

**CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND EDUCATION SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE**

(Committee Rooms 1 and 2, Port Talbot)

Members Present: **22 October 2015**

Chairperson: **Councillor A.R.Lockyer**

Vice Chairperson: **Councillor H.N.James**

Councillors: A.Carter, Mrs.A.Chaves, M.Ellis, P.Greenaway,
R.G.Jones, Mrs.S.Paddison, M.Protheroe,
A.L.Thomas, D.Whitelock and Mrs.L.G.Williams

**Co-opted Non Voting
Members:** A.Hughes

**Officers In
Attendance** N. Jarman, A.Thomas, Mrs.A.Thomas, C.Millis,
Ms.K.Warren, Ms.A.Flynn, J.Haeney, K.Mort,
Ms.J.Thomas, Ms.C.Dyer and Ms.C.Gadd

Cabinet Invitees: Councillors P.D.Richards and A.J.Taylor

Observers: Dr.C.Ball and Ms.S.Harrop-Griffiths

1. **MEMBERS DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The following Member made a declaration of interest at Minute No. 10.

Councillor A.Carter Report of the Head of Children and Young Peoples Services re: Family Support Services – Voluntary Family Support as he is a board member of Neath Port Talbot Council for Voluntary Services.

2. **MINUTES OF THE CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND EDUCATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON 24 SEPTEMBER 2015**

Noted by the Committee.

3. **SCRUTINY FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME 2015/16**

Noted by the Committee.

4. **CHILD AND ADOLESCENT MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES BRIEFING**

The Committee received a report and presentation providing an update on the arrangements for the planning and provision of services for children and young people with emotional and mental health needs in the ABMU Health Board area, as detailed within the circulated report.

Members were informed of the range of services that were provided by the Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), which included universal to specialised services. Members were informed that specialist CAMHS services were provided by Cwm Taf Health Board and it was recognised that the current service model was historic and was not necessarily reflective of needs of the resident population. It was noted that it was a good service but it was not meeting demands and problems had evolved over the last five to ten years. Interventions were required in a more timely and effective way. It was explained that all health boards were experiencing similar issues and there was a crisis developing in CAMHS services across Wales. The Welsh Government had recently invested money to address this.

Members highlighted that specialist CAMHS services with Cwm Taf Health Board were commissioned by the six local Health Boards. Members asked how many staff were employed in the area and for reassurance that the same staff were not being allocated to all areas and was there value for money. It was confirmed there were separate workers in each local health board area and teams were becoming more multi-disciplinary. It was highlighted that it had to be ensured that therapies put in place were sustainable and a new service model

was being developed to ensure that money was being spent as wisely as possible.

Members requested further clarity on how many CAMHS workers there were in Neath Port Talbot or in the ABMU Health Board area. It was explained that there were between five and six consultant lead specialised teams and these were likely to become three locality teams in the future. In addition there were approximately 30 clinical staff and some administrative staff. Members highlighted that this was over 40 members of staff and there were still long waiting lists of up to 53 weeks. It was recognised that early intervention and prevention was important and waiting a year for an appointment was not early intervention. It was queried how this could be improved were more staff going to be employed or training of more lower level staff. It was noted that the waiting lists were primarily in relation to developmental diagnosis, such as autism. It was highlighted that services have not historically been developed to meet this need, however, with new funding it was anticipated that improvements would be made in this area. Members queried how robust the CAMHS services were and how many clinical hours were used by Neath Port Talbot children and young people. It was explained that this information was available, however, officers did not have this information with them.

It was outlined that there had been significantly less investment in CAMHS in Wales compared with England and it was recognised that further investment was required. It was noted that emotional health needs of children had become more prominent and there was more national recognition that has challenged services to improve. The Minister for Health and Social Services launched Together for Children and Young People, a service improvement programme to improve the emotional and mental health of children and young people in February 2015. The aim was to deliver change at pace and build on best practice. This programme had resulted in the Welsh Government investing an extra £7.6m annually into mental health services for children and young people. It was noted that the funding was very prescriptive. In response to this a multi-agency planning group had been established by ABMU Health Board with partners from the Western Bay to develop, agree and commission a service specification that provides seamless care from primary or direct contact services. The Planning Group had developed proposals in relation to the available funding streams that had been submitted to Welsh Government for consideration and all but one proposal has been approved with some conditions.

