

## **Lancashire Children's Services Improvement Board**

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**Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday, 1st August, 2017 at 2.30 pm in Committee Room 'B' (The Diamond Jubilee Room) - County Hall, Preston**

### **Present:**

County Councillor Geoff Driver CBE  
County Councillor Mrs Susie Charles  
Alison Aylott  
Jane Booth

Richard Cooke  
Paul Wilcox  
Louise Storey  
Louise Taylor  
Tony Crane  
Jo Turton  
Chris Coyle  
Natasha Wright  
Bridgett Welch  
Amanda Hatton  
Debbie Duffell

**Lancashire County Council**  
**Lancashire County Council**  
**Primary Schools**  
**Lancashire Safeguarding Children's Board**  
**Lancashire County Council**  
**Voluntary Community Faith Sector**  
**Lancashire County Council**  
**Lancashire County Council**  
**Independent Chair**  
**Lancashire County Council**  
**Lancashire County Council**  
**Lancashire County Council**  
**Lancashire Care Foundation Trust**  
**Lancashire County Council**  
**Lancashire County Council**

### **Apologies:**

Stephen Cox

Secondary Schools

### **1. Welcome and Introductions**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and round table introductions were made.

### **2. Minutes and actions from the last meeting**

**Resolved:** The minutes of the meeting held on 6 June 2017 were approved as an accurate record.

### **Actions:**

- CSE intelligence input to be on the agenda for the September meeting – Ian Whitehead.
- To share some Social Worker profiles with the Board - Chris Coyle/Amanda Hatton.

### **3. Being a Good Corporate Parent**

Natasha Wright, Care Leaver and LCC Apprentice, presented the Being a Good Corporate Parent video to the Board. This video is also used as part of the training package for Social Workers.

**Actions:**

- To ensure that the video is presented to all Elected Members as they are all corporate parents - CC Charles/CC Driver.
- Young people who were involved in the video to be sent a letter on behalf of the Board congratulating them on this achievement – Tony Crane.
- To show the video and Natasha to contact the members to see who has used it and what effects it has had and report back to the Board at the October meeting – Natasha Wright/Board Members.

**4. Operational Improvement Group**

Chris Coyle and Louise Storey provided the Board with an update from the Operational Improvement Group.

- Morale in the North had improved since the return of Skylakes.
- Positive feedback from Social Workers of the local MASH.
- To focus on good practice and innovation – be an Innovation Group, plans afoot to change the governance of the Operational Improvement Group.
- Caseloads in general feel manageable.
- Ofsted visit was positive, still some issues in North, however East and Central are fine.
- Amanda Hatton has been carrying out small workshops with the workforce and found that the same issues are being raised throughout the areas which is good and can be worked on collectively. The workshops were a very good two-way process, good interaction with staff and positive feedback received.
- Hyndburn and Ribble Valley are trialling realigning work and this is felt to be going well so far and morale is raised.
- Other teams are wanting the Care Planning Structure now.
- The Performance Improvement Model is ongoing in the Central area – need to see where it needs rolling out to next. Elements of it are already being carried out in other areas.
- Staffing issues in one area of the North and stable in the other North team – recruitment and retention is being looked at and also to having a management culture to ensure they stay. Found that different managers have different approaches and need to look at one management style for all.
- Need to change the mind-set of the North being in crisis – some areas of it are good and the narrative needs to change.

**5. DCS Progress and update**

Amanda Hatton provided an update to Board members on:

**Ofsted**

- Significant improvement in the three months since the last visit – no cases referred back and no queries on cases – all cases compliant.
- Workers knew their children well and spoke with passion and had manageable caseloads.

- Morale generally good.
- Some examples of good casework seen (especially in West Lancashire).
- Young people were inspirational and positive about the access they have to senior officers and members.
- Audit is finding the right things.
- Areas for development are what was known and are already in the new improvement plan – specifically:
  - Reduce the changes of social worker and focus on effective career pathways and support to managers.
  - Develop a clear social work model based on outcomes – purposeful practice and link to the Higher Education Institutes.
  - Focus on effective permanence and challenge in relation to this – there is a section in the plan on permanence and corporate parenting.

### **Next Ofsted Visit**

- Focus on Child in Need – very concerned about this at the last full inspection.
- Will take place in November with the same inspection team.
- Will inform the duration of the full re-inspection – might not be full four weeks.

It was apparent that recording was a key factor and that skills need to be developed on this, writing less but more accurate.

Issues around permanence where cases are left without proper assessment therefore management need to ensure that this does not happen and need to do what is best for the child – some permanence is by default.

No comments were received from Ofsted on Care Leavers, however they did talk about the transition stage which was commented on in the video seen earlier.

