

SWINDON CHILDREN'S TRUST BOARD

THURSDAY, 6 DECEMBER 2012

PRESENT: Liz Holmes, Jo Garton (Head teachers), Valerie Johnstone (Governors), Louise Tapper (Swindon Primary Care Trust), John Gilbert (Group Director), Phil Thomas (Community Safety), John Popowicz (Fire Service), Mike Howard (LSCB), Doug Morris (Parent & Carers Advisory Group), Riana Taylor (Probation Service), Kate Rowe (Sure Start), Steve Colledge (Schools Forum), Inspector Roger Bull (Wiltshire Police) and Keith Blackmore (Parent & Carers Advisory Group).

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors David Renard and Rochelle Russell, Julie Tridgell (Head teachers), Katherine Bryan (Head Teachers), Ruth Fitzjohn (Swindon Primary Care Trust), Joanna Bryant (Voluntary Sector), Teresa Harding (GWH Foundation Trust), Paul Gregory (Equalities), Jill Annal (Jobcentre Plus), Liz Mearns (General Practitioners), Andrew Miller (Swindon College), Graham Taylor (New College) and Tim Carter (Sure Start).

20. Minutes

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 27th September 2012 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

Matters Arising:

The Board noted that Peter Wells would be stepping down as the Diocese representative.

Resolved – That Peter Wells be thanked for his work and contributions to the Board over the past years.

21. Public Question Time

No public questions were submitted for this meeting.

22. School Exclusion in Swindon; National and local Data - An Overview

The Cabinet Member for Children's Services and the Board Director, Commissioning submitted a joint report setting out an overview of exclusion data in Swindon over the last five academic years and provided local data relating to good practice in Swindon.

Nigel Pickering, Additional Provision and Reintegration Manager, gave a presentation regarding School Exclusions in Swindon. The Board noted the current and future challenges faced by the Council and schools in supporting pupils excluded from school or who were at risk of exclusion to ensure access to full time educational provision.

Nigel Pickering referred to the good practice by schools, in particular the support for primary schools pupils. The Board noted the "One Stop Shop Model" at Nyland Campus that provided an Outreach Service and Special School Provision through the Pupil Referral Unit. These provisions were part of therapeutic intervention models for Primary Schools.

Mr Pickering commented on the provision for Secondary Schools and advised that all Secondary Schools had adopted the Secondary Fair Access Model. This allowed participation ensuring positive outcomes for pupils at risk of exclusion. He further commented on a different but effective and close relationship with Academies.

The Board was advised of the new Local Authority Duties for pupils out of school to be introduced in 2017. It was noted that until then, it was the Local Authority's duty to support excluded pupils. The new duties would also include young people needing support who were not currently covered by existing criteria.

As part of the presentation, Mr Pickering provided two case studies that reflected issues two young people had experienced and explained the support actions undertaken by the Council.

The Board welcomed the report and noted the:

- Accuracy of the number of pupils on roll over the past five scholastical years. Steve Colledge, Schools Forum, advised that these figures were provided to give a basis for statistical accuracy.
- Number of excluded Swindon pupils attending out of borough schools. Nigel Pickering confirmed that pupils living in Swindon that were excluded from out of borough schools would be supported by his department.
- Financing provided for excluded pupils attending Wiltshire schools. It was confirmed that devolved funding from Central Government granted to Wiltshire Council covered the support for excluded young persons and it was still the responsibility of the excluding school to offer support.
- Effect of Academy status on exclusions. The Board enquired if the Exclusions Policy was skewed given the academy status of some schools. Nigel Pickering referred to the supportive partnership working that existed with academies and explained the functions of the Fair Access Protocol. He referred to the exclusions guidance that came into effect in September 2012 and the Board noted his concerns regarding gaps within the guidance that could affect young people. In response, Paddy Bradley, Head of Commissioning Economy and Attainment, explained the Memorandum of Understanding that existed between Secondary Schools and the Council.
- Transitional work that was to be undertaken before the new duties came into effect in 2017. The Board supported the undertaking of the preliminary work required to ensure that the present high standards and results were maintained.

Resolved: (1) That the report regarding School Exclusions in Swindon, be noted.

(2) That the Head of Commissioning Economy and Attainment inform the Board of the actions to be undertaken in preparation of the adoption of the new directive, "School Responsibility for the Education of Pupils Permanently Excluded".

(3) That a report regarding Tuition Services be presented at a future meeting of this Board.

23. Minutes of Local Safeguarding Children's Board for July and September 2012

The Cabinet Member for Children's Service and the Board Director Commissioning submitted a joint report setting out the minutes of the Local Safeguarding Board meetings of 12th June and 11th September 2012.

