

Minutes of the Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board

27 March 2023

-: Present :-

Councillor Bye (Chairman)

Councillors Douglas-Dunbar, Dudley, Foster and Loxton

27. Apologies

It was reported that, in accordance with the wishes of the Independent Group, the membership of the Sub-Board had been amended to include Councillor Loxton in place of Councillor Mills. Apologies for absence were received from Laura Colman and Claire Platt (Co-opted Members) and Ed Wright, Jo Morrell and Mike Cook (non-voting Co-opted Members).

28. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Sub-Board held on 30 January 2023 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

29. Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)

Dr Femi Akerele – Clinical Director, and Sonja Upton – CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services) Head of Service from Child Family Health Devon (CFHD) gave a presentation in respect of CAMHS services in Torbay and wider Devon covering the following areas:

- Update on CAMHS.
- The action being taken to reduce waiting times.
- The options for young people who do not meet the threshold for formal CAMHS referral or support.
- Access for young people to CAMHS services.

Members were advised that there was now a CAMHS worker with the Youth Justice Team working one or two days a week but it was hoped that this would be extended further once recruitment issues had been resolved.

It was noted that CAMHS had developed short films which had been shared extensively on social media platforms, promoting the support available to children and young people in Torbay and Devon. These can be viewed at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xw4FLqo4678> and https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jgrpLb4_FCA.

The following questions were raised:

- How were young people's social needs being met by CAMHS.
- How did the signposting work for young people who may not be able to access support and advice without further help.
- How does CAMHS involve other agencies and partners, including the voluntary and community sector in their work.
- Was the 18 week target for a referral the first point of contact with the young person or was there a triage approach.
- How many children were currently receiving CAMHS input in Torbay (Note: it was agreed that a written response would be provided to this point.)
- How does a young person get a referral to CAMHS.
- Was it expected that the number of children and young people with mental health and emotional health needs was going to continue to increase.
- How does the relationship work with youth centres and community centres and how do you ensure that they were referring people to CAMHS.
- Why were CAMHS Teams only in 50% of schools, what was being done to increase this and how were the current schools chosen.
- What investigation has been carried out in respect of eating disorders and addictions.

(Note: Councillor Douglas-Dunbar left the meeting after this item.)

30. Children's Services Self Assessment

Becky Thompson, Divisional Director of Safeguarding provided an update on the Children's Services Self Assessment which had been structured through the lens of a child's journey as set out in the submitted report and responded to the following questions:

- The number of referrals was high, was this for different children or were some of the referrals for the same child.
- How were referrals made to the service.
- There was confidence that three of the areas of weakness identified by Ofsted were being addressed, however, where was the action within the Self Assessment that we were making progress on the frequency and quality of management oversight.
- What were the expected numbers of cases for each category of social worker.
- Where were the family hubs going to be.
- Will one family hub be sufficient for Torquay.
- Torbay still has higher numbers of cared for children and young people compared to other areas what was being done to address this.

Members acknowledged the importance of stability of the workforce and the increased confidence that partners had in Children's Services.

Resolved (unanimously):

That the Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board thanked Children's Services and their partners for the progress made in improving services to children and young people in Torbay.

31. Torbay Local Area Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Joint Inspection Written Statement of Action Update

Hannah Baker, Project Manager SEND Written Statement provided an update as set out in the submitted report on the implementation of the Torbay Local Area Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Written Statement of Action (WSOA) and responded to the following questions:

- How long did the parent workshops last for and where were they held.
- What was the projected increase in the number of children with SEND.
- Could the pillars of the workstream membership be spread further into the voluntary and community sector and also within the inclusive pillar.
- How could you ensure that all associated pillars link with good social care practice.

Resolved (unanimously):

That the Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board acknowledge the updates regarding each improvement pillar and support the continued implementation of the actions arising from the SEND Written Statement of Action.

32. Young People - Housing Strand Update

Nick Holland, Team Leader Housing Options presented the submitted report which provided an update on the joint working with the Housing Options Team and Children's Services Team to assist young people with their housing needs. Members asked questions in respect of the following:

- One of the recommendations from the Torbay's Housing Crisis Review was to assist young people with bonds for properties, what action had been taken to address this and help care experienced young people secure rented accommodation.
- Was there a risk that the flexibility to incentivise landlords to rent properties to care experienced young people would be reduced and was there a need for an agreed policy for such incentives.
- Was there confusion around benefits and did this impact on someone's ability to secure suitable housing.
- How were the figures in the tables on pages 210 and 211 created. (Note: it was agreed that a written response would be provided to this question.)
- Where were we with move on accommodation.
- What proportion of the 240 units of accommodation due to be developed this year by TorVista would be specifically allocated to care experienced

young people. (Note: it was agreed that a written response would be provided to this question.)

Members acknowledged the importance and impact that suitable housing had on young people's lives and that care experienced young people had received a lot of support at an earlier age but needed to have suitable transitional support to help them become independent adults.

33. Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board Action Tracker

The Sub-Board noted the contents of the submitted action tracker.

Chairwoman
