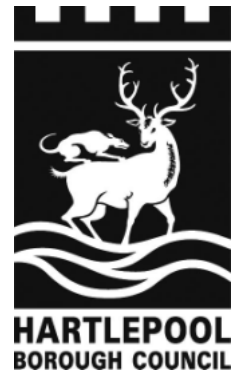


CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM AGENDA



Tuesday, 19 October 2010

at 4.30 pm

in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Hartlepool

MEMBERS: CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM:

Councillors C Akers-Belcher, Fleet, Griffin, Ingham, Lauderdale, Maness, Simmons, P Thompson and Wells

Co-opted Members: David Relton and 3 vacancies

Resident Representatives: Joan Steel and Hilda Wales

Young People's Representatives: Ashleigh Bostock, Lauren Carroll, Demi Coull, Shauna Hanley, Aarthi Suresh and 1 Schools' Council Representative

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS

3. MINUTES

3.1 To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 28 September 2010

3.2 To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 30 September 2010

4. RESPONSES FROM THE COUNCIL, THE EXECUTIVE OR COMMITTEES OF THE COUNCIL TO FINAL REPORTS OF THIS FORUM

No items

5. **CONSIDERATION OF REQUEST FOR SCRUTINY REVIEWS REFERRED VIA SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE**

No items

6. **CONSIDERATION OF PROGRESS REPORTS / BUDGET AND POLICY FRAMEWORK DOCUMENTS**

No items

7. **ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION**

Investigation into ‘Youth Involvement / Participation’:-

- 7.1 Verbal update on the progress of the investigation into Youth Involvement / Participation – *Young People’s Representatives*

Investigation into ‘Think Family – Preventative and Early Intervention Services’:-

- 7.2 Verbal evidence - case studies from Hartlepool Carer’s – *Councillor Mary Fleet*
- 7.3 Delivery and Co-ordination of Think Family services:-
- (a) Covering Report – Scrutiny Support Officer
 - (b) Small group exercises to discuss how the Council and its partner organisations deliver and co-ordinate their Think Family services

8. **ISSUES IDENTIFIED FROM FORWARD PLAN**

9. **ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS ARE URGENT**

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

Date of Next Meeting Tuesday, 2 November 2010 at 4.30 pm in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Hartlepool

CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM

MINUTES

28 September 2010

The meeting commenced at 4.30 pm in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool

Present:

Councillor: Chris Simmons (In the Chair)

Councillors: Mary Fleet, Sheila Griffin, Sarah Maness, Paul Thompson and Ray Wells.

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 4.2 (ii), Councillor Carl Richardson was in attendance as substitute for Councillor Peter Ingham.

Co-opted Members:

Mr D Relton

Resident Representatives:

Joan Steel

Young Peoples Representatives:

Lauren Carroll, Shauna Hanley, Kira Lund, Danielle O'Keefe and Robyn Reid.

Officers:

Sally Robinson, Assistant Director, Safeguarding and Specialist Services

Caroline O'Neill, Assistant Director, Performance and Achievement

John Robinson, Parent Commissioner

Ian Merritt, Head of Commissioning and Children's Trust

Mark Smith, Head of Integrated and Youth Services

Danny Dunleavy, Youth Offending Service Manager

Danielle Swainston, Sure Start, Extended Services and Early Years Manager

Nicola Dunleavy, Interventions Co-ordinator

Laura Stones, Scrutiny Support Officer

Angela Hunter, Principal Democratic Services Officer

Also in attendance:

Zoe McKenna, Participation Worker

Representatives from Golden Flatts Parents' Group

Jill Coser, Barnardos

25. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Christopher Akers-Belcher, Peter Ingham and John Lauderdale.

26. Declarations of interest by Members

Councillor Paul Thompson declared a personal interest in minute 31 and 32.

27. Minutes of the meeting held on 6 September 2010

Confirmed.

28. Responses from the Council, the Executive or Committees of the Council to Final Reports of this Forum

None.

29. Consideration of request for scrutiny reviews referred via Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee – Refurbishment of Exmoor Grove Children's Home *(Scrutiny Support Officer/Head of Commissioning and Children's Trust)*

The Scrutiny Support Officer presented a report which provided Members with the opportunity to respond to the referral from the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee on the refurbishment of Exmoor Grove Children's Home. Members had expressed concern that the capital expenditure for the refurbishment currently estimated to be in excess of £100,000 was excessive and further information on this was requested.

The Head of Commissioning and Children's Trust was in attendance and presented a report which provided the background to the refurbishment of Exmoor Grove Children's Home. Members were asked to note that the building had not undergone any substantial refurbishment since it was built in the 1970's. The cost of the refurbishment had a detailed estimate £84,668.75. Members were asked to note that approximately £34,000 of work related to Health and Safety issues and the remaining work would ensure that the building complied with the National Minimum Standards for Children's Homes, under section 23(10) of the Care Standards Act 2000. The works would also resolve the concerns expressed during recent Ofsted inspections.

A discussion ensued which included the following issues.

