

Barnet Children's Trust Board

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 24 October 2013 at Hendon Town Hall, The Burroughs, NW4 4BG

PRESENT:

Cllr Reuben Thompstone (Chairman)	LB Barnet
Cllr Helena Hart	LB Barnet
Dr Andrew Howe	LB Barnet
Dr Clare Stephens	Clinical Commissioning Group
Kate Kennally	London Borough of Barnet
Janet Matthewson	CommUnity Barnet
Nicola Francis	LB Barnet

ALSO PRESENT:

Superintendent Simon Corkill	Metropolitan Police
Val White	LB Barnet
Duncan Tessier	LB Barnet
Jenny Gridley	Oakleigh School
Portia Kumalo	LBB/Barnet CCG
Judith Berlow	Central London Community Health Trust

APOLOGIES:

Adrian Usher	Metropolitan Police
David Byrne	Barnet and Southgate College
Tim Beach	Outgoing Independent Chair, LSCB

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Councillor Thompstone, the Cabinet Member for Education, Children and Families welcomed members of the Board and thanked them for their attendance.

2. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 27 JUNE 2013

The minutes of the meeting of the Barnet Children's Trust Board held on 27 June 2013 were agreed as a correct record.

3. MID-YEAR PERFORMANCE REPORT

Duncan Tessier, the Assistant Director - Early Intervention and Prevention introduced a presentation that provided the Board with an update on the Children and Young People Plan Performance Indicators.

In introducing the report, Mr Tessier advised the Board that the progress was presented by seven strands with a monitoring period from April 2013 – September 2013. The strands were: Early Years; Primary; Secondary; Preparation for Adulthood; Early Intervention and Prevention; Targeting of Resources to Narrow the Gap; and Keeping Children and Young People Safe.

Mr Tessier highlighted the percentage of breastfeeding within the Borough at 6 – 8 weeks from birth was 84.7%, below the target of 95%

Dr. Andrew Howe, the Director for Public Health at Barnet and Harrow Councils referred to the percentage of children immunised for MMR before their second birthday, which was 82.1%, with a target of 95%, Dr. Howe noted that it was important to take a step forward on this statistic and have a report on immunisation data collection.

The Board were advised that it had been challenging to collect data from Partners in some instances. A Member of the Board commented that there was a need to clarify how the health community would decide which data to put forward.

Councillor Helena Hart, the Cabinet Member for Public Health questioned how this discussion would be taken forward with NHS England.

Kate Kennally, the Director for People commented that the Children and Young People Plan was no longer statutory, and advised the plan was written in partnership with Board members, and that the Board should also take responsibility for the delivery of the plan.

The Board had a discussion regarding the submissions by partner agencies around the indicators and their progress. Partner agencies were asked to provide any thoughts and amendments to Yogita Popat by Friday 1 November 2013 so that where appropriate this could be fed back into the Health & Wellbeing Board. It was agreed that Ms. Popat would e-mail all partners after the meeting to provide her full contact details to enable this submission.

RESOLVED that the Board note the mid-year performance report.

4. 14/15 BUDGET PROPOSALS AND LONGER TERM FINANCIAL CHALLENGES

Val White, the Schools, Skills and Learning Lead Commissioner provided the Board with a presentation that provided an outline of the Council's 2014/15 budget proposals and longer term financial challenges.

The Board was advised that the Council needs to make savings of £18.930 million in 2014/15, and savings of in £20.082 million in 2015/16, and highlighted the huge challenges that the service was required to implement.

Ms. White advised the Board that the Council was planning now for continuing austerity until at least, the end of the decade. The Board was advised that the Council had forecast a budget gap between 2016-2020 at around £70 million from a total budget of circa. £270 million.

In context of the financial context, Members commented on the need to deliver as much as possible through efficiencies.

A Member of the Board commented that Special Educational Needs Transport was not working as well as it could, and expressed concern about the future in light of future efficiencies planned for this service area.

Ms. Kennally advised the Board of the need for the Council to consult widely with partner agencies in light of budget constraints. Ms. Kennally also advised the Committee that

the 2014/15 budget figures, and the 2015/16 budget figures would be published shortly, and advised that a link would be sent around to members of the Board to make them aware.

RESOLVED that the Board note the 2014/15 Budget Proposals and Longer Term Financial Challenges.

5. EARLY YEARS

Duncan Tessier, the Early Intervention and Prevention Assistant Director presented a report which provided the Board with an update on the early years review that is being led by the council.