Mike Howard, Chair, Swindon Local Safeguarding Children Board, commented on the Minutes and informed the Board of the main points arising from the Swindon Local Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report for 2011/12.

The Trust Board welcomed the report and noted the:

- Issues regarding the provision of appropriate training. Mike Howard confirmed that this chargeable service was provided on a voluntary contribution basis to supported schools. He commented on feedback received confirming that the service provided value for money. The Trust Board noted that the challenge would be to ensure that the validity and value for money continued to be offered by this service.
- Work being undertaken by the Swindon Local Safeguarding Children Board on child exploitation. Mike Howard advised that this was a national issue with initiatives being supported by Central Government. He highlighted the “justWhistle” campaign and the intelligence gathering and partnership working used to tackle this issue. He referred to the use of an audit tool developed by the University of Bedford to assist with this process. John Gilbert (Board Director, Commissioning) referred to the “Early Help Strategy” that targeted issues at an early stage and explained how the Information Sharing Protocol helped partnership working to ensure appropriate action was taken to help vulnerable young people.
- Single point of contact for safeguarding issues. John Popowicz, Fire Service, reminded the Trust Board of the need to establish a single contact number for partners to refer safeguarding issues. Sara Tough, Head of Children and Families, confirmed the running of a pilot to seek to address this. This aimed to raise awareness of an early intervention hub providing a single point of contact to gather information that ensured issues were dealt by appropriate department / staff. This would be launched and widely publicised in April 2013.
- Differences in interpretation of safeguarding issues between different agencies as reflected in the Wiltshire Police Inspection and Safeguarding Audit feedback. The Board Director, Commissioning agreed to update the Trust Board at a future meeting. The Board noted that the action plan also took into account the area of concern in respect of detaining children and young persons under S136 of the Mental Health Act 1983. It further noted that this was seen as an issue across not only Wiltshire and Swindon, but within other local authorities.
- The Trust Board welcomed comments confirming that Swindon was a leader in advocacy work.

Resolved – (1) That the report and minutes of the Local Safeguarding Children’s Board meetings held on 12th June and 11th September 2012, be noted.

(2) That, at a future meeting of the Swindon Children’s Trust Board, the Board Director Commissioning inform on any developments that may take place concerning any discussions.

(3) That the Trust Board welcome for the opportunity to provide support on future Local Safeguarding Children’s Board work.

24. Youth Forum - Update Report

The Chair welcomed Grishma Ramesh, the elected Member of the Youth Parliament and her deputy, Naheda Miah to the Board meeting.

Grishma Ramesh referred to the contents of the report submitted by the Cabinet Member for Children’s Services and the Board Director, Commissioning updating the Board on work undertaken by the Youth Parliament.

The Youth Parliament representatives referred to the opportunities and challenges the Youth Forum and Parliament would encounter over the next year and confirmed that:

- The Youth Parliament campaigned to find constructive and meaningful ways to combat discrimination amongst young people.
- The Forum's priorities for this year included the removal of obstacles from sports, leisure and cultural activities. This would include identifying Youth and community centres for young people to frequent. They also commented on the need for affordable public transport.
- A film had been created to raise awareness regarding mental health issues affecting young people.
- "Chatterbox" was fully established and was a platform to allow young people an outlet to express their views and needs.
- A film had been produced to raise awareness on what Chatterboxes were doing and how this affected young people.
- Young Inspectors had undertaken an inspection of the Big Arts Day 2012 and future inspections would include visits to the Great Western Hospital, the Central Library and the Oasis.
- Partnership working being undertaken with Locality Teams.
- Schools would be contacted to invite young people to become involved in the Youth Forum.

The Chair thanked the Members of Youth Parliament and the Board noted the following:

- Transport issues. Paddy Bradley, Head of Commissioning, Economy and Attainment, commented on the challenge to improve present transport provision. Following discussions with Secondary School Headteachers, it was hoped schools would liaise with the Youth Parliament representatives to identify appropriate actions to address highlighted issues.
- Sara Tough, Head of Children and Families, confirmed that Support would be provided to assist the Youth Forum in its work.
- Work being undertaken to identify the best methods to strengthen the relationship between young people and adults within the community. The Board noted that schools were one medium and examples such as "Young Creators" were referred to.

Resolved – (1) That the Board note the report and presentation and reiterates that it will continue to support the work of the Youth Forum, Youth Parliament and Chatterbox Group.

(2) That, as a voice for the young people of Swindon, the Youth Parliament be invited to actively engage with the Children's Trust Board on future work.

