	<p style="text-align: center;">CHILDREN, EDUCATION and SAFEGUARDING COMMITTEE</p> <p style="text-align: center;">12 September 2018</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Title</p>	<p>Report on tackling loneliness and social isolation among young people</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Report of</p>	<p>Chairman of the Committee, Councillor David Longstaff</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Wards</p>	<p>All</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Status</p>	<p>Public</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Urgent</p>	<p>No</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Key</p>	<p>No</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Enclosures</p>	<p>None</p>
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Summary

During the Children Education and Safeguarding Committee meeting on 6 June 2018, Members asked for a report to be presented at the September meeting to outline the work being done to tackle loneliness amongst young people.

This report outlines work being delivered to tackle homelessness, loneliness and social isolation among Barnet's children and young people.

Recommendations

1. That the Committee note the work being undertaken to tackle loneliness and social isolation among children and young people in Barnet.

1. WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED

- 1.1 During the Committee meeting in June 2018, Members asked for a report to be presented at the September meeting to outline the work being done by the Council to tackle loneliness and social isolation amongst young people.
- 1.2 Barnet is the largest borough in London by population and is continuing to grow. There are approximately 93,590 children and young people under the age of 19 living in the borough, representing 25% of the Borough's total population. The youth population is estimated to reach 98,914 by 2020 - a growth of 6%.
- 1.3 There is wide-ranging diversity within the youth population in Barnet:
 - 19% of children under five (5,000 children) live in low income families;
 - Of all children and young people aged under 19 years old, 14% are aged 16 – 17 years old;
 - The proportion of children entitled to free school meals in primary school is above the national average at 16.7% compared to 14.5% nationally;
 - Children from minority ethnic groups account for 52% of all children living in the area versus 30% nationally;
 - The proportion of children and young people with English as an additional language in primary schools is 48.7% (the national average is 20.1%). In secondary schools, this is 38.8% (the national average is 15.7%).
- 1.4 Research by ACEVO (Association of Chief Executives of Voluntary Organisations) shows that nearly half of young people in the UK often feel lonely, compared to only a quarter of over 65s; young Londoners are twice as likely to feel lonely as their peers in other parts of the UK.
- 1.5 Thanks to technology and social media, children and young people are more connected than ever to their peers, family members, organisations and services. According to the June 2017 report, 'Social Media and Children's Mental Health: a Review of the Evidence', over a third of UK 15-year olds are 'extreme internet users' and nearly a third of young people in the UK were aged 6 years old or under when they first used the internet.

In response, the council and partners are working hard to ensure that more information and services are accessible across a range of online and offline platforms and locations. There have been some notable developments, such as the implementation of the online counselling service 'Kooth', and the introduction of the mobile application 'MOMO'. Nevertheless, statistics indicate that young people today feel lonelier than ever.

- 1.6 Tackling loneliness is incorporated within the council's core business to promote the welfare of, and protect Barnet children and families. However, this issue cannot be tackled by the council alone; input and commitment from a diverse range of universal, targeted, specialist and statutory partners on a local and national level is required.

Universal Services

Children's Centres

- 1.7 Children's Centres help parents to access the free early education entitlement for targeted 2 year olds, 2 and 4 year olds and the 30 hour offer for working parents. This provides links for families into nurseries and schools in their community and enables young children to socialise with their peers. The Centres also work closely with schools to enable a supported transition for children and their families when they move into reception classes. The 0-19 Early Help Hubs ensure a whole family approach so that services for older children and young people are identified and provided as appropriate.

