

CHILDREN'S HEALTH, SOCIAL CARE AND EDUCATION OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY, 22 JANUARY 2020

PRESENT:- Councillors Barbara Parry (Chair), Matthew Courtliff (Vice-Chair), Alan Bishop, Fay Howard, Oladapo Ibitoye, Nick Martin, Carol Shelley, Bazil Solomon and Nadine Watts.

31. Declarations of Interest

The Chair reminded Members of the need to declare any known interests in any matters to be considered at the meeting.

Councillor Barbara Parry made a personal and non-prejudicial declaration of interest as she worked for Ridgeway School.

Councillor Bazil Solomon made a personal and non-prejudicial declaration of interest in his capacity as a part time teacher.

32. Public Question Time

There were no Public Questions.

33. Minutes

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 27th November 2019, be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

34. Performance Report - Education and Skills

The Committee received a joint report of the Head of Skills, Employment and Lifelong Learning and Education Place Planning and Admissions Manager setting out an overview of education and skills outcomes for children and young people in Swindon. In presenting the report officers highlighted the following points:

- There was good progress in Early Years Education with Good Levels of Development improving year on year and closing the gap on the national average.
- At the end of Key Stage 1, 91% of pupils achieve the expected standard in phonics. Key stage 1 attainment outcomes are at or above the national results in all subjects.
- Work was continuing to increase maintain nursery provision across the town and where possible with access to a qualified teacher to improve early standards.
- Primary Key Stage 1 and 2 were meeting the expected standards for phonics which was stable over three years. Key |Stage 1 attainment overall was above national standards average although there had been a slight decline in achievement although his was stable.
- Writing had increased by 0.7% slightly when compared with the national expected standard. Mathematics at the expected standard has risen slightly by 2% from the previous local figures but remains 2% below national figures.

- The secondary phase had shown some steady improvement over the last three years in narrowing the gap to the national average with three secondary schools achieving positive Progress 8 scores. Swindon ranked 87th local authority compared to ranking 136th in 2017 for Progress 8 scores.
- Discussions were on-going with secondary schools regarding the delivery of the Ebacc which remained an area of concern. In 2019 17% of key stage 4 pupils secured an Ebacc standard pass against a national average of 25%.
- Securing improvements at key stage 4 maths has been a key priority for the Swindon Challenge Board. In 2019, standard passes in maths were 70% which is in line with national average.
- There had also been an improvement in English outcomes with standard passes in English at 75%, almost in line with the national average of 76%.
- In Key Stage 5 in 2019, there had been a small increase in the average point score per entry for A levels, increasing from 26.48 to 26.68. This compared to a national average of 33.77. Unfortunately the gap to the national average had not been reduced and further work was being undertaken to achieve consistent improvement and for high A level; achievement.
- A positive destination of sustained education or employment from level 3 courses (A level or equivalent) in 2018 employment was 88% which is in line with national average. Those entering work continued at a high level but more work was required to get more young people in higher education (this had improved from the previous year).
- The focus of the work on skills and employment related, in particular, to supporting vulnerable young people and putting improvements in place for Children Looked After and Care Leavers, including a case review of every case.
- The work of the Support Employment Team had been reviewed and it had helped 53 residents into work.
- Work with Swindon College and the Institute of Technology to increase the number and range of higher education courses operating in Swindon and to allow the joint college to open in 2021 following its merger. Quality improvement work to improve Adult Learning to meet the requirements of the OFSTED framework and to improve performance. Challenges included, enabling vulnerable young people to access sustained employment beyond 18 and ensuring placement sustainability for the most vulnerable and the tracking of young people not in Education, Employment or Training and to speed up the identification of the destinations of young people.
- The growth in apprenticeships has slowed recently, Swindon had achieved 62% of the overall apprenticeship target in the first 4 years of a 5 year target period set by Government (this compares with 59% nationally). Work was continuing across the Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership to assess the key reasons for more employers not employing Apprentices and refreshing the plan.
- Work on schools placement with the recent trend of an increase in the number of primary school children with the resultant pressure on school placements and future need for additional secondary schools places. Engagement continued with Academies and Free Schools within the Borough. The approach had been successful with two new secondary schools coming to the town through external investment as well as secondary school provision.
- The downside of the Council not directly paying to new schools was that it lost some control over their development; however officers continued to work

with the Government to retain as much influence as possible and to ensure schools were delivered on-time.

