

MEETING:	South Area Council
DATE:	Friday, 22 October 2021
TIME:	10.00 am
VENUE:	Council Chamber, Barnsley Town Hall

MINUTES

Present

Councillors Markham (Chair), Andrews BEM, Eastwood, Franklin, Frost, J. Higginbottom, Osborne, Shepherd, Smith and Stowe

15 Declarations of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

No Member wished to declare an interest in any item on the agenda.

16 Minutes of the Meeting of South Area Council held on 3rd September, 2021 (Sac.22.10.2021/2)

The meeting considered the minutes of South Area Council held on 3rd September, 2021.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the South Area Council held on 3rd September, 2021 be approved as a true and correct record.

17 Environmental Enforcement - Mark Giles (Sac.22.10.2021/3)

Mark Giles, Group Leader, Safer Neighbourhood Service, was welcomed to the meeting. Members were reminded that an Environmental Enforcement Policy had recently been approved by Cabinet. This outlined the approach to be taken across Barnsley.

Following the approval an exercise was undertaken which considered provision across the borough, and it highlighted that this varied considerably between wards. It was also noted that all current enforcement contracts were due to cease at the end of March, 2022.

Moving forward, the approach being taken would involve procuring a single contract which to provide a boroughwide service. This service would be provided at zero cost, with the provider receiving any income from notices issued. It was proposed that the service would cover areas such as littering, dog fouling and car parking previously commissioned in the South Area, but would also enforce areas such as non-presentation of bins, fly tipping and commercial waste. In allowing a single contractor to concentrate on enforcement, BMBC resources would then be focused on prosecutions.

It was suggested that the contract would allow flexibility for Area Councils to procure additional resource over and above that provided by the main contract.

Members noted that the specification for the service required the adoption of technology used by the council for issuing Fixed Penalty Notices. This would allow

monitoring on a geographical basis to ensure the service was being delivered appropriately across the borough.

Questions were raised around the external procurement of the service, and whether this could be provided in house. It was noted that there was currently not the resource to do so within the Council, and the process to recruit and train significant numbers of staff would be time consuming and costly.

Comments were received that Members needed to know the basis for issuing Fixed Penalty Notices so that they could support the process, for example by ensuring yellow lines were maintained, and that cameras were located in correct positions.

Queries were raised around the funding of additional services above the base level of service, and income from any notices issued. Members heard that any income generated from any additional service funded by the Area Council would be returned to the Area Council.

Members discussed CCTV and the monitoring of this, which is undertaken by South Yorkshire Police. It was noted that covert cameras were being used for operations, including to combat off road biking.

With regards to environmental education, Members questioned how this would be provided. Members heard that this would be through schools, at community events and through leaflets and the provision of other information.

RESOLVED:-

- (i) That thanks be given for the presentation;
- (ii) That the Area Council receives further information relating to the Environmental Enforcement Service in due course; and
- (iii) That future performance reports feature information relating to the Area Council funded covert cameras.

18 Children and Young People's Emotional Health and Wellbeing - Lauren Nixon (Sac.22.10.2021/4)

Lauren Nixon, CYP Emotional Health and Wellbeing Transformation Lead, was welcomed to the meeting. Members were made aware of the work to date in this area. A mapping and scoping exercise had been undertaken in order to record all services supporting the emotional health and wellbeing of young people. From this a number of recommendations for improvement had been developed.

A multi-agency group on the theme had been convened, which was well attended by a broad spectrum of organisations. The formation of the group was designed to enable strategic decisions to be made collectively.

The CAMHS service specification had also been reviewed and a model developed which puts the child at the heart. Members heard how the service was now in a mobilisation and implementation period, but improvements had already been seen in waiting list times.

A Mental Health Support Team was also in the mobilisation phase. Specialising in early intervention and mental health support in schools, the service would be fully

operational by March 2022, but was already operating in all secondary and special schools, and some primary schools.

Members also heard of the bereavement and healthy relationship councillor roles, which operated boroughwide.

Investment had been made to provide a physical space, with the CYP Emotional Health and Wellbeing Hub located in the town centre. This was partly operational but would be launched fully in the new year.

