

COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING – 18 SEPTEMBER 2015

Statement from: Councillor Mrs P A Bradwell, Deputy Leader and Executive Councillor for Adult Care and Health Services, Children's Services

CHILDREN'S SERVICES

GCSE / A-level results

Early indications of GCSE results across Lincolnshire show continued improvements this year. With a few schools still to return data, provisional figures indicate that the overall result for the national key GCSE indicator of 5+ A*-C, including English and maths, has increased this year to 58.6%, an improvement of 3.8% on last year.

Fourteen schools achieved in excess of 90% of students earning 5+ A*-C including English and maths. Provisional results from the majority of sixth forms in the county show an increase in A-level passes and an increase in higher level grades awarded. The pass rate for A-levels in Lincolnshire schools reached 99% and is 0.9% above the national figure. Fourteen of our schools achieved 100% of pass grades.

Ofsted inspection of Children's Centres 2015

Two centre groups, East Lindsey North and North Kesteven North, were inspected in July- both achieving an overall outcome of GOOD. According to statistics released by Ofsted (March 15) only 50% of children's centre groups nationally are graded GOOD, and under the revised framework Lincolnshire continues to have a 100% record of achieving GOOD outcomes.

Signs of Safety Innovation Project Update.

Children's Services continue to take a full and active part in this innovation project with Eileen Munro. Over the last two months refresher training has been completed with staff. The project lead, Danielle Marshall, has commenced training work with health colleagues this month, meeting to support them in their understanding and application of the practice framework. The research being undertaken by Eileen Munro continues and the telephone interviews with parents of children subject to child protection plans for phase two will commence over the next two weeks. Kings College continue to evaluate the whole project and the researcher has interviewed twelve parents and children with further interviews scheduled for this week to complete the identified fifteen interviews for the study. The lead Kings College researcher, Mary Baginsky, was in Lincoln for two days at the end of July to gather other data to support the evaluation which will be produced at the end of the project in 2016.

Launch of 'Adopter Voice' in Lincolnshire

Lincolnshire is one of the ten pilot areas who will be launching the 'Adopter Voice' project, which has been funded by the DFE and is being developed nationally by Adoption UK.

Adopter Voice will develop a network of local advocates and 'adopter champions' at regional levels to improve the understanding of voluntary adoption agencies, local authorities and the health and education sectors.

This will be developed by creating online communities enabling adopters and professionals to communicate on aspects of adoption, and to share best practice and evidence. There will be local forums and adopter champions will engage with regional boards to bring the 'lived' experience of adoption to decision making.

Adoptions UK are looking for Lincolnshire adopters who would want to become adoption champions.

Advocacy

Total Voice Lincolnshire has launched a new Advocacy Hub. In a new partnership, the service brings together specialist advocacy for adults, children and young people across Lincolnshire into one service and has enhanced the different ways people can speak directly to fully-trained advocates.

Advocacy is a free, independent and confidential service commissioned by Lincolnshire County Council and provided by Total Voice Lincolnshire (TVL), led by VoiceAbility. Other partners involved include Age UK and Lincs2Advice with Barnardos providing the service to Children and Young People. Barnardos has delivered advocacy and children's rights services for more than 20 years, and is contracted for more than 40 advocacy services across the UK.

The service commenced on 1 July 2015. The Council's Children and Young People's Plan 2013/16 emphasises the need to consistently capture and act upon the views and wishes of children and their families, enabling them to be active partners in their care and safety plans. The new service is committed to ensuring that children and young people are listened to, taken seriously, and responded to appropriately. Advocates use language and communication methods which are clearly understood and appropriate to the individual, and enable a child or young person with emerging and enduring physical, emotional and mental health needs to access support informing them of their rights and signposting them to relevant services.

Education Support

There are over 15,500 children starting school or transferring to secondary schools. This year over 99% of parents received their first or second choice of secondary school and 97% for primary schools. 95% of parents now apply online and additional support is offered to families new to the country to help them through the admission process.

For the school terms autumn 2013 – spring 2014 the overall absence from Lincolnshire primary schools was 3.4% compared to 3.2% nationally. For secondary schools it was 4.2% compared to 3.9% nationally. As a result of our attendance strategy 'Every Day Matters', launched in September 2012, we have seen persistent absence reduce significantly. For primary schools it is now 2.6% compared to 2.8% nationally and for secondary schools it is 5.9% compared to 5.8% nationally. We continue to target schools with a high percentage of school absences and by

reduced persistent absences we have reclaimed 5,000 learning days. In addition to this, more than 800 cases of children missing education have been investigated and closed this year.

Permanent exclusions in schools remain a concern as Lincolnshire continues to be above the national average according to latest figures for 2013/14. This isn't acceptable and we are working with schools, with strategies in place to improve the situation quickly. It's important that children and young people are in school and developing their skills and knowledge – schools should use exclusions as an absolute last resort when all other options have been exhausted.

Prospects for post 16 young people remain positive; 97.7% of Year 11 pupils had an offer of learning for the coming academic year and the percentage of young people not in employment and education has reduced from 5.6% to 4.5%.

ADULT CARE

Care Act

Following implementation of the Care Act 2014 in April this year Adult Care now has a single modern statute that puts the person and their wellbeing at the heart of their care. The translation of the aims of the Act into practice continue to be embedded across the service and as new research, resources and products emerge they are being considered by Adult Care to support and improve services further in the future.