- The on-going challenge would be educational provision for the new housing development areas and officers were refreshing data for future planning and for negotiations with housing developers for funds for new school for delivery as early as possible.
- The School Admissions Team continued to see good performance for School Admissions with 91% of secondary school parents receiving their first school preference and 99% of parents receiving one of their three top secondary school preferences. 95% of primary school parents received their first preference school and 99% received one of their three primary school preferences.
- That the Council's admissions team was processing around 2,900 applications per annum.
- The future challenge on primary school provision as the latest demographic data suggested a slow down the birth rate.
- The challenge of some schools refusing to admit pupils with challenging needs although all children would be provided a school placement, this was particularly challenging where schools became academies and made their own admissions criteria.

Following the presentation Members challenged officers in respect of:

- The need to raise the aspirations for Care Leavers, especially in respect of those in employment, education and training from the current target of 75%, especially when compared to the wider population, even though this might be otherwise seen as a challenging target given the timescales involved.
- The adverse effect on higher education statistics from losing talented children to educational establishments outside of the Borough and how this distortion might best be addressed.
- The issue of accommodating a large number of pupils from West Swindon currently being educated in Wiltshire.
- The effect of students taking gap year between leaving school and going to university, or indeed decide to further their education several years after leaving school (for instance open university), on the relevant statistics. Also that the Lifelong Learning offer needed to reflect this life choice.
- That the economic success of Swindon might sway some young people to move to employment when leaving school, especially if they were unsure as to what they wished to do. Likewise a town or city with a university might persuade their young people to continue education. This might offer apprenticeship type of opportunities within the Borough by, the Local Enterprise Partnership, officers and councillors working with local employers.
- The type of apprenticeships available within Swindon and how many of these might be seen as being the equivalent of a degree and to ensure career advice, including choices between educational advancement and differing levels of apprenticeships, would allow young people to meet their potential.
- That there was a larger proportion of young people in Swindon wanting paid employment as opposed to further education. The work with the Institute of Technology in an offer combining work and education was considered.
- Work by the Swindon Challenge Board to meet the educational attainment targets for 202/21 across all levels of education.

- The continued European Social Fund grant for the Supported Employment through the Building Bridges Programme over the next two years.
- Funding options available to the Council in respect of the provision of new schools within the Borough and the Council's previous success in attracting Free Schools to the Borough.
- The need to aspire to 95% of children achieving phonics targets in year to ensure their continued educational attainment and to enable schools to best utilise their resources.

Resolved - That the performance report on Education and Skills and the successes and challenges outlined in the report be noted.

35. Education, Training and Employment Sub-Group - Update

The Head of Skills, employment and Life Long Learning submitted a progress report in respect of the Education, Training and Employment Sub Group and highlighted:

- The outcomes of the first meeting of the sub-group held on 5th December 2019 which were set out within the report and a second meeting held on 15th January 2020.
- A breakdown of the membership of the sub-group which included members not directly related to the Council and the skills and value that members brought to the sub-group.
- The role of the sub-group in identifying opportunities and how these might be matched to young people in a streamlined manner.
- The identification of areas the sub-group wanted to focus on.
- Barriers faced by young people in employment or in accessing the mainstream education offer and stepping stones that might be put in place to allow young people to gain experience and confidence.
- The task group would look at pathways for young people where current offer wasn't meeting needs and securing support from employers. Also how the community and voluntary sectors might be assist.
- The development of a plan to progress work on areas identified.

Following the presentation of the report Members discussed:

- Ensuring maximum opportunities for vulnerable young people and also fulfilling the Council's obligation as a Corporate Parent.
- Possible links with Switch onto Swindon and the production of a toolkit to help businesses.
- The need to identify meeting times suitable for the wide range of participants.

Resolved – That the update be noted.

(2) That the Committee Officer be requested to contact Members of the Committee to ascertain their ability to regularly participate in Sub-Group meetings.

