

GATESHEAD METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL
FAMILIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING

Thursday, 8 September 2016

PRESENT: Councillor B Oliphant (Chair)

Councillor(s): S Green, J Adams, S Craig, A Geddes,
M Hall, S Hawkins, J Kielty, L Kirton, K McCartney,
E McMaster, S Ronchetti and C Simcox

CO-OPTED MEMBERS John Wilkinson, Maveen Pereira and Sasha Ban

F9 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Mullen, Cllr Clelland, Cllr J Graham, Cllr Caffrey and co-opted member Jill Steer.

F10 MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 June 2016 were agreed as a correct record.

F11 OSC REVIEW OF CHILD PROTECTION - MONITORING REPORT

The Committee received the first monitoring report following last year's review into child protection in Gateshead. It was acknowledged that there has been a limited time from completion of the review to date, therefore much of the work is in progress.

A number of recommendations came out of the review, including improving the availability of GP reports at Child Protection Conferences. It was noted that there has previously been a struggle to get GP information into conferences, however a lot of work has been carried out through workshop events with the Clinical Commissioning Group. This has resulted in an improvement and between April 2015 and March 2016 70.4% of Child Protection Conferences included GP reports, this continues to be monitored.

Another recommendation from the review was to improve the detail of data provided in relation to school referrals. It was acknowledged that there is still work to do to link detail with school information because of the different systems used. It was reported that from April 2016 35 schools, four nurseries and one private school made referrals. A breakdown of this data will be provided in future reports.

The review recommended that evidence be reviewed in light of the Ofsted inspection findings. It was reported that focus over the summer was around child protection planning to ensure this was clear for all staff. Workshops were held with Social Workers in order to help support them to improve the quality of plans and ensure

they focus on risk and important issues for the child. Independent advocacy was highlighted by Ofsted as an area for improvement, therefore work is continuing to promote the Mind of My Own (MOMO) app. The app is used to send information of importance to the young person and ensure their views are incorporated in plans. It was confirmed that there are 191 young people who currently have the app. Work is also ongoing with NYAS, the provider for independent advocacy, to support children and young people through the child protection process.

The review also recommended that consideration be given to the appropriateness of a Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) for children. It was reported that there are a few Hubs nationally with mixed reports, and it is still being considered as to whether this is right for Gateshead.

It was questioned whether any other Tyne and Wear authorities have Multi Agency Safeguarding Hubs for children. It was confirmed that they do not, although Northumberland County Council does have some co-location work it is not a MASH. It was noted that Sunderland previously had one, however there have not been any locally which have been successful.

It was queried whether gaps are identified in terms of which GP practices are not providing reports to Child Protection Conferences. It was noted that work is ongoing with the CCG who will feedback to specific practices.

It was questioned how issues can be addressed better. It was acknowledged that improvement planning on a multi agency basis is carried out and the LSCB works with partner agencies to address issues.

- RESOLVED -
- (i) That the Committee noted that progress achieved in the last five months.
 - (ii) That the Committee was satisfied with the level of progress to date.

F12 LSCB ANNUAL REPORT AND PLANS

The Committee received the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) annual report for the last financial year and the business plan for this year.

It was noted that the LSCB is a statutory multi agency partnership that meets six times per year to look at safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. The role of the LSCB is to monitor effectiveness and coordinate what is done by partners for the purposes of safeguarding, also the Board must raise awareness of safeguarding and undertake Serious Case Reviews.

Last year the LSCB was chaired by Gary Hetherington and currently the Board is in a recruitment exercise for a new Chair. The Board is obliged to publish an annual report on the effectiveness of safeguarding in the area, this is shared with this Committee, Cabinet, the Children's Trust Board and the Health and Wellbeing Board. The annual report also determines safeguarding priorities for the following year.

It was reported that the Government commissioned a review of multi agency strategic safeguarding arrangements and the Wood Report recommended a number of changes, including possibly disbanding LSCBs to set up new partnership arrangements. Government agreed in principle, however a Government steer is currently being awaited, therefore future requirements are not clear. It was noted that the Wood Report recommends the continuation of strategic multi agency partnership working, therefore it may be decided that the LSCB is still fit for purpose. It was agreed that the Committee would be kept up to date on any possible changes.