Mr. Tessier advised the Board that the review would look at early years provision in a strategic way and would include children's centres and nurseries.

The Board were advised that Phase One of the review had completed, and had included the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment, and that information had been collected from over 1,000 parents and childcare providers.

Mr. Tessier advised the Board that the emerging findings of the review had led to three key recommendations:

- 1) Strategic Integration
- 2) A shift in balance from universal to targeted services
- 3) A response to changes in demographic growth.

Commenting on the first recommendation of strategic integration, a member of the Board noted that it was well observed that integration with health partners has clear benefits, and recommended doing a pilot with Health Visitors in Children's Centres.

A representative from Barnet Clinical Commissioning Group endorsed the idea of a pilot piece of work based upon joining up Children's Centres with health partners such as GPs, Health Visitors and midwives.

A Member of the Board expressed concern about the possibility of a shift in universal to targeting services. Mr. Tessier advised that despite any potential shift, universal services would remain. A Member questioned which areas of universal services would remain. Mr. Tessier advised that the review was based on the principle of doing what works, and noted that an increased focus on targeted groups was the direction of OFSTED.

Ms. Kennally noted the challenge of the need to make childminding a more desirable childcare option, as had been highlighted in the Phase One report.

Responding to a member of the Board, Mr. Tessier advised that the "2 Year Old Offer" had become a requirement this year.

RESOLVED that the Board endorse the recommendations in the report, in particular the need for an integrated approach to better take advantage of the opportunity to intervene early and prevent needs escalating for higher risk families.

6. INCREASING PARTICIPATION AND ADDRESSING YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT: LEARNING LESSONS AND NEXT STEPS

Ian Harrison, the Education and Skills Director introduced a report which addressed the issues of increasing participation and addressing youth unemployment.

Mr. Harrison advised the Board that a scheme, known as “Platforms” had been created through work of a 14-19 year old partnership group comprising of the Local Authority, schools, Barnet and Southgate Colleague and alternative provision providers had been started last year. The Board were advised that the “Platforms” scheme was designed to develop a wide range of options and pilot approaches to gauge which projects were most successful in terms of helping young people to improve their skills, confidence and work readiness. The Board were advised that eight work streams were piloted, which were:

- Apprenticeships
- Internships
- Prince’s Trust for young people needing support to motivate
- Voluntary Sector Placements
- Graduate Support
- 16-24 Employability Support
- Enterprise and Start-up Support
- Support for young people with learning difficulties and disabilities

Mr. Harrison highlighted the delivery of the projects was by partnership working, and noted the key successes of the partnership working, which were:

- The main aim of the Council’s Platforms programme was to reduce the number of young people not in education, employment or training aged 16-24 years in Barnet. During Phase 1, the JSA claimant count for 18-24 year olds living in Barnet has decreased from June 2012 to June 2013 by 1.1% (approximately 255 young people).
- By the end of July 2013, Platforms had engaged with over 290 young people, with over 160 young people actively participating over the 8 projects. Over 260 employers were engaged with, and of these over 70 employers actively participated with Platforms to boost their staff capacity and to support young people on the programme. 8 Internship and Jobs Mob placements were converted into full apprenticeships, demonstrating the benefits of a ‘work trial’.
- Barnet Apprenticeship Agency established and generated 40 vacancies for young people during the period June 2012/13.
- There have been 14 new places created in from September 2013 through a partnership between Oak Lodge School and Barnet and Southgate College.

Mr. Harrison then commented of the lessons learnt from the “Platforms” programme, and advised the Board that:

- Apprenticeship opportunities have been the most difficult to fill and very resource intensive for the number of outcomes generated. The low minimum wage for apprenticeships appears to have put off young people aged 19-24 years, maybe due to overhead costs, such as travel. This is a feature common in London.

However, we need to consider the types and levels of apprenticeship opportunities to make sure that we learn lessons from elsewhere in the country which have similar employment patterns where the take up of apprenticeships has been high.

- There has been a lack of interest in the enterprise support element of the Platforms offer, something reflected at a national level, potentially due to the economic climate and lack of confidence in starting a business at a young age. However, given the high number of small businesses in Barnet, we need to consider what support young people need to encourage more to join this local enterprise economy.
- Projects aimed at the harder to reach young people found it challenging to encourage take up among young people who lack motivation or face significant personal barriers to work including housing, family and mental health issues.
- Some young people were not job ready so required not only motivational support, but also intensive employability skills, which were provided by the Skills and Enterprise Adviser. Working directly with the young people and the associated business engagement and support is resource intensive.
- The most successful and popular elements of the Platforms projects were the paid Internships, the Princes Trust projects helping to motivate young people and voluntary sector funded work placements offering nine month placements for young people from the more deprived parts of the borough.

