

IMPROVING LIVES SELECT COMMISSION
Tuesday 18 June 2024

Present:- Councillor Pitchley (in the Chair), Councillor Brent (Vice-Chair) Councillors Hughes, Monk, Baggaley, Knight, Brent, Sutton, T. Collingham and Bower.

Apologies for Absence:- Apologies were received from Councillors Foster, N Harper, Blackham and Fisher.

The webcast of the Council Meeting can be viewed at:-
<https://rotherham.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

1. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Resolved: - That the Minutes of the meeting of the Improving Lives Select Commission, held on 5 March 2024, be approved as a correct record of proceedings.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

There were no items of business on the agenda that required the exclusion of the press and public from the meeting.

4. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS

There were no questions from members of the public or press.

5. COMMUNICATIONS

The Chair advised that all the items regarding communication were covered on the agenda.

6. INTRODUCTION TO PERFORMANCE OF CHILDREN'S AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES

This agenda item provided a presentation on the introduction to Childrens and Young People's Services (CYPS) Performance. The Chair welcomed to the meeting Anne Hawke, Head of Service for Performance and Quality and invited Anne to lead on the presentation, during which the following was noted:

What is Performance Management:

- The Local Government Association definition for performance management was "for councils, performance management was about using data to inform action that would improve outcomes for

people. The umbrella term 'performance management' included a range of processes, techniques, and methods to identify shared goals and various measurements of progress towards these. It was also closely related to the concept of governance and making sure arrangements were in place so that an authority's objectives can be achieved."

CYPS Performance Management and Reporting:

- There was extremely robust performance and data reporting across CYPS.
- There was strong governance, which included the following:
 - Performance Scorecards
 - Directorate Leadership Team
 - Monthly Performance Board
 - Quarterly Assurance Board
 - Corporate Parenting Partnership Board
 - Place Board
 - All performance and data were linked to the Council Plan and Year Ahead Delivery Plan
 - Improving Lives Select Commission.
- The service used data to recognise the need to focus on key areas of performance.
- Performance management was a collaborative process across the whole directorate.
- There was frequent benchmarking.
- There was a focus on activity and demand.

Quarterly Members Scorecards included the following:

- The measures included in the scorecard were agreed and developed with elected members the year before via a workshop setting.
- The Scorecard included Key Performance Indicators.
- Social Care and Early Help performance.
- Education performance, which was timely throughout the year due to the timeframes of the academic year and assessments.
- Linked Council Plan measures.
- Timeline and whether the measures were a monthly, quarterly, or annual report.
- Data notes.
- Three months performance was provided at once.
- Year to date and annual trend information was included.

Good performance on the scorecard included the following:

- Direction of Travel (DOT) had a coloured arrow.
- Red, Amber, Green (RAG) rating was included.
- Targets and tolerances.
- Year on year performance and trend was included.
- Latest available benchmarking information was included.
- There was also a glossary to assist interpretation of the scorecard.

Example One and Things to Note:

- An example scorecard was provided on the presentation slide and the officer discussed how to interpret the data on the scorecard example.
- In relation to this example, the following was advised:
 - Good performance for this indicator would be high.
 - The DOT indicated that when compared with the previous year performance had decreased.
 - This example indicated that current performance was in-line with the amber tolerance target (84%+).
 - Note the previous performance and peaks and troughs in the year-to-date trend lines.
 - Note that performance was consistently high and in-line with benchmarking for both statistical neighbours and national averages.

Example Two and Things to Note:

- Another example scorecard was provided on the presentation slide and the officer discussed how to interpret the data on the scorecard example.
- In relation to this example, the following was advised:
 - Good performance for this indicator would be low.
 - DOT indicated that when compared with the previous month performance had increased (e.g., the number had reduced).
 - RAG indicated that current performance was in line with the red tolerance target.
 - Take note of previous performance and also peaks and troughs in YTD trend lines.
 - Note that performance was consistently improving however it was still above (e.g., below) benchmarking for both statistical neighbours and national averages.