- (i) A Member questioned whether part of the reason for the refurbishment was the change of use from a residential home for severely

handicapped young people to a more relevant use for young people with special needs. The Head of Commissioning confirmed that the property had been reduced from an 8-bedroom to 6-bedroom unit to allow provision for young people with complex needs including autism, learning difficult and other special needs. The unit would provide respite and short-term care throughout the year.

- (ii) In relation to the costs the Forum agreed that they were reasonable but raised concerns in relation to the professional fees incurred as part of the refurbishment project. A Member questioned the level at which they were charged, as 13% across the board seemed excessive and the money could be spent more productively. Members requested that the cost for professional fees be reviewed and reduced wherever possible.
- (iii) The Commissioning Manager indicated that this was the standard rate charged by the Council's Building Consultancy Team and he would pass on the Member's concerns to the appropriate officers.

Members considered that the refurbishment being undertaken was required to ensure the safety and well-being of the young people who were to occupy the building. Having been presented with the background, detailed costings and reasoning behind the refurbishment, Members agreed it was a necessary project.

Recommended

- (i) Members wished to confirm the refurbishment project at Exmoor Children's Home was a necessary project and that the total cost was reasonable and not excessive in view of the level of work undertaken.
- (ii) That the cost for professional fees be reviewed and reduced wherever possible.

30. Consideration of progress reports/budget and policy framework documents

None.

31. Verbal Update on the progress of the investigation into Youth Involvement/Participation *(Young People's Representatives)*

As part of their investigation into Youth Involvement and Participation which aimed to explore ways of expanding the participation / involvement of young people in the development and delivery of Council services with particular focus on the safeguarding of young people during their involvement in the process, the young people's representatives presented a paper to the Forum.

The paper highlighted that during their discussions, safeguarding was seen as a key issue when looking at social networking. The recent highly publicised case concerning Facebook and a young girl, Ashleigh Hall was referred to and

a card containing 'Ashleigh's Rules' provided by Darlington College was distributed. A number of suggestions were detailed in the paper which may help with this issue.

The young people had also met with Councillor Paul Thompson who had provided his experiences of using social network sites to publicise events for young people in the town. This had proven very successful in publicising the recent Hartlepool has Talent competition. The young people had commented that the development of a website to advertise services for young people may be an option with a link to social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter etc.

A piece of research undertaken by the National Youth Agency on youth work and social networking was referred to and it was noted that the Scrutiny Support Officer would forward the electronic link to this document to Members of the Forum. The key points found during this research were:

- Over 60% of 13-17 year olds had profiles on social networking sites and may spend up to two hours a night on them.
- Only 18% of young people have not tried using these sites.

However, it was clear from the research that there were massive risks concerned with the use of social networking in youth work and that there were some strong procedures needed to be put in place to manage these risks.

It was noted that the Council's Museums Service had a strategy in place for the use of Twitter and that the Scrutiny Support Officer would forward the electronic link to this document to Members of the Forum.. Members were asked to note that the young people would be meeting with a representative from the Safeguarding Board to examine ways of linking all this work together and feedback would be provided to the Forum at a later date.

The young people were thanked for their very informative presentation and Members look forward to receiving further updates at future meetings.

Recommended

The presentation was noted.

32. Think Family – Preventative and Early Intervention Services – Setting the Scene Presentation *(Scrutiny Support Officer and Child and Adult Services Department)*

There were several representatives from the Child and Adult Services Department in attendance to provide Members with evidence for the Forum's investigation into 'Think Family – Preventative and Early Intervention Service'.

The presentation provided the background to the Think Family service. This

included a Family Support Panel involving a number of agencies and organisations all working together in a joined up approach. A range of services had been developed using grants and a wide range of funding opportunities which provided strong partnerships and clear links with all agencies and organisations with clear leadership to Assistant Director level.

Details were provided on how the Team Around the Children's Centres operated including its key priorities with the range of its aim from women during pregnancy up to children under 5 years old and their families. The Team Around the Primary School worked in conjunction with the Family Intervention Programme through multi-agency working and looked at early intervention aimed at children aged between 5 and 11 years old to ensure that families had access to the relevant support at the earliest opportunity. The Team Around the Secondary School involved targeted youth support to ensure early identification of risk to young people and the delivery of the necessary support.

The Assistant Director, Safeguarding and Specialist Services concluded the presentation by summarising that the Think Family and Early Intervention Service provided a holistic and child focussed approach to child and family support. In addition tailored packages of care were being piloted with a view to ensure the families individual needs were met and to try and keep children out of the care of the local authority.

A discussion ensued which included the following issues:

- (i) A Member sought clarification on the CAF which was referred to in the presentation. A representative from the Child and Adult Services Department confirmed that this was a Common Assessment Framework form which was completed in conjunction with the family and used across all the services working with the families to provide a holistic assessment for that family.
- (ii) It was noted that there were a number of routes to identify families in need through health workers, police or school but what was in place to recognise families living in poverty? Members were informed that this would be identified by the Team Around the Primary School or a Children's Centre with only one referral required.
- (iii) There were a number of representatives from the Golden Flats Parenting Group who shared their experiences, positive and negative, with Members. Officers were asked to speak to these parents after the meeting to discuss their experiences and ascertain exactly what support was available for them.
- (iv) A Member sought clarification on whether there were any processes in place to allow a family to change social workers should they feel it necessary. The Assistant Director confirmed that there would be dialogue with the Manager involved in this situation to either resolve any issues or potentially change the social worker. It was also noted that there was a complaints procedure in place should anyone wish to make a complaint.
- (v) The presentation referred to a 'virtual' multi-agency team around each

secondary school and a Member questioned what this meant. The representative from the Child and Adult Services Department confirmed that the multi-agency team did meet up every six weeks and in between these meetings representatives from the team were in regular contact.