The proposed model was outlined to Members. It was explained that the next steps included discussions regarding the financial mechanisms for commissioning of CAMHS services and finalising the specialist CAMHS specifications. It was highlighted that this was an opportunity to really develop CAMHS services and produce better outcomes. It was established that a key aspect was ensuring that staff had the right training and there would be an expectation that it would be undertaken even if not specifically identified. Training was recognised as being essential, however, it was highlighted that the current proposed funding allocation for training from Welsh Government was £6k per health board and this was not thought to be adequate so further representation was being made in regards to this.

Members requested more detail of how the investment from Welsh Government would be used. It was highlighted that there was not a clear idea of the activity currently undertaken and service specification would be used to outline standards and outcomes. It was anticipated that it would be established that CAMHS could not deliver everything and the best outcomes would be identified for the money invested. Members commented that it was unusual way to contract services to ask service deliverers what they would like to do with the money rather than outlining in the contract what was required. It was agreed that this would be the best approach if starting at a new position with new services, however, there was a lot of historical information and development of services. It was explained that the NHS in Wales did not work in the same way as it did in England or as other organisations. There were not the same formal contracting arrangements and procurement processes. However, there would be clearer specifications and outcomes required. It was noted that it was a Welsh Government decision on the way NHS services in Wales were commissioned. Members expressed concern that commissioning was based on historic arrangements and not on needs. It was enquired if any needs analysis had been undertaken as part of the development of the proposed new service model. It was confirmed that it was based on need, however, there had not been the opportunity to undertake a needs analysis. It was recognised that basing services on needs and outcomes was an issue and previously it had not been clear enough. The proposed service model should address this and there should be more of a grip on it.

Members asked how services were being reviewed. It was outlined that work streams had been identified and the action plan including timescales would be monitored by the multiagency group. It was

noted that a national group had also been established and it would be checked what information could be shared. Members asked what data was available on past performance to feed into plans going forward, including levels of provision and outcomes. It was confirmed that there was activity data available, such as how many appointments were made, however, information on capturing outcomes was lacking. Work was being undertaken to account for the work of all the services and what had been completed. Members highlighted that this information would be useful in gathering a clearer picture on how the money was spent.

It was noted that money had been released to tackle waiting lists and Members queried how this would be undertaken and why it would take until April 2016 for a full service to be up and running. They were informed that there was a plan in place to recruit more staff to reduce waiting lists, but there were difficulties in recruiting suitable professionals and staff shortages in this area across Wales. Members noted that the quality of the service was important and that the right staff were recruited for the jobs.

Members queried how children and young people were referred to CAMHS and it was outlined that there were several routes, such as through GPs and educational psychologists. It was highlighted that there had been a 100% increase of referrals that were accepted at secondary tier, which had added pressure to the services. It was noted that it was important to empower services to be delivered at the right place and training was crucial to this in working with families and teachers. The intention was to create pathways rather than just referrals and this involved upskilling staff to the right level.

It was noted that the proposed service model does not seem to have any operational indicators, such as the number of professionals and the ratio of staff to children requiring a service. It was highlighted that such specifications should be in the contract details rather than the general service specifications. It was noted that contracts would be jointly commissioned with local authorities.

Members felt that further discussion and investigation was required into the matters outlined during the presentation. The Committee recommended and agreed that a one day scrutiny inquiry was undertaken into CAMHS services and the proposed new service models, including inviting partner agencies to give evidence.

Following scrutiny, it was agreed that the report be noted.

5. **CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SERVICES - KEY PRIORITY INDICATOR INFORMATION**

The Committee received the report on the key priority indicator information within Children's Services, as detailed with the circulated report, for indicators:

- Priority Indicator 5 – Number of looked after children by placement type.
- Priority Indicator 6 – the number of children who have been discharged from care and then subsequently re-admitted.
- Priority Indicator 7 – the number of cases held within the service categorised by status – child protection, looked after or child in need.
- Priority Indicator 8 – The number of cases “stepped down” from Children and Young People Services to Team Around the Family.
- Priority Indicator 9 – The percentage of children looked after during the year with a Personal Education Plan within 20 school days of entering care or joining a new school.

Members requested for bar graphs to have a better distinction between different shades of colour so it was easier to read.

Members were informed that in relation to PI 5, that the number of looked after children in Neath Port Talbot had now dropped below 400, which was good news and demonstrated the progress the Service had made.

