

## MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & EDUCATION SCRUTINY PANEL HELD ON TUESDAY, 8TH MARCH, 2022

**MEMBERS:** Councillors Mustafa Cetinkaya (Associate Cabinet Member (Enfield South East)), Elif Erbil, Ayfer Orhan, Ahmet Oykener, Andrew Thorp and Glynis Vince (Conservative Group Whip)

**Officers:** Anne Stoker (Director of Children & Family Services), Ivana Price (Head of Early Help, Youth & Community Safety), Luis Herrero (Service Manager Enfield Leaving Care), Suzanne Rowson (Head of Corporate Parenting, Virtual School Headteacher, HEART CAMH Manager & CIN Educational Lead), Rashmi Patel (Head of Looked After Children & Care Leavers), Victoria Adnan (Strategy & Policy Manager), Suzy Francis (Principal Educational Psychologist & Strategic Lead for CYP Mental Health), Barbara Thurogood (Head of SEN), Suzanne Connolly (Governance Officer)

**Also Attending:** Mustafa-Berk Ak (Youth Representative)

### 1. WELCOME & APOLOGIES

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Mahtab Uddin and Cllr Chinelo Anyanwu.

### 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest registered in respect of any items on the agenda.

### 3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> October 2021 were agreed. The spelling of Cllr Thorp's name would be corrected.

Cllr Orhan asked if all actions had been completed; Officers to check **ACTION.**

### 4. EARLY HELP SERVICES - REVIEWING EFFECTIVENESS

Ivana Price, Head of Early Help, Youth & Community Safety, introduced the item and highlighted the key messages from the report.

1. It was noted that the data in the report was for 2020/21.

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2. Many families in Enfield require help and intervention. A new referral system, Early Help Triage, looks at all referrals ensuring they meet eligibility criteria.
3. Additional referrals had been received this year with the majority coming from the east of the borough.
4. The previous Ofsted inspection was strong and there's a clear plan to improve and enhance the service.

Officers were thanked for the helpful report and in response, the following comments were received:

1. Cllr Orhan asked about the eligibility criteria. Officers advised this was set by statutory guidelines, however a wide range of help was available hence introducing a Triage Officer.
2. Officers confirmed that all referrals were accepted despite where they reside, and that work was taking place with schools and the police to increase awareness of the services.
3. Cllr Thorp asked if there were any trends emerging around re-referrals. Officers stated it was a new measure introduced this year, however families themselves were self-referring back to the service which was very positive. A deep dive would be performed to help understand and inform practice going forward.
4. Mustafa-Berk Ak, Youth Representative, queried if there was any way to increase the number of self-referrals which currently stood at 8%. The majority of referrals come from education and children's services due to the nature of the work however work was taking place to increase awareness.
5. Members stated that they were aware of families in their areas using the service and feedback was very positive.

### **5. LEAVING CARE SERVICE REVIEW**

Luis Herrero, Service Manager Enfield Leaving Care, introduced the item highlighting that the main priority of the work was to improve outcomes for care leavers.

The number of young people currently being actively supported by the service was 351. The breakdown of this figure was detailed on pages 22-23 of the report.

Gill Hawken, Foster Carer, was in attendance to give first hand experience around care leavers.

1. It was noted that preparing children in care to become a care leaver was essential, however many foster carers do not start preparations early enough. The increased age from 21 to 25 was helpful.
2. It was suggested to ask care leavers about their experiences and what would've made the transition easier.

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3. There had been issues around care leavers being able to claim housing benefit, particularly if they were out of borough. This created unnecessary stress and upset.
4. Cllr Vince had expressed concerns around care leavers for many years, particularly the transition from child to adult services. Many get lost in the system.
5. There was a need to increase the number of foster carers however it was felt there were misleading adverts around the amount of pay they receive.

A care leaver was in attendance and gave a personal account of her time pre, during and after care. Members were interested to hear about these experiences and extended their thanks to the young person. The following key points were noted:

6. Care Leavers need a greater understanding of funding and benefits.
7. Services need to recognise a care leaver and ensure they receive funding and benefits quicker.

Members thanked officers and visitors for their work and input to this item.

### **6. SERVICE USER FEEDBACK & HOW THIS WILL BE USED TO IMPROVE SERVICES**

Suzanne Rowson, Head of Corporate Parenting, Virtual School Headteacher, HEART CAMH Manager & CIN Educational Lead, highlighted the variety of ways the service had reviewed participation, consultation and engagement.

The report was well received by members and thanks were extended to all involved.

### **7. SEND STRATEGY**

1. Officers hoped that the new code of practice would be received by the end of this month.
2. Many children still go out of borough; this was a priority area to improve.
3. Additional support for children & young people with SEND was provided at different levels. Schools and settings provide support at SEN Support and provide interventions so that they make progress. Various services were available to support schools and settings to further understand and meet the needs of their pupils with SEN from their existing resources. For children whose needs were more complex, schools, parents/carers make a request for an Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment (EHCNA).
4. Children aged over 16 were able to make their own request for an EHCNA.
5. Referrals for EHCNAs were looked at by a panel using a very robust system. Family members were not involved in the panel due to the personal content being discussed.
6. There was a query as to why Enfield had a higher EHCP increase compared to Barnet and Haringey. Officers advised that it was difficult to

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know and were working with public health to investigate. It was noted that there was a high number of people in the borough with complex autism.

7. The breakdown of primary category of need shown in point 16 of the report was useful however members asked if comparable data was available – officers to check and share **ACTION**.

### **8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

This was the last meeting of this municipal year.

It was recognised that this was Cllr Vince's last formal meeting at Enfield Council and the panel wished to extend their gratitude for her work over the years, particularly in children's services.

The meeting ended at Time Not Specified.