Annual Timeline:

- The quarterly scorecard would be published following approval at the Performance Board every quarter. It would then be circulated to Members of the Improving Lives Select Commission and OSMB.
- Members were advised to send any queries on the circulated scorecards via email to the Governance Advisor. Any areas of concern raised would then be provided to the service and either a written response would be provided to members, or if deemed more appropriate an officer would attend the next Improving Lives Select Commission meeting to discuss any areas of concern raised.
- The Scorecard would also be published on the Members newsletter.
- The Annual CYPS Performance Report would be presented to Improving Lives in July 2024.

The Chair thanked the relevant officer for the presentation and invited questions, this led to the following points being raised during discussions:

- Every year during quarter three and quarter four, the data and performance team reviewed the scorecard with senior leadership in CYPS. During the review, the performance over the year was assessed and the KPI's were reviewed to ensure the right targets were in place for the next year. National targets and performance levels at that point in time, were considered during the review, to ensure the service was in line with those levels. Checks and challenges were completed via the assurance board.

Resolved: That the presentation on the introduction to performance in CYPS be noted.

7. INTRODUCTION TO THE EARLY HELP STRATEGY

This agenda item provided a presentation on the introduction to the Early Help Strategy. The Chair welcomed to the meeting Kelly White, Interim Assistant Director for Early Help and Business Support who was also the LINK Officer for the Commission, and Kirsty Woodhead, Locality Manager. The Chair invited Kelly to lead on the presentation, during which the following was noted:

The Background:

- The Early Help Strategy 2024-2029 was recently approved at Cabinet.
- There was a government review called Stable Homes Built on Love which completed in 2023, this was a long-standing piece of work with lots of engagement with individuals who had lived experience in Early Help. This review defined a significant change to children's social care and set out key ambitions, known as the six pillars of reform. One of the pillars focused on including the need to provide family help, to help ensure all children and families could get the right help at the right time and in an easy way.
- Working Together to Safeguard Children was statutory guidance, which was refreshed in 2023 and sat alongside the Childrens Act. The guidance stated what organisations and agencies should do to help, protect, and promote the welfare of all children and young people. Ensuring a child-centred approach, while bringing a whole-family focus, to embed a strong, effective, and consistent multi-agency child protection practice.
- The Early Help System Guide outlined a national vision and descriptors that were shared by the Department of Education and the Department for Levelling up, Housing and Communities. It also provided a toolkit to assist local strategic partnerships.
- The National Supporting Families Framework 2012 focused on sustaining improved outcomes for families, facing complex challenges and problems. The programme promoted a whole family approach.

The Vision and Key Principles:

- The Early Help Team worked with key partners to develop the key principles, ensuring children and families were kept at the centre of the principles. All agencies worked together to ensure that children, young people, and families could have their needs identified early and could receive swift access to targeted help and support.
- The key principles developed were as follows:
 - Children, young people and families were at the heart of everything in the service.
 - Early Help was a shared responsibility and was everyone's business.
 - Children, young people and families would receive the right support, at the right time, in the right place, from the right person.
 - The service was committed to promoting fairness, respect, equality, dignity and supporting autonomy.
 - The service would have purposeful conversations and provide support to improve outcomes.
 - The service would work restoratively with children, young people and families.
 - Prevention and early help support was better than late intervention.
 - Public, voluntary and community sector organisations combined to create the early help system and worked together to meet the needs of children and their families.
 - Expectations of family help to ensure early help would provide the right support at the right time, so that children could thrive with their families.

Early Help:

- Early help was working together to safeguard children, support would be for children of all ages that could improve a family's resilience and outcomes or reduce the chance of a problem getting worse. It was not an individual service or a council only service, but a system of support delivered by local authorities and their partners working together and taking collective responsibility to provide the right provision in their area.
- The early help system included several public and voluntary and community sector organisations, working consistently together to meet the needs of children and their families so that they receive the right support at the right time. These organisations included public health nursing, midwifery, mental health services, the police, schools, nurseries, substance misuse providers, educational psychologists, domestic abuse services, childminders, housing providers.
- Early help focused on providing the following:
 - The right support at the right time
 - Identification of needs early, as problems arise to help prevent them from getting worst.
 - The best possible start which could increase the number of

children accessing early education.

