

Note of last Children & Young People Board meeting

Title: Children & Young People Board
Date: Monday 10 September 2018
Venue: Smith Square 1&2, Ground Floor, 18 Smith Square, London, SW1P 3HZ

Attendance

An attendance list is attached as [Appendix A](#) to this note

Item	Decisions and actions	Action
1.	<p>Declarations of Interest</p> <p>The Chair welcomed all newly appointed and reappointed members to the first Children and Young People Board meeting for the political cycle 2018/19. Congratulations were given to the recently appointed ADCS President Stuart Gallimore. Apologies were noted listed at Appendix A.</p> <p>No declarations of interest were made.</p>	
2.	<p>Presentation by Sir Alan Wood on Children's Residential Care</p> <p>The Chair introduced Sir Alan Wood, Chair of the Residential Care Leadership Board (RCLB), to the meeting. Sir Alan Wood provided the Board with an update of the progress of the RCLB's work so far, outlined achievements, current challenges faced and sought guidance from Members on how to take additional work forward.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sir Alan Wood highlighted the recommendations taken forward from the Narey Report on children's residential care. The RCLB has focussed on improving placement commissioning and supporting pilots of the Staying Close initiative for young people from a residential setting.• Sir Alan Wood explained the aims and challenges faced to date. With regards to commissioning, the focus is on building capacity in secure children's homes. The biggest challenges surround availability of beds for children placed on welfare grounds, high placement costs and the lack of provision in certain parts of the country.• Sir Alan also highlighted that, while lack of capacity was certainly the primary issue, there were also many examples of placements being unavailable despite apparent under-occupancy in some homes. While there are some legitimate logistical reasons for under-occupancy (the physical condition of the home, the needs of young people already accommodated, the skill and expertise of staff to meet the specific needs of the young person needing a	

placement) Sir Alan Wood welcomed comments from the board on how best to drive up occupancy to allow more children to benefit.

- The Board agreed that further work needs to be undertaken to understand why some homes are at capacity and others under-occupied. A query was raised around progress with previous plans to introduce national commissioning of secure children's home placements. Sir Alan explained that the RCLB's focus had moved to the regional commissioning of secure children's homes, and that groups of local authorities would be encouraged to come together and submit proposals to increase capacity in their own region. This would be supported by a small central fund to provide feasibility studies.
- With regards to geographic placement of open children's homes, Sir Alan reported that the lack of children homes in London results in a lot of London traffic moved to the North West or the South East regions which displaces children. Sir Alan Wood raised the issue that local authorities are increasingly removing themselves as direct providers and now 80% of providers are commercial institutions compared to only 20% which are local authorities. This places further strain on local authorities as the nature and complexity of children's needs are changing and there is still not enough supply to meet demand.
- Sir Alan Wood drew the Board's attention to the particular challenges encountered in accessing services offering effective therapeutic support, not least due to a lack of clarity on what is meant by "therapeutic", and argued that there needs to be an increased level of specificity on this point from both providers and commissioners.
- Sir Alan Wood acknowledged the stigma of past events and children's homes and expressed that this can cause hesitance about local authorities building new ones, which is a potential obstacle. He did, however, highlight a number of examples of local authorities beginning to build new homes, while acknowledging the difficulty in identifying suitable sites in some parts of the country.
- The Board asked whether areas where providers are not providing have been identified, and what action could be taken in these circumstances. Sir Alan explained that there is capacity for this, but without regional choice it has made this more difficult. The Board agreed that a system in place that focuses on regional placement for regional need is the right approach as it would provide accountability and be much more effective.

The Chair expressed her gratitude to Sir Alan Wood for speaking to the Board. She echoed the recommendations put forward by the Board that, while a focus on regional arrangements was an appropriate response to the current position, further consideration should be given to the national role in secure children's home commissioning and focus should remain on the relationship between local authorities and private providers of open children's homes. and

Decision

The Children and Young People Board **noted** the update provided by Sir

Alan Wood.

3. Update from the ISOS partnership on progress on research on early help and SEND

The chair welcomed speaker Isos Director, Natalie Parish, from the Isos Partnership to the meeting. Natalie Parish provided the Board with a verbal update on the progress of three pieces of research: SEND good practice action research, research into high needs budget and early help action research and asked members for their feedback.