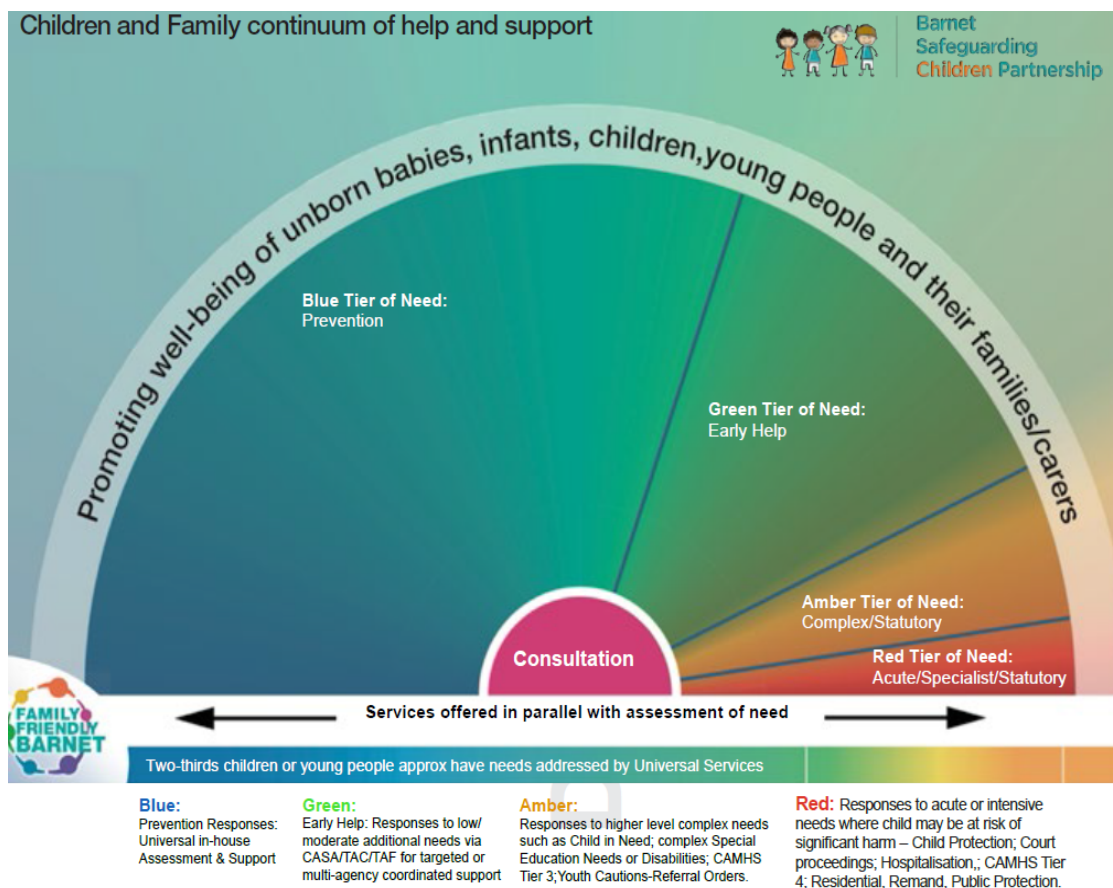
The Targeted Youth Service

- 1.8 The Targeted Youth Service provides a range of positive activities, programmes and holiday schemes for children and young people that are designed to enable them to socialise, build self-esteem and develop resilience. There are 3 key areas of Youth Work, which are central to empowering young people to enjoy their socialisation processes, peer association and environment:
- Detachment work
 - Groups and Programmes
 - Residential and off-site activities
- 1.9 **Detached work** is a youth work activity based on the delivery of services and activities in the local community, which enables young people to build strong attachments to their environment and the people around them. This practice is an enabler for community cohesion and resilience and draws on positive activities and programmes as the vehicle for achieving goals and objectives. **Groups and Programmes** are a fundamental area of practice for building self-esteem, confidence and positive engagement. In Barnet, we have developed groups and programmes around topics and issues facing young people today. For example, our service delivery covers groups for:
- Gender
 - Citizenship
 - Practical living skills
 - Sports
 - Keep Safe
 - Crime diversion

- 1.10 By delivering relevant groups and programmes the service can better support families and young people with self-improvement and integration development. The Youth Service delivers several **residential** programmes designed to build resilience in young people as well as to develop their socialisation and vocational skills. The Duke of Edinburgh Award is an example of a structured outbound programme that improves outcomes and works towards future aspirations for young people based on a collective collaboration approach.

Early Intervention and Prevention

- 1.11 We know we have a large universal population that is doing well, but a small percentage (2%) need a targeted and specialist service to meet their needs and improve their outcomes in line with their peers.
- 1.12 In Barnet, we describe services using a Continuum of Help and Support based on the assessment of needs, as set out in figure 1 below. The Council's early help and school's improvement work tends to focus largely on the blue and green tier of need, Family Support and Youth Justice in amber and Statutory Services in red. The Continuum of Help and Support is founded on the principle of building resilience to enable sustainable change and improvements in outcomes. The issue of loneliness amongst children and young people may feature within any one of these Tiers of Need as part of the Barnet Safeguarding Children Partnership's primary aim of promoting the well-being of unborn babies, infants, children, young people and their families/carers.
- 1.13 Children and young people with additional needs may benefit from access to Early Help or targeted services from the council or partners, and for some children with more complex needs, access to specialist help may be required. Where a safeguarding risk is evident, children will need to be referred to Children's Social Care to safeguard and promote their welfare.



