitted to Corporate Parenting Board.

Decision:

The Committee noted:

- 1) The national agenda in relation to transformation of maternity services; and
- 2) The completed Substantial Variation Assessment Questionnaire attached at Appendix B which concludes that this change is not a

substantial health service development or variation and that the Committee would be kept updated on the Transformation Plan as it progresses.

355 Childhood Immunisation Service Update

Discussion:

The Director for Public Health introduced the report compiled by Dr John Rodriguez, Consultant in Public Health, Kent and Medway Screening and Immunisation Lead. He drew the Committees attention to the role of Medway Council and explained the data provided at Appendix 1 to the report provided historical data which demonstrated some rates of immunisation were perceptively lower than the average for England. However, the Director for Public Health noted this owed to a lack of complete data.

The Consultant in Public Health explained how the data presented at Appendix 1 to the report had been collected and described other models to extrapolate the data, for example the Kent Data Warehouse, which provided a more positive outlook for selected immunisation rates.

The Consultant in Public Health outlined actions that had been taken to improve reporting rates, these included: electronic reporting; a system of challenge; engaging Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) and a pilot scheme (in Ashford and Canterbury) in which parents of children who appeared not to be vaccinated were contacted.

Members then raised the following points and questions, which included:

- **Data validity** – Several Members raised concerns that the data provided may be inaccurate given that new vaccination rates had been reported at the meeting. The Director of Public Health explained that the data set out at Appendix 1 to the report had been validated and shared nationally, however on receipt of the data, the Public Health Department had interrogated it within General Practice Systems which highlighted the inconsistencies narrated to the Committee. The Consultant in Public Health added investment had been made into the Child Health Information System (CHIS) service improvement plan to assist in the provision of accurate and complete data.
- **Data quality** - At the request of Members, the Director of Public Health undertook to ensure that NHS England provides the Committee with Medway childhood immunisation rates as a percentage of children in Medway receiving specified vaccinations.
- **Coverage** – In response to a question whether an epidemic could occur owing to parents not allowing their children to be vaccinated, the Consultant in Public Health advised based on the current immunisation rates reported, it was unlikely an epidemic would result, however there was a future possibility. He provided an example of the Measles Mumps

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and Rubella (MMR) national outbreak but noted this did not affect Medway. The Director for Public Health advised that he received a daily update on outbreaks and this had not highlighted any concerns.

- **Pilot scheme** – A Member commented that the pilot scheme in Canterbury and Ashford was also required in Medway. Greater clarity was required on why Medway Children were not receiving the necessary vaccinations. In relation to the letter sent to parents, a Member asked for clarity on the resultant follow up action taken and how those not taking up the offer of vaccination were reached. The Consultant in Public Health undertook to provide further information.
- **Strategic overview** – In response to a question whether a national or local reporting system would be developed, the Consultant in Public Health agreed one system would be useful and moving to the new system, Kent Data Warehouse, was in part a response to this. He added that the data verbally presented to the Committee was not ready for publication owing to data protection sensitivities.
- **Looked After Children (LAC)** – A Member noted there had been complete coverage for LAC.
- **Immunisation schedules** – A Member commented that providing parents with a card noting the immunisation schedule would reinforce their responsibility. The Director for Public Health reassured the Committee that a Medway Immunisations Board would be established. This Board would enable the Council to gain assurance immunisation services commissioned by NHS England were meeting the needs of Medway residents. Further, he explained the Medway Public Health Department was currently out to tender for a provider to deliver 0-19 Public Health Services (Health Visiting School Nursing). There would be specific requirements placed in the new contract to support new mothers and fathers to immunise their children.

Decision:

The Committee:

- 1) Noted the report at Appendix 1 from Dr John Rodriguez, Consultant in Public Health, Kent and Medway Screening and Immunisation Lead which provided an update on children's immunisations; and
- 2) Requested an update report on children's immunisation setting out clearly the position in Medway to be provided to the Committee as soon as practicable.

356 Work Programme

Discussion:

The Democratic Services Officer introduced the report which provided the Committee with its current work programme and proposed amendments.

A Member requested a report on the Young Asylum Seekers to be provided to the Committee in December. The Chairman of the Committee undertook to discuss this as the next pre-agenda meeting.

Decision:

The Committee agreed:

- 1) The work programme as set out at Appendix 1;
- 2) An update on Cookham Wood Young Offenders Institute be considered by the Committee at its June 2018 meeting; and
- 3) An update on progress in establishing a Regional Adoption Agency be provided to the Members of this Committee by way of a briefing paper.

Chairman

Date:

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