

<b>MEETING:</b>	Overview and Scrutiny Committee
<b>DATE:</b>	Tuesday, 11 September 2018
<b>TIME:</b>	1.00 pm
<b>VENUE:</b>	Council Chamber, Barnsley Town Hall

## MINUTES

### Present

Councillors Ennis OBE (Chair), Bowler, G. Carr, Charlesworth, Clarke, Clements, Frost, Gollick, Daniel Griffin, Hampson, Hand-Davis, Hayward, W. Johnson, Makinson, Murray, Phillips, Pickering, Sheard, Sixsmith MBE, Tattersall, Wilson and Wright together with co-opted members Ms P. Gould and Ms K. Morrill.

### In attendance

Councillors Barnard, C. Johnson, Millner, Riggs, C. Wraith.

### 17 Apologies for Absence - Parent Governor Representatives

No apologies for absence were received in accordance with Regulation 7(6) of the Parent Governor Representatives (England) Regulations 2001.

### 18 Declarations of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interest

Councillors Carr, C. Johnson, Sixsmith MBE, Tattersall and Wilson declared non-pecuniary interests in minute numbers 20, 21 and 23 due to their positions on the Corporate Parenting Panel.

### 19 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> July, 2018 were approved as a true and accurate record.

Councillor Carr made Members aware of the current situation in relation to Worsbrough Dale Park Pavillion and the suggestion that the building was not fit for purpose. The Parks Department had been identified as the customer in the case in question

In relation to issues with heating systems, Councillor Carr said that she had been made aware that a number of residents had been told that there would be no further investment at this time. It was suggested that this issue feeds in to the Overview and Scrutiny Task and Finish Group on Social Housing.

### 20 Barnsley Safeguarding Adults Board (BSAB) Annual Report 2017-18

The following witnesses were invited to the meeting:-

Bob Dyson - Independent Chair, BSAB

Rachel Dickinson, Executive Director – People, BMBC

Chief Superintendent Scott Green, Barnsley District Commander, SYP

Lennie Sahota, Service Director, Adult Assessment and Care Management, BMBC

Cath Erine, Barnsley Safeguarding Adults Board Manager

Monica Green, Head of Service – Safeguarding and Quality Assurance, BMBC  
Sarah MacGillivray, Designated Nurse For Safeguarding Adults, BCCG – Chair of the Pathways and Partnership Subgroup  
Councillor Margaret Bruff, Cabinet Spokesperson – People (Safeguarding)  
Michael Potter – Service Director, Organisation and Workforce Improvement, BMBC  
Will Boyes - Business Improvement Advisor, Performance Improvement Team, BMBC

Members heard how the annual report had been designed to be brief and more public friendly and inclusion of case studies, supplemented by videos on the website. Questions were invited from Members and the following lines of enquiry were challenged and pursued:-

With regards to the types of vulnerable adults dealt with by the Police, Members heard that there was a wide range of vulnerabilities seen which may impact on individuals capacity to make decisions, each was dealt with on their own merit. Within the past year increases in domestic violence and abuse had been seen, and there had also been increased evidence of hoarding and self neglect, though there were no current areas of concern.

When dealing with victims of crime that were vulnerable, Members heard how vulnerability would be assessed and referrals made appropriately. Assurances were given that the Police and Adult Social Care worked in partnership at all levels, and this was bolstered by an escalation policy, which highlighted issues to a more senior level should partner organisations not be in agreement.

With regards to performance against previous years and that of neighbours, Members heard how the previous 12 months had generally been positive, especially in areas such as removal of risk following intervention, and in reducing the numbers of cases with risks remaining. Members also heard how the Adult Social Care Users Survey showed that greater proportions felt safe in Barnsley than nationally and compared to neighbours. Members heard how improvements had been made in collecting performance information, with a move to considering more multi-agency data, with increased narrative, and a programme of audit for quality assurance.

When Members questioned what they could do to assist, it was suggested that it was important that awareness was raised for Members to identify issues when working with the public, and be able to signpost appropriately.

With regards to the effectiveness of the board, the committee heard how BSAB board members held each other to account, and an annual self-assessment was completed in addition to regular performance data being provided to each Board meeting. Board members were of a senior level, who had authority to take responsibility, and be held to account.

Members noted the Safeguarding Adult Review requests and the decision to commission one independent review. Learning from all the cases is monitored via the sub groups and Board and will be published on the website.. Also noted were the peer reviews undertaken to provide feedback and identify any areas for improvement.