(3) That, in response to the request from the Youth Forum, a Trust Board member be invited to volunteer to join the proposed Youth Forum Board of Trustees.

(4) That, further to (3) above, a briefing note with further information on the Youth Forum Board of Trustees be circulated to members for their consideration.

25. Child Obesity Update

The Director of Public Health submitted a report providing an update on child obesity prevalence and on the work being undertaken locally to reduce obesity.

Cherry Jones, Deputy Director of Public Health, Swindon Primary Care Trust, introduced the report and advised that the figures for Swindon had plateaued. She referred to the multi-agency work undertaken with schools, the voluntary sector and partners. The Board noted the programmes in place to reduce obesity in adults and was advised of how lifestyle choices impacted on the obesity figures.

The Board noted the report and discussed the following issues:

- Concerns regarding eating disorders - The Board recognised the importance of creating an environment that promoted healthy eating.
- School meals - The importance of ensuring choices were made available to promote a balanced diet.
- Lifestyles - Sue Wald, Head of Commissioning, Children and Adults, referred to the rise in the obesity figures for young people between 5 and 11 years old and the challenge for all agencies and the community to promote a healthy lifestyle.

Resolved: (1) That the report on Child Obesity, be noted.

(2) That the Director of Public Health and the Board Director, Commissioning be requested to provide an update on the Child Obesity Strategy to a future meeting of this Board.

26. Initial Assessments Report

The Cabinet Member for Children's Services and the Head of Children and Families submitted a joint report providing an update on the Children's "front door" data set in respect of assessments.

Sara Tough, Head of Children and Families, introduced the report confirming that it reflected the processes, progress made and changes within the service provision.

Frances Matchett, Head of Community Social Care, informed the Board that demands on the Assessments team had increased as result of an increase in complex new cases and the number of referred assessments was below the national average. The demands on the early support hub had proved difficult to meet. The Board noted that performance had improved and that a peer challenge would be undertaken by February 2013.

The Board welcomed the report and enquired if the decrease in referrals was sustainable and could be built upon. Frances Matchett Head of Community Social Care, commented that whilst she was unable to confirm that the decrease could be maintained, she believed that the early support hub would be pivotal in ensuring information was shared between teams to provide the right support.

The Board enquired if the initial assessment thresholds were the same across the Borough. It also highlighted the importance of reviewing the thresholds with schools. Sara Tough, Head of Children and Families, recommended that random sampling of primary schools would be undertaken to identify any issues.

Resolved: (1) That the report on Initial Assessments, be noted.

(2) That an update following the peer challenge audit in February 2013 be presented to a future meeting of this Board.

27.**Children's Services Performance Report.**

The Cabinet Member for Children's Services and the Board Director, Commissioning presented a joint report providing an update on the performance within Children Services for the period to September 2012.

Sue Wald, Head of Commissioning – Children and Adults, introduced the report and advised that it addressed the issues raised at the previous Board meeting and reflected information that had previously been presented to the Joint Commissioning Board. The Board noted reasons why the referral figures were low and the adoption scorecard information that effected performance during this reporting period.

The Board welcomed the report and commented on the following points:

- The stability of education provision for children in care. The Board noted the policy of not changing area or schools unless the child is adopted or placed in long term foster care.
- Children on Free School Meals appear on school data for six years, but children placed in care only appear on the school data for one year. Paddy Bradley advised that information could be gathered and shared with schools through the information sharing protocol. The Board noted that provision was also provided through the CAMS services.
- The Board asked Kevin Leaning, Head of Service, Helping Children and Families, to comment on the type of support the agencies within the Board could offer to ensure young people do not become young offenders. Kevin Leaning advised of the responsibilities of all agencies to offer support and guidance to families faced with this issue. He added that the "Stronger Together" structure supported this work as it improved communication between families and supporting agencies.
- In response to a query regarding the effectiveness of exchange of information and data, Kevin Leaning confirmed that communication between Swindon agencies was excellent and intelligence sharing was effective.

Resolved: That the Children Services Performance report, be noted.

28.**Minutes of Joint Commissioning Board (Adults & Children)**

Sue Wald, Head of Commissioning – Children and Adults submitted a report and the minutes of the Joint Commissioning Board (Adults and Children) meeting of 18th September 2012.

Resolved – (1) That the report and minutes of the Joint Commissioning Board (Adults and Children) meeting held on 18th September 2012, be noted.

(2) That the Head of Commissioning – Children and Adults be asked to submit further information on the demand enquiry programme at a future meeting of the Board.