

AT A MEETING of the Children and Young People Select Committee of
HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL held at the castle, Winchester on Tuesday
22nd November 2022

Chairman:
p Councillor Neville Penman

p Councillor Juliet Henderson

p Councillor Prad Bains

p Councillor Jackie Branson

p Councillor Ann Briggs

p Councillor Steven Broomfield

p Councillor Tim Davies

p Councillor Christopher Donnelly

p Councillor David Drew

p Councillor Zoe Huggins

p Councillor Gavin James

p Councillor Lesley Meenaghan

p Councillor Arun Mummаланeni

p Councillor Jackie Porter

p Councillor Jacky Tustain

p Councillor Malcolm Wade

Co-opted members

Robert Sanders, Church of England Schools Representative

Gemma Rainger, Parent Governor for Primary Schools

68. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies were received.

69. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were mindful that where they believed they had a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in any matter considered at the meeting they must declare that interest at the time of the relevant debate and, having regard to the circumstances described in Part 3, Paragraph 1.5 of the County Council's Members' Code of Conduct, leave the meeting while the matter was discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with Paragraph 1.6 of the Code. Furthermore Members were mindful that where they believed they had a Personal interest in a matter being considered at the meeting they considered whether such interest should be declared, and having regard to Part 5, Paragraph 5 of the Code, considered whether it was appropriate to leave the meeting whilst the matter was discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with the Code.

No declarations were made.

70. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the meeting held on 17 October 2022 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

71. DEPUTATIONS

The Committee did not receive any deputations.

72. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman did not make any announcements to the meeting.

73. AUTISM ASSESSMENT SERVICES

The Committee received an update presentation on Hampshire's Autism Assessment Services (see Item 6 in the Minute Book).

Members received a brief overview of the concerns first raised in 2018 related to the growing waiting lists and times, followed by an overview of the new assessment service. This service commenced in October 2021, with the following key changes:

- Expanded age range to 3-18 (up to 19 with learning disabilities),
- Referral sources expanded to include social care and education,
- Post assessment sessions and now offered routinely,
- Referral pathways have been streamlined.

The committee heard that the waiting list had dropped from c.1,750 to c.1,000 in November 2021, but that this had increased to c.1,900 in July 2022. Waiting times have fallen to c.10 months from 35 months in September 2020. The key issues the service was facing were set out for the committee, alongside the proposed actions to address them. Crucial amongst these was the increase in referrals, which was not thought to be down to organic population factors. Instead there has been a larger number of inappropriate referrals and a disproportionate number from a small number of GP surgeries.

In response to questions members found that:

- There is work being undertaken with SENCOs to ensure classrooms, and schools generally, are inclusive for all.
- The disruptive effect of lockdowns during the pandemic had a bigger impact on the neurodiverse.
- While there are more girls being diagnosed with autism, this is not linked to the increase in numbers.
- All referrals need professional input and cannot come solely from parents.
- All young people on the waiting list are signposted to other support agencies, while they await their assessment. Once a young person is diagnosed there is a separate suite of resources available.

RESOLVED:

That the Children and Young People Select Committee note the update from the Autism Assessment Services.

74. HAMPSHIRE CHILD AND ADOLESCENT MENTAL HEALTH SERVICE (CAMHS)

The Committee received a report and presentation providing an overview of Hampshire's Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) (see Item 7 in the Minute Book).

Members heard how Hampshire's CAMHS continues to go through a period of significant transformation to deliver an expansion of its core capacity in response to the increasing demand of Children's Mental health services. While increased numbers of young people are accessing support, demand continues to outstrip the capacity of the local service.

The committee noted the priorities for service development and investment, alongside the £2.5m investment for Hampshire's CAMHS committed by the NHS. This funding is to:

- Increase capacity of core CAMHS teams to reduce waiting lists for assessment and treatment.
- Transform the mental health service offer for Children in Care, children and young people with learning disabilities and/or autism.

In response to questions members found that:

- More families are presenting in crisis than previously, but all these cases are being seen urgently. The current waiting time of 64 weeks is only for routine cases.
- The Mental Health Support Teams in schools have been a success, both for the pupils' outcomes and for training post-graduates. Further teams are being rolled out in 2023 to provide county-wide cover.
- There have been national calls for a review of the CAMHS as there are issues nationwide. Comparatively, Hampshire is performing well but it is recognised that this is not good enough.

RESOLVED:

The Children and Young People Select Committee is asked to consider the report and note the work programme and priorities of the Hampshire Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service.

75. SAFEGUARDING REPORT - CHILDREN'S SERVICES

The Committee received a report and presentation from the Director of Children's Services providing the annual safeguarding report ahead of its submission to Cabinet (see Item 8 in the Minute Book).

Following a contextual background to the department, members noted the national developments since the last annual report. The Independent Review of Children's Social Care was considered a once-in-a-generation opportunity for radical change which emphasised the importance of universal services and family-wide support. It also called for a further investment and identified ways that this could lead to future savings. In addition to this, members had an update

on effect of the pandemic, the homes for Ukrainians scheme, Child Exploitation and Children who go missing.

Members received an overview of the performance and activity levels of the department, which showed a continued increase in demand with the department receiving a 21% increase in contacts. Members noted the positive figures in relation to Child and Family Assessments and Child Protection Plans. Given the rise in Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children a specific team has been set up to support them and care leavers in Hampshire.

The committee heard an update on the challenges of recruitment and retention of social work staff and the actions and schemes being taken and introduced to address them, alongside an update on the Transforming Social Care Programme.

Officers shared the future challenges and operational priorities for the Children's Services Department noting the key aims of:

- Keeping more children at home, when it is safe and appropriate to do so.
- Ensuring children have the right placement to meet their needs.

In response to questions members found that:

- The department has introduced a new 'Family Practitioner' role to take on some of the assessed cases and assist with caseloads.
- The department is investing and planning ahead so that it can confidently move forwards financially in a pragmatic way.
- Ex-service users have been recruited to provide support to those currently involved with Children's Services.
- The department has started a new initiative looking at persistent school absenteeism due to the safeguarding concerns surrounding this.
- When asked by the DfE, support has been provided to other Local Authorities, provided income for the department.

RESOLVED:

That the Children and Young People Select Committee note and support the recommendations being proposed to Cabinet in the attached report.

76. **WORK PROGRAMME**

The Chief Executive presented the Committee's work programme (see Item 9 in the Minute Book).

RESOLVED:

That the work programme, subject to any amendments made during the meeting, is agreed.

Chairman, Children and Young People
Select Committee