Commenting on sustainability, Mr. Harrison advised the Board that the Council was continuing to support the development of apprenticeships through the Barnet Apprenticeship Training Agency (ATA) which was pump primed to become self-sustaining.

The Board were advised that several voluntary sector organisations are seeking funding to retain their young person following the end of the 9 month placement and a number of the internship placements have converted into apprenticeships or extended placements, and that the Council would seek to explore innovative and creative funding models to build on this success.

The Board noted that the Job Centre Plus is continuing to work closely with partners to provide a referral mechanism for NEET young people who are eligible for benefits onto suitable projects, and that the Jobcentre Plus continues to provide support for graduates through the Sector Based Work Academy

Members of the Board also noted that Barnet and Southgate College has won the opportunity to manage the corporate training operations and deliver its own retail and catering training (including JCP) at the Hospitality Guild's new "Hospitality House" venue in Finchley from October 2013.

Mr. Harrison then provided the Board with an overview of the next steps that would be taken, in order to incorporate the lessons learned so far.

Mr. Harrison spoke to of importance of identifying potential funding opportunities to sustain and develop the most successful elements of the Platforms project: paid internships, the Princes Trust projects and voluntary sector funded work placements

The Board were advised of the importance of promoting the creation of apprenticeships within the Barnet economy, including leading through example within the council, other public sector organisations and their associated supply chains., and noted the importance of supporting schools in the early preparation of young people for apprenticeships and the world of work.

Mr. Harrison also noted the requirement to foster the collaboration between schools and colleges to provide a curriculum offers that provides a smooth transition from school to college. (e.g. extending the new collaborative 6th form between 4 schools and Barnet and Southgate College)

A Member referred to the new provision for young people with learning difficulties as set out in the report, and asked about the possibility of extending this provision back to young people who would already have gone through the system. Ms. White advised the Board that this was a discussion that was to be had with Barnet and Southgate College.

A Member of the Board commented on the importance of young people being signposted towards the services that were available, and noted the need for young people to undertake work-type placements to gain experience. Ms. Kennally advised that it was here that school were able to make a real difference through ensuring access to independent careers advice.

RESOLVED that the Board note the progress made and the lessons learnt.

7. BARNET SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN'S BOARD ANNUAL REPORT

Nicola Francis, the Family Services Director introduced the Barnet Safeguarding Children Board's Annual Report for 2012-2013, and noted that it was the report of the out-going Chair, Mr. Tim Beach.

Ms. Francis advised Board that the report demonstrates the collaboration from parties around the Safeguarding agenda, and highlighted the success of Barnet's Youth Shield, who had won the London Safeguarding Children's Awards.

The Board were advised of the challenges that faced the Barnet Safeguarding Children's Board, noting firstly, the importance of ensuring that Safeguarding remains a priority. The Board also noted the challenges that would arise from changes to the OFSTED Inspection Frameworks.

Ms. Francis highlighted the Board's role as a "critical friend", and the strategic importance of holding to account the agencies involved in the safeguarding of children.

The Board were advised of the importance of the development of the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) Ms Francis advised that the Board must monitor the impact of the MASH on partnership agencies, and noted the importance of the MASH in the context of information sharing.

Ms. Francis noted the continuing challenge of efficiency and delivering budget savings in the context of the Borough's increasing child population and the need to ensure that this does not adversely impact on the protection of children.

The Board were also advised of the appointment of a single Chair for both the Adults and Children Safeguarding Boards. Ms. Francis advised that she believed this decision to be a good opportunity to refresh and energise the work of the Board. Ms. Kennally advised the Board that Christopher Miller had been appointed as the new independent Chair and that he had a background in both policing.

Ms. Kennally advised the Board that there would be a “takeover” day in the Council by Children and Young People on 22 November 2013. She advised that Voice of the Child Co-ordinator would be able to outline opportunities for involvement of other organisations wished to participate.

RESOLVED that the Board note the contents of the report.

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was none.

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING: THURSDAY 30 JANUARY 2014, 2:00 PM

10. PRESENTATION BY YOUNG PARENTS (IN PRIVATE SESSION)

RESOLVED that the Board note the exempt information.

The meeting finished at 12.07 pm