

Integrated Care and Wellbeing Scrutiny Panel

10 March 2022

Commenced: 6.00pm

Terminated: 7.40pm

Present: Councillors T Smith (Chair), S Homer, Affleck, Alam, Cooper, Drennan, Patrick, Pearce, N Sharif, Sweeton

Apologies: Councillors Jackson, Martin, Owen, Welsh

37. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Integrated Care and Wellbeing Scrutiny Panel held on 13 January 2022 were approved as a correct record.

38. CHILDREN'S SERVICES

The Panel welcomed Councillor Bill Fairfoull, Deputy Executive Leader (Children and Families); Alison Stathers-Tracey, Director of Children's Services; and Tony Decrop, Assistant Director, to receive a response to specific points related to Ofsted, sustainability, forward strategy, practice and quality and key priorities for the next 12 months.

Members sought assurances on operational and financial sustainability, with links to the previously identified projects and the wider work around placements, accommodation and foster care. Mr Decrop provided detail and progress against the seven projects. Key to this was:

- Service redesign and a 7 day working model with core aspects of Early Help to prevent escalation
- Developing a neighbourhood offer and expansion of Early Years offer
- Team Around the School approach and engaging with education providers
- Reducing the number of children experiencing drift and delay within systems, including courts
- Internal transfer of cases and responsiveness of social care teams
- Challenges associated with the workforce, fewer contacts and more consistency for young people
- Review of placements, permanence and planning
- Strategic priorities and Fostering Service improvements
- Working with key partners in health, education and housing

The Director of Children's Services (DCS) updated members on aspects of Ofsted communications and appraisal. It was reported that a new self-evaluation had been written in February 2022, encompassing all aspects of the service. The latest evidence position submitted on 10 March 2022, in preparation for the Annual Conversation with Ofsted.

The Self Evaluation Framework (SEF) details progress delivered since the last Focussed Visit Inspection, areas of challenge, impact delivered for our children and young people and areas of focus that remain going forward. Members receive a summary of aspects detailed within the SEF pertinent and categorised to:

- What we have delivered
- What difference have we made
- What have been our challenges

- What do we still need to do

The Panel heard that the SEF details service specific priorities across the directorate that will be owned by each Head of Service, Service Unit Manager and team. The improvements will be driven via the operational teams in each area and align with the Improvement plan as more specific, focussed improvement actions with measurable milestones and impact monitored quarterly.

Discussion touched upon workforce and leadership, with Councillor Fairfoull updating members on recent appointments and plans to create an established and permanent leadership team across Children's Services.

The ambition is now to steady the leadership position through each service, building more stability in operational teams, notably in the cared for and care leaving services. All Leaders have engaged with a recent Practice Week model, with leaders across the whole of Children's Services observing and engaging with front line practice and auditing casework co-designed with Stockport partner in practice.

Councillor Fairfoull, Ms Stathers-Tracey and Mr Decrop responded to a number of questions from the Panel on:

- Improvement Plan
- Practice and quality – signs of safety, timeliness of process such as reviews and plans
- Identified priorities for the coming 12 months
- Achieving best value and best outcomes for children and young people
- Current and expected demand for services, key factors and vulnerability of residents regarding poverty and deprivation
- Responsibility across the system and partners
- Quality and responsiveness of a range of services to deliver what is needed
- Clarity, transparency and commitment within the organisation, including cross-directorate working
- Reflective practice and monitoring of interventions to inform future decisions
- Relationship with Scrutiny regarding effective challenge, support and opportunities to add value

Resolved: That Councillor Fairfoull, Ms Stathers-Tracey and Mr Decrop be thanked for attending the meeting.

39. SCRUTINY BUDGET LETTER

The Panel received for information, a letter of the Scrutiny Chairs to Councillor Oliver Ryan, Executive Member, Finance and Economic Growth, in response to annual budget update sessions held on 17 January 2022.

The Chair advised members that the letter was presented at the joint meeting of Cabinet and Overview Panel on 9 February 2022.

40. SCRUTINY ACTIVITY 2021/22

The Chair advised that a report presented at the joint meeting of Cabinet and Overview Panel on 9 February included a summary of the Scrutiny Panel's activity during the year. Work undertaken on:

- Children's Services improvement
- Children's Services – Ofsted focused visit
- Fostering marketing and recruitment

- Health Improvement Service
- Health and Care Bill
- Mental Health (Access and Crisis)
- Adult Services
- Tameside SEND inspection
- Assurance review of LGSCO focus report – Domestic Abuse
- Corporate Performance Scorecard
- Ombudsman complaints monitoring
- Budget updates

41. CORPORATE PLAN SCORECARD

The Panel received the Corporate Plan Scorecard for information.

42. GREATER MANCHESTER SCRUTINY

The Chair provided a verbal update on known activity of the GMCA Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

43. CHAIR'S UPDATE

The Chair thanked all members for their participation and contribution throughout the 2021/22 municipal year. Scrutiny has adapted well, with the reintroduction of face-to-face meetings and efforts to deliver the work programme. Next step is to inform the work programme for June 2022 onwards with updated priority issues and topics.

The Chair advised members of Scrutiny reports tabled at the joint meeting of Cabinet and Overview Panel on 9 February 2022. Items specific to the panel include:

- Scrutiny Update (summary of activity for 2021/22)
- Scrutiny Interim Report – Mental Health Support (Access and Crisis)
- Assurance Review of LGSCO Focus Report – Improving Services for Domestic Abuse Victims

44. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

To note that this is the last formal meeting of the Scrutiny Panel for the 2021/22 municipal year.

45. URGENT ITEMS

The Chair reported that there were no urgent items for consideration at this meeting.

CHAIR