PI 6 indicated that one young person had been readmitted into care during September. Members asked if there was an appropriate plan in place to help this young person. Officers informed them that they did not have the information on the specific case but overall they were pleased with the responses from the edge of care team and the focus was to rehabilitate children and young people back to their families. It was noted that the strengthening of the admissions process had significantly reduced the number of emergency admissions.

In relation to PI 7 it was highlighted that the number of cases were considered every week by teams and there was a lot of work undertaken to continue to reduce children in need and for cases to be stepped down where appropriate.

Members highlighted that in September 19 out of 28 children with a change of school had a Personal Education Plan within 20 school days. It was confirmed that this was due to the transition period between primary and secondary school and all looked after children had a Plan in place within another 10 days.

Following scrutiny, it was agreed that the report be noted.

6. **REVIEW OF YOUTH CLUB PROVISION**

The Committee received an update report on the current youth club provision and mapping exercise, as detailed within the circulated report.

Members were informed that there were currently 14 youth clubs being run by the Youth Service. It was highlighted that in some areas alternative proposals were being considered, especially where there was low attendance. It was noted that consideration had been given to the age range able to access clubs and changing it from 11 to 25 to 11 to 18 years old and those young people who still wished to be involved after 18 to undertake different roles. It was noted that there was a mix of young people from different backgrounds who attended the clubs. The Service had analysed attendance and the average a club had 25 young people that attended around 10 times a year. However, it was noted that the figures were slightly misleading as they included two clubs that were not open for the whole period when the data was collated. Members highlighted that there was low attendance at some clubs and queried if there was information on what made a good club. It was explained that when young people were asked why their attendance dips their response had been that they were too busy to attend.

It was highlighted that consultation on youth club provision had been carried out with young people from 28 of 42 wards. Where specific issues were raised workers have undertaken further work with the young people. In some areas the youth clubs were considered to be in the right place and in others they were not.

A community mapping exercise was also undertaken and provided some useful data. It was recognised that the data was not the whole story and other information was used such as knowledge of communities. Officers have tried to map other youth facilities in areas, however, it had been difficult to find the right information and ensuring

it was up to date and accurate. Members noted that play sufficiency assessments had been undertaken in some wards and this information could be useful to the Youth Service in planning provision. Members also highlighted that there were some inaccuracies in the community mapping information in regards to levels of crime and other youth provision. It was suggested that officers consulted with local Members who have a lot of knowledge about what provision was in their area.

The Committee noted that they had previously asked for information on need and corresponding best provision, as there seem to be areas without Local Authority provision and also no alternative provision. There could be scope for money to be better spent, even if it was providing transport to existing provision. Officers took these comments on board.

Members highlighted that young people had indicated other provision they would like in their communities and one of the top responses was having a skatepark, it was queried if more skateparks could be created. It was highlighted that this involved considerable funding and where possible officers looked at potential external funding for such provision.

Members noted that the number of young people who responded to the consultation was not very representative of the actual number of young people in the County Borough. It was queried if there were alternative ways to consult with more young people, such as by using schools. Officers informed them that they would be going to the NAASH (the group of secondary head teachers in Neath Port Talbot) to consider how schools could assist.

Following scrutiny, it was agreed that the report be noted.

7. **REPORT CARD - YOUTH SERVICE**

The Committee received the report card for the Youth Service, as detailed within the circulated report.

Members were informed that the Youth Service provides opportunities to young people to enable their learning, personal and social development and worked with young people aged 11 to 25 from across the whole of the Country Borough. The report card outlined the key activities and priorities for the Service.

Members noted that nationally accredited outcomes had reduced by 50% and officers explained that it was due to the reduction of funding through the Forward Financial Plan. It was highlighted that ENGAGE provision had transferred to the Education Otherwise Than At School team and there had been a reduction in number of contacts and recognised outcomes. Members queried if accredited qualifications included Duke of Edinburgh awards and it was confirmed that they did.

Members asked how the key actions were going to be monitored. Officers informed them that there was a management information system in place to monitor the outcomes achieved by the Service and ensure the data monitored by management was current and accurate.

It was noted that the Youth Service undertook a lot of joined up work with other organisations and Members highlighted that it was important that these resources were utilised.

Following scrutiny, it was agreed that the report be noted.

8. **PRE-SCRUTINY**

The Committee scrutinised the following matters:

Cabinet Board Proposals

8.1 Western Bay Youth Justice and Early Intervention Service Quarter 1 Data Report

The Committee received the report on the progress made bringing the three previously existing Youth Offending Teams of Bridgend, Neath Port Talbot and Swansea together and concentrating on Neath Port Talbot locality performance, as detailed within the circulated report.