- (vi) A Member questioned whether the number of children being looked after by the local authority was increasing. The Assistant Director confirmed that this number was increasing and this was partly due to the earlier intervention with more families than before and this was reflective of the national picture.
- (vii) There was some concern that the additional measures put in place in relation to early intervention were not having the desired affect if the numbers were increasing. The Assistant Director confirmed it was still early days but that the current service was aimed at supporting families down the continuum of need.
- (viii) A member of the Forum questioned what the cost of this service was. It was noted that in general early intervention costs would be around £8,000 to £14,000 but without this the cost of taking a young person into the care of the local authority could amount to £0.25m. The think family grant in 2010/11 was £969,706

At this point, the Chair noted that the meeting was inquorate.

- (ix) A Member referred to the personal situations which had been referred to by some of the representatives from the Golden Flatts Parenting Group and requested general feedback at a future meeting on how these issues might be addressed.
- (x) One of the issues raised by one of the parents in attendance was that any parent who would like support from one of the Think Family services could not self-refer and it was suggested that this should be examined further to enable parents to self-refer. It was suggested that should self-referral for early intervention not be possible, the problems that family was experiencing would become worse and possibly result in more serious interventions at a later date. A representative from the Child and Adult Services Department confirmed that all think family services can be self referred through contact with the school or children's centre.
- (xi) It was suggested that further publication was needed of all the services brought together to support children and their families through Think Family services.
- (xii) A parent questioned how closely GPs were involved in the provision of the Think Family services. A representative from the Child and Adult Services Department commented that work was underway to work more closely with GPs through the Children's Centres but some GPs were more receptive than others.

The Chair thanked everyone in attendance, especially the parents in attendance who had shared their experiences.

Recommended

The presentation and discussion that followed were noted.

33. Progress Updates from Previous Investigations (*Scrutiny Support Officer*)

A progress update had been requested at the meeting of the Forum held on 6 September 2010 on the investigation into 'The Provision of Sex and Relationship Education (SRE) in Hartlepool Schools' and the investigation into 'Raising Boys Achievements – Bridging the Gender Gap' which had been undertaken in 2006/7.

Progress reports were circulated to the Forum on both of these issues.

Recommended

The progress reports were noted.

34. Any Other Business – Circulation of Agenda Documentation

A Member referred to the distribution of agenda documentation to non-Councillor members of the Forum as there appeared to have been several occasions when they have not received their agenda documentation prior to attending the meeting.

Recommended

Members concerns would be forwarded to the relevant officer to investigate this further.

Meeting concluded at 6.08 pm.

CHAIR

CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM

MINUTES

30 September 2010

The meeting commenced at 4.30 pm in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool

Present:

Councillor: Chris Simmons (In the Chair)

Councillors: Mary Fleet, Sheila Griffin, John Lauderdale, Sarah Maness, Paul Thompson and Ray Wells

In accordance with Paragraph 4.2 (ii) of the Constitution Councillor Carl Richardson was in attendance as substitute for Councillor Peter Ingham

Resident Representative: Joan Steel

Officers: John Robinson, Parent Commissioner
Danielle Swainston, Sure Start, Extended Services and Early Years Manager
Laura Stones, Scrutiny Support Officer
Denise Wimpenny, Principal Democratic Services Officer

Also Present:

Iain Wright, MP
Hilda Wales, Rift House Community Association

35. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Christopher Akers-Belcher, Peter Ingham, Co-opted Member, David Relton and the young people's representatives.

36. Declarations of interest by Members

Councillors Fleet, Griffin, Maness, Simmons and Thompson declared a personal interest in Minutes 40 and 41.

37. Minutes

None.

38. Responses from the Council, the Executive or Committees of the Council to Final Reports of this Forum

None.

39. Consideration of progress reports/budget and policy framework documents

None.

40. Scrutiny Investigation into Think Family – Preventative and Early Intervention Services – Evidence from the Member of Parliament for Hartlepool – Covering Report (*Scrutiny Support Officer*)

As part of the Forum's ongoing investigation into Think Family – Preventative and Early Intervention Services, the town's MP has been invited to the meeting to provide evidence in relation to his views on this issue. The Chair welcomed Iain Wright, MP to the Forum.

The MP emphasised the importance of early intervention, the benefits and success of family intervention projects in Hartlepool and nationally, the advantages of partnership working with the voluntary sector and ensuring this partnership continued. Reference was made to the potential effects on the service as a result of the Government's budget cuts and that evidence suggested that early intervention saved money in the long term. The need for the Council to retain these services to ensure people had the best start in life was highlighted.

