

**SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL**

**Children, Young People and Family Support Scrutiny and Policy Development  
Committee**

**Meeting held 2 December 2019**

**PRESENT:** Councillors Mick Rooney (Chair), Mike Levery (Deputy Chair),  
Olivia Blake, Mike Chaplin, Julie Grocutt, Kevin Oxley, Colin Ross,  
Jim Steinke, Alison Teal and Cliff Woodcraft

**Non-Council Members in attendance:-**

Alice Riddell, (Healthwatch Sheffield, Observer)

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**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

- 1.1 Apologies for absence were received from Sam Evans (Diocese Representative – Non-Council Voting Member) and Peter Naldrett (Parent Governor Representative – Non-Council Voting Member).

**2. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS**

- 2.1 No items were identified where resolutions may be moved to exclude the public and press.

**3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

- 3.1 There were no declarations of interest.

**4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

- 4.1 The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 4<sup>th</sup> November 2019, were approved as a correct record and, arising therefrom, the Policy and Improvement Officer (Alice Nicholson) reported that (a) she was still awaiting information which had been requested from officers at the meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> October 2019, and would chase this up, and circulate the information to Members of the Committee when received, and (b) the special meeting of the Committee to consider the 'Make Your Mark – UK User Consultation Outcomes', and which was to be attended by members of the Youth Council, had been arranged for Tuesday, 17<sup>th</sup> December 2019, at 4.30 pm to 6.30 pm, in the Town Hall.

**5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS**

- 5.1 There were no questions raised or petitions submitted by members of the public.

**6. SHEFFIELD SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD - ANNUAL REPORT 2018-19**

- 6.1 The Committee received a report of the Executive Director, People Services, attaching the Sheffield Children Safeguarding Board - Annual Report 2018/19.
- 6.2 In attendance for this item were David Ashcroft (Independent Chair, Sheffield Children Safeguarding Partnership), Victoria Horsefield (Assistant Director, Children and Families Service and Professional Advisor to the Partnership), Tina Gilbert (Manager, Sheffield Children Safeguarding Partnership) and Dan White (Sheffield Futures).
- 6.3 David Ashcroft introduced the report, which contained information on the involvement of children and young people, the key roles, relationships, funding arrangements and achievements of the Sheffield Safeguarding Children Board, how the Partnership learned from what it did, safeguarding children in Sheffield and safeguarding priorities, and attaching as an appendix, a list of the Board partner agencies and Executive Board members.
- 6.4 David Ashcroft, who became Independent Chair in April 2019, just prior to the Sheffield Safeguarding Children Board becoming the Sheffield Children Safeguarding Partnership in June 2019, provided a brief background to his professional career.
- 6.5 Members of the Committee raised questions, and the following responses were provided:-
- The safeguarding training for taxi drivers was delivered by the Partnership, in conjunction with Sheffield College, and formed one part of the BTEC qualification which drivers were expected to attain as part of their licence application. Similar training was delivered to other licenced premises, such as hotels, takeaways and fast food restaurants. Such training was particularly welcomed as it also helped safeguard them in their role.
  - One of the reasons for the increase in the preliminary number of allegations received by the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) was due to improved reporting processes and a better collection of data. As well as delivering training to statutory and voluntary organisations to assist them recognising cases regarding allegations, the LADO also provided advice and guidance to such organisations.
  - The Youth Justice Service had recently been inspected, and had been rated a very strong Service with outstanding features. The increase in the number of young people who had been referred into the Service was mainly due to the increased use of out of court disposals, which diverted young people away from the criminal justice system.
  - The rate of increase in the number of children becoming subject to a Child Protection Plan was broadly in line with the national picture. Early intervention and prevention remained a priority area, with the aim of intervening in a family life at the earliest possible opportunity.
  - The importance of tackling bullying and the impact it had on a young

person was a key message from a Learning Lessons Review, which had been published in March 2019. The Partnership was currently planning further requests of schools with regard to how they applied their bullying policies. It had been accepted that more work was required in this area. The important thing was to recognise bullying as this was often difficult as it manifested itself in a number of different ways. The officers in attendance did not have the detail to hand with regard to how children in Sheffield were being affected by bullying, but there was no evidence that Sheffield experienced a more entrenched issue than that found nationally.

