

**CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE
 SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
 19 OCTOBER 2015**

PRESENT: COUNCILLOR J D HOUGH (CHAIRMAN)

Councillors R Wootten (Vice-Chairman), W J Aron, Mrs J Brockway, S R Dodds, A G Hagues, B W Keimach, C R Oxby, Mrs H N J Powell, Mrs S Ransome, Mrs N J Smith, S M Tweedale, Mrs S M Wray and Mrs C A Talbot

Added Members

Church Representatives: Mr S C Rudman

Parent Governor Representatives:

Councillors: attended the meeting as observers

Officers in attendance:-

Michelle Andrews (Head of Birth to Five Service), Debbie Barnes (Executive Director of Children's Services), Stuart Carlton (Assistant Director Children's Lead Early Help), Jo Kavanagh (Head of Service Families Working Together), Tracy Johnson (Scrutiny Officer) and Rachel Wilson (Democratic Services Officer)

32 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE / REPLACEMENT MEMBERS

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors B Adams, T Keywood-Wainwright, Mrs L Rollings and L Wootten.

Apologies for absence were also received from Mr P Thompson (Church Representative), Mr C V Miller (Parent Governor Representative) and Mrs E Olivier-Townrow (Parent Governor Representative).

33 DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest at this point in the meeting.

34 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 11 SEPTEMBER 2015

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting held on 11 September 2015 be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

35 FAMILIES WORKING TOGETHER SERVICE

Consideration was given to a report which outlined Phase 1 of the national "Troubled Families" Programme, led by the Department of Communities and Local Government; progress to national targets during Phase 1; the requirements of Phase 2 of the "Troubled Families" Programme; and a summary of families that would have been visited by Members of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee.

It was reported that the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) had identified 120,000 'troubled families' across the country, and 1370 of these were in Lincolnshire. The Troubled Families Unit was set the task by the Prime Minister of 'turning around' these 120,000 families by March 2015.

Troubled families were characterised by there being no adult in the family working, children not being in school and family members being involved in youth crime and anti-social behaviour. Lincolnshire's response to the national Troubled Families Programme was "Families Working Together" (FWT) which was a team consisting of 48 Key Workers alongside a Performance and Management team. Key Workers were either directly employed by Lincolnshire County Council or seconded from partner organisations.

Members were advised that Lincolnshire had identified and worked with 100% of the 1,370 families, and by May 2015 had "turned around" 100% of the families.

Members of the Committee were provided with the opportunity to ask questions to the officers present in relation to the information contained within the report, and some of the points raised during discussion included the following:

- Over 800 families had been identified for Phase 2, which would have a broader remit;
- £200million had been made available by the Government for Phase 2, and Members were advised that once it was agreed how many families Lincolnshire would work with, a proportion of that funding could be applied for on a payment by results basis. It was thought that this could bring up to £5million into Lincolnshire if the programme was successful;
- One member commented that they had met with one of the families in the programme, and were very impressed with the progress which had been made, particularly in relation to the relationship which had developed between the Key Worker and mother, as the Key Worker had provided a service tailored to the needs of the family;
- Concerns were raised regarding the sustainability of this service, and whether there would be the time available to give to each family. However, members were advised that officers were confident that the time involved was becoming less, as Key Workers gained more experience into which methods worked best. Staff were now able to go into a family and get an understanding of what was going on within the family much quicker than in the past;
- It was important that there was a focus on outcomes, and what needed to be achieved for the family;