Members were made aware of the CYP Emotional Health and Wellbeing Improvement Plan which focused on 5 key areas:-

- Early Intervention and Prevention:- assistance is provided through a mental health support team supporting schools to embed a whole school approach to mental health including looking at the causes of mental health issues and how to support those with adverse childhood experiences;
- Workforce Development:- a training calendar has been developed which had been rolled out to educational settings;
- The role of schools and school settings:- investment has been made with schools having a designated mental health lead, and a forum to share best practice and input into service development has been developed;
- Improved support for vulnerable children and young people:- the Mental Health Support Team specifically work with groups such as LGBT, Young Carers, and those at risk of exclusion;
- Engagement and Coproduction:- working with such as the Youth Council, there has been significant engagement over the summer, and charter for services to commit to has been developed.

Members noted the ongoing workstreams, which included the Self Harm Strategy, All Age Eating Disorder Working Group, development of the Hub Building and the provision of a centralised multi-agency training offer.

Members discussed past issues and variable relationships with schools, with many now being academies. Assurances were given that all secondary schools were engaged with the agenda. It was noted that it was mandatory to have a designated mental health lead in all schools, and for these to be fully trained. Whilst not all primary schools were taking part, it was hoped that this would be developed over time, with the opinion of schools sought on the barriers. It was hoped that schools would see the benefits of engaging in due course.

Those present discussed the waiting times associated with different CAMHS pathways, and whilst many of these had improved, there was still need for further improvement. It was suggested that historically emphasis had been on diagnosis, with more support required once a diagnosis had been given.

Members noted the need to improve access to mental health services for all residents, with much to do in order to improve waiting times for those with serious mental illness. Members heard of the recently established Mental Health Partnership, and it was noted that the concerns of Members could feed into the group.

RESOLVED that thanks be given for the presentation and update.

19 Children's Social Care Assessments - Liz Stenton (Sac.22.10.2021/5)

Liz Stenton, Head of Children and Family Social Care, was welcomed to the meeting. Members heard of work completed by the Nuffield Foundation and published in July, 2020. The work considered levels of poverty and deprivation and the impact on decision making for children in social care. Members were reminded that Barnsley was the 38th most deprived borough out of 317 authorities.

Members heard of the work Service Director Debbie Mercer had been involved in, leading a service of practice focused workshops with children's services staff. These allowed time for reflection on practice and to make recommendations for the future.

Since this time there had been an opportunity to look at the next steps, working with families and communities to poverty proof assessments.

Members heard that issues with families were often not as a result of neglect but often due to problems associated with poverty. Historically some practitioners had struggled to make the link with poverty, and this was an important factor to be sighted on during assessment.

Those present heard of the difficult choices families in crisis often had to make in relation to their finances, and how this may often impact on other areas. It was seen as important to ensure practitioners unpicked the underlying reasons and looked at ways to support families.

Work also looked to strengthen collaboration across the Council to support families, noting the phrase 'it takes a village to raise a child', and it was acknowledged that the primary focus was for children to stay with their family wherever possible.

In practical terms, Members noted that a poverty task and finish group had been established and had developed an action plan. A poverty checklist for managers to use when supervising staff had been developed, and poverty champions were now in place. Links had been made with staff in Department for Work and Pensions, and Citizen's Advice Bureau to look at how families can best access support. An agreement for training, advice and guidance to be provided by officers in housing was now in place and the review of the neglect strategy would take into account the links between poverty and neglect. Members noted that child assessment and protection templates would now also take account of the poverty context of the family.

Future work in this area included broadening conversations with families and further engagement with the third sector and across departments. Members noted that Covid had put additional pressures on households, and linking families to support to maximise income was more important than ever. Assurances were given that the voice of families and of children continued to be at the centre of work, and that work with families continued on a strength based restorative approach.

Members discussed the impending changes to universal credit and the expected impact. The need for support to ensure residents received the benefits to which they are entitled in order to maximise their income was noted.

Support provided at an Area Council or Ward level, including welfare rights advice, winter wellbeing work, and access to food through such as healthy holidays provision, was noted, and the need for practitioners to be aware of this. It was suggested that any gaps in support identified could potentially be addressed by the Area Council or Ward Alliance. All agreed that a joint approach to addressing poverty and assisting families was required.

RESOLVED that thanks be given for the presentation.

Chair