

CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES PARTNERSHIP
Wednesday, 21st November, 2012

Present:- Martin Kimber (in the Chair); Karen Borthwick, Claire Edgar, Sara Graham, Jason Harwin, Shafiq Hussain, Julie Mott, Clare Pyper, David Polkinghorn, Giles Ratcliffe, Sue Skalycz, Karen Smith, Helen Talbot, Sarah Whittle and Sue Wilson.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Lakin, Juliette Greenwood, Shona MacFarlane, John Radford, Dorothy Smith, Joyce Thacker, Janet Wheatley and Chrissy Wright.

178. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 19TH SEPTEMBER, 2012

The minutes of the meeting held on 19th September, 2012, were considered and approved as a correct record.

179. ISSUES AND CONCERNS

Looked After Children's Council

A lot of activity had taken place and no concerns raised. Comment was made on the incredible send off Howard Woolfenden, former Director of Safeguarding Children and Families, had been given by the young people.

Youth Cabinet

No concerns had been reported and a lot of activity had taken place. A meeting had been convened between the Youth Cabinet and Elected Members on 11th December to discuss their concerns regarding safety of young people on transport.

Parent and Carer's Forum

Claire Pyper, Interim Director of Safeguarding Children and Families, reported that a presentation had been given to the Directorate's Leadership Team meeting on the Charter and parents' engagement and good new stories about parents' general development and increased self-esteem. Jayne Fitzgerald wanted to launch the Charter further particularly to those schools and communities that were not participating. It was to be linked through Learning Communities and specific reference to working with new arrivals and using some of the strategies employed by the Forum to extend their engagement for a range of services.

Karen Smith reported that her School was participating in the Charter and had their assessment day very shortly. The work done so far had been valuable for the School, however, she did wonder if the cost was prohibitive to others in the current financial climate.

Julie Mott reported that Newman School had not proceeded with the Charter as they were currently taking part in Achievement for All which also had a large element of parent care and involvement. However, once that was completed, the School would be interested in participating.

Voluntary Sector

Concern regarding the latest rumoured budget cuts in Intervention.

180. SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

Claire Edgar, Team Manager, Sexual Exploitation Unit, reported that Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) was an expanding area of work with the issue now widely reported both nationally and locally.

The Council had provided a CSE specialist service (Risky Business) long before the issue of CSE was widely accepted and understood. Following on from the success of Risky Business, the Council had resolved to unite all agencies involved in safeguarding young people to manage the threat at the highest level. The new Service, which was continuously reviewed, aimed to:-

- Reduce sexual exploitation by deterring offenders with the threat of disruption, prosecution and by awareness raising amongst young people
- Identify victims early, win their confidence and help them recognise themselves as victims
- Achieve successful prosecutions and prevent young people from becoming victims
- Support victims and their families through intensive one-to-one advocacy and emotional wellbeing work to help them move forward positively with their lives

The interventions required must be co-ordinated and overseen by qualified Social Workers in accordance with current Legislation, Guidance and good practice. Accordingly, the new Service:-

- had recruited 2 qualified Social Workers who would be able to provide continued support to young people whether they were at high risk or if they were on the fringes of CSE
- aimed to provide a rapid consistent response to young people at risk of CSE
- the Specialist Team would sit alongside investigators within the Police Public Protection Unit to ensure a shared responsibility and consistent approach
- target children and young people from a variety of ages and backgrounds within schools with a clear aim of reducing the numbers of young people at high risk of CSE in the future
- develop closer links with Healthy Schools and other education providers
- develop and build on the prevention and education booklet and continue to target schools not currently engaged with the Service
- devise a clear Strategy outlining the indicators of CSE including referral pathways and guidance for professionals as to where support could be sought for children and young people who may be on the fringes of CSE but not currently involved
- provide support and guidance to parents, carers and professionals who worked with young people who were at risk of or being abused through sexual exploitation

Discussion ensued on the report with the following highlighted:-

- o If a child came into Social Care they would be discussed in the daily Unit briefings to ascertain if there was a Police investigation etc.