- A whole family approach, a system of support that supported families and partnership working.

The Three Stages of Support for Children and Young People in Rotherham:

- Stage one was universal and community family help. Universal and community services were available to all children, young people, and families in Rotherham. These services were provided by different agencies such as nurseries, schools, and colleges, GPs, midwives, health visitors, children centres, family hubs, libraries, youth services, and community organisations. They were the central point for any family in Rotherham requiring information, advice, and support.
- Examples of support within this stage was as follows:
 - Increasing access to all family hubs children's centres for families in Rotherham.
 - Developing the self-service and digital offer to increase the uptake of evidence-based programmes.
 - The SEND Hub.
 - Providing baby packs.
 - Increasing the capacity of the voluntary and community sector through provision of the universal youth work offer across the borough, ensuring young people have places to go and things to do.
 - Delivering the children's centre offer to children and families aged 0-5 years, to increase engagement via a universal offer.
 - Delivering targeted work with Rotherham's not in education, training or employment and not known young people, to support young people in years twelve and thirteen, to access employment, education, and training.
 - Increasing and review the use of the Early Help Assessment as Rotherham's consistent tool to ensure effective and co-ordinated support is provided to children and families.
- Stage 2 was focused family help that would be provided when families were not managing to affect positive change and required enhanced, more intensive and/or specialist support. Children and their families who needed additional support from the Local Authority so they could meet their full potential, would receive focussed family help. This often included children who required low level statutory social work input. This could be longer term and specialised support, for example supporting a child with disabilities or a child with areas of significant need.
- Examples of support within this stage was as follows:
 - Supporting families at the earliest opportunity to reduce the need for social care intervention and ensure that children and young people were in education.
 - Working with partners to ensure that children and young people and their families would get the right support at the

- right time.
- When there was a need for support, to ensure it was as straightforward as possible to access.
- Developing the approach to ensure that all children and young people could get the best possible start, by working with families to increase the number of children accessing early education.
- Ensuring that across the wider early help system, attendance was viewed as 'everybody's business' and that the reasons for poor attendance were understood and addressed through the Early Help Assessment.
- Working with young people that were disengaged to reconnect them to training, further education and employment.
- Working to provide better access to mental health and wellbeing support programmes for young people.
- Working with schools to reduce the number of children who would be excluded.
- Stage three was specialist family help, this was a statutory service to children and their families, which was provided when children and young people were experiencing or likely to suffer significant harm, including Child Protection and Children in Care arrangements. Specialist family help was provided to families where the problems were severe and had not improved through enhanced or specialist support.
- Examples of support within this stage were as follows:
 - Child protection
 - Tier three and four mental health services
 - Youth justice support
 - Children in care
 - Children in specialist education placements.

The Strategies Five Year Phased Delivery Plan:

- Phase One would be Design in 2024-2025 and would include the following:
 - Identifying and consulting with stakeholders such as the police, health, and wider local authority.
 - Considering the new Working Together to Safeguard Children Framework 2023, incorporating any required changes for Rotherham.
 - Developing a roadmap of a child's journey across early help.
 - Reviewing and updating the Early Help Systems Guide in July 2024.
 - Budget and HR integration for relevant agencies.
 - Establishing a project.
- Phase Two would be to implement and deliver 2025-2026 and would include the following:
 - Ensuring clear governance arrangements.
 - Focusing on operational groups.
 - Developing key outcome measures.

