

# Children's Scrutiny Panel

10<sup>th</sup> November 2021

**Meeting commenced:** 6.00pm

**Meeting ended:** 7:35pm

## **Present:**

Councillor Brocklehurst (in the chair)

## **Councillors:**

Lewis Nelson; Mike Pevitt; Neil Reynolds; Madeline Wade; Joan Walsh; Collette Weir.

## **Co-opted Members:**

Dr Keith Archer; Jacqui Morrissey.

## **Officers:**

Kate Berry – Early Help Locality Manager

Geoff Catterall – Head of Complex Needs: SEN

Cathy Starbuck – Assistant Director Education and Skills

Liz Wright – Democratic Services (Clerk)

## **Members of the public:**

None

### **1. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Councillor Joshua Brooks, Councillor Ari Leitner, Councillor Robinson-Smith, Judith Elderkin, Yolande Amana-Ghola, Dr Alex Klein.

### **2. Declarations of interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **3. Minutes of the previous meeting**

**Resolved: That**, the minutes of the meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> October 2021 were approved as a true and correct record.

### **4. Matters arising from the minutes**

#### **4a. Corporate Parenting Panel (CPP)**

The meeting of Councillor Brocklehurst, Councillor Cammell, Councillors John Walsh and Councillor Robinson-Smith had had to be cancelled. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the reporting of CPP to the Children's Scrutiny Panel (CSP) and would be re-scheduled.

#### **4b. Vacancies update**

The long standing Free Church representative vacancy was discussed and it was agreed that Councillor Brocklehurst could raise it with SACRE to see if they could propose a representative.

**Resolved: That**, the panel agreed that Councillor Brocklehurst could raise it with SACRE to see if they could propose a representative.

#### 4c. Chatsworth Engage

The clerk had contacted Dr Hanbury (CEO of Chatsworth Academy Trust) for further information about Chatsworth Engage and had circulated the outline he provided to all panel members. Dr Hanbury had offered to attend a future meeting to update the panel on Chatsworth Engage and the panel agreed to add this to the abeyance list for future consideration.

**Resolved: That,** the panel agreed to add Chatsworth Engage to the abeyance list for future consideration

### 5. **Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Presentation**

The Early Help manager (Kate Berry) and Head of Complex Needs – SEN (Geoff Catterall) gave a presentation (which had been circulated with the papers for the meeting) and highlighted the following.

- Salford Family Partnership
  - It had a 0-25 remit and delivered services via the family Hubs.
  - The range of services were highlighted and the structure for each areas was outlined (Family Hubs and Youth Centres).
  - There was a strong offer for parents and carers with a mix of face to face and online provision.
  - The emphasis was working with families to identify their needs and to develop a *Team Around The Child* family model.
- The prevalence of SEND in Salford was reported.
  - More than 1 in 5 of 0-25 had an identified SEND. This was seen as positive as it showed that identification was well done in Salford and at an early stage. This was verified by Ofsted as they had also highlighted it as an area of strength for the local authority (LA). The importance of this was also raised by parents and by partner providers of the LA.
  - 16% of 0-25 of children and young people in Salford were at *SEND Support* and nearly 5% had Education Health Care plans (EHCPs). This also highlighted the significance of the involvement of professionals in the identification of SEND and parents involvement was also key to this.
  - There were significant levels of SEND in Salford but it was recognized that the LA had a good track record of managing the support for children and young people at *SEND Support* in school.
  - For EHCPs, 50% of need was met in mainstream schools and provision and very good outcomes were being achieved so this was a very good indicator for the effectiveness of the LA's inclusion strategy.
  - The age profile for EHCPs showed 16-25 year olds was at 22% of the plans and that was increasing. This showed that the needs of 0-25 year olds were being identified and being addressed.
- The background context of Greater Manchester and Salford was provided.
  - There was an Early Years high needs pathway for each locality.
  - A strategy group had been established in March 2021 to scope out this work in Salford as it was important for parents to be able to easily understand how they can access the pathway to get the help they need when they need it.
  - It covered all the services not just statutory services.
- The six design principles were highlighted as:
  1. The right support was offered at the right time, based on the child's and family's needs.
  2. Families were assets and their needs were not pre-judged.

3. The needs of all individuals in a family unit were met.
  4. Where appropriate support first came from the community connections and pers.
  5. Families were always informed of what was available.
  6. Families and practitioners were empowered to try new things, adapt and learn.
- The Terms of Reference (TOR) of the High Needs/SEND Pathway Strategy Group were explained. The role focused on identifying and mapping the current pathways, identifying and reporting on any gaps and producing an easy reference guide for parents/carers and professionals on how to get the appropriate support.
  - The high level mapping exercise was explained along with the pathways and the work streams. Examples were given such as:
    - Support available from the Neuro Development Pathway of support available to meet children, young people's and families' needs even if they had not received a formal diagnosis (e.g. dietary support and sleep support).
    - South Pathfinder multi-agency approach.
    - Early help and 0-19 health integration.
    - Early Years SEND Thrive: An age related toolkit for families and professionals.
    - LA nurseries supporting vulnerable children.
    - The Assure App was developed in house to help quickly collate information to help identify needs and provide support.
    - A new SEND Parents/Carers Forum had been set up.
    - A Parents' Assembly was held every six weeks online (via Teams) and this had been started during the pandemic. The assembly brought together officers and professionals to address topics identified by parents.
    - There were challenges accessing some of the above support because of the numbers of requests and the impact on timescales for receiving support.
  - What else had been done.
    - A Parent/Carers Task and Finish Group.
    - SEND Thrive Strategy: A suite of documents to support schools and setting with SEND processes.
    - The EHC Hub: An App where parents can access their assessment at every stage of the process, where parents and young people can add *their own story* (including video clips). The App facilitates developing the EHC plans online with parents/carers and young people.
    - Collaborative commissioning across GM to provide for specialist needs (e.g. visual impairment).
    - Speech and Language Therapy has been moved into the schools rather than the children and families having to travel to clinics so that school/health staff are were working with parents in schools.
    - Decision making panels would have representation from senior posts in education and health and any tribunals in Salford focused on resolution of the problems raised.
    - There had been a change of approach with the emphasis being "*What can we do to arrange and deliver provision for children, young people and families*".