- Natalie introduced the first project of SEND good practice action research and how this work aims to identify how councils are meeting the challenges of providing SEND support as demand continues to grow. Natalie explained that the project had been approached in three phases: initial workshops, developing messages and case studies, and further workshops to build on findings. Six themes have emerged from the findings and key messages were identified on how to best engage with SEND children and families within the system:
 1. Strategic partnerships with parents/cares and young people
 2. Partnerships working and join commissioning across education, health and care
 3. Identifying and assessing young people's needs
 4. Building inclusive capacity in mainstream schools and settings, and providing targeted support for inclusion
 5. Developing responsive, effective local specialist provision
 6. Preparation for adulthood
- Natalie updated members on the progress so far in regards to the high needs budgets and spending project. An outline of the project had been built up of three phases: analysis of the funding gap, fieldwork visits to councils and developing the final report which was due October 2018.
- Natalie updated members on the progress made so far on the early help action research taking place from August 2018 until February 2019. Isos were currently reviewing the existing material and research in terms of what worked in early help, what areas could be strengthened and development of early tools. They were currently working with eight local authorities to engage in field visits before going ahead with research until January/February 2019.
- All members agreed that building inclusive capacity for SEND children in mainstream schools was important, while accepting that this can put additional strain on school resources. To deal with this, some local area's mainstream schools have specialist ASD units

which have proven to be more cost effective and inclusive. Feedback also included the need for more continuous learning or training for teachers, teaching assistants and parents to recognise SEND tendencies.

- The board agreed that the needs of SEND children are becoming more complex and it is proving to be more challenging for children and their families to access the support that they require.

The Chair expressed her gratitude to Natalie for speaking to the Board. Natalie noted that she would be happy to update the Board on all three projects when they have concluded next year.

Decision

The Children and Young People Board **noted** the update from Isos Partnership.

4. Membership and Terms of Reference for 2018/19

The Chair asked the board to formally note the membership and the Board's Lead Members for 2018/19, the Terms of Reference which outlines the purpose of the Board and to appoint councillors to current vacancies for Outside Bodies.

Decision

The Children and Young People Board **noted** and **agreed** their Membership, Terms of Reference and Outside Bodies.

5. CYP Board Policy Priorities for 2018-2019

The Chair asked the Board for their comments with regards to the Board's priorities:

- Item three regarding the Government's 30 hour free childcare policy and available funding was a highlighted concern, with the need to drive forward this priority to ensure it is targeted to those who need it and how it can be more effectively utilised.
- The Board noted that the Board priorities did not mention county lines, and the priorities should include reference as to how this impacted children.

The Chair and the board agreed that the priorities will be amended to ensure these areas are covered.

Decision

Subject to the amendments above, the Children and Young People Board **agreed** the Board's priorities and work programme for 2018/19

6. CYP Mental Health Green Paper & CYPMH: 10 year NHS plan

Samantha Ramanah, children and young people's health adviser, introduced the board report on children and young people's mental health reforms and updated the Board on the Government's response to its Green Paper 'Transforming Children and Young People's Mental Health' and provided an update on the NHS Long-term Plan. Members' steer were sought on the direction of travel.

The Government's response to the Green Paper included strengthening the links between schools and the NHS, taking a whole school approach to deliver early intervention, addressing social media and the pilot of a four week waiting list for mental health referrals.

The following points were raised by members:

- While a focus on university students and reducing mental health stigma were welcomed, concerns were raised about the lack of focus on the 16-25 age group who are not in further education, training or employment, many of whom may be from demographics that are underrepresented or fall into vulnerable cohorts. Members felt that there was a lack of acknowledgment for other social groups who are more susceptible to mental health issues.
- Members were concerned that the paper did not address the Brighter Future campaign and the accountability for the £1.7 billion funding. Members therefore felt that there needed to be a focus on how to strengthen local government's role.
- Role of health and wellbeing boards- there is no guarantee that health and wellbeing boards would be effectively implemented to fit into wider integration.
- While the focus on a whole school approach in the Green Paper was a helpful contribution to the LGA's call for an independent school based counselling service, the board agreed that it does not fully meet the Board's call for action.
- Members felt that a four week waiting time is not ambitious enough with no clarity as to how children in the remaining areas will overcome long waiting times. This raised the question of the point of referral as many young people are referred already at the point of crisis. There was also a missed opportunity to who picks up the pieces when young people get turned away when their mental health is not deemed severe enough.