- Implementing the re-designed system.
- HR support.
- Budget monitoring.
- Continuing engagement with employees and stakeholders.
- Phase Three and Four would be maintain and operate in 2026-2028 and would include the following:
 - The on-going delivery of services.
 - Implementing the government changes and legislation.
 - Monitoring service quality and adjust measures accordingly.
 - Responding to learning to ensure continuous improvement.
 - Budget pressures.
 - External evaluation.
- Phase Five which would be to evaluate in 2029 and would include the following:
 - Assess and identify areas of development.
 - Review and refresh the Strategy.

The Chair thanked the relevant officers for the presentation and invited questions, this led to the following points being raised during discussions:

- The term absolute low income was referenced in the report, previously this was referenced as absolute poverty, the change in terminology was due to absolute low income being the government terminology used.
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) would be included in the third stage of the Early Help Strategies five-year phased delivery plan. There was also lower-level intervention provided to children and young people within the early help offer, if there were concerns raised relating to emotional and mental wellbeing prior to a referral into the CAMHS process.
- Electively home educated children were not specifically named within the Strategy, there was a lot of work that was undertaken via the Education Service. Early help worked closely with the Education Team to identify any early help required for all children, including those that were electively home educated.
- The Early Years 0-5 Service engaged families within the borough in relation to early years and accessing services. There was a high uptake in nurse and pre-school offers.
- Early Help Assessments were completed by Early Help Workers within individual schools. Schools were well placed to use the Early Help Assessment as a tool and mechanism to ensure children and families accessed the right support. Within early help there were five Integrated Working Leads who provided support and oversight to the process of Early Help Assessments and worked closely with all partners, including schools.
- There was a digital pathway within the Family Hubs Programme, this focused on providing support to access digital offers within the family hubs centres and libraries. There was direct work and engagement available for any families unable to access the digital

offer. The Digital Inclusion Team worked within the family hubs centres to support families and individuals who did not have digital access. The Early Help Service held evening groups for daytime workers, to ensure that they could access support. The community resources via the voluntary sector also held some evening-based services. The Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) was available twenty-four hours a day, via an out of hours service. The digital offer provided was a wraparound offer for families who were unable to work with the service in person, the main emphasis of the offer was to work with families face to face, in their homes and local communities. The service recognised the need for a digital offer to compliment the face-to-face offer.

- Child Development Centres were available for children aged between 0-5 and once a child turned five years old, they would be placed on the CAMHS waiting list. There was a waiting list for CAMHS, an intermediary service provided support via outreach to mainstream schools, which linked in with early help and wider services. Children of school age had access to a wide variety of school support.
- In relation to the baby self-weighing sessions, it was advised that some parents were unable to attend due to the time of the sessions. It was acknowledged that it was difficult to find a suitable time for all, however, the service would be flexible to the needs of the residents to ensure families could attend a session.
- Early Help had strong links with the voluntary sector, such as Voluntary Action Rotherham. The service worked closely with the Digital Inclusion Team who supported families to provide sim cards and other digital access where required.

Resolved:-

- 1) That the presentation on the introduction to Early Help be noted.
- 2) That the Assistant Director for Early Help provides members with specific data in relation to the number of schools with a dedicated family support worker available.

8. INTRODUCTION TO SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES (SEND) AND SEND SUFFICIENCY

This agenda item provided a presentation on the introduction to Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and SEND Sufficiency. The Chair welcomed to the meeting Cary-Anne Sykes, Head of Service for SEND and Mark Cummins, SEND Transformation Project Lead. The Chair invited Cary- Anne and Mark to lead on the presentation, during which the following was noted:

What is the SEND Strategy:

- The key line of the proposed Strategy was “My Life, My Rights”. This was captured via feedback from the young people during the

strategy consultation period.

- This proposed strategy covered the period of 2024-2028 and set the vision for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) in Rotherham. It would drive forward the improvements already started across the local area and help services in education, health, and social care to work together to ensure children and young people in Rotherham would achieve the best outcomes.
- The proposed strategy was written in a way to engage young people, as this was requested in the consultation feedback for the Strategy. The SEND Strategy had been approved for consultation.
- The service listened to children, young people and their families, to find out what needed to change. This highlighted that some parts of the system in Rotherham were working well, and the experience of families was good. However, this was not the same for all children, young people and families, there was several areas that required improvement.
- The proposed strategy was co-produced with partners such as the children's disabled council, young people and families and would go to wider consultation.
- Ambition, inclusion, and equity were identified as key principles by the consultation.

