Attendance

Members of the Panel
Cllr Julie Hodgkiss (chair)
Cllr Paula Brookfield
Cllr Susan Constable
Cllr Bishan Dass
Cllr Dr Michael Hardacre
Cllr Lorna McGregor
Cllr Peter O’Neill
Cllr Stephen Simkins

Other Councillors
Cllr Val Gibson Cabinet Member for Children and Families

Jordan Kiefer Dearn (Youth Council)
Stacey Game (Youth Council)

Staff
John Welsby Assistant Director (Children, Young People and Families)
Robin Morris Manager Youth Services (Schools, Skills and Learning) (Item 5)
Emma Bennett Interim Assistant Director (Safeguarding, Business Support and Community Services)(Items 6,7)
Andrew Campbell Head of Children in Need and Child Protection (Children, Young People and Families)(Item 8)
Deborah Breedon Scrutiny Officer

Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Patricia Patten (vice-chair) Cllr Christine Mills, Cllr Judith Rowley and Sarah Norman (Strategic Director Communities).

Part 1 – items open to the press and public

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3. **Minutes of the previous meeting (12 June 2013)**
   Resolved:
   That the minutes of the meeting held on 12 June 2013 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

4. **Matters arising**
   **Co-opted Member Vacancies**
   Panel were advised that Cllrs Julie Hodgkiss and Peter O’Neill have met with Governor Services Officers and that an action plan has been agreed to seek nominations for Co-opted Members to the CYP Scrutiny Panel.

   **Building Schools for the Future (BSF)**
   An update report will be prepared to the next CYP Scrutiny Panel by the Interim BSF Programme Manager. The report will address the matter raised previously by Cllr Dr Michael Hardacre namely the ability to compare the differing schemes to allocate bursary funding in Wolverhampton Schools.

   **Celebrating Achievements (Wowscars July 2013)**
   Cllr Peter O’Neill welcomed the success of the Wowscars and shared a particular highlight of the evening a remarkable speech from one of the young people receiving an award.

**DECISION ITEMS**

5. **Update on the Youth Services Improvement Plan**
   Robin Morris provided Panel with an update report on the Youth Service Improvement Plan. He advised that significant progress was being made and informed of the next steps to continue improvement.

   In response to questions Robin Morris outlined that the Wolverhampton Youth Service aims to provide quality opportunities, informal education, inclusion and youth participation.

   He confirmed that there is youth provision for LGBT and that the Duke of York awards are valid credits at university to enhance educational achievement. He further clarified that following the consultation process key documents would need to be developed and the implementation plan would sit under this.

   During the debate Panel members considered the equality analysis appended to the report and the need for effective monitoring to ensure equalities are an integral part of developing the youth provision, there was some concern that the milestones in the analysis were end products rather than targets along the way. Panel considered 70% face to face youth work and 30% administration to be satisfactory. Robin Morris advised that an ICT management system is being developed to enable effective administration and analysis of data to improve reporting of data.
which will assist in development of the Youth Service. Panel sought assurance that the ICT system would integrate with the rest of the City Council.

Robin Morris reaffirmed the main areas for improvement set out in paragraph 3.3 of the report and responded to questions relating to re-provision of services. Panel was advised that 10 sessions had already been identified as value for money in neighbourhoods for youth provision at a competitive cost and that a further 40 grants of £1000 are available to stimulate growth in youth provision.

Resolved:
Panel received the update report and requested a further update relating to the implementation of the improvement plan to a future meeting.

6. **The Childs Journey New Operating Model**

Emma Bennett provided a presentation of the New Operating Model for Children and Young People.

In response to Panel members questions John Welsby and Emma Bennett advised that:

- The 27 educational psychologists would be increasing working across the service but that this would not detract from schools and that this was a really useful resource to enhance Social Worker (SW) services.
- The pilot staffing structure for Child and Family support Areas will be rolled out recognising needs do differ from area to area, The preference is for two SW units per Area (formerly MAST).
- Based on schools or addresses the structure will be flexible trying to fit the service users rather than they fit the structure.
- The management structure of Child and Family Support Teams will be made clearer going forward, having identified some uncertainties around this within current MASTs.
- The EP in MAST team will continue to carry out normal role. The EP in SW units will be specifically geared to supporting the social workers in their assessment and intervention programmes.
- The Pilot will last for three months resulting in a restructure across Looked After Children Teams as well as the Locality Teams.
- Once implementation is complete we will explore its roll out to other teams including fostering and adoption.
- The pilot MAST 6 was chosen because it had the quickest change around to pilot and test it properly, not because it is the busiest.
- There are small additional costs to facilitate the pilot.
- The steering group overseeing the new operating model meets this week, The Children’s Trust Board, the overarching body, is multiagency but the accountability for roll out of the model rests with the Assistant Director Children, Young People and Families.
- To develop closer working relationships in the locality the approach has to
be multi-agency.