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- It was noted that the approach would be broadened to include other staff, and would include focusing on the importance of work, as getting parents work ready would have a raft of benefits;
- The secondments from partner organisations were highly valued, and it had recently been confirmed that the district council secondments would be extended;
- It was noted that from 1 November 2015, all frontline staff would move to become Early Help Support Workers, following the restructure. This was to ensure greater flexibility in the frontline staff;
- The team had become bigger and bigger and more opportunities were developed, and now the approach would be expanded across to other groups of staff, but the brand of 'Families Working Together' would be retained;
- The outcome plans were designed to provide clarity to staff on what needed to be achieved for each family. It was considered positive to have a clear framework around outcomes;
- This was a five year programme and officers were trying to make it as broad and as flexible as possible. There would be an individual plan for each family which would set out what it was that needed to be achieved;
- It was noted that other authorities had used this funding to 'prop up' other services, but Lincolnshire had not done this, and was still committed to having the same number of people doing this work. But there had been a need to bring it into the Locality Teams;
- Members were advised that almost all authorities had achieved 100% of the families turned around. However, Lincolnshire had achieved the required level by October 2014 and so was selected as an early adopter for Phase 2. However, it was commented that there were some advantages to not being the first, but Lincolnshire was still seen as a leading authority, as it was doing something different;
- Members commented that the team should be congratulated;
- In terms of following up with families, it was reported that towards the end of the period, staff would start working with the family on how they would continue when the support ended, and each family would have an exit plan which would set out how they would move forward and how the changes would be sustained. Staff would also follow up with the family after four months. Families would be provided with the contact details for their Key Workers, so they would still be able to contact them, if needed. It was important to ensure that when a Key Worker left a family, they were prepared for it;
- Members had found it positive to experience some of the things that the Team did. In particular it was highlighted how the staff developed trust with the families. It was also noted that signs of safety was clearly in use within the team;
- The team in Grantham was also congratulated, however, there were some concerns regarding the PCSO secondment and it was queried what the criteria for seconding a PCSO was, as some only seemed to focus on the one aspect of crime and anti-social behaviour. Members were advised that having all partners on board was beneficial, and crime and anti-social behaviour was a big issue. However, a lot had been learned about what training was required,

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and an induction programme was being developed by the practice supervisors;

- It was felt that it was a key development for the service to be able to benefit from having members of the Police Force as a part of the team, and good links had been developed;
- Members were advised that it was originally intended for full time police officers to be seconded to the team, but a decision was reached that it would be better if PCSO's took up this role;
- There was often a catalogue of issues which impacted on a family and they could not see a way out of it. The Key Worker would work with them to help them resolve these issues;
- It was queried whether there was an element of this programme which would focus on elderly family members. It was noted that this would only be picked up if elderly family members were living in the family home;
- Members were informed that Lincolnshire was chosen as one of the areas to have an independent review, and there would be a report published shortly. DCLG was very keen to ensure that authorities were providing value for money in terms of this programme. It was agreed that a copy of the report would be circulated to members once it had been published;
- It was difficult to measure the cost savings of preventative work;
- Concerns were raised regarding whether there was sufficient staffing capacity to take on another 800 plus families in Phase 2. However, members were advised that this was why officers were looking to embed this approach within the locality team, and spread this across all families which were experiencing need. Officers were confident that this could be managed within the existing case load, and it would include the families that the authority was already in contract with;
- As part of the national programme, there was a need to demonstrate that the turned around families had sustained this approach for at least six months;
- It was noted that those families who had been turned around were acting as peer supporters, however, this was an arrangement which needed to be formalised.

RESOLVED

That the comments made in relation to the Families Working Together Service be noted.

36 PROGRESS REPORT ON THE LINCOLNSHIRE YOUTH OFFER

Consideration was given to a report which provided the Committee with a progress report on the development of the Lincolnshire Youth Offer and updated the Committee on current service delivery and plans for the future.

It was reported that the Government had retained the duty on Local Authorities (LA) to secure sufficient educational and recreational leisure-time activities for the improvement of the wellbeing of 13-19 year olds. This duty also required LA's to take into account young people's views and to publicise information about the local offer.