Members agreed that there is a lack of accountability on who is held responsible for the delivery of the reforms and members agreed that though aspects of the green paper are welcome, there are weaknesses, particularly with regards to a four-week waiting time for referrals, addressing the Bright Future campaign, lack of commitment to an independent school based counselling service and the role of health and wellbeing boards.

Decision

The Children and Young People Board **noted** the updates detailed in the

report.

7. Civil Society Strategy

Louise Smith, Adviser, informed members of the LGA work with DCMS on the Civil Society Strategy, and outlined how the strategy intended to support young people with opportunities to improve their life chances.

The following points were raised:

- The strategy committed DCMS to fully embedding the National Citizen Service (NCS) in the wider youth sector. The Board members strongly felt that NCS was not the solution to supporting young people in wider society for a number of reasons. NCS did not offer year-round provision in the same way that other youth services did, while the majority of young people taking part were not from vulnerable backgrounds, and were not those in most need of support.
- Members felt that the funding should be devolved from the NCS and into councils in order to target the needs of the most vulnerable.
- Members felt that it would be helpful for organisations such as the NHS, civic societies, and sport partnerships to pool money for youth services rather than delivering in silos.
- The LGA would engage with the Government as it revisits and develops its new guidance on councils' statutory duties around youth services. In particular, it will be important to ensure that the clarification of the duty does not result in additional burdens on local authorities or over-ride the importance of local decision-making.
- One member raised concerns around whether the government might try to remove the duty from councils. The Board agreed that it was an important part of early help and intervention, and it was therefore important that the duty was not lost.
- Regarding the 'Brighter Futures: our vision for youth services' campaign, some members felt there needed to be an emphasis on cooperation with partners and ensuring provision for vulnerable children.
- Members discussed the revisit of the wider Bright Futures campaign at NCAS and the need to be in a position to show the progress made one year on. It was felt that further exploration into financial elements was needed in order to build on the work from Newton Europe at the end of the last Board cycle 2017/18.
- The Chair agreed to meet with members working on the Bright Futures campaign and officials to discuss these areas and will provide a full update at the next Board meeting.

Decision

The Children and Young People Board **noted** the report and **agreed** lines of enquiry to pursue with DCMS.

8. Note of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the last Board meeting of the political cycle 2017/18 were **agreed**.

9. Confidential update on Children's Services Improvement

Sally Burlington, LGA Head of Policy, provided members with a verbal update on the progress with two programmes of work to support improvement in early years and children services, both funded by DfE.

A confidential discussion followed.

Decision

The Children and Young People Board **noted** the update.

10. Confidential Note of the Previous Meeting

The confidential minutes of the last Board meeting of the political cycle 2017/18 were **agreed**.

Appendix A -Attendance

Position/Role	Councillor	Authority
Chairman	Cllr Anntoinette Bramble	Hackney London Borough Council
Vice-Chairman	Cllr Roy Perry	Hampshire County Council
Deputy-chairman	Cllr Lucy Nethsingha	Cambridgeshire County Council
	Cllr Gillian Ford	Havering London Borough Council
Members	Cllr Natasha Airey	Windsor & Maidenhead Royal Borough
	Cllr Susie Charles	Lancashire County Council
	Cllr Matthew Golby	Northamptonshire County Council
	Cllr Dick Madden	Essex County Council
	Cllr Roger Gough	Kent County Council
	Cllr Teresa Heritage	Hertfordshire County Council
	Cllr Megan Swift	Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council
	Cllr John Kent	Thurrock Council
	Cllr Bob Cook	Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council
	Cllr David Mellen	Nottingham City Council
	Cllr Clare Coghill	Waltham Forest London Borough Council
	Cllr Barry Kushner	Liverpool City Council
Apologies	Cllr Laura Mayes	Wiltshire Council
	Cllr Carl Cashman	Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council
In Attendance		
LGA Officers		