Over the last year the LSCB was inspected by Ofsted and was found to 'require improvement'. Following this, seven recommendations were made, all of which have now been achieved and signed off. It was reported however that Ofsted was satisfied that the Board was meeting its statutory requirements but that some areas required strengthening, these were areas identified through self assessment. It was also found that a number of arrangements were strong, in particular around missing and sexually exploited children. It was reported that progress has been made against all priorities, there has been an inquiry into child sexual exploitation and lessons have been learnt from Serious Case Reviews in other areas, as there has been none in Gateshead. The LSCB has also strengthened links to young people and communities, views of young people were sought through a recent engagement event. Taxi driver training events have also been held, this is now a condition on granting or renewing a taxi licence. A sub-regional conference was also held with 500 professionals, including Social Workers, Health workers and Teachers.

The Missing, Sexually Exploited and Trafficked Group (MSET) discussed 43 cases due to missing and sexual exploitation concerns. The Child Death Review Sub Group considered nine child deaths, it was noted that this is the lowest number Gateshead has had and the majority of these deaths were due to premature births or as a result of life limiting conditions and were not modifiable conditions.

It was reported that there has been a 5% increase in the number of child protection plans over the last year and an increase of 38% in the number of child protection enquiries. It was acknowledged that this has inevitably led to an increase in the workload at a time when services are squeezed. It was noted that Gateshead continues to have the highest number of unborn babies subject to child protection plans and that this is reassuring as there are pre-birth assessments early and therefore less need to put in steps later. It was confirmed that the rate of re-referrals into Social Care remain low, this shows that families are receiving the services that they need at the first point of contact. It was noted however that there has been an increase in the number of children being permanently excluded from school and higher than expected numbers of children being admitted to hospital for self-harm.

The Board previously agreed a three year approach in terms of business planning and three strategic principles were agreed; leadership, challenge and learning. Three strategic objectives were also established; protecting vulnerable children, preventing harm and improving outcomes. In relation to leadership the Board will continue to strengthen links with the community and monitor the redesign of Early Help services. In terms of challenge, an effectiveness framework will be implemented which will challenge the Boards performance, single agency audits will also be undertaken by partners. In relation to learning it was noted that young

people will be listened to and their views be used to identify themes. It was noted that task and finish work will be carried out on the issue of self-harm and the increase in permanent exclusions.

It was questioned whether the business plan would still stand if the Government steer was to remove LSCBs. It was confirmed that nothing would happen until at least the end of the year as legislation would need to be re-written if changes were intended to be made.

It was queried as to who signs off the recommendations from Ofsted once they are achieved. It was noted that the Board sign off and then is reported to Group Management Team, it was confirmed that Ofsted would only return if there had been a judgement of inadequate. It was also noted that for long term issues an effectiveness framework is used as a benchmarking exercise.

It was questioned whether there is a lack of engagement with certain communities and whether this is specific to the LSCB or is Council wide. It was confirmed that this is not an issue as there are now three lay members on the Board, there had previously been a member of the Jewish community represented, however he has since stood down and has not been replaced as of yet. It was acknowledged that the Board has carried out the work recommended by Ofsted but there is still more to be done, for example rolling out the child sexual exploitation training to other areas such as the leisure sector.

It was questioned why there are no names against the membership list. It was noted that representatives change quite quickly and any named membership list would be out of date, however the positions would stay the same. It was confirmed that partnership arrangements are very strong and there is buy in at a senior level in all partner organisations.

It was queried what issues were identified as concerns for young people in Gateshead. It was noted that this was around safety on the Metro and in parks, however it was felt that this was more around perception rather than them witnessing any real incidents. It was suggested that, in the absence of park wardens, community leaders should be made aware of any issues in order to help tackle them.