Members were informed of last year's performance and the first quarter's performance of this financial year. It was highlighted that positive steps had been taken to improve performance through the regional approach to delivery.

It was noted that there had been a reduction of first entrants into the Youth Justice System and last year Neath Port Talbot had achieved a 26% reduction. It was highlighted that the figures for the first quarter of this year indicated that only two young people from Neath Port Talbot had entered the system for the first time. Reoffending rates were reported on but data is always two years old due to the way it is calculated. It was noted that those who do reoffend do so with increased frequency compared to previous years and the most common re-offences were violence related. Custodial figures for the region were so low that it would be hard to reduce the numbers any further and the target was to maintain this performance. It was noted that one young person had been accommodated in Bed and Breakfast accommodation and measures were in place in Neath Port Talbot to ensure this did not happen again.

Members asked how reoffenders could be targeted and asked about custody. Officers informed them that part of the issue was the length of sentence given and the team had to target them when they were released with the right interventions. It was highlighted that the background of the young person had an impact, including links to being excluded from school and substance misuse. Officers informed Members that the Trauma Recovery Model that was developed in Hillside Secure Unit was being piloted in other areas to establish if it was transferrable to community settings. It was too early to evaluate the effectiveness of this.

It was explained that the restorative justice approach was being taken in schools to try and prevent exclusions. In regards to accessing education and training it was highlighted that this was being addressed by the Building Skills Programme, which offers a growing range of skills and development opportunities, reparation projects and paid work experience placements. Examples were given of local schools using the programme to build play areas and Members were pleased to hear about this scheme. It was noted that there was a plan to move the innovation centre from Swansea to Neath, near the train station, so it was accessible to all three local authorities.

Members asked if the Western Bay structure was working and officers explained that the management structure was a strength in how effectively it was working. It was noted that

there had been difficulties, however, there was willingness for all areas to work together and share practice.

Following scrutiny, it was agreed that the report be noted.

8.2 Workforce Data Update

The Committee received the report updating Members on workforce data in relation to Children and Young People Services, as detailed within the circulated report.

Members were informed that there were currently no concerns regarding the workforce profile of Service, improvements had been maintained and progress continues. It was noted that people management systems were in place to ensure employees were managed appropriately. Agency workers were now only used to cover sickness, maternity and any vacancies in the Service and the process was being managed properly. The maximising attendance scheme was being used effectively and work related stress accounted for only 1% of incidents of absence. There was monitoring was in place to flag when someone had three or more periods of sickness absence.

Members asked if the Council offered unpaid leave to employees where appropriate and it was confirmed that this was the case.

It was highlighted that the Service had easily filled unqualified vacancies through internal recruitment. In addition two new experienced Principal Officers had been appointed from other local authorities. In regards to progression and succession planning Members were informed that there was a good calibre of social work staff progressing through the bar (opportunity to progress from a grade 8 to a grade 9). There were no concerns over leavers as there would always be natural turnover and exit interviews continue to be undertaken.

Members queried how many male social workers were employed and were there any steps to encourage men into the roles. Officers informed them that social work tends to attract more women, however, there were some male social workers who were in teams and had been for some time.

It was noted that performance appraisals had started to be rolled out and information on this would be reported back to the Committee at a future meeting.

Following scrutiny, it was agreed that the report be noted.

8.3 Introduction of a Single Point of Contact in Children and Young People Services

The Committee received the report regarding the introduction of the Single Point of Contact (SPOC) designed to respond to all contacts that come into Children and Young People Services (CYPS) and the Team Around the Family (TAF), as detailed within the circulated report.

Members were informed that since the TAF had been co-located with the Intake Team, the Service had taken the opportunity to create a SPOC to holistically assess all contact and referrals, which would result in more consistency in practice. The co-location had allowed for closer working relationships between the teams and more robust arrangements being put in place, which had resulted in shorter assessment processes. It was noted that the initiative was being officially launched on 6th November and Members were welcome to attend.

Members were pleased to hear of this development. It was emphasised that the Service continues to create an environment where families can approach teams about their concerns and not be fearful of social services. It was noted that there was a dedicated room in Neath Civic Centre for the Intake Team to meet with families that was user friendly.

Following scrutiny, it was agreed that the report be noted.