- 1.14 The Council is just one of many providers that deliver early help services to children, young people and families. Some services are delivered directly by the local authority, such as Youth Services, Family Support and some Children's Centres; others are commissioned, for example, Family Health Coaches and Perinatal Health Coaches.
- 1.15 Other key partners provide a range of early help services including schools, community health services (such as mental health and maternity services), welfare advice, community policing and the voluntary sector (such as Mencap who deliver support for young people with disabilities and Barnardo's who provide therapeutic support).
- 1.16 There are a range of services and activities being delivered by the council and partners to tackle issues affecting children and young people. Many of these directly or inadvertently tackle loneliness and social isolation. Further information about some of the key services and work being delivered by the council are outlined from 1.17 to 1.37.
- 1.17 Resilient schools programme
The mental health and wellbeing of children and young people can affect them for the rest of their lives. The growing number of children and young people experiencing poor mental health is one of the greatest challenges facing Barnet schools. These issues often intersect with experiences of loneliness and social isolation.

The Resilient Schools programme provides a framework for schools to assess and improve mental health and wellbeing support to pupils, parent and carers and all staff within the school. The programme aims to:

- Help schools, parents and pupils to recognise their own mental wellbeing needs and be confident to access information to support themselves and others
- De-stigmatise mental health in schools
- Intervene early to prevent escalation of mental health problems
- Involve parents, pupils and schools in tackling issues

The programme is based on 8 workstreams, all of which directly or indirectly contribute to the tackling of social isolation and loneliness amongst young people. The Programme was first piloted in September 2017 with five schools, and another eleven schools across the borough have joined as part of the second year of the programme that will begin in September 2018. Collectively, the 16 schools will be champions of mental health and resilience for the rollout of the programme in 2019/20.

1.18 Kooth online

In June 2017, the Kooth online counselling service for 11-25 year olds in Barnet was launched. The service is available during evenings and weekends – key times during which young people feel most lonely - and can be accessed by children and young people on mobile and desktop devices. During the first three months of the service being launched, 176 Barnet young people used the service; 40% more than the expected performance.

1.19 Joint Housing and Children's Social Care Protocol for homeless 16 and 17year olds

In July 2017, a new protocol was implemented which sets out Barnet's commitment and responsibility to ensuring that young people receive a good or better service when they ask for help. The protocol addresses the need for Barnet to ensure homeless 16- to 17-year-olds are thoroughly assessed and that appropriate ongoing support is offered to them to meet their needs. This includes securing good quality, supported accommodation, and a focused plan for the homeless young person to help them manage independence and access training, education and employment. Some key changes introduced within the new protocol include:

- The provision of early help services for young people that are not assessed as homeless and remain at home;
- Ensuring young people who are homeless have access to good quality and supported accommodation or comprehensive outreach support whilst their needs are being assessed;
- Ensuring that young people are assisted to make decisions about the services they can receive via use of advocates who can help them to understand their rights and entitlements for services.

These key changes are all integral in reducing the loneliness often experienced by young people who become homeless at this age. In addition, the provision of early help for young people who are not assessed as homeless and remain at home, means that young people are able to have support with personal or familial issues, which can include loneliness or issues linked to feelings of isolation.

1.20 REACH team

In April 2017 the REACH team was established. This is a small, multi-professional team to lead the delivery of support to adolescents deemed to be vulnerable to exploitation and violence, and their siblings.

A formative evaluation report produced by Research in Practice shows that children, young people and their families have benefited from a co-ordinated wrap-around response to meet their complex needs. This work fits into the wider activity of the service involving Keeping Young People Safe, Targeted Youth Service, work with voluntary sector organisations, Youth Offending Team and the gangs panel; all work to support children and young people who experience a range of vulnerability factors such as social isolation.