Preliminary work had been started for the funding reforms which were due to come into force in April 2016 but the Government has decided to delay implementation until April 2020. The Government has said that the delay will allow time to be taken to ensure that everyone is ready to introduce the new system and to look at what more can be done to support people with the costs of care.

- The Cap on Care Costs (to April 2020)
- The extension to the Means Test Thresholds (to April 2020)
- The Appeals system (pending the Comprehensive Spending review).

Activity and Performance

In the last financial year, Adult Care supported 12,300 people with longer term support in residential or nursing care or in the community with a personal budget. Bearing in mind that 32,000 new requests for support were received in the year, only 1,900 people went on to receive longer term support, with the lowest number of admissions to residential or nursing care for several years. Over 70% of requests from people had their needs met with the right information and advice, or were signposted to other support services in the community. 3,000 individuals benefitted from the reablement service, 86% of which were diverted away from long term support as a result of the intensive 6 week intervention. In addition to this, 6,500 people were supported with lower level services such as equipment, telecare and the Wellbeing Service to enable them to remain independent in their communities. It is encouraging to see that demand for services is being managed effectively, and there is scope to improve this further with our new business services provider, Serco, who now manage the Customer Service Centre, and by increasing capacity within the

Reablement Service. Over and above this, almost 6,000 carers were provided with support in the year, many of which with a direct payment.

With the Better Care Fund, a series of projects are in place to reduce the pressure on the health sector. Social Care have helped by supporting the County's Accident and Emergency departments, being involved in joint discharge planning, arranging care packages quickly for patients ready for discharge, and making sure assessments are completed quickly. Moreover, ensuring people get the help they need early, can have a profound effect on delaying and/or reducing their need for longer term health and social care. Over the last 12 months, demand for NHS services has been widespread; calls to '111' and the East Midlands Ambulance Service (EMAS) have increased, and demand for out of hours health care has also seen a rise. As a result, the system has been stretched. Despite the pressure, there has not been a significant rise in unnecessary delays for patients, which is still relatively low by comparison, and is good to see. Delays have increased in the first quarter of 2015/16 and these are being monitored closely.

Homecare

The Council has recently awarded new Homecare contracts to twelve Prime providers who will work in a specific geographical area. This new model of delivery will allow providers to deliver a more reactive service for people and support the market to meet rising demand. We are now in the process of transferring people to the new providers ready for the start of the new contract at the end of September 2015. During this change of contracts, our priority is to keep disruption to a minimum for people who receive home care. We have asked all current and incoming providers to work closely with us. In some cases the current provider has chosen to give notice to end the package of care for some individuals. In those cases we are working closely with the person and their family to make sure that their needs are met.

Reablement

The Council is re-procuring the current reablement service to ensure we have increased quality capacity across the County. The new provider is due to commence on 3rd November 2015 following transfer of staff from the current provider.

COMMUNITY LEARNING

The Government, through the Skills Funding Agency, fully funds our provision of community learning. The Government is slightly shifting its skills policies so that there is more of an emphasis on productivity and on local priorities, and we have planned and responded to this shift to ensure that our Learning Service remains up to date with Government and Skills changes.

We recently re-tendered for our adult learning contracts, and we made it clear to anyone who was interested in delivering adult learning that we would want them to focus on economic growth, Information Technology, basic skills, volunteering, and local conditions. Setting out this focus was important because it helps to ensure that adult learning meets wider council objectives, and it also demonstrates to government that their funding will be used effectively.

Despite the team having to deal with a substantially higher number of submissions than the funding available, we believe that we have agreed to a good quality package of schemes that support wider council objectives and that will be delivered both by further education colleges and by private and voluntary sector providers that deliver high quality learning across Lincolnshire.

The new courses will start to be delivered in the autumn.

PUBLIC HEALTH

Housing Related Support

Our new model of support service for people who need help getting and making a success of their housing launched in June 2015 as planned. Stable housing that meets people's needs is an essential underpinning of their wellbeing, and I have prioritised safeguarding these services by seeking maximum efficiency.

The re-commissioning provides services for as many people as the old model for a significantly reduced budget. It is an example of what can be achieved with fewer resources when we apply good processes of engagement with service users and providers, and follow a rigorous evaluation of proposals from prospective suppliers.

The new system will also provide us with much better intelligence about local need and service usage by supporting people through their application for places and seeking the best fit for them through a central IT system.

We saw 350 referrals into the new system in the first 6 weeks. As always when we introduce new services and systems, we will keep the implementation under review and work with partners to adapt the service as we go.

Wellbeing Service

The Wellbeing Service has now been in operation for around a year providing preventative, tailored support to many individuals in the County in order to meet individual people's needs regardless of their tenure of financial status. People have access to a range of simple equipment aids for daily living, Telecare and other practical support at home. This applies whether that home is the family home or supported housing, rented or owned.

Several thousand County residents have been helped and supported in this way throughout the year with our key providers; and an evaluation has recently been completed with newly available data highlighting successes in keeping people independent for longer. PH intends to continue to work in close partnership with Adult Social Care as the service enters its second year to ensure it continues to excel and provide value for money for the Council.

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