Resolved:
That the presentation be received and note that Panel welcomed the progress made to date and the Pilot scheme objectives.

7. **Adoption Scorecard**
Emma Bennett provided the Panel with an analysis of Adoption Scorecard Information 2012-13. Panel was advised that Wolverhampton Adoption Service continues to make improvements in adoption outcomes for its Looked After Children (LAC).

The 10 performance indicator measures are:
1. Average time from child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family
2. Average time between receiving court authority to place and the local authority deciding a match
3. The number and percentage of children who wait less than 21 months between entering care and moving in with their adoptive family
4. Adoptions from care
5. Number and percentage of children from whom the permanence decision has changed away from adoption.
6. The percentage of black and minority ethnic children leaving care who are adopted
7. The percentage of children aged 5 or over leaving care who are adopted.
8. Average length of care proceedings locally (weeks).
9. Number of children awaiting adoption
10. Average time between a child entering care and moving in with its adoptive family – adjusted for foster carer adoption.

Panel members were advised that the scorecard is working well and the direction of travel for LAC services is good.

In response to Panel members questions relating to the performance indicator outcomes John Welsby and Emma Bennett advised that:

- In the past court timescales had been particularly poor but as the dynamics between Council and Court grow, in faith and confidence, there are marked improvements.
- Agency adoption procedure shows improvement with one child recently being signed on in two and a half months.
- The Court user group membership includes a number of Authorities as well as a senior Judge. It may be appropriate to give a presentation of issues or concerns to the user group.
- National Safeguarding all have exactly the same standard and inspection regime.
- In recent years decommissioned a number of foster carers
- WCC will share intelligence and work together with Local Authorities where concerns have been raised.
Once adopted we can go back and offer engagement and negotiate a clear support process
Governance arrangements have to be sound

Resolved:
That the update report is received and Panel welcomes the improvements demonstrated in the Adoption scorecard.

8 Safeguarding Children Peer Review
John Welsby advised Panel that at its last inspection 2 years ago OFSTED had found Wolverhampton Children’s Safeguarding services to be ‘Adequate with good prospects’ and that a further inspection is anticipated in the next six months. In preparation for the inspection a peer review was carried out in March 2013 under the auspices of the Local Government Association.

Andrew Campbell provided Panel with an overview of the report submitted. Panel members welcomed the peer report and considered issues of concern and the measures put in place to improve performance. The following comments were of particular relevance:
- There has been a tangible difference in the quality of report writing by SW, Panel members sitting on Adoption Panel have more insight into the child and circumstances on which to base a decision.
- Cancellations of meetings and assessments (referenced in the review) not complete were the result of a particularly difficult time of statutory sickness and collision of priorities for SW during the post-Christmas period.
- The Local Safeguarding Board is more organised under a new chair.
- The purpose of CYP Scrutiny Panel considering the peer report and receiving more reports in the work programme this year is to address the limited evidence of challenge by Elected Members.
- In response to MASTS being semi-detached from the social work function the development of MASTS and SWs in the new operating model will shape future integrated working.
- Improved performance management system in MASTS will address concerns about who holds what data and enable sharing pupil data to demonstrate achievements.

The Panel noted the value of information sharing as demonstrated in the Integrated Offender Management System operated locally and noted the crossovers between this approach and the requirements of safe practice in child protection and safeguarding.

Resolved:
1. That Panel receives the Local Government Association (LGA) report and
findings of the Safeguarding Children Peer Review and the current update of the Wolverhampton Safeguarding Children Improvement Plan.

2. That the comments of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel be noted by the Assistant Director Children, Young People and Families.

Meeting terminated 20:05