The Four Cornerstones:

- The service would continue to imbed the Four Cornerstones and recognised that when the cornerstone values were integrated into practice, then trust would be developed and progress in achieving outcomes for children and young people would be made. The service recognised that without trust, systems, partnerships, organisations and families could not work together effectively and meaningful partnership work could not be achieved.

The Commitment to Young People with SEND:

- The following three commitments were identified as priority areas of development and monitoring via consultation with young people.
 - The number of permanent exclusions and part time timetables for children and young people with special educational needs.
 - The number of disabled children and young people and those with special educational needs missing school, due to health concerns, including mental health.
 - Having a clear process for engagement with children and young people.

Next Steps:

- In August the service would begin a borough wide consultation on the Strategy to ensure all communities would be reached.

What was SEND Sufficiency:

- In Rotherham 20.4% of pupils had either a statutory plan for SEND, known as an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP), or were receiving SEND support (previously known as school action and school action plus).
- This compared to an average of 17.1% across all England Authorities. To ensure the educational needs of children and young people in the borough with SEND could continue to be met, the Council created a sufficiency of education provision to meet the needs of all pupils.
- Most young people with an EHCP would have their needs met in mainstream settings and there was 38% of pupils with an EHCP are in mainstream education.

SEND Sufficiency Phase Four:

- SEND Sufficiency Phase 4 would create ten additional SEND resource provisions within mainstream education settings, this would create a minimum of one hundred additional SEND places, over the next three academic years.

What Was a Resource Provision:

- A resource provision was attached to a mainstream school providing specialist therapeutic input and support for pupils with a specific SEND need type. Pupils could access support from the resource provision based on their individual need, whilst also accessing mainstream classes and curriculum.
- The development of resource provision through SEND Sufficiency Phase Four would increase capacity for provision, this would follow eight resource provisions developed during previous rounds of SEND Sufficiency.
- There was currently ninety-seven young people accessing resource provision across Rotherham, with primary and secondary provisions across the following need types:
 - Communication and Interaction
 - Moderate Learning Difficulty
 - Social Emotional and Mental Health
 - Speech, Language and Hearing Impairment.
- The key strategic aim set out for Phase Four was to enhance mainstream SEND capacity to meet a wider level of need across all schools and mitigate the need for children, young people, and young adults to be educated in settings outside the Borough and promote inclusive practice.

The Accessibility Strategy:

- The Accessibility Capital Funding Programme focused on three distinct areas and included the following:
 - Targeted work across mainstream and special schools linked to accessibility requirements for individual pupils and cohorts.

- Individual requests and contributions for individual pupils linked to the established equipment panel.
- A small capital grant programme for schools open through application and assessment in line with the school's own accessibility planning.

Accessibility Small Grants Capital Programme-

- The service was implementing a local authority School's Accessibility Strategy and Capital Small Grants programme.
- The Strategy aims were as follows:
 - To increase the extent to which SEND and/or disabled pupils could participate in the curriculum.
 - To improve the physical environment of schools to increase the extent to which disabled pupils could take advantage of education.
 - To improve the delivery of information to disabled pupils and their parents and/or carers through the Rotherham Local Offer.

Case Study at Rockingham Junior and Infant School:

- The school applied for an Accessibility Grant of £20,000 to develop an external, safe, multi-sensory exploration space with a 'forest school' approach to outdoor learning.
- At the time of applying the school had 311 children and 71 children on the SEND register.
- The school identified that there were many children who had communication, interaction and SEMH needs, who needed a curriculum taught in a different way. This new provision would enable children to engage with school, improve attendance and learn in a way that would enable and empower them.
- The school was very proactive in involving both children and parents and/or carers in the development of this exciting new provision. This included a visit to the Forest of Bewilderment at Wentworth Woodhouse.
- The school hoped to complete all works by the end of the summer holidays 2024.

