

Minutes of last Children & Young People Board meeting

Children & Young People Board

Tuesday, 23 January 2024

Hybrid Meeting - 18 Smith Square and Online

Attendance

An attendance list is attached as **Appendix A**

Item	Decisions and actions
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1 Welcome, Apologies and Substitutes, Declarations of Interest

The Chair welcomed everyone to the Children and Young People Board.

Apologies were received from Cllr Annabel Wilkinson, Cllr Phillipa Williamson and Cllr Anne Dorian substituted by Cllr Mark Sutton and Cllr Robert Flatley.

Cllr Vernon-Jackson declared he had previously worked in the Department of Health and Social Care in relation to item 3.

No other declarations of interest were received.

2 Note of the Previous Meeting

Members agreed the minutes of the previous meeting held on 5 October.

Members discussed the issue of considering care experience as a protected characteristic. Louise Smith, Senior Adviser, advised members that work by the Office of the Children's Commissioner to gather views of care experienced people on this issue was expected to be published in the coming months and would inform the LGA's position on this and any advice issued to councils.

For information, the appointments to outside bodies are as below:

National Youth Agency (NYA) - Cllr Jon Hubbard

Asylum, Migration and Refugee Task group - Cllr Roger Gough & Cllr Cordelia Law

Children's Improvement Board (CIB) - Louise Gittins, Chair

3 NHSE - Children's Mental Health

The Chair invited David Lockwood, Head of CYP and Perinatal Mental Health, Andrew Nichols-Clarke, Senior Development Lead, Health and Justice Children Programme, Yvonne Carey, Senior Programme Manager, NHSE QTT and Kate Brooker, Independent Social Worker, NHSE QTT to present to the Board. The three presentations (pages 15 – 70 in agenda) outlined the range of activity the National Health Service England (NHSE) had been undertaking concerning children's mental health, the wider activity being undertaken by the NHS, alongside specific programmes of work; the Mental Health, Learning Disability and Autism Inpatient Quality Transformation Programme and the Framework for Integrated Care were discussed.

Members comments:

- A concern was raised regarding the work of the Vanguards being a small part of the overall need of the country and there was a request for information on how NHSE would see this roll out, alongside the local mental health hubs and the recruitment issues being faced.
- A member acknowledged the large role domestic abuse plays in mental health related family interventions.
- There was a concern raised regarding the effect of the closure of youth services and what is being done to address this.
- A member welcomed better partnership working to rethink how to support young people, however noted the presentation referred to a lot of services that are underfunded and barely exist in some places.
- It was raised that it would be difficult to evaluate the effectiveness of the Vanguards and the transferability of the desired outcomes to another area.
- A member requested information on if there is work being done at a national level to provide sufficient provision and secure units to reduce councils' placements competition and reduce costs.
- It was highlighted that local authorities and the third sector have an important role in tackling health inequalities by providing early intervention to marginalized communities.
- A member encouraged a focus on early intervention and working with local authorities on mental wellbeing to increase prevention.
- There was a concern raised regarding how to increase the profile of children's issues within Integrated Care Boards (ICBs) and Health and Wellbeing Boards (HWBs).

NHSE responded to comments:

- It was acknowledged that the scale of the challenge is large, and it would be a long process before need can be fully met. Sustainable funding and a focus on joining up sectors and partners is the focus going forward to be able to meet need.
- The Vanguards are of a small scale due to funding currently. The Framework to Integrated Care is evidence based, thus needed to be tested to understand if it works within the community and the system. Each Vanguard is being evaluated individually, which will provide the evidence base to make a case for wider roll out.
- The Department of Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS)

colleagues have started a scoping exercise on youth workers, looking at what provision is available and how it can be improved – which NHSE will start feeding into with the results of the Vanguards.

- NHSE and the Department for Education (DfE) are doing a joint piece of work to help address high-cost placements and understand how to support this continued work by looking at Deprivation of Liberty Safeguarding (DoLS) and complex needs pathways for young people.
- There is further investment in the secure estate both across justice and welfare. New and secure children's homes are being developed in London and the West Midlands. The work of the Vanguards is to provide early intervention to stop the high need of placements.
- Experts from Sonnet Advisory are looking into how impact can be measured in the system and how a system can change to be trauma-informed to support these young people.
- Colleagues encouraged a united voice to increase the emphasis on early intervention and prevention and increase the profile of children in relevant Boards.

Decision

The Board noted and commented on the presentations from NHS England colleagues on activities taken related to children's mental health to date and considered areas of discussion listed under paragraph 23 and the next steps.