A discussion ensued which included the following issues:-

- (i) In response to a query regarding the impact the recent change of Government would have on Family Intervention Projects, the Forum was advised that the previous Government had produced a green paper which indicated the importance of families and not just young people in the success of the services. Concerns were expressed that the new Government were concentrating on the deficit with little focus on future policy and priorities. Members were advised that the MP for Nottingham who was championing early intervention schemes would be a useful source of evidence for this investigation.
- (ii) A Member referred to the focus of the Council to reduce child poverty and a number of other issues including tackling drug and alcohol abuse etc and queried how committed the Government would be in delivering those priorities. In response, the MP expressed concerns regarding the absence of a youth policy, the risks that the current budget constraints may have on the previous

good work undertaken in this regard and referred to the importance of social fairness.

- (iii) Concerns were raised in relation to the low take up of working tax credits and benefits generally. The MP advised that whilst assistance was available arrangements should be made to ensure the system was simplified to encourage greater take up.
- (iv) Disappointment was expressed regarding the Government's proposals to reduce the number of Sure Start Centres and highlighted the benefits of the service as well as the importance of universal services being available to everyone.
- (v) In relation to the suggestion that the MP for Nottingham be approached in terms of sharing best practice, a Member suggested that evidence be sought from another local authority of comparable size with similar social economic and demographic issues. The MP stated that Hartlepool was regarded as one of the champions in this area, however, examples could be sought and provided.
- (vi) Whilst Members recognised the requirement to reduce services, the need to retain expertise and address the implications of such cuts was emphasised. Reference was made to the issue of continued worklessness and the consequences for the town as a result of the loss of the heavy manufacturing industry in the 1970s and 1980s.
- (vii) The improvements in educational standards, care systems and regeneration of the town over a number of years was highlighted and the importance of maintaining these standards were reiterated.
- (viii) In relation to the representatives from the Golden Flats Parenting Group who had shared their experiences at the last meeting of the Forum, it was pointed out that it was evident from these discussions that their feedback was invaluable. However, there were still a number of families in need not accessing the services available, the potential reasons of which were discussed. It was suggested that this issue be further pursued at a future meeting of the Forum.
- (ix) With regard to early intervention, the benefits of partnership working with the Health Service, particularly midwives and health visitors, to identify problems at pregnancy stage was highlighted as well as the need to develop stronger partnerships with the police and housing providers in terms of funding intervention projects.
- (x) Some concern was expressed in relation to the proposed transfer of services from PCTs to GPs and the impact on services as a result.
- (xi) It was noted that whilst there were a number of routes to identify families in need, there were a number of families not being identified. The benefits of extending the current referral routes was debated including the advantages and disadvantages of formalising referral routes and the importance of gaining trust with service users.
- (xii) Whilst Members noted the success of parenting programmes, it was pointed out that current intervention programmes focussed mainly on support for mothers. The benefits of providing a similar level of support to fathers was suggested.
- (xiii) Following further debate, the Forum emphasised their support for extending and improving family preventative and early intervention

schemes.

The Chair thanked the MP for his attendance and valuable contribution to the investigation.

Recommended

That the information given be, noted and the comments of the Forum and evidence provided be used to assist with the scrutiny investigation.

41. Consideration of request for scrutiny reviews referred via Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee – Service Delivery Option for Sure Start, Extended Services and Play *(Scrutiny Support Officer/Director of Child and Adult Services)*

The Scrutiny Support Officer presented a report which provided Members with the opportunity to respond to the referral from the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee on the Service Delivery Option (SDO), Sure Start, Extended Services and Play. Members of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee had sought clarification as to how the efficiency target and budget base figures had been calculated as part of the SDO for this service area.

The Sure Start Extended Services and Early Years Manager was in attendance and presented a report which provided the background on the options available for a proposed £40,400 savings target as part of the SDO for this service area. The services that were council funded and were included in the discussions for savings were:-

OSCARS out of school service - £85,542
Play Opportunities Pool - £18,000

Oscars was an all year round childcare service operated by the Council. It offered both after school club provision and holiday club provision. The service was town wide and open to children from 4-16 years of age. It operated from 2 locations within the town, Miers Avenue, Sure Start and Owton Manor Community Centre. Further details of the OSCARS out of school service and Play Opportunities Pool were set out in the report.

In relation to savings options, the options discussed at the review meetings included the following:-

- Increase OCCARs prices to enable the service to be sustainable
- Tender OSCARS to a private or voluntary/community provider
- Partner with other local authorities to provide a service regionally
- Close the OSCARS service
- Cease the Play Opportunities Pool

The report included the risk implications of the proposals, the impact on service users, third sector partners together with the impact on council staff.

A discussion ensued which included the following issues:-

- (i) The reasons for the OSCARS proposed price increases were discussed as well as a number of schools reluctance to provide after school services.
- (ii) In response to a query regarding the implications for OSCARS if parents transferred to childcare facilities on school sites, Members were advised that a child care assessment was currently being undertaken which would clarify preferences. However, current feedback from schools suggested that a number of schools were reluctant to provide out of school provision due to the costs involved and were reliant on OSCARS to provide the service. Members thought that it would be beneficial if all schools could provide after school and holiday provision and suggested the option of OSCARS running the provision from schools and requested that this be explored further.
- (iii) A Member queried whether the proposed increase in cost would assist with the service being self sufficient. The Sure Start and Extended Services Manager indicated that based on the current occupancy figures the service would be self sufficient. It was accepted that the increases were required to meet efficiency targets.