Outreach Services:

- A key part of supporting mainstream schools to meet a wider level of need was the development of a range of specialist outreach provision.
- The current outreach services developed included the following:
 - Primary and Secondary SEMH Outreach. This had the aim of supporting mainstream schools to reduce suspensions and exclusions. Outreach support had been received by 78 schools, split across 14 secondary, 62 Primaries and 2 Early Years Settings.
 - A pilot Secondary Communication and Interaction Outreach. This service was piloted for this academic year, 6 schools

had received support to improve outcomes for communication and interaction learners. The service was extended by a further academic year to understand better longer-term outcomes and impact.

The Chair thanked the relevant officers for the presentation and invited questions, this led to the following points being raised during discussions:

- As part of the wider strategy and implementation work, the service continuously reviewed the impact and analysis of provisions, to ensure the most effective outcomes for children and young people.
- In relation to the consultation period, the service worked with three Key Stage Two groups in mainstream education, three secondary school groups, this included children and young people in provision and mainstream. The service consulted with children and young people who were in other education such as electively home educated children and medical home tuition children. The next phase would include questionnaires to ensure every young person in school and other education provisions would have the option to engage and respond.
- Accessibility would be a key focus in the strategy, to ensure families and carers struggling to engage due to literacy or language barriers could be helped to access services. An easy access document was being produced to ensure the strategy could be easier to read and accessible to all. There would also be an audio and brail versions of the strategy produced to ensure the service could reach as many people as possible.
- The funding application process for the Small Grant Funding was open to all schools across the borough. The service had practitioners and Specialist Advisory Teachers in school settings, and they would encourage schools to apply for the grant, when a need was recognised. The service also regularly mapped provision to target specific areas where required, there was a recently developed map of specialist provision completed by the service, this would be provided to members of the Commission following the meeting.
- For a young person to access a resource provision, their needs were identified through the EHCP process. The decisions and recommendations were decided via the Education, Health and Care Plan Panel. There was a cost involved for resource provision and this cost was very similar to the cost of an EHCP in a mainstream school.
- Resource provisions bridged the gap between mainstream school and specialist schools. The impact of resource provisions was assessed by the service. Sufficiency planning, individual pupil outcomes, attainment, destination data and borough wide outcomes were all assessed by the service.
- Children born during the pandemic were considered and accounted for during provision mapping. The service ensured future proofing by including cohorts that missed key transitions during the pandemic in SEND sufficiency planning.

Resolved:-

- 1) That the presentation on the introduction to SEND and SEND Sufficiency be noted.
- 2) That the SEND Transformation Project Lead shares the relevant mapping document relating to specialist provisions, with members.

9. NOMINATION FOR HEALTH, WELFARE AND SAFETY PANEL

The Commission was asked to nominate one representative to sit as a member of the Health, Welfare and Safety Panel for 2024/2025.

Resolved:- That Improving Lives Select Commission appointed Councillor Brent as it's representative on the Health, Welfare and Safety Panel for 2024/2025.

10. WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee considered its work programme, and the following was noted:

- The work programme for July's meeting was included in the agenda pack for members to consider.
- There would be an additional meeting for all scrutiny Commissions, to discuss and agree work programmes for 2024/2025.

Resolved: - That the work programme for the next meeting in July 2024 be approved.

11. IMPROVING LIVES SELECT COMMISSION - SUB AND PROJECT GROUP UPDATES

The Chair provided a progress report on sub and project group activity.

Resolved: - That the update be noted.

12. URGENT BUSINESS

There was no urgent business.

13. DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING

Resolved:- That the next meeting of the Improving Lives Select Commission take place on 30 July 2024 commencing at 10am in Rotherham Town Hall.