Actions

- NHSE to share information about the interventions, for instance the work of the DoLS for Member feedback to encourage an ongoing dialogue between the LGA and NHSE.
- Officers to invite NHSE to future task group meeting and back to the Board eventually.

4 Isos Partnership - Effective SEND System

The Chair invited Ben Bryant, Director of Isos Partnership to provide an update on the LGA/CCN-commissioned research on what a financial sustainable system that meets the needs of children and young people with SEND looks like.

Members comments:

- It was raised that good practice needs to be shared to help councils control their budgets, as most councils are overspent due to the huge increase in requests for SEND referrals and transport.
- A member highlighted the need for a positive focus on the vision and outcomes rather than a budgetary led agenda. Also, there was a request for a re-evaluation of the measurements of success for children with SEND, for example an emphasis on developing good social relationships rather than high GCSE grades.
- Information was requested on where Isos Partnership see the role of the special school sector in the vision of the new school system.

Ben Bryant responded to comments:

- Good practice does have a role to play, however it is the fundamental incentives and design of the system that needs to change.
- There is a vision to provide a positive focus, to reduce the need to segregate children with SEND and instead calibrate a system within mainstream schools to meet the need of children with SEND.
- The role of the special school sector in the vision for a new SEND system is not known yet - there are many factors to consider.

Decision

The Board noted the work undertaken by the Isos Partnership on this project to date and provided feedback on the findings to date and proposed next steps. A SEND workshop will be coordinated to provide Members with further opportunity to feedback.

Actions

- Officers to share slides.
- Officers to coordinate a SEND workshop.

5 Foundations - Children's Social Care and Early Help Practice Guides

The Chair invited James Somerville, Senior Policy Adviser at Foundations to present his item which outlined that as part of its children's social care reform programme the DfE had commissioned *Foundations – the What Works Centre for Children and Families*, to produce practice guides to set out what the evidence says about how to achieve the outcomes in the Children's Social Care National Framework.

Members comments:

- A member requested within the practice guide a section specific to councillors and what they can do to help – to increase accessibility and save time.
- A member asked how the voice of the child would be incorporated into the guides.
- There was a request for councillors to contribute to the guides.

James Somerville responded to Member comments:

- James Somerville welcomed the councillor specific resource. The What Works Centre was speaking to children's services leaders to understand their use of evidence to help inform the creation of better guides. The guides would be accessible and searchable on a website.
- The voice of children will be included through research questions in all the systematic reviews around perspective of beneficiaries and secondly, each practice guides have an advisory group including people with lived experience.
- James will investigate the possibility of councillors being invited to the practice guide advisory groups.

Decision

The Board provided feedback to the Foundations What Works Centre on what would be most helpful in the new practice guides to support children's social care and early help services.

Actions

- Officers to share slides.
- Members to share any further feedback particularly to the questions posed on the last slide of the presentation.

Appendix A -Attendance

Position/Role	Councillor	Authority
Chairman	Cllr Louise Gittins	Cheshire West and Chester Council
Vice-Chairman	Cllr Patricia Bradwell OBE	Lincolnshire County Council
Deputy-chairman	Cllr Gerald Vernon-Jackson CBE	Portsmouth City Council
	Cllr Jon Hubbard	Wiltshire Council
Members	Cllr Victoria Cusworth	Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council
	Cllr Adam Ellison	South Tyneside Council
	Cllr Fiona Venner	Leeds City Council
	Cllr Imran Khan	Bradford Metropolitan District Council
	Cllr Mili Patel	Brent Council
	Cllr Garry Bridges	Manchester City Council
	Cllr Tony Ball	Essex County Council
	Cllr Roger Gough	Kent County Council
	Cllr Laura Mayes	Wiltshire Council
	Cllr Cordelia Law	Torbay Council
Apologies	Cllr Anne Dorrian	Boston Borough Council
	Cllr Annabel Wilkinson	North Yorkshire Council
	Cllr Phillippa Williamson	Lancashire County Council
In Attendance	David Lockwood	Head of CYP and Perinatal Mental Health, NHSE
	Andrew Nichols-Clarke	Senior Development Lead, Health and Justice Children Programme, NHSE
	Yvonne Carey	Senior Programme Manager, NHSE QTT
	Kate Brooker	Independent Social Worker, NHSE QTT
	Ben Bryant	Director, Isos Partnership
	James Somerville	Senior Policy Adviser, Foundations
	Cllr Mark Sutton	Staffordshire County Council
	Cllr Robert Flatley	Derbyshire County Council
	Cllr Leigh Redman	Somerset County Council
	Cllr Joshua Garfield	Newham London Borough
	Cllr Rachel Massey	Rochdale Borough Council
	Cllr Dine Romero	Bath & North East Somerset Council