Recommended

That the Forum supported the SDO and the proposed £40,400 savings target and that the option of OSCARS running after school and holiday provision from schools be further explored.

The meeting concluded at 6.00 pm.

CHAIR

Case studies

Ms M**Type of support given:-**

- a volunteer to take Ms M out to shop in town then onto asda.
- A driver to drive her to shops and return.

Why support:-

- mobility very poor – use of wheelchair/struggles to stand, cannot get out of house on own without support & someone to push wheelchair.
- Son also disabled lives with her.
- The volunteer support actually benefits them both.

Support time:

4 hours for volunteer shopper / 1.5 hours for driver every week

This lady has been getting support from us for 3 years - every week since she started getting support despite going into hospital (when we have run messages and shopped for her) & volunteer holidays and Christmas.

This lady does suffer with several health conditions and we regularly take the lady for doctor, nurse, chiropody, dental, eye checks, blood tests, we have also collected prescriptions for her – often 2 people will take the lady due to her mobility problems.

Lady has often said she would not be able to cope without our service. She does get paid careworkers who prepare meals, help her out of bed but she would not get out of the house at all (her son would not be able to take her as he is disabled and experiences mental health problems) or attend check ups if it was not for Hartlepool Carers. Ms M looks forward to these times out and has her hat and coat on to go out. Thankfully we have 2 very reliable volunteers who go every week for her. Her son also gets along well with the driver so there is some contact for him when the driver drops the lady off home.

MRS S**Type of Support:-**

Dog walking / emotional support

Why she gets support:-

Isolated / ongoing health problems. Difficulty leaving the house. See below..

Support Time:-

4-5 hours per week by one volunteer. (walks dog several times a week and also sits with Mrs S to have a chat with her) Dog walking currently in place since March this year. Hartlepool Carers volunteers have walked dog off and on for 3 years.

A friend of S contacted us as she was worried about S's health and she knew she was struggling to walk the dog. We contacted the lady and offered her some volunteer help with her dog. Mrs S is isolated and has suffered with cancer for several having operations to have tumours removed and ongoing problems with her health and especially energy. She does not leave the house very much at all due to this and has a dog to keep her company. She got the dog before she became ill. She struggles with illhealth and walking the dog. This impacts her own mental health as she worries about him and he is more boisterous when not walked. Very often the volunteer will sit with Mrs S to chat. Mrs S is struggling with depression due to ongoing pain and illness. Occassionally we run messages for Mrs S.

MR J

Type of support:-

Help to get out shopping/company/emotional support

Why he gets support:-

Mr J has experienced ill health – heart problems whilst out shopping and sight in one eye. He is not confident crossing roads on his own

Support Time:

3 – 6 hours per week, supported Mr J for 2 years.

After experiencing some worrying symptoms with his heart condition whilst out on his own and losing his sight Mr J approached us to ask for help. He can get out on his own but feels better when with someone. He was getting so worried that he was not going out on his own. He also needs some help to carry shopping due to his heart condition. Mr J and his volunteer have become good friends and occasionally John goes into hospital for a few days his volunteer will visit him there or attend appointments with him.

Mrs L

Type of Support

Taken out Shopping & gardening

Why she gets support

Parkinsons disease, sons live away, wheelchair user out of house – cannot get out of her house on her own due to ramp up to her front door. Illness gradually worsening.

Support Time:

4 hours per week, Supported for 3 years

We have supported this lady every week for 3 years barring Xmas week and 4 weeks when we have had no volunteer available. The volunteer would not normally get out of the house without our service as her family in Hartlepool are older and frail and her sons live away. With our service she has choice about where she goes and what food she buys. Without us this lady would not be able to buy clothes, food, Xmas or birthday presents. When we cannot take her out directly we run messages for her.

MRS J

Type of support:-

Company/ getting to the hairdresser / getting bits of shopping in /getting out of the house / clothes shopping

Why she gets support:-

Losing sight (now almost blind), very poor mobility, not safe on electric scooter due to sight problems. Closest family are nieces who live away from Hartlepool.

Support time:-

2-4 hours per week. 2 volunteers – 1 provides company and often runs messages, 1 volunteer takes Mrs J to hairdresser and out shopping

Mrs J does get help from social services careworkers twice a day – she gets help with preparing food as she can no longer see clearly. Recently our volunteers helped her locate and get a new house as she was left to bid on the new compass system even though she is blind and in her 80s and has never used a computer before. Volunteers have made phone calls for her and acted as advocates. They recently popped in several times a week as she was left without warden call and telephones as she moved house and experienced a fall. Volunteers also provide emotional support as this lady can get confused easily and does get upset when this happens. "I used to be a really confident social lady, I don't know what has happened lately," she said to me. They have also helped her with post that she struggles with. She has told me she has had more love and care from our volunteers than those who get paid to help her.