- A positive change following the introduction of the new safeguarding arrangements had seen additional responsibilities being placed on three key partner agencies, with South Yorkshire Police and Health, represented by the Clinical Commissioning Group, having equal responsibility with the Local Authority for the effective co-operation of the Safeguarding Partnership in Sheffield.
- Liquid Logic, an IT system, which was now used across both Children's Social Care and the Early Intervention and Prevention Services, was now becoming embedded. It aided compliance as it set out clear stages for progression through the system. There remained a level of IT support, including floorwalkers, who provided practical assistance as and when required. The system was considered an improvement on the previous system, and it was compatible with other local authorities, helping in terms of collecting data and benchmarking.
- Further detail on the issue of domestic abuse would be forwarded to Members of the Committee. Linked to the Strengthening Families Programme, there was a domestic abuse worker now working within the Substance Misuse Services.
- The excellent work carried out by staff at Aldine House Secure Children's Home, particularly with regard to transitions had been well documented. A report would be presented to the next Safeguarding Executive Board. Work in connection with transitions was viewed as a challenge across the City, with varying degrees of quality and success ???.
- The pilot scheme currently taking place in the north of the City by early Intervention Services would provide learning for work in other parts of the City. The Early Prevention Service attempted to target its resources in a specific area, in which a particular need had been identified. A decision would then be made as to whether resources could be allocated to similar initiatives in other areas.
- The Partnership does not have any resources itself, but relies on the partner agencies to manage and fund such initiatives. Challenge events were held annually with senior members of staff from partner agencies to review progress against the previous year's agreed actions and discuss the challenges and barriers they were facing.

- All the partner agencies are required to have a statement with regard to the thresholds of need, which should be clear for all partners and families. The Partnership was trying to encourage the agencies to be more flexible in terms of looking at what services a child should receive, based purely on their needs, as opposed to meeting certain thresholds.
- Whilst there were no specific concerns with regard to professionals' attendance at Child Protection Conferences, the Partnership was monitoring this, and feeding back to the partner agencies.
- Whilst there had been no concerns regarding the operation of the Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP), nationally, Panels had been encouraged to improve in terms of the collection of data. The new arrangements had resulted in the responsibility for this area of work transferring from the Department for Education to the Department for Health, which had been considered an appropriate change given the close link to health issues. National data will give us a clearer picture, and therefore hopefully result in sufficient data to identify trends and actions required to enable better outcomes.
- The Suicide Prevention Pathway was now established, and a programme had been developed with voluntary sector partners to help prevent self-harm, and a pilot had commenced in September 2019 in the north of the City, which included a school, college and youth centre, where the wellbeing café model would be introduced with therapeutic support for young people and skills development for staff supporting them. Early indications had shown that the pilot was working well, particularly in the college.
- It was important that appropriate training was provided in terms of the Management of Actual or Potential Aggression (MAPA), the method of restraint used in Aldine House, which benefitted both the member of staff exercising such restraint and the young person being restrained. Staff of Aldine House would be attending the Safeguarding executive to report on their use of restraints. The number of incidents where restraint methods were used was often dependent on the cohort in a secure children's home at any one time. A detailed report on all issues regarding restraint would be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee.
- The Independent Chair of the Partnership (David Ashcroft) had been encouraged by the joint working arrangements, and the high level of commitment from all partner agencies in the City. There were some minor concerns regarding changes in personnel in some of the partner organisations, which sometimes had an adverse effect on consistent working practices. It was clear from the Annual Report that significant progress was being made in terms of the aspirations of all partner agencies and, in those areas where progress had not been made, or had not been as effective as expected, there were clear recommendations as to what action was required. Specific reference was made to the positive input by the Chief Executive (John Mothersole).

- It was acknowledged that there would be turnover of staff within the partner agencies, which was often very difficult to manage. There was a need to ensure that the training provided by the agencies was effective, and that monitoring this was important. Recently, there had been a higher profile given to the effect of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs).
- It was agreed that prevention was key in terms of safeguarding children and young people in the City. However, the factors, including poverty, education, housing and aspirations, which caused the problems, were often out of the control of the Partnership. The Partnership's role was to monitor the concerns, and work with the partner agencies in terms of addressing the issues.
- In terms of performance, it was considered that the City had well established partnership arrangements, and that all partner agencies had a good sense of the issues and a good track record in terms of involvement. As the new Independent Chair had only been appointed in April 2019, he was not in a position where he could identify any particular weaknesses in the arrangements. However, it had been acknowledged that more work was required in terms of coordinating and consolidating the work undertaken with schools, particularly at a strategic level, and further work was required in terms of transitions, both for individual cohorts of young people and transition to adulthood, together with recognition that it was a transition and not a continuation. Mental health provision in the City was seen as an area where more work was required.
- The link between the Partnership and schools was currently through Learn Sheffield, with Chief Executive (Stephen Betts) sitting as a member on the Executive Board (the Chief Executive of Sheffield College was also a member of the Executive). The Partnership was looking to establish some form of formal engagement with Head Teachers, but were experiencing difficulty due to the number of schools in the City. Education was not named as a statutory partner as part of new safeguarding arrangements, but the Partnership was intending to make use of the Head Teachers Forum to link into schools in the City. Each school in the City was also linked to an Education Safeguarding Advisor within Children's Social Care, who provide advice and training.
- Whilst any reduction in the numbers of young people going into the criminal justice system should be welcomed, the resultant increase in numbers open to the Youth Justice Service could create some difficulties with capacity for the Service.
- Whilst there were a number of different initiatives and programmes dealing with the issue of knife crime, with some not being as coordinated and effective as others, the Youth Justice Service would only get involved with the recognised programmes.
- Details of the effectiveness of the current arrangements regarding Female

Genital Mutilation (FGM) would be forwarded to Members of the Committee.