In relation to partnership working it was noted that sharing of information worked well between all partners. The reintroduction of a neighbourhood model for community safety did assist in providing local knowledge, including knowledge of those potentially vulnerable in the area, and helped to ensure positive partnership working at a local level.

The committee discussed the prevalence of neglect, and it was acknowledged that the issue of self-neglect was high on the agenda of the board. Much work had been undertaken to develop the self-neglect and hoarding policy, including the development of tools and programme of multi-agency training for staff in both the statutory, private and voluntary/community sector.

Discussion turned to the vulnerable individuals who had issues, but the capacity to make decisions, and refused assistance. It was acknowledged that this presented a challenge and can limit the support agencies can provide. Members heard how a person centred approach is adopted and often the relationship between a certain member of staff or family can help to remove barriers so support can be accessed. Members were assured that in cases such as these, perseverance and a commitment to providing support were important.

The meeting discussed how agencies supported elderly and vulnerable residents, who may be victims of anti-social behaviour, and how this may change depending on the nature of the situation and of the victim. However, it was recognised that if referrals were made from Elected Members, then feedback on the situation to them could be improved. It was noted that if the individuals in question were Berneslai Homes residents, then tenancy support and mental health support workers were available, and that they worked closely with other partners.

Members stressed the importance of appropriate transition arrangements when young people became adults and it was noted that transition protocols and policies were in place. Support for vulnerable young people in the form of targeted information, advice and guidance and through the targeted youth support service was noted.

Members questioned whether members of the public were aware of how to report concerns, and the work undertaken as part of Safeguarding Awareness Week was highlighted. This was held across the county, and was featured in many parts of the media. In addition websites had been revamped to be more user friendly, and the pathways subgroup was considering accessibility and use of language, assisted by the Safe group.

Queries were raised in relation to the high proportion of abuse within care homes, and Members were made aware of the work of the CCG with the Council to look at standards of care in care homes. Regular risk assessment, with audits, and a programme of inspection was in place. The board was proud of the work in place to keep the majority of adults safe. Members heard of the over reporting of concerns by care homes and the work with the CQC to ensure decisions were taken at appropriate levels, which could see the over reporting reduce.

**RESOLVED:-**

- (i) That thanks be given for the attendance of all witnesses;
- (ii) That the report be received;

- (iii) That all agencies consider how feedback is provided to Elected Members following referrals.

## **21 Barnsley Safeguarding Children Board (BSCB) Annual Report 2017-18**

The following witnesses were welcomed to the meeting:-

Bob Dyson, Independent Chair, BSCB

Rachel Dickinson, Executive Director – People, BMBC

Mel John-Ross, Service Director, Children’s Social Care and Safeguarding, BMBC.

Monica Green, Head of Service – Safeguarding and Quality Assurance, BMBC

Angela Fawcett, Designated Nurse Safeguarding Children and Looked After Children, BCCG

Emma Cox, Named Nurse For Safeguarding Children, South West Yorkshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (SWYPFT)

Chief Superintendent Scott Green, Barnsley District Commander, SYP

Nigel Leeder, Barnsley Safeguarding Children Board Manager, BMBC

Councillor Margaret Bruff, Cabinet Spokesperson – People (Safeguarding)

Questions were invited from Members and the following lines of enquiry were challenged and pursued:-

In relation to the greatest impact on resources, Members heard how neglect had been the most common area of concern over the previous 12 months. A significant piece of work had been undertaken to develop policies around this issue. In addition Members noted that early help intervention helped to improve outcomes whilst also being a more efficient use of resources in the longer term.

The Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) had worked particularly well with staff sharing office space to foster greater partnership working, and that recording and sharing information of digitally generally worked well even though changing operational systems did provide challenges. It was noted that information sharing protocols were in place in order to share information between agencies, when in the best interests of a child.

The plans of previous governments to implement a national database for data sharing were discussed, and it was acknowledged that though this was not implemented information did follow the child for children subject to a child protection plan or children in care should they move. For those not subject to statutory protocols, agencies were vigilant in making contact to ensure that information was passed on to relevant authorities.

When asked about achievements, and areas requiring improvements, Members heard how the Safeguarding Awareness Week had included a wide range of agencies cross county, and the board was also proud of the work on neglect. Members also noted the recent change of the subgroup focused on Child Sex Exploitation (CSE), following recognition that this should be broader and more holistic covering exploitation.