- Safeguarding Board training open to all sectors
- Children's Commissioner's Child Exploitation report and the report by the University of Bedfordshire - element that fell between the Partnership and the Local Safeguarding Board
- Understanding how to individually and collectively open up appropriate conduits of safe environments to allow disclosure to be made
- How did the Partnership raise awareness about what was needed to be looked for?
- Have a clear view on what prevention looked like
- How could agencies always ensure in every circumstance that the child was safe particularly when moving from disclosure through the criminal system
- Professional dilemma in looking at the rights of the individual. Protocols required to help
- Use the media to demonstrate the hard work that had taken place and be upfront about the challenges that all communities faced – a lot of the concerns were perceptions
- The media could be used to publicise the “signs” to look out for
- Arrangements in hand for a national Child Sexual Exploitation conference hosted in Rotherham
- The need for work with young people with disabilities post 16 who fell in between Children and Adult Services – improved links between the Services. Currently Adult Services would not carry out an assessment of a young person until 6 months before their 18th birthday
- Consideration to the process of engagement and the most appropriate way – LSP responsibility as Corporate Parent?
- Voluntary and community sector worked with young people and had a long reach both as service provider and possible recogniser/reporters of sexual exploitation
- Avoid work duplication with the Police and Safeguarding Board with regard to action plans
- Recognition of the work carried out by the Education Welfare Officers

Agreed:- [1] That the report be noted.

[2] That quarterly updates be submitted to the Partnership.

181. OFSTED ACTION PLAN UPDATE

Sue Wilson, Performance and Quality Manager, presented a report on the unannounced OFSTED inspection which had taken place between the 2nd and 11th July, 2012, on the arrangements within Rotherham for the protection of children.

The inspection had been carried out under the new Framework which now covered 4 judgements:-

- Overall effectiveness – Adequate
- The effectiveness of the help and protection provided to children, young people, families and carers – Adequate
- The quality of practice – Adequate
- Leadership and governance – Adequate

The Inspectors had recognised the series of improvements that had been made since 2009 and in some areas said that the Services provided were good whilst in others the changes were seen to be positive but was too early to judge on their full impact. The key element of the judgements was in relation to lack of consistency across the whole of the Service.

The 13 recommendations broadly matched the areas that had already been identified in the improvement work across all agencies and an action plan developed.

A substantial amount of the recommendations were near to completion. However, the multi-agency Improvement Panel had been requested at their next meeting to carry out quality assurance of the evidence and impact and not just accept they had been completed.

It was not known when/if there would be a re-inspection.

Agreed:- That the report and action plan be approved.

182. PLAN ON A PAGE 2013/16

Further to Minute No. D175, Sarah Whittle presented a draft 'plan on a page' 2013-16 which incorporated the comments/suggestions made at the September meeting.

Comment was made that at a glance it gave all the information you required. Sarah was thanked for her work on producing the document.

The Plan would be included on the Council's website. It was suggested that it would be useful for it to be sent to all Schools for inclusion on their own websites.

Agreed:- That the amended Plan on a Page 2013/16 be approved.

183. TALENT MATCH

Sara Graham reported, on behalf of the Voluntary Sector Consortium, the bid that Sheffield City Region, involving 8 different areas of which Rotherham was 1, had made to the Big Lottery Fund.

The target audience was young people who were the furthest away from being work ready – age range 18-24 years – and must have been out of education/employment/training for 12 months. It was about improving confidence, making sure they took up employment/training opportunities, more meaningful communications with training agencies, voluntary sector and also about the young people being able to set up opportunities for themselves.

If successful, the Sheffield City Region would be allocated in excess of £8M over 5 years.

The bid was being lead in Rotherham by the Consortium looking at 3 broad areas/barriers of people to employment of changing lives, changing systems and changing culture.

A decision would be made in January, 2013 on the prospectus that had been submitted. If successful, the next stage would be for a completed business plan by May with a decision in June, 2013. The successful project to commence in September, 2013.

Young people with learning disabilities, mental health issues and lone parents were particular cohorts of interest.

It was felt that there were close linkages with the Health and Wellbeing Strategy and the Troubled Families Initiative, the latter being used to identify young people for involvement in the Programme.

Talent Match was a great opportunity but the trick was to make it additional and something different to what was already on offer. A vast majority of the young people would be involved in a Job Programme so it needed to be made different. Sue Skalycz offered to supply information on what was available for 18-24 year olds including Employer Incentives to employ a young person.

Agreed:- (1) That the report be noted.

(2) That Sue Skalycz provide information of the initiatives already available for 18-24 year olds.

184. ROTHERHAM LOCAL SAFEGUARDING BOARD

The minutes of the Rotherham Local Safeguarding Children Board held on 14th September, 2012, were noted.

185. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business to report.

186. DATE AND TIME FOR MEETINGS IN 2013

Agreed:- That a further meeting be held on Wednesday, 23rd January, 2013, in Rotherham Town Hall commencing at 2.00 p.m.