36. Engagement and Participation of Children and Young People

The Corporate Director – Children Services setting out a plan of action on how children and young people will be engaged with within the Committee for the forthcoming year 2020/21. The following issues were highlighted in the presentation of the report:

- Discussions held with the Children in Care Council regarding how they might participate in and contribute to meetings of the Committee as well as challenging the Committee in respect of services they receive.
- Step under the current contract would work with **FF** to develop a network for young children.
- Children and Young People would attend the Committee three times per annum to comment and feedback on reports that were relevant to them and a fourth meeting to present an annual report on activities they have been engaged with providing an overview of areas of success and those requiring further development.
- Representatives of the Committee would attend an external meeting led by young people once a year.
- Children and Young People would be offered the opportunity to undertake a qualification as part of their participation.
- A review list would be kept by the young person representatives to track progress on any actions proposed by the Committee.
- Councillors Barbara Parry and Carol Shelley had met with STEP and the Council's Young Person Commissioner to consider a forward plan for the Committee work for the Municipal Year 2020/21.
- Young People would have a pre-meeting prior to meetings they attended to be briefed on reports of interest.
- The video of the young people's involvement was being considered so that this could be shown to other Children and Young People.

Following the presentation officers responded to questions relating to:

- The selection of the children and young people representatives which would initially be selected through a schools currently working with STEPS whilst the network was broadened.
- Work to be undertaken to ensure representation of children and young people reflected students at Swindon schools.

Resolved – That the report be noted and the future attendance of children and young people representatives at the Committee be welcomed.

37. Performance Summary - Special Educational Needs and Disability - Area Written Statement of Action

The Strategic Commissioner Special Educational Needs and Disability submitted a report setting out an overview of the Written Statement of Action for special educational needs and disability, a requirement on the local area following the Ofsted area inspection in November 2017. In introducing the report the Strategic Commissioner Special Educational Needs and Disability drew Members' attention to

- The Written Statement of Action for Special Educational Needs and Disability was required following the OFSTED inspection in November 2018.
- The Statement of Action was approved in April 2019 and there were 18 months to deliver the action plan.
- After the delivery date of October 2020 a re-inspection was anticipated and if this happened it was anticipated that the team would primarily be composed of inspectors from the initial visit and would review progress made against

the plan and written statement of action.

- The written statement of action was approved on first submission by the Department of Education.
- The Statement of Action was ambitious with 179 actions to be reviewed by the end of January; 45% of which had been completely embedded or were RAG related green and 11% would require mitigating action. Priority would be given to those actions that needed to be delivered by the end of January
- The Local Authority was required to lead the Written Statement of Action but Inspection and Written Statement of Action was about the Swindon area and involved all key partners in the Swindon area, including children and parent forums whose work was commended.
- An outline of the work in respect of each of the eight priorities, some of which were fairly simple, for example the appointment of a designated clinical officer and a dedicated medical officer, and the Clinical Commissioning Group had appointed both.
- Other priorities were more complex and required a far greater degree of work on the move towards a more participatory approach and a large change from the tradition means of operation.
- Another clear priority was in respect of attendance and exclusion from schools and in particular those with Special Educational Needs which required a lot engagement with school leaders in the Borough.
- Work was overseen by an active Strategic Board which met bi-monthly and was also attended by representatives of the Department of Education Advisor and a NHS England Advisor who were appointed to support, monitor and challenge the Board's work and provided notes of actions following meetings they attended.
- Every Strategic Board meeting received detailed reports from the various priority leads with a move towards impact reporting and examples of work being progressed was outlined.

Following the presentation Members scrutinised:

- The role of Committee members and more widely Councillors in promoting the work relating to the Statement of Action to schools within the Borough.
- Examples of the role of young people in shaping elements of work arising from the Written Statement of Action, including the young person's roadshow, and how this was impacting service delivery.
- The high case load in respect of Education Health and Care Plans and the length of time for the completion of associated work and the restructuring of the team with the Local Authority committing an additional £500,000 into staffing. It was noted that the casework referred to in the report was case co-ordination in relation to the statutory processes and not traditional case work.
- Work was also on-going in respect of preventative work to lessen demand and provide more timely outcomes through timely intervention.
- Currently 3.2% of Swindon Children were on a health and Care Plan against the national average of 2.1% so work was needed to identify the reasons for this and to take appropriate actions.
- The outcomes of a recent staff recruitment event in Swindon with 67 people attending (there were 16 posts vacant) in an area of work that there was a national shortage.
- The creation of a neurodevelopment pathway with a different workforce and

skill mix for a spectrum of needs rather than one just for autism; this pathway was now live and was seeing a reduction in waiting times for treatment and in determining the offer for the individual child's treatment.