The Chair invited questions and comments from the members and the following were raised.

- A member asked about the Triple P for Teenagers and how it worked and how accessible services really were. It was explained that the Triple P Parenting Course was delivered with CAMHS. In terms of accessibility, some referrals came from professionals and some were via other routes such as schools. The high level of demand impacted on accessibility as referrals had to be prioritised.

- A member asked what it was like for families to access services, especially those on *SEND Support*, and what were the wait times. It was explained that all the referrals were screened for safeguarding and the parents would be contacted straight away and support would be provided for their *presenting needs* by Early Help. Support was provided based on the lived experience of the children/young people and their families rather than waiting for a formal diagnosis. The Early Help practitioner would make contact within five days and would start assessing needs straight away.
- A member asked if there had been increased referrals since the start of the pandemic. It was confirmed that they had increased and particularly certain types of referrals such as mental health and finance. Contacts were being made within the five days and steps were being taken to try and reduce this timescale to three days.
- Member commented that they were very pleased and excited by the developments. Early identification was key and congratulations were given for the high identification of needs and provision of EHCPs as appropriate and the low number of tribunals and the focus on resolution with the tribunals that were lodged. It was confirmed that the strategy was to focus on early identification to get the child/young person/family on the pathway early so that needs could be addressed as quickly as possible. The low number of tribunals saved money and also supported parents as resolution of any problems/issues was the focus.
- A member asked if there were any areas that were not as well covered. It was explained that by bringing professionals together, not bound by locality boundaries, and focusing on the needs of the families meant that the approach was flexible. The Family Hubs tended to have a universal offer but services could go to the family's home if that was needed. Work was ongoing to identify where provision needed to be extended and a current example of this was Irlam and Cadishead College (ICC) and the Eccles Gateway.
- A member asked about access for families at ICC as they were concerned that access may be restricted due to it being a school. The Early Help Manager did not think this was an issue and arrangements were in place but they would check and send further information to members about the Irlam Centre.
- A member asked about waiting lists and late/delayed diagnosis due to Covid-19. It was confirmed that 18 month reviews by Early Help had continued throughout the pandemic to try and ensure there was not a backlog. There were also close working relationships with health visitors and the midwifery service.
- A member requested that Ward Councillors were kept updated about the developments and particularly if services were being extended in their area. They thought that this was not currently happening for them in their ward and this would help them advise their constituents more effectively.
- A member expressed their concern that private providers were filling gaps left by the lack of LA provision.
- A member asked if there was enough Top-Up Funding to pay for the services. It was explained that early identification helped to save money in the longer term as it prevented issues and problems escalating. The High Needs Funding was under review and some LAs were challenging the level of funding they were receiving and LAs were continuing to lobby Government.
- A member commented that they would have found it more useful to have had an accompanying report with the presentation that outlined the background detail. This could have been read in advance and the meeting could then have been used to scrutinise the information, rather than to pull out the information.

- The Chair commented that the panel had requested on many occasions that presentations by officers were always accompanied by a full report and asked that this happened for future meetings.

The Chair thanked the Head of Complex Needs and the Early Help Locality Manager for their presentation. On behalf of the panel the Chair thanked all the staff involved, as early intervention and the Salford Way was having a positive impact on Salford families for the update and commented that it was very good to see how the approach had progressed and how early intervention and whole family support was having a positive impact on the young people and their families and also ensuring the best use of resources.

**Resolved: That,** the Children’s Scrutiny Panel:

1. Requested that all presentations by officers at panel meetings were accompanied by a detailed report in advance of the meetings.
2. Noted the presentation and gave their thanks for the informative presentation.

## **6. The Work Programme and Membership**

### 7a. The Work Programme

- Chatsworth Engage was added to the abeyance list as discussed earlier.

### 7b. Membership

- The following vacancies still remained:
  - A parent governor vacancy – to be filled by an election.
  - A Labour Party vacancy (to fill the place left vacant by Councillor Walker)
  - A representative from the Free Churches.
  - A Roman Catholic Diocesan Representative.

**Resolved: That,** the Children’s Scrutiny Panel agreed that Councillor Brocklehurst would approach SACRE for a representative to fill the Free Church vacancy. the meeting to discuss the CPP would be convened as outlined above.

## **7. Any Other business (AOB)**

There were no items of AOB.

## **8. Date, time and venue for next meeting**

- The meeting will be held on Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> December 2021 at 6pm (5:30pm briefing for members).
- The venue for the meeting is Salford Suite, Salford Civic Centre, Old Town Hall Building. Members must attend in person.