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Members were provided with the opportunity to ask questions to the officers present in relation to the information contained within the report, and some of the points raised during discussion included the following:

- The link between the Youth Offer and the Troubled Families Programme had been formalised;
- The authority had a responsibility to ensure that activities were in place for the 13 – 19 year old age group;
- Clarification was requested for the four youth centres which had been taken out of scope. It was reported that this was due to a lack of a suitable organisation to take over the lease of the centre. These centres were in areas where they were needed, and would continue to run activities by a number of different community groups. They had been taken out of scope as it was felt that officers would be spending more time searching for an organisation to take over the lease than they would on ensuring activities were being offered. Until such time as an organisation came forward, the County Council would continue to operate these premises;
- Members were assured that there were no current plans to close these centres at this time;
- It was commented that the list of positive activities that young people were engaged in within the county was impressive. However, it was noted that this list was not exhaustive, as another positive activity was the Lincolnshire Children's University Passport Scheme. Officers would ensure that this was included in the next report;
- There were concerns that with centres being taken out of scope that there could become a postcode lottery in terms of activities for young people. Members were advised that there was not a gap in provision in these areas, it was just that no suitable group had come forward to take on the leases of the buildings;
- Positive Futures had expanded, and had received funding from the Street Games;
- Until a suitable organisation could be found to take on the leases of the centres taken out of scope, the authority would continue to run them;
- It was requested that all local councillors be kept up to date with any significant developments in relation to the youth centres in each area;
- It was agreed that a full list of all the Lincolnshire County Council youth centres would be sent out to the Committee for information;
- Positive Futures did mainly focus on sport related activities, but it also offered other qualifications such as leadership and mentoring;
- There were concerns regarding how much youth work was taking place, and officers advised that they were trying to ensure that youth work was taken on by other organisations. The authority was trying to prioritise a very small resource, and had been trying to ensure that other groups were able to deliver these services.

RESOLVED

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That the comments made in relation to the current Youth Offer and plans for the future be noted.

37 MEMBER FEEDBACK ON VISITS TO CHILDREN'S SERVICES SOCIAL WORK TEAMS

Consideration was given to a report which invited members of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee to provide feedback from their visits to the social work teams in Children's Services.

It was noted that since February 2015, a number of visits had been arranged for Members to visit the eight Children's Services social work teams across Lincolnshire. All eight of the social work team were visited at least once.

Those members who had visited the social work teams were provided with the opportunity to give feedback to the rest of the Committee and the following was noted:

South Kesteven

Concerns were raised regarding the lack of parking spaces for staff at the site. However, members were provided with a lot of information and were given a tour of the building, and had the opportunity to meet with a couple of graduates based in the team. It was noted that one of the graduates, who was in their final year of a social work degree was dealing with 14 cases.

It was also reported that it was clear that signs of safety framework was embedded within the processes of this team.

Lincoln

Members were disappointed that the breastfeeding service had been cut, however, the team was trying to incorporate this into its own service.

Members were impressed by the 'Dads Club', in particular one story was reported in which a father had attended, discovered he was artistic and now was a volunteer at the centre.

It was commented that the staff were very enthusiastic and there were plenty of opportunities available for training, including basic life skills such as kitchen skills.

West Lindsey

Again, the staff were found to be very enthusiastic, and it was reported that one of the social workers in this team had been nominated for the social worker of the year award, which was a national award, and this person had been shortlisted for the top five. Councillor Mrs Brockway advised that she had put in an endorsement as well.

East Lindsey

There was clear use of the signs of safety process which was working well for families. Very clear risk assessments were carried out for children. Work had also been carried out which had enabled dialogue between mother and children to be very constructive.

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The visiting member had sat in on a child protection conference at this centre. It was noted that the Practice Supervisor had felt very supported by the authority in their work.

It was reported that that the councillor who visited had found the facilities at the Skegness centre to be fantastic, as it included space for training, as well as a flat which was available for use by families when needed.

Boston

The councillor attended a case conference, and reported that it related to a young man who was leaving care, and the meeting had seemed very positive and friendly.

North Kesteven

There were concerns that there was very limited space, and it was queried whether smaller work stations could be provided to ensure that every member of the team had access to a desk.