1.21 Targeted Youth Service

The Youth Service provides a range of early intervention and preventative programmes for young people identified as vulnerable and loneliness and isolation can often underpin the presenting issues for young people referred to the service. The interventions are delivered through 1:1 or group work using different methods to engage. The universal offer enables the service to identify issues at the earliest possible stage of concern and through the engagement, prevent issues from escalating (see paragraphs 1.8 – 1.10). Because of this, many young people do not go on to present at the 'prevention' level.

1.22 Unitas Youth Zone

Barnet Council is contributing £4.2million towards the construction costs of a new Youth Zone project – Unitas - being delivered in Barnet by the national charity OnSide. The Unitas Youth Zone will be built upon a model which has proven to change the lives of young people across the country for the last decade. The aim of the Youth Zone is a simple one; to build a network of 21st Century Youth Clubs which give young people, safe and inspiring places to go in their leisure time. Unitas aims to provide young people in the borough with somewhere to go, something to do and someone to talk to.

1.23 Space 2 Grow fund

The Young Barnet Foundation's (YBF) Children & Young People's Fund is available to support local community organisations to deliver activities and services to children and young people in the London Borough of Barnet. The main purpose of the fund is to:

- Support local voluntary and community groups, who are members of the Young Barnet Foundation and are working with children and young people (and their families).
- Grow activities and services for children and young people in the London Borough of Barnet.
- Give priority to community organisations with limited access to other sources of funding. (although decisions are on a case by case basis, based on the purpose of the grant and outcomes it will achieve.)
- Support projects that target children, young people and/or families whose needs are greatest
- Develop and enhance the capacity and sustainability of the local children and young people's voluntary, community and social enterprise sector.

The Space 2 Grow Fund is currently open for applications with £100,000 worth of funding available. The Fund is specifically seeking applications for projects and activities for children, young people and/or families that:

- Develop emotional wellbeing and resilience
- Enhance social inclusion

The type of projects that will fulfil these criteria will almost certainly contribute to the Council's work to tackle loneliness and social isolation amongst children and young people in the borough.

1.23 Barnet Young Carers Advisory Service (BYCAS)

Barnet Carers Centre is an independent charity and a Network Partner of Carers Trust. It is the main provider of Adult and Young Carer Support Services for the London Borough of Barnet. As part of the current contract, Barnet Carers Centre provides dedicated support to young carers and their families including information, advice, practical and emotional support to more than 700 young carers who live in the Borough who may otherwise be isolated and experience loneliness due to their caring responsibilities.

The organisation also provides a Young Carers in Schools Programme (YCiS) in association with Carers Trust and The Children's Society, as well as supporting young carers through the Primary Young Carers project for children and young people aged between 5 and 17, a Young Adult Carers Project for young people aged 16 to 25 and a Hubs and Activities programme. Activities include 1:1 and group mentoring, advocacy, tuition support for young people, celebratory carers events including group work and fun activities such as kayaking with young people in school holidays as well as term-time.

1.24 Specialist 1:1 mentoring

There are times in a child or young person's life when mentoring support may be needed for those facing significant emotional and/or behavioural challenges for a variety of reasons, such as isolation. These children and young people often have specific vulnerabilities, and statutory services can struggle to engage them. Barnet Council therefore commissions providers to deliver specialist 1:1 mentoring support to these children and young people, to:

- Engage them to address specific, assessed vulnerabilities;
- Help them develop protective factors to mitigate adversity and nourish personal strength;
- Enable them to respond proactively to challenging situations;
- Support them to achieve specific outcomes and their potential.

1.25 Safe spaces for young people

The availability of safe activities and spaces for all Barnet children and young people, helps reduce the likelihood of loneliness being experienced by some young people by offering somewhere to go and feel welcome. To encourage young people to form and maintain social skills and participate in fun, engaging and constructive activities in the local area, a range of services and activities are commissioned by the Council. This includes Art Against Knives and a variety of school based programmes.

1.26 Grasvenor Project

The Grasvenor Project offers children and young people outreach mentoring which is undertaken within the community. The Project aims to:

- improve the outcomes of Barnet's Looked After Children (LAC), adopted children and children in need, through the delivery of child-centred, therapeutic individualised support in physical infant setting placements and community outreach mentoring;
- reduce the rate of academic underachievement of vulnerable children and young people, through empathetic, strengths-based approaches and interventions that help remove barriers to academic success and support them to achieve;
- improve the long-term quality of life of children and young people by reducing the chances of perpetuating cycles of 'disadvantage';
- increase the resilience of children and young people by supporting them to overcome challenging situations they experience.