MRS D

Type of support:-

Company/help to get out of house/emotional support

Why she gets support:-

Isolation/loneliness, disabled in an electric wheelchair – will not leave house alone due to previous remarks in street

Support time:-

2-3 hours per week

Most of the support this lady receives is emotional. She has had a lot of life changes in the last 2 years and is struggling with loneliness and depression. She also does not leave the house alone and yet is a very sociable person. Her social life has been curtailed somewhat by life events and volunteer help is very important to her. The key with this person is that the volunteer is the right person. She finds it difficult to trust people and so the service works hard to find her the right person to help her. In the past volunteers have given more time to this lady than 2-3 hours because of her need to get out and about and for company and due to her emotional state and feelings of loneliness.

CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM

19 October 2010



Report of: Scrutiny Support Officer

Subject: THINK FAMILY – PREVENTATIVE AND EARLY INTERVENTION SERVICES - DELIVERY AND CO-ORDINATION OF THINK FAMILY SERVICES - COVERING REPORT

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To inform Members of the Forum that partner organisations and parents have been invited to attend this meeting to discuss the delivery and co-ordination of Think Family services in relation to the investigation into 'Think Family – Preventative and Early Intervention Services'.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 Members will recall that at the meeting of this Forum on 6 September 2010, the Terms of Reference and Potential Areas of Inquiry/Sources of Evidence were approved by the Forum for this scrutiny investigation.
- 2.2 Subsequently, partner organisations have been invited to attend this meeting along with parents to examine how the Council and its partner organisations co-ordinate their Think Family approach in order to deliver services in an integrated way to avoid duplication and gaps in service provision.
- 2.3 It is suggested that the Forum split into small groups to discuss the delivery and co-ordination of Think Family services with partner organisations and parents. The aims of the group exercise are to:
- (a) Enable everyone to speak and put forward their opinions;
 - (b) Support parents and young people throughout the exercise;
 - (c) Pick up key themes / issues throughout the discussion and report them back at the end of the meeting; and
 - (d) Prepare final notes following the meeting.

2.4 It is suggested that discussion should focus on the following key questions:-

- (a) How do you feel that Think Family services should be delivered to families?
- (b) In what ways can the Council / partner organisations ensure that parents and their families get the support they need at the earliest opportunity?
- (c) In what ways can the Council / partner organisations maintain contact with families who have accessed Think Family services and may need to access them again in the future?

3. RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 That Members of the Forum consider the views of the partner organisations and parents in attendance in relation to the questions outlined in section 2.4 of this report.

CONTACT OFFICER

Laura Stones – Scrutiny Support Officer
Chief Executive's Department - Corporate Strategy
Hartlepool Borough Council
Tel: 01429 523647
Email: laura.stones@hartlepool.gov.uk

BACKGROUND PAPERS

The following background paper was used in preparation of this report:-

- (a) Scrutiny Investigation into 'Think Family – Preventative and Early Intervention Services' - Scoping Report (Scrutiny Support Officer) – 06.09.10

Opening Times:

Monday	9 am - 7 pm
Tuesday	9 am - 7 pm
Wednesday	9 am - 7 pm
Thursday	9 am - 8 pm
Friday	9 am - 5 pm
Sat/Sun	Closed

**CHANGES aim to carry on
offering support to the
Children, young people and their
families / carers in
Hartlepool.**

**It aims to build an
approachable and accessible
service by
networking with partners and
other agencies in Hartlepool.**

**CHANGES
17 Lowthian Road
Hartlepool
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**Children and Families
Psychological Wellbeing Service**

CHANGES

Children and Families

Psychological Wellbeing Service

CHANGES Counselling Service provides Counselling for Children, Young People and where necessary their Families or Carers. Our Counsellors are there to facilitate a social, emotional and psychological service. The theoretical approach is primarily person centred but other approaches are drawn upon depending on the client and their presenting issues; i.e.continued

..... CBT, Gestalt, Solution Focused, Humanistic, TA and Psychodynamic therapies, Therapeutic games and creative therapies are used with the children to help them engage in the therapeutic process. There are a vast range of clients issues that are dealt with from anger and bullying, family breakdown, self esteem and confidence, to anxiety and depression, eating disorders, self harm, bereavement, abuse and suicide, to name but a few.

Once a referral is received the client is matched to a counsellor depending on their presenting problem and intensity of the issue. It is then the upmost priority to provide a safe, warm environment for the client to encourage engagement with the service and ensure the best possible outcome for the client. Improving the client's ability to communicate thoughts and feelings and improved self esteem and self confidence, will enhance over all emotional and psychological wellbeing.



CHANGES
Children and Psychological Wellbeing Service
Counselling Project

Aims and Objectives

Changes Counselling Project works with two staff members, Karen Thomas is a BACP registered counsellor and supervisor; and Lisa Alvey has just completed a doctorate in Counselling Psychologist. The project also has sixteen volunteer counsellors who are qualified to Diploma level or are student counsellors in the second year of the diploma course or second year doctorate students.

The aims of the project is to provide counselling for children and where necessary their families and try to facilitate a better social, emotional and psychological wellbeing service.