South Holland

Members were amazed by the quantity of cases and the seriousness of the cases being handled by this team. What really came across was the range of foster carers what were required, and the enormity of what foster carers had to deal with. It was commented that the social workers did a fantastic job.

Members were provided with the opportunity to discuss the feedback and ask questions to the officers present, and some of the points raised during discussion included the following:

- Due to the confidentiality of the cases, members were only able to see a select number of families, mostly those which had good outcomes. However, there must be other cases which were not as successful. Members were advised that there would be a mixture of families who would not want to give permission for their cases to be viewed, partially due to the fact that many of the service users would be reluctant service users. Officers were confident that the quality of the work that was being seen was consistent;
- It was thought that much of the work which had been done in Skegness was due to the sustainability and the stability of the staff. It was queried whether the authority would ensure that the centre in Horncastle remained open. Officers considered it essential that a centre remained in Horncastle, as this enabled staff to travel on to Skegness;
- Procedures and protocols were in place in the event that a different social worker had to visit a family if the usual worker was off sick;
- The Chairman recommended that those Councillors who had not yet visited one of the social work teams should do so. It was agreed that further dates for visits to social teams would be arranged. It was also queried whether it would be possible for those members that had visited previously to have follow up meetings regarding the families they had met with previously. Officers agreed to look into this.

RESOLVED

That the feedback provided to the Committee on members' visits to social work teams in Children's Services be noted.

38 CHILDCARE SUFFICIENCY ASSESSMENT AND ANNUAL REPORT

Consideration was given to a report which presented the annual sufficiency report for comment and provided the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee with an update on the delivery of Lincolnshire's Childcare Sufficiency report for 2014/15.

Members were advised that following the presentation of the sufficiency paper in January 2015, it was agreed that the Birth to Five Service would develop the annual sufficiency report by revisiting the methodology of assessing sufficiency to give assurance that it was fit for purpose; developing and delivering the annual sufficiency report for 2015 within agreed associated costs and timeline; and also to consider strategies for financing sufficiency gaps once the assessment was complete.

It was reported that it was believed that there was sufficient early years provision in Lincolnshire, but it was noted that using waiting lists was not a very good way of assessing demand as some parents would put their names down for two or three different providers to ensure their child got a place.

Members of the Committee were provided with the opportunity to ask questions to the officers present in relation to the information contained within the report and some of the points raised during discussion included the following:

- There were concerns that there was very low provision in the Hartsholme area of Lincoln for 0-2 year olds, and it was queried whether there was a breakdown of the provision available in the different areas of Lincoln;
- It was noted that for the purpose of this report, it was important to take a holistic look at the provision in the city;
- The 0-2 year old provision was the most expensive, as it required a 1:3 ratio of staff to children;
- Officers were trying to analyse the level of child care costs in the county;
- It was queried whether schools were being encouraged to offer these services. Members were advised that there had been an increase in breakfast clubs, but it was more difficult organising activities for the afternoon;
- There were concerns about provision for 11 year olds, as there were often a large number of children of this age who would have to let themselves into their house after school;
- In relation to the Snap short survey which was used to form the basis of the assessment of sufficiency of places, it was noted that the questions had been interpreted in a number of different ways. It was suggested that the Community Engagement Team should be used in the future to ensure that questions were written in a way which would ensure that the correct information was obtained;
- The internal consultation team was now getting a better quality of information than external consultants;

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- One member commented that she had attended a conference the previous week in relation to dementia, and centres were being established to provide support, and it was suggested whether they could also be used by young people after school, as both young people and elderly people could benefit from the interaction with each other. Officers agreed to look into this scheme further to determine whether it would be appropriate;
- It was noted that families that had not been able to find child care provision in their area were encouraged to report this through the Family Information Service. This would also be the best way to collect data in relation to sufficiency of places;
- It was requested whether information in relation to how many children were affected by lack of provision could be included in future reports.

RESOLVED

1. That the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee approve the Annual Sufficiency Report;
2. That the working group be supported to continue to meet as a collective to review the resource allocations to ensure the local authority meets its statutory duties regarding sufficiency of childcare places.