6.6 RESOLVED: That the Committee:-

- (a) notes the contents of the Sheffield Safeguarding Children Board – Annual Report 2018/19, now submitted, together with the information now reported and the responses to the questions raised;
- (b) thanks David Ashcroft, Victoria Horsefield, Tina Gilbert and Dan White for attending the meeting and responding to the questions raised;
- (c) welcomes the progress being made by the Sheffield Safeguarding Children Board and, with effect from June 2019, the Sheffield Children Safeguarding Partnership;
- (d) places on record its thanks and appreciation for the excellent work undertaken by Jane Haywood, former Independent Chair of the Sheffield Safeguarding Children Board; and
- (e) requests that:-
  - (i) information on the new Domestic and Sexual Abuse Strategy for Sheffield be circulated to Members of the Committee, and more detailed information on this area of work be included in future Annual Reports; and
  - (ii) a report be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee, containing details of (A) the use of restraint in secure children's homes in the City and (B) the work being undertaken by the Partnership to establish and improve links with schools.

**7. SHEFFIELD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION SERVICE - ANNUAL REPORT 2018-19**

- 7.1 The Committee received a report of the Chief Executive Officer, Sheffield Futures, attaching the Sheffield Sexual Exploitation Service – Annual Report 2018/19.
- 7.2 In attendance for this item were Dan White (Sheffield Futures), David Ashcroft (Independent Chair – Sheffield Children Safeguarding Partnership), Victoria Horsefield (Assistant Director, Children and Families Service and Professional Advisor to the Partnership) and Tina Gilbert (Manager, Sheffield Children Safeguarding Partnership).
- 7.3 Dan White referred to the introductory report, which contained information on the service user profile for 2018/19, key achievements and developments in 2018/19 and priorities for the Service for 2019/20.
- 7.4 Members of the Committee raised questions, and the following responses were provided:-

- The reference, under the Service User Profile 2018/19, to the added pressure of a further worker from another agency becoming involved with the young person being too much, was referring to pressure being placed on the young person in that they were having to explain their position to workers from different agencies each time they got involved. This was considered unnecessary, therefore the young person was now only required to give one interview, which was recorded, and used by the different agencies as and when required.
- The move of the Criminal Exploitation, Sexual Exploitation and Missing Persons Teams into one office at Star House, had resulted in improvements in information-sharing which, in turn, had resulted in action and decisions being taken much quicker.
- In terms of the pursuit of perpetrators of child sexual exploitation, if any particular 'hot spot' areas of the City were identified, through the intelligence focused, multi-agency meetings, this would trigger a collective response by the relevant agencies and resources would be targeted in these areas. As a result of the effective multi-agency working, no major issues in this regard had been identified.
- There was always an element of frustration when the threshold for prosecution was not met.
- General safeguarding training, which included child sexual exploitation, was provided in some schools in the City. The majority of schools had been involved in the recent 'It's Not OK' campaign, which had been organised by the NSPCC, and which comprised an awareness session for pupils.
- South Yorkshire Police shared intelligence with colleagues across the region, and the Exploitation Working Group, and there was a national working group which shared information across the country.

7.5 RESOLVED: That the Committee:-

- (a) notes the information contained in the covering report and the Sheffield Sexual Exploitation Service – Annual Report 2018/19, together with the information now reported and the responses to the questions raised;
- (b) thanks Dan White, Victoria Horsefield, David Ashcroft and Tina Gilbert for attending the meeting, and responding to the questions raised; and
- (c) requests the Chief Executive Officer, Sheffield Futures, to:-
  - (i) circulate data on those 'hot spot' areas in the City in which criminal activity has taken place, and include such data in future Annual Reports; and
  - (ii) include details regarding information and intelligence-sharing

collaboration in Sheffield and South Yorkshire, and information on disruptions of criminal activity, in future Annual Reports.

**8. WORK PROGRAMME 2019/20**

- 8.1 The Committee received a report of the Policy and Improvement Officer (Alice Nicholson) containing the Work Programme for 2019/20.
- 8.2 Ms Nicholson stated that she would follow up on the requests for information made at this meeting, and identify a suitable meeting for Members to receive such information.
- 8.3 Councillor Jim Steinke stated that he would be in a position to provide a report on the update on the Voice of Young People at the meeting to be held on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2020.
- 8.4 The Chair reported that he had spoken to Councillor Ben Curran (Chair of the Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee), who had agreed that the issue regarding knife crime be considered at that Committee.
- 8.5 **RESOLVED:** That the Committee approves the contents of the Work Programme for 2019/20, taking into consideration the comments now made.

**9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

- 9.1 It was noted that the next meeting of the Committee will be a special meeting, and will be held on Tuesday, 17<sup>th</sup> December 2019, at 4.30 pm, in the Town Hall.