The theoretical approach is primarily person centred but other approaches are drawn upon depending on the client and their presenting issues; i.e. CBT, gestalt, solution focused, humanistic, TA and psychodynamic therapies. A lot of play therapy, therapeutic games and creative therapies are used with the children to help engage them in the therapeutic process.

The referrals come from various sources, Mind, Social Services, Cafcass, Hyped, Victim Support, Harbour, Schools, and Parents, Self referrals and many other local projects and organisations.

There are a vast range of client issues that are dealt with from anger and bullying, family breakdown, self esteem and confidence, to anxiety and depression, eating disorders, self harm, bereavement, abuse and suicide, to name but a few.

Once a referral is received the client is matched to a counsellor depending on their presenting problem and intensity of the issue. It is then the utmost priority to provide a safe, warm environment for the client to encourage engagement with the service and ensure the best possible outcome for the client. Improving the client's ability to communicate thoughts and feelings and improving self esteem and self confidence, will enhance overall emotional and psychological wellbeing.

School Counselling Service.

Lisa Alvey has been placed in Manor School in Hartlepool as part of a pilot study to determine if there is a need to have a counsellor placed within the school. The project ran very well and the service was utilised to its full potential; concluding that there is indeed a need for a counselling provision within the structure of the school. Changes now has a counsellor on site in Manor School every Monday and are soon to be starting this provision in High Tunstall School. The aims of Changes are to try and replicate this pilot study and approach all of the schools in the local area; and eventually have at least one counsellor placed within each of the schools. This service will be offered at an agreed costing and generate income for the project.

Changes have also started to work closely with the Sure Start centres across Hartlepool. We have a counsellor placed in Chatham House on a Thursday who is available for parents to access counselling support for their children aged 3 to 7 years of age.

Changes aim to carry on offering support to the vulnerable young people in Hartlepool and their families. It aims to build an approachable and accessible service by networking with partners and other agencies in Hartlepool.

CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM REPORT

19 October 2010



Report of: Director of Child and Adult Services

Subject: RAISING BOYS' ACHIEVEMENT

SUMMARY

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to provide a background to the work being done to raise the achievement of boys in Hartlepool schools and Colleges and to inform and update Scrutiny Forum members of successes to date and future challenges.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The headline data on attainment in Hartlepool

"Our students achieving 5 or more A* - C passes is now almost 8% above the national average and 50.3% of pupils have achieved the important measure of five or more A* - C passes including English and maths beating last year's record when Hartlepool was the most improved Local Authority in the country in this particular indicator."

Hartbeat, Autumn 2010

Whilst Hartlepool has every reason to celebrate an improving trend in outcomes in its schools there are still some persistent gender gap issues which, for Hartlepool, will remain an issue for schools and Colleges to address.

KS1 Results 2010

Level 2+ Gender Gap

- The gap between boys and girls is becoming noticeably wider in Reading, Maths and Science since 2007. Girls are performing better than boys in all subjects at L2+ by the end of KS1.

Level 3+ Gender Gap

- Reading – gap narrowing
- 2007 – girls performed 12.4% better than boys and in 2010 girls performed only 2.6% better than boys.
- Writing – gap narrowing
- 2007 – girls performed 11.2% better than boys and in 2010 girls performed only 2.9% better than boys.
- Speaking and listening – gap narrowing
- 2007 – girls performed 6% better than boys and in 2010 girls performed 0.5% better than boys.
- Maths – gap widening but boys out-performing girls
- 2007 – girls performed 1.6% better than boys, however, by 2010 boys were performing 8.8% better than girls.
- Science – gap widening but boys out-performing girls
- 2007 – girls performed 0.3% better than boys but by in 2010 boys performed 4.6% better than girls.

KS2 Results 2010

Level 4+ English and Maths Combined Gender Gap

- The gender gap at L4+ combined English and Maths has widened between 2007 and 2010. Girls have performed better than boys year-on-year, with the gap increasing from 6% in 2007 to 8% in 2010.

Two levels progress- Gender Gap

- 2007 – 1.3% fewer boys achieved 2 levels progress in English than girls. In 2010 this gap has risen to 4% less boys.
- 2007 – 2.7% more boys achieved 2 levels progress in Maths. However this had fallen to 1.3% fewer boys than girls in 2010.
- Overall the gender gap has widened in terms of progress in English and Maths over the past four years.

KS3 Results 2010

Level 5+ Gender Gap

- English Level 5+ - 2007 12.2% more girls achieved L5+ than boys. This gap increased to 18.8% in 2010.
- Maths L5+ - 2007 2.1% more boys achieved L5+ than girls. In 2008 there was no difference in the gender achievement. By 2010 the gender difference was 6.6% more girls achieving L5+.

Level 6+ Gender Gap

- English L6+ - Girls out-performed boys between 2007 and 2010. In 2007 the gap was 6.7% by 2010 it had increased to 20.5%.
- Maths L6+ - 2007 boys achieved 4.2% more than girls. By 2010 this has changed to girls achieving 3.7% more than boys. Therefore the gap has widened considerably over the last 4 years.

KS4 Results 2010

5+ A*-C

- 2007 – 68.6% girls achieved 5+A*-C compared to 54.7% of boys, making a 13.9% difference. By 2010 this gap has narrowed to 3.8%, although girls are still outperforming boys. Girls have outperformed boys over the last four years.