- The concern of speech and language problems were not being identified until children attended schools and the issues this caused families and the inclusion of an early Access Fund to support work in relation to this at an early stage.

Resolved – That the performance report and the successes and challenges outline within the report be noted.

38. Targeted Mental Health Services (TaMHS) and Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CaMHS)

The Principal Officer for Health and Wellbeing, Children, Families and Community Health, Swindon Borough Council and Esther Schmidt, Children's Commissioning Lead, Swindon Clinical Commissioning Group submitted a joint report setting out an update on performance and key issues relating to Mental Health Support Services in Swindon and highlighted:

- A survey of the services currently available in relation to Mental Health Services.
- The previous year had been a successful one with an additional £2.3 million being received for children and young people's mental health which helped provide some significant improvements to the service.
- Nationally there had been a 68% increase in mental health referrals for children and young people which created significant challenges.
- The prevalence of mental health issues in children and young people has changed from 1 in 10 to 1 in 8.
- The creation of a whole system approach to look at the needs of children and young people to provide the right at the right time in Swindon through partnership with the Local Authority, Trailblazer Service (40 schools), the voluntary sector the specialist health providers in Oxford Health Service.
- The single point of access managed by TAMHS and the traded service with schools which included 47 schools in Swindon and the main service provision available to every child in Swindon.
- That the majority of children accessing the service had mild to moderate mental health needs who were treated by Swindon with moderate to high needs receiving treatment from Oxford.
- An additional funding bid for further work under the Trailblazer scheme.
- The creation of a parenting hub by Swindon Borough Council and the creation of an additional post by the Clinical Group in the Specialist Hospital Liaison Service which were embedded in the wider CAMHS service.

Following the presentation Members questioned officers in respect of:

- The average waiting time between referral and treatment for CAMHS and TAMHS services and proposed measures to reduce this period.
- The waiting time for treatment following an assessment which was currently around 5 to 6 weeks for CAMHS services although all cases were triaged

and so waiting times would vary.

- Modelling work was progressing to reduce waiting times for CAMHS and TAMHS services but this would require additional staff to be recruited.
- The extension of services to the 18-25 age group and how these services were advertised and accesses; including the role of universities in promoting mental health.

Resolved – That the the key performance messages from the performance information be noted.

39. Health Visiting Service

The Manager, Named Nurse for Safeguarding submitted a briefing note setting out an update on performance and key issues relating to the Council's Health Visiting Service and highlighted the following issues:

- The role undertaken by a highly qualified Health Visitor team, including the Healthy Child Programme for the age range 0 to 5 which had a positive impact on family's lives.
- A summary of the Universal Offer which was often the first contact with new families and parents can call health visitors for advice.
- The role of Child Health Hubs which were held weekly in three venues and support these provided to new families and which had been well received.
- A twelve weekly visit to support parents with potential mental health issues.
- The 24 to 30 month review to offer additional support to families and children and to check on the child's development; in quarter 3 the number of visits were above the national average.
- Enhanced work which was targeted to families that midwives had concerns about and might lead to a referral for other services such as baby steps and offer support to the family as early as possible.
- An update on performance and key issues relating to the SBC Health Visiting Service.
- Targeted twelve month contacts for those families requiring the most support; these visits were to be moved back within the Universal Offer in the future when additional Health Visitors were in post.
- Work over the previous 12 months including Children Looked After Reviews which were carried out every six months.
- Changes in the skills mix for health visitor teams, increased training, renewing the Baby Friendly Accreditation and improving the quality of recording to demonstrate outcomes.

Following the presentation Members scrutinised the following issues:

- The capacity of baby hubs and how families could be encouraged to visit these. At the moment these tended to be used by families when they wanted to access a service.
- Letters sent to families regarding their 12 month service setting out the type of activities children should be doing at that age and contact details in case parents want advice or help.

Resolved – That the report be noted.

40.

Work Programme 2019/20

The Committee considered a report by the Chief Legal Officer on the results of the work programme consultation and the suggested priorities for the work for the Municipal Year, 2019/20.

Resolved – That the report be noted.