In relation to the refresh of the Anti-Bullying, Hate and Harassment Strategy, the widening of this was noted, and the recognition that schools were expected to take action wherever the issue occurred. It was hoped that this would help keep children safe from bullying and help ensure attendance at school.

Members questioned what they could do to assist, and again I was suggested that they could raise awareness, signpost and refer as with adults. Members reiterated the need for feedback to them where cases had been referred, recognising the need to maintain confidentiality.

Questions were raised regarding communications and it was recognised that a communications strategy was important, with the board worked closely with BMBC Communications, with an example being the Safeguarding Awareness Week had been promoted extensively. The importance of information being accessible with understandable language was stressed, and it was noted that the website had been revamped to take account of this.

Questions were raised as to whether all relevant policies and procedures were in place and were robust and effective, and that the board was self-aware so that there would be no surprises in future. In response the journey from 2012 was stressed, with a culture of openness, and ability to challenge now embedded. In relation to performance management, this was supplemented by audits, which provided relevant checks to help reinforce quality, and to raise learning points. Also noted was the consideration of the serious case reviews conducted in other areas, in order to take account of any learning that could be useful to Barnsley.

Members asked how accurate the self-assessment undertaken by schools was, and those present noted that the assessments relied on honesty but that there was a positive working relationship with schools. With regards to external moderation it was noted that Ofsted would take account of safeguarding within schools.

**RESOLVED:-**

- (i) That witnesses be thanked for their attendance;
- (ii) That the report be noted;
- (iii) That organisations consider how their feedback to Members could be improved following referrals.

**22 Exclusion of the Public and Press**

**RESOLVED** that the public and press be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following item because of the likely disclosure of exempt information as described by the specific paragraphs of Part I of the Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) as follows:

<u>Item Number</u>	<u>Type of information likely to be disclosed</u>
23	Paragraph 1

**23 Children's Social Care Performance**

The following witnesses were welcomed to the meeting:-

Mel John-Ross, Service Director, Children's Social Care and Safeguarding, BMBC  
Councillor Margaret Bruff, Cabinet Spokesperson for People (Safeguarding)

Members were given an overview of the report circulated, which provided data to the end of July, 2018. Of significant note was the increase in numbers of Early Help

interventions closing, which was due to a recent exercise to chase information from agencies in order to ensure records were up to date.

The number of children with a child protection plan had increased, but did not present any cause for concern and all visits were on time, with cases subject to regular review and oversight.

The numbers of looked after children had reduced to 290, with rates lower than the national and statistical neighbour averages. Performance in relation to adoption was positive, however timescales remained challenging.

Proportions of care leavers define as NEET (not in employment, education or training) had declined, but it was noted that this agenda still needed focus and drive.

Though school attendance for those in care was high when compared with national rates, the need for continued high attendance rates to ensure positive outcomes was acknowledged.

Members heard how average caseloads had increased across many teams, however those for the Disabled Children's Team remained stable following a reduction from January.

The committee was reassured of the general positive picture the performance report provided.

Questions were invited from Members and in the ensuing challenge and discussion, the following points were noted:-

Following transition to school or between schools it was noted that schools will be made aware which children were already known to social care. Assistance is given to schools, including via the training given to safeguarding leads, so that schools are best placed to identify children requiring support.

With regards to caseloads, Members asked whether the increase in social worker numbers impacted on this. It was noted that there had been a significant investment in social workers, and generally retention was high. However some did move on, including being promoted internally which did leave some vacancies which were being recruited to. It was acknowledged that resources had to be managed effectively, and it was important to ensure teams were supported.

In relation to children with Special Educational Needs, questions were raised as to whether there were difficulties in accommodating any needs in placements. Assurances were given that for all Looked After Children who had been identified in the category, appropriate placements were available and all needs identified were being met.

With reference to the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) Members challenged the drop in completion rates, and in response it was acknowledged that this needed to be improved and should be driven by Social Workers, and also by Fostering Support Groups.

Questions were raised in relation to home schooling and whether any Looked After Children (LAC) were home-schooled, and it was confirmed that none were currently.

In relation to the recent children's services peer review it was noted that the findings were mostly positive and the service was in the process of implementing the recommendations. It was agreed that that the full report would be shared with the committee.

Members noted the offer of training on understanding the performance report should any new or existing members require this.

**RESOLVED:-**

- (i) That the witnesses be thanked for their attendance;
- (ii) That the reports be noted;
- (iii) That the peer review report be circulated to Members of the Committee.