5+ A*-G

The gender gap is 3.8% in 2010. In 2007 the gap was 7.8% narrowing to 3.8% by 2010.

1+A*-G

The performance of boys has only increased by 0.5% between 2007 and 2010. The performance of girls has fluctuated between 2007 and 2010 (increasing overall by 1%) but they have always performed better than boys. In 2007 they out-performed boys by 1.7% and in 2010 the gap has risen to 2.2%.

5+A*-C inc E&M

In 2007 - 33.9% boys achieved 5+ A*-C inc E&M which has increased to 45.7% in 2010. However girls achieved 43.8% in 2007 and 53.0% in 2010, out-performing boys by 7.3%. This gender gap has closed by 2.6% between 2007 (9.9%) and 2010 (7.3%).

Please note progress against the original Scrutiny Forum recommendations:

- That the Local Authority focuses its future strategies in relation to the raising of boys' achievement levels on boys' literacy and writing. Identify boys' underachievement as a key priority in both Primary and Secondary Operational Plans.

Evaluation

Completed.

- That the Local Authority focuses its future strategies in relation to the raising of boys' achievement levels on boys' literacy and writing. Implement specific actions as part of the primary and secondary national strategies programme which target intervention and support in underachieving pupils including boys.

Evaluation

Completed and action reviewed from September 2007.

- That in addition to the Local Authority's Departmental Action Plans, the creation of a policy that includes a clear timetable and future aims and objectives, in relation to the raising of boys' achievement levels in Hartlepool be further explored. Develop and agree an overarching strategy for raising boys' achievement.

Evaluation

An overarching strategy has been explored and is now felt not to be the most effective way forward. Instead planning for bridging the gender gap will be better tackled through targeted support and challenge in schools and through the work of the School Improvement Partner.

- That in addition to the Local Authority's Departmental Action Plans, the creation of a policy that includes a clear timetable and future aims and objectives, in relation to the raising of boys' achievement levels in Hartlepool be further explored.

Evaluation

Agree with schools and other stakeholders including milestones for implementation.

- That a review be undertaken to ensure that an appropriate staffing structure is in place for the effective 'rolling out' of the Blended Learning Project across all Hartlepool schools. Continue to develop the blended learning pilot for reading. The original cross phase

Assessing Pupils Progress (APP) literacy group with Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) support is established and ongoing, being scaled up to include other schools. Numeracy group building on the work.

Evaluation

This is now completed and schools have developed APP as a mechanism for tracking pupil progress over time.

- That a review be undertaken to ensure that an appropriate staffing structure is in place for the effective 'rolling out' of the Blended Learning Project across all Hartlepool schools. Brief Secondary and Primary Heads through Director's briefings and Primary / Secondary Strategy updates.

Evaluation

The role of Blended learning has been developed through the use of the Learning Platform. The new town wide Learning Platform, Fronter, will allow all schools Primary and Secondary to network and share good practice, including assessment, and powerfully support improvement and innovation in teaching and learning.

- That a formal process be developed for the sharing of information and best practice to assist in the raising of boys' achievement levels across all schools in Hartlepool. Further develop the collection and analysis of data by LA.

Evaluation

Achieved. Analysis of data across the five phases is currently being undertaken for report on boys underachievement, for use with school improvement partners. School Leaders and SIPs will continue to analyse school data to identify where the gender gaps are and to use the data to ask questions about their provision for boys and girls.

- That a formal process be developed for the sharing of information and best practice to assist in the raising of boys' achievement levels across all schools in Hartlepool.

Evaluation

Space to Learn has provided an opportunity to develop town wide Learning Innovators who will share best practice in relation to teaching and learning.

- That a formal process be developed for the sharing of information and best practice to assist in the raising of boys' achievement levels across all schools in Hartlepool. Train schools in the use of RAISE online for tracking and interpreting data.

Evaluation

All schools use RAISE online to analyse school data and identify trends over time as well as performance of specific groups of pupils, eg, boys/girls.

Space to Learn has provided an opportunity to develop town wide Learning Innovators who will share best practice in relation to teaching and learning.

- That ways of encouraging greater parental involvement in the education of boys' within schools across Hartlepool be explored. Introduce a town-wide campaign to encourage parental support for pupils. Links with Family Literacy Co-ordinator established and joint work underway. Original deadline March 2008.

Evaluation

The awareness of role of parents in supporting their children and particularly boys has been raised in all schools.

- Stronger links with Adult learning. Family learning Coordinator implemented courses aimed at vulnerable groups. More parents from vulnerable groups have been involved in Family Learning and some have achieved accreditation.

Evaluation

The awareness of role of parents in supporting their children and particularly boys has been raised in all schools.

- That the Local Authority explores with the National Breakthrough Programme the possibility of adopting a 'cluster' funding approach, to assist in the reduction of costs associated with participation in the programme. Seek additional resources to support participation and discuss financial contributions from schools with Head teachers.

Evaluation

Explored and proven to be too expensive to be purchased as an additional resource by schools.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

That Members of Forum note the content of the report and where appropriate seek clarification.

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