8.4 Reorganisation of the Provision of Pupils who Receive their Education otherwise than at School

The Committee received the report on the proposed recommendations of the Inclusion Review, as detailed within the circulated report.

Members were informed that the report sets out the Council's strategic approach to wellbeing and behaviour provision with particular reference to pupils that were taught outside of the school setting. Officers were taking this opportunity to consult with Members on this issue and it was noted that Members had the opportunity to respond throughout the consultation period.

It was highlighted that the proposals were not a withdrawal of provision but to provide better provision on a more sustainable footing. The role of the Education Otherwise Than At School (EOTAS) Team had grown and this incurred increased costs. There would be overspend in this year's budget, which could not be sustained year on year and the Service was not confident that the potential of children and young people was being maximised.

The Inclusion Review noted that an unacceptably high number of pupils receiving education other than at school and the high levels of exclusion from school was a contributory factor. Educating children outside of school could compound their social and behavioural issues and there were strong indications that there was a link to poor achievement. Schools have indicated that they were having difficulties in dealing with the behaviour of some children, especially in the secondary sector. Estyn's recommendations, following their 'Education other than at school: a good practice survey' (June 2015) undertaken across all local authorities, were similar to that of the Inclusion Review.

The proposals aim to transfer the responsibility for excluded pupils back to the schools so that they remain in mainstream education as far as possible. It was emphasised that the EOTAS Team engage well with pupils, however, they did not have access to the same facilities for subjects they may be more inclined to engage with, such as art. Children and young people educated outside of the school setting were not making the same academic achievements as their peers. It was recognised that the best teachers were in mainstream schools and schools should be putting together a package of support based on the needs of individuals. The proposals were to provide support to schools to help manage this and ensure there was a continued link between the child and the school.

Members highlighted that the home tutors had a lot of experience and knowledge that should continue to be utilised. Officers explained that they would have the opportunity to apply for the new posts in the proposed structure. The new posts would be advertised with prior consideration to those at risk of redundancy and in addition they would, in the first instance, be ring fenced for the staff that were at risk within the existing service provided they met the job requirements. Also schools should consider what skills and experience they had and whether this needed to be expanded. The proposals should develop a more sustainable approach and the responses from the consultation would be considered before a final model was agreed.

Members expressed concern about where savings would be made as once a child was referred to EOTAS they have to be funded. It was explained that schools already receive funding for pupils that were on their roll and this funding should be used to educate those pupils. However, there would be support services available to be utilised by schools to manage these pupils and increased capacity to prevent similar behaviour in the future. Early intervention was an important part of the preventative work. Members were informed that the proposals had so far been supported by headteachers and they had been engaged in the process.

The Committee were supportive of more responsibility being given back to schools. Removing children from the school environment did not tackle the root cause of the behaviour and the focus should be on educational attainment. Members suggested that transition management needed to be addressed as this could assist with identifying issues earlier.

Members queried if children with a medical condition that prevented them attending school would still get home tuition. It was clarified that each case would be assessed on an individual basis.

Following scrutiny, it was agreed that the report be noted.

9. **ACCESS TO MEETINGS**

Resolved: that pursuant to Section 100A(4) and (5) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded for the following items of business which involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 12 and 14 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A to the above Act.

10. **PRE-SCRUTINY**

The Committee scrutinised the following matters:

Cabinet Board Proposals

10.1 Family Support Services – Voluntary Family Support

Cllr.A.Carter reaffirmed his interest at this point.

The Committee received the report for the Council to enter into a partnership agreement with Neath Port Talbot Council for Voluntary Service (NPTCVS) to deliver enhanced services within the area of Voluntary Family Support, as detailed within the circulated report.

Members were informed that the Council had a long standing contract with NPTCVS to deliver a Voluntary Family Support service, however, this agreement had now come to an end and the Council must look at ways to deliver this service in a more sustainable way. It was highlighted that the service needs to be more outcome focussed. It was noted that going out to procurement would cause too much service disruption and there were significant advantages to entering into an agreement with NPTCVS to ensure best value for money, sustainability and avoidance delay. Therefore it was requested the normal tendering processes were suspended.

Members queried if there was any duplication of services and officers confirmed that there was not as NPTCVS were already delivering this service and this exercise would improve the contract. It was noted that the contract would go out to procurement in the future and an opportunity was provided to test and challenge the service to identify what could be delivered.

Following scrutiny, the Committee was supportive of the proposal to be considered by the Cabinet Board.

CHAIRPERSON