It was questioned how the training to taxi drivers is provided. It was confirmed that taxi drivers must attend a one hour briefing with police around child sexual exploitation. The training highlights signs to look out for in terms of vulnerable young people and how to report any incidents of concern. There are examples of budget hotels being used so taxi drivers are made aware in case of dropping off young people at such places. It was noted that in Newcastle there was examples of party houses where sessions were held and drivers need to be aware if they are dropping a lot of people off there. It was agreed that a copy of the presentation and handouts provided to taxi drivers during their training would be circulated to the Committee.

- RESOLVED -
- (i) That the Committee noted the LSCB and partner agency performance for 2015/16 and endorsed the proposed priorities.

- (ii) The Committee agreed to receive updates in relation to any proposed changes to strategic arrangements as a consequence of the Wood Report.

F13 GATESHEAD CHILD HEALTH PROFILE

The Committee received a report on the Child Health Profile that was published in June. The key findings for Gateshead were identified as;

- Child poverty is significantly worse than the England average
- Childhood obesity levels are similar to the England figures
- Immunisation uptake is above the England average
- Child mortality rates are similar to the England average
- Although there has been a decrease in the number of hospital admissions as a result of self-harm for young people, Gateshead is still significantly worse than the England average

The report provided a list of indicators that have shown improvement in the last year and also those which have not improved and it was noted that any particular issues could be brought back to the Committee.

The performance in terms of immunisations in looked after children was queried. It was confirmed that there was a slight dip last year, however this was not an issue and figures remain in the high 80%. Although it was noted that, ideally, this should be above 95% for herd immunity.

It was questioned whether numbers of children on Education Health Care Plans are recorded within the Child Health Profile. It was confirmed that this is not recorded in the Child Health Profile, however it was suggested that it could be looked at as to how health correlates with those young people on Education Health Care Plans. It was also suggested that next time information around the number of young children having eye tests could be reported on and whether there are any risk assessments carried out in schools around the time children spend in front of computer screens.

Performance around self-harm figures was questioned. It was acknowledged that the number in Gateshead is significantly worse than the national average, in Gateshead there were 179 admissions to hospital for self-harm, however this does not determine the actual number of young people involved. It was confirmed that this relates to ages 10-24 and a larger cohort for hospital admissions is 19 and above. It was also noted that there may be some young people self-harming but who are not admitted to hospital. It was reported that the LSCB is to roll out training in schools to help them support young people who are self-harming.

It was questioned whether female genital mutilation (FGM) is an issue in Gateshead. It was confirmed that there are no cases in children in Gateshead nor any national prosecutions. However, maternity services have reported some mothers who have suffered and they continue to be monitored. It was queried whether hospitals would know what to do if there was a case in Gateshead. It was noted that all frontline practitioners and schools have received training in this area, they have a duty to

report any cases of female genital mutilation and procedures are in place.

The point was made that further information is needed around the redesign of the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS). It was confirmed that the 'Expanding Minds Improving Lives' project is ongoing and the CCG has paid for ongoing counsellor support in schools while the larger development of the service is going on. Committee was advised that a report on CAMHS is scheduled on its work programme for 1 December 2016.

- RESOLVED -
- (i) That the Committee noted the content of the report.
 - (ii) That the Committee agreed to receive future reports which detail specific areas of concern and provide trend analysis showing change over at least three years data.

F14 REVIEW OF CHILDREN'S ORAL HEALTH IN GATESHEAD - EVIDENCE GATHERING

The Committee took part in the first evidence gathering session of the review into the oral health of the child population in Gateshead and their access to dental services. David Landes from Public Health England attended the meeting to give some general context into dental health and dental services in the area.

It was reported that a small survey was undertaken to show the proportion of five year olds with tooth decay in 2015. This small sample showed 20% of the 5 year old population in Gateshead suffered from tooth decay. It was noted that Gateshead is performing well compared to the North East, which may be to do with the artificially fluoridated water in the area.

It was noted that a five year old survey will be carried out to examine all five year olds in state schools. This will allow comparisons to be made between different areas. It was however noted that this data will only be an indication following the change to positive parental consent in schools.

The Committee viewed a map which showed the areas in Gateshead with the highest percentage of dental disease. It was evident that there are wide variations across Gateshead, therefore there are inequalities in different sections and there is a need to look at other interventions.