The Project reduces loneliness for children and young people whose isolation can:

- be targeted by perpetrators seeking to groom and/or exploit them;
- result in underachievement in education;
- be linked to the experience of poor emotional and mental health.

1.26.2 Voice of the Child Strategy

The Voice of the Child Strategy Group enables the wider engagement of children and young people in service design and commissioning of provision across the Partnership. This includes youth forums such as Barnet Youth Board and Youth Assembly, the SEN forum (to co-design services) and Children in Care Council (to improve the support children in care receive). The Voice of the Child team have been working closely with UNICEF UK to deliver the Child Friendly Communities and Cities initiative. This is a global programme that aims to advance children's rights and well-being at the local level. The team are reviewing the current Youth Voice Offer to develop a structured action plan to focus on increasing reach and impact for children and young people in Barnet.

Children in care and care leavers

1.27 Children in care and care leaver programme of events

The Virtual School, Voice of Child and Social Work teams aim to provide opportunities for children in care and care leavers, to interact and engage in activities with peers, and enjoy new experiences without feeling isolated or stigmatised due to their care status. They deliver an annual programme of events including residential trips, celebration events, children in care council trips and meetings, BBQs and themed celebration weeks, such as care leaver week.

1.28 Woodhouse Road drop in space

The leaving care service, Onwards and Upwards, has a range of free, drop in services available to care leavers at their Woodhouse Road building. This includes computers, internet access, a kitchen that young people can use to cook, a laundry service, a pool table, a garden, a large screen TV and access to professionals such as Job Centre Plus staff. Overall, the building provides a social space to relax and connect with other young people, staff and professionals.

1.29 The Woodhouse Road Therapy Service

Onwards and Upwards works with those care leavers that experience mental health issues which require support, but do not meet the threshold for statutory intervention. To support these young people, the Service commissioned mental health provision to deliver 1:1 therapy.

1.30 Emotional wellbeing peer support group

Emotional support is provided to Barnet care leavers through a peer group led by a care leaver and supported by staff from the Duty & Assessment and Onward & Upwards teams. The group provides support for young people experiencing a range of personal issues in a safe and confidential space.

In addition to the regular peer group meetings, support is also provided by speakers invited to attend the group who are selected based on feedback and issues raised by care leavers. The peer group also delivers activities outside of Woodhouse Road; some recent examples include go karting and theatre groups.

1.31 Refreshed care leaver accommodation offer

The accommodation offer for this cohort is currently being refreshed and will review existing support commissioned from local partners such as mentoring and 1:1 key work. The refresh aims to ensure effective support is provided to care leavers at times in their lives when they are most likely to feel socially isolated and lonely, such as transition points and when first living independently. The refresh is due to be completed by the end of 2018

1.32 Care leaver local offer

Following the introduction of the Children and Social Work Act 2017 and to ensure care leavers are aware of local services and how to access them, Barnet will be developing a care leaver offer in consultation with young people. The new Local Offer will be published by December 2018 and include information on a variety of services including housing, education and welfare. Providing clear and easily accessible information on local services will help care leavers to access services at times and in places most convenient to them.

1.33 Financial Policy for care leavers

The financial policy for care leavers, refreshed in September 2017, sets out the type and amount of allowances that young people leaving care are entitled to, helping care leavers to have greater stability and reduced isolation due to clarity relating to financial allowances, access to support and relief during times of financial hardship.

1.34 Care Leavers Participation Project

The Care Leaver Participation Project was initiated by John Hooton in early 2018 and is being delivered by Family Services in partnership with Cambridge Education and the Commissioning Group. The Project is focussed on ensuring a robust education, employment and training (EET) and financial offer is available to Barnet care leavers to increase participation and improve their EET outcomes.

1.35 Independent Visitor contract

The Children Act 1989 and the Children and Young Persons Act 2008 places a duty of care on Local Authorities to appoint an Independent Visitor (IV) for children in care if they believe this to be in the child or young person's best interest. IV's are adult volunteers who give up some of their free time to take a special interest in children and young people in care who would benefit from a more individualised relationship. An IV visits, advises and supports a young person according to their needs and wishes, thus reducing isolation and developing a positive friendship.

The current provider is SOVA, however, this contract is ending. A new service is currently being recommissioned and is due to commence on 5 October 2018.