39 CENTRE FOR PUBLIC SCRUTINY'S GUIDE TO SCRUTINISING CHILDREN'S SAFEGUARDING ARRANGEMENTS

A report was received which invited the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee to consider the Centre for Public Scrutiny's guide for overview and scrutiny councillors on scrutinising children's safeguarding arrangements.

It was reported that in May 2015, the Centre for Public Scrutiny (CfPS) published "Safeguarding Children – A Practical Guide for Overview and Scrutiny Councillors". The CfPS guide was designed to support councillors on scrutiny committees when considering children's safeguarding arrangements and set out key aspects of local safeguarding arrangements, statutory duties and the role of overview and scrutiny.

Members were advised that it would be helpful to have a framework, and in terms of scrutiny quality assurance around safeguarding an authority could never have enough.

Members were provided with the opportunity to ask questions to the officers present in relation to the information contained within the report and some of the points raised during discussion included the following:

- The Senior Scrutiny Officer agreed to look into what was included in the CfPS toolkits;
- It was suggested that the Scrutiny Committee should try and do some more work on this;
- It was suggested that this could be a suitable topic for the Councillor Development Group, as all councillors were 'corporate parents';

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- It was also queried whether there were other scrutiny committees which could benefit from this, as well as themes that could be raised with the district councils.

RESOLVED

1. That the comments made in relation to the CFPS guide for councillors on safeguarding children be noted;
2. That the questions relating to the local authority be considered when the Committee receives the Frontline Social Workers and safeguarding Scrutiny Review – Second Monitoring Update at its next meeting on 27 November 2015;
3. That the Committee recommend that the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Boards Scrutiny Sub-Group consider the questions relating to the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Board at its future meetings.

40 CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK
PROGRAMME 2015/16

Consideration was given to a report which enabled the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee to consider its own work programme for the coming year.

It was reported that there were a couple of amendments to work programme as a report on "2016/17 contract with Lincolnshire Community Health Services NHS Trust for Health Visiting, Family Nurse Partnership, School Nursing and Antenatal Weight Management" had been added to the agenda for the meeting on 27 November 2015 which was for pre-decision scrutiny before an Executive decision on 1 December 2015. The Corporate Parenting Panel Update would be added to the agendas for 27 November 2015 and 15 January 2016, and the Safeguarding Boards Scrutiny Sub Group Update would be added to the agendas for 27 November 2015 and 4 March 2016.

Members were advised that a Financial Challenges workshop had been arranged for the afternoon of 27 November 2015 from 2.00pm – 4.00pm. This was to enable the Committee members to receive a private briefing on the budget pressures facing Children's Services. Officers would seek to find a new date for the Progress 8 workshop. It was suggested that it could be held after the January 2016 meeting.

In relation to the visits to the University Technical College, two visits would be arranged as there had been a spread of member availability across the three dates circulated. The two proposed dates were Friday, 13 November 2015 at 10.00am and Monday, 16 November 2015 at 10.00am. Each visit was expected to be around 1-1 1/2 hours. It was also noted that parking was limited and so members were advised to either use local car parks or car share where possible. Electronic appointments for both dates would be sent out.

It was noted that there was a need for clarification in relation to the "2016/17 contract with LCHS NHS Trust for Health Visiting, Family Nurse Partnership, School Nursing and Antenatal Weight Management" report and whether this report was a

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straightforward contract extension, or if there were to be significant changes to the contract. It was suggested that if (or when) there was to be a substantial piece of work on this contract, it may be helpful to have a working group of 3-4 members to go through it in more detail. Councillors Mrs J Brockway, S R Dodds, J D Hough and Mrs H J N Powell volunteered to take part in this working group.

RESOLVED

1. That the content of the work programme, as set out in Appendix A of the report, be noted.
2. That the content of the Children's Services Forward Plan, as set out in Appendix B of the report, be noted.

The meeting closed at 12.15 pm