The proportion of the Gateshead population accessing NHS dental care in 2012/13 was looked at. This showed that that figure was less than 50% for 0-4 year olds, however by school age this increases to 70%. A breakdown of practices across Gateshead in 2013 was also provided.

In terms of orthodontic care this is accessed by the South of Tyne and Wear area and access is measured on a third of all 12 years olds needing orthodontic care. It was noted that this roughly meets needs and shows that all have reasonable access.

In terms of access to services it was reported that distances of 100,000 journeys have been measured, the majority travel less than two miles to dental services and the most deprived areas travel the least.

It was noted that challenges continue in terms of tackling dental disease in the population by addressing inequalities. Although 75% of five year olds in Gateshead have no dental disease there are still 20-25% who have preventable dental diseases. The Committee was advised of the need to consider if services are where they need to be and ensure oral health is integrated into all plans.

The point was made that previously dental vans were brought to schools which meant less reliance on parents taking children to dental surgeries. It was advised that separate school dental services stopped in the early 1990's however it was acknowledged that it is still important to get practices linked to schools. It was noted that the standard of dental care has changed massively over the last 30 years and therefore it would be very expensive to deliver a mobile service. It was recognised that for some families there are issues around overcoming the barrier of getting into a dental practice. It was also felt particularly important to ensure links with schools in deprived area. It was confirmed that current links are being reviewed through the Public Health reviews to see where dental care is expected to fit in, ie with school nurses. It is hoped through these reviews the service can be less disjointed in terms of 0-19 care.

It was queried whether there are dentists trained to deal with autistic and disabled children in Gateshead. It was noted that all dentists should be able to help, either offering care themselves or be able to refer to colleagues who can better meet the needs of a particular child.

It was noted that Public Health gained responsibility for dental care in 2013, this is across the South of Tyne and Wear, therefore discussions must be held with South Tyneside and Sunderland. It is expected that in 18 months time there will be a full 0-19 service that includes oral health. It was agreed that regular updates on the review can be reported to Committee.

RESOLVED -

That the Committee noted the content of the report and the evidence presented as part of the review of Children's Oral Health in Gateshead.

F15 OFSTED INSPECTIONS AND SCHOOL DATA - PROGRESS UPDATE

The Committee received a report outlining the findings from Ofsted inspections, undertaken in spring and summer 2016 terms.

In terms of primary schools, Brandling and Roman Road improved from previous good ratings to outstanding. Washingwell Primary School received a good rating, an improvement on its last inspection. It was reported that St Wilfrid's Catholic Primary School stayed as 'requires improvement', it was noted that the school comprises of a high number of children with special educational needs which has had an impact on the rating.

In relation to secondary schools, Whickham School was found to 'require improvement'. It was noted that the school received a tough inspection and was on the edge of a 'good' result and the monitoring report was very positive about where the school is going. Joseph Swan Academy was also found to 'require improvement', there were good elements within the inspection findings but exam results were not strong enough to improve its rating. In both schools leadership and management were found to be good.

It was reported that the Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) was found to be 'inadequate'. It was noted that the senior leadership of the PRU has changed, however Ofsted judged attendance and behaviour to be inadequate. Work is ongoing to improve attendance and the PRU is in a better position today than it was previously.

It was noted that 94% of schools in Gateshead are good or better and only 5 require improvement. 37% of primary schools in Gateshead are outstanding, nationally this figure is 20%. In addition, provisional Key Stage 2 SAT results show Gateshead is joint ninth in the country.

It was queried as to whether the increase in permanent exclusions is a factor as to why the PRU was judged to be inadequate. It was confirmed that work is ongoing with the LSCB to look at the causes of the increase in permanent exclusions, this makes the work of the PRU harder.

The funding system was queried in terms of the ratio between primary and secondary schools. It was acknowledged that evidence suggests that early intervention is better, if the balance was changed pupils may be behind where they should be when starting secondary schools.

It was questioned how academies are helped following Ofsted. It was confirmed that powers of intervention are reduced so it depends how schools work with the Council, however it was noted that there are good relationships with all the academies.

RESOLVED -

That the Committee considered the position in relation to Ofsted inspections.