1.36 The Imagination Trust

The Imagination Trust is the first scheme run by Live Unlimited. The Imagination Trust creates the opportunity for Barnet's looked after children and care leavers to apply for small grants to help them explore their passions and further their interests.

Whether they are a sports enthusiast and want to use the grant to pay for the cost of joining a football club, or an aspiring chef and want the grant to help contribute towards a chef's course, this scheme aims to help Barnet's children and young adults progress towards their goals. Examples include:

- a suit for a school leaver to ensure he looked smart for interviews;
- a video camera for an aspiring vlogger to talk about his experiences in care;
- flights to Spain for a young person who wished to walk the Camino Santiago trail with a group of care leavers;
- a camera lens which enabled a photography student to complete her course;
- Italian summer school for a languages student to boost her employability skills;
- a sign language course to help a young care leaver fulfil her dream of becoming a social worker for hearing impaired children;
- gym membership for a young person who wanted to improve their health and fitness.

2. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 Members are asked to note the action being undertaken to tackle loneliness amongst young people living in Barnet.

3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED

- 3.1 Not applicable.

4. POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION

- 4.1 Work to tackle loneliness and social isolation will continue to be delivered by the Council and its partners in line with the Corporate Plan, Children and Young People Plan, Corporate Parenting Pledge and Ofsted Improvement Action Plan priorities.

5. IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION

5.1 Corporate Priorities and Performance

- 5.1.1 Barnet Council and its partners will deliver the Family Friendly Barnet vision to be the most family friendly borough in London by 2020.
- 5.1.2 The work being undertaken to tackle loneliness and social isolation among Barnet's children and young people supports the following Council's corporate priorities as expressed through the Corporate Plan for 2015-20 which sets out the vision and strategy for the next five years based on the core principles of fairness, responsibility and opportunity, to make sure Barnet is a place:
- Of opportunity, where people can further their quality of life
 - Where people are helped to help themselves, recognising that prevention is better than cure

5.2 Resources (Finance & Value for Money, Procurement, Staffing, IT, Property, Sustainability)

- 5.2.1 There are no financial implications arising directly from this report. Funding for the work being undertaken and outlined in Section 1 is contained within existing Family Services budgets.

5.3 Social Value

- 5.3.1 The Public Services (Social Value) Act 2013 requires people who commission public services to think about how they can also secure wider social, economic and environmental benefits. Before commencing a procurement process, commissioners should think about whether the services they are going to buy, or the way they are going to buy them, could secure these benefits for their area or stakeholders.

5.4 Legal and Constitutional References

- 5.4.1 Local authorities have specific duties in respect of children under various legislation including the Children Act 1989 and Children Act 2004. They have a general duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in need in their area and, if this is consistent with the child's safety and welfare, to promote the upbringing of such children by their families by providing services appropriate to the child's needs. They also have a duty to promote the upbringing of such children by their families, by providing services appropriate to the child's needs, provided this is consistent with the child's safety and welfare. They should do this in partnership with parents, in a way that is sensitive to the child's race, religion, culture and language and that, where practicable, takes account of the child's wishes and feelings.
- 5.4.2 Article 7 of the council's constitution states that the Children, Education and Safeguarding Committee has the responsibility for all matters relating to children, schools and education. In addition to this, the committee has responsibility for overseeing the support for young people in care and enhancing the council's corporate parenting role.

5.5 Risk Management

- 5.5.1 The nature of services provided to children and families by Family Services manage significant levels of risk. An inappropriate response or poor decision-making around a case could lead to a significant children's safeguarding incident resulting in significant harm. Good quality early intervention and social care services reduce the likelihood of children suffering harm and increase the likelihood of children developing into successful adults and achieving and succeeding. The implementation of the Barnet Children's Services Improvement Action Plan based on inspection findings and recommendations reduce this risk and drive forward improvements towards good quality services.

5.6 Equalities and Diversity

- 5.6.1 The 2010 Equality Act outlines the provisions of the Public-Sector Equalities Duty which requires Public Bodies **to have due regard** to the need to:
- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
 - advance equality of opportunity between people from different groups
 - foster good relations between people from different groups
- 5.6.2 The broad purpose of this duty is to integrate considerations of equality into day business and keep them under review in decision making, the design of policies and the delivery of services.
- 5.6.3 Equalities and diversity considerations are a key element of social work practice. It is imperative that help and protection services for children and young are sensitive and responsive to age, disability, ethnicity, faith or belief, gender, gender, identity, language, race and sexual orientation. Barnet has a diverse population of children and young people. Children and young people from minority ethnic groups account for 52%, compared with 30% in the country. The percentages of children and young people from minority ethnic groups who receive statutory social care services account for 61% of Children in Need cases, 56% of child protection cases and 60% of all Children in Care. The proportion of children and young people with English as an additional language across primary schools is 44% (the national average is 18%).
- 5.6.4 Social workers practice in relation to inequalities and disadvantage is inconsistent. Recent learning from audits and practice week has highlighted attention to diversity and the cultural context in assessments is an area of practice in need of immediate support from management, the Practice Development Workers and targeted training. The action plan addresses the additional work which needs to be done to ensure that children's diversity and identity needs are met; "5b(ii) Strengthen consideration of diversity in assessment so that assessments thoroughly explore and consider family history including the influence of cultural, linguistic and religious beliefs, norms and expectations".

5.7 Corporate Parenting

- 5.7.1 In July 2016, the Government published their Care Leavers' strategy *Keep on Caring* which outlined that the "... [the government] will introduce a set of corporate parenting principles that will require *all departments* within a local authority to recognise their role as corporate parents, encouraging them to look at the services and support that they provide through the lens of what a reasonable parent would do to support their own children.'
- 5.7.2 The corporate parenting principles set out seven principles that local authorities must have regard to when exercising their functions in relation to looked after children and young people, as follows:
1. to act in the best interests, and promote the physical and mental health and well-being, of those children and young people;
 2. to encourage those children and young people to express their views, wishes and feelings;
 3. to take into account the views, wishes and feelings of those children and young people;
 4. to help those children and young people gain access to, and make the best use of, services provided by the local authority and its relevant partners;
 5. to promote high aspirations, and seek to secure the best outcomes, for those children and young people;
 6. for those children and young people to be safe, and for stability in their home lives, relationships and education or work; and;
 7. to prepare those children and young people for adulthood and independent living.
- 5.7.3 The work being delivered to tackle loneliness and social isolation in Barnet and set out in Section 1, espouses all of the corporate parenting principles.
- 5.7.4 In addition to this, officers ensure that teams and services have due regard to the Principles and are held to account using various channels, such as the Corporate Parenting Officers Group and Corporate Parenting Advisory Panel. It is because of the Corporate Parenting Officers Group for example, that the Care Leaver Participation Project was progressed and received investment from the Chief Executive for additional resource to deliver the Project.

5.8 Consultation and Engagement

- 5.8.1 Consultation and engagement with children and young people is central to social work practice and service improvement across the Safeguarding Partnership. A service user experience strategy has been developed and was launched on 19th February 2018. The strategy ensures that how we work with children and young people is child centred, that we know, understand and can capture the lived experience of children and feed lessons learnt into service improvement. We have nominated Voice of the child champions across partner agencies and within Family Services to promote and lead on the Service User Engagement agenda within their respective areas.

5.9 Insight

- 5.9.1 Research by ACEVO (Association of Chief Executives of Voluntary Organisations) shows that nearly half of young people in the UK often feel lonely, compared to only a quarter of over 65s; and that young Londoners are twice as likely to feel lonely as their peers in other parts of the UK.

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 6.1 Barnet's Corporate Parenting Pledge to Children in Care and Care Leavers (2016)

[https://www.barnet.gov.uk/dam/jcr:c33f12a5-86d9-4215-9c89-a8c82675fba4/Pledge%20for%20Children%20in%20Care%202016%20\(digital\).pdf](https://www.barnet.gov.uk/dam/jcr:c33f12a5-86d9-4215-9c89-a8c82675fba4/Pledge%20for%20Children%20in%20Care%202016%20(digital).pdf)

- 6.2 Single Inspection of services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers and Review of the effectiveness of the Local Safeguarding Children Board report, Ofsted, 7 July 2017
https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/local_authority_reports/barnet/051_Single%20inspection%20of%20LA%20children%27s%20services%20as%20pdf.pdf
- 6.3 Social media and children's mental health: a review of evidence, Emily Frith, June 2017
https://epi.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Social-Media_Mental-Health_EPI-Report.pdf