### **Performance**

- Children Looked After (CLA) with a PEP has seen a significant increase.
- % of audits that are graded inadequate are continuing to reduce.
- Ofsted happy that the audit framework is robust.
- Small number of districts responsible for worsening performance on assessments within 45 days, majority are areas where there are staffing issues (experience, vacancies, management) – additional resources are being put in place.
- Education, Employment and Training (EET) – Lancaster is the worst performing district (drop from 51.5% to 29.4%) – this is being monitored.
- Care Leavers in EET on 20 July 2017 was 53.2%, this is still not good enough, but is moving in the right direction and the Corporate Parenting Board is looking at what can be achieved by working with Business Partners.
- CLA – 64 have been discharged of care orders (23 reached 18 years old). Lots of work is planned around this to address the issues and another challenge is that court time is full also. More work is being done on Public Law Outline (PLO). Need to monitor this closely.
- Going to look at the re-referral rates and will report this back at a future meeting, including step-down too.
- Louise Storey will bring to the September Board meeting the heat maps on recruitment and retention.

- Three staff workshops have been carried out and the next one is in September.
- Proposing to refresh the Practitioners Guide.
- A suggestion from the workshops is to look at a jury service model for real opportunities to harness talent – five days on a specialism/interest a member of staff may have and wish to share with colleagues ie play therapy will be implemented.

#### **Actions:**

- Report to the Board at a future meeting, statistics on re-referrals including step-downs – Amanda Hatton.
- Heat maps report on recruitment and retention for the September meeting - Louise Storey.

### **6. Early Help - reducing demand for statutory services**

Debbie Duffell and Lee Kearns, Wellbeing, Prevention and Early Help Service (WPEHS) presented data as an update on their response to each of the points below and also their current capacity to support step down cases from CSC.

WPEHS purpose:

- Identify early CYP & Families who need support to prevent their needs escalating and needing statutory service support.
- Contribute to reducing demand on high cost statutory social care services.
- WPEHS do this by:
  - Pre “front door” i.e. Common Assessment Framework (CAF) – identifying children, young people and families early before need for statutory intervention.
  - Diversion of demand on “front door” i.e. MASH.
  - De-escalation from District Children Social Care (CSC) teams.

Key principles for all partners:

- Use of the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) in order to prioritise support offered (i.e. those at level 2 and 3 on the Lancashire Continuum of Need).
- Jointly identify, manage and coordinate a response to identified risk for the safeguarding of children, young people, families and adults.
- Identify the appropriate agency to take the Lead Professional responsibility.
- Deliver best practice models of interventions, including strength based assessment/action planning and developing community based solutions for families.
- Evidence multi agency contribution towards achieving successful outcomes for children, young people, families and vulnerable adults.

It was reported that LCC cannot keep resourcing this and that the Police are not using the Neighbourhood Action Centres. This Board needs to check that the Police are delivering and that the evidence is produced on the impact it is having.

Targets need to be set at the MASH Board and reported back to the Board.

**Actions:**

- Evidence is produced on the impact the Neighbourhood Schemes are having – Ian Whitehead.
- MASH Board needs to set targets for de-escalation, processes and monitoring on a scorecard and report back to this meeting – Jane Booth.

**7. 12 Week Improvement Plan****A View from the Principal Social Worker (PSW) – Louise Storey**

- Can see the amount of work undertaken with staff when completing audits and can see evidence of the work that has been put in with staff around
  - Risk Sensible
  - Corporate Parenting
  - Voice of the Child and their lived experience
  - Chronologies/Case Summaries
  - Introduction of a SMART plan template
- Staff are more positive generally and caseloads have remained steady over the last 12 months.
- In terms of the PSW responsibilities the team have been working on a number of initiatives and the achievements include:
  - Social work recruitment events which have been successful. Recruitment is mostly social media based and although there is a large number of Assessed and Supported Year in Employment (AYSE) applications there is no shortage of recruits to vacancies.
  - There is a new supervision policy in place and this contains a suite of new documents related to Continuing Professional Development (CPD), training and development plans, probation and Management Style Questionnaires (MSQs) linked to 360 appraisals. This supervision policy has been linked to the National Accreditation and Assessment Scheme in advance of the scheme being rolled out next year.
  - The social work academy starts in September 2017, a two week intensive induction followed by call in days throughout the year. This gives a chance to develop a consistent induction for new starters and a system of tracking their progress to support retention
  - Front line management support is being provided via a management development programme, this will start in the North and be supported by a coaching and mentoring approach.
  - Health and wellbeing representatives have been established and health and wellbeing days are being set up for Children's teams designed to support resilience and retention.
  - Good practice examples are being disseminated on a weekly brief to teams so that good practice is showcased and shared amongst teams and localities.
  - Young people are now firmly embedded within the recruitment and interviewing process and involved in the training and development of staff. They have recently been involved in developing a social work profile template and have undertaken training via the Voice of the Child training course.

- MOMO, digital app for communicating with CYP, is being launched on the 9 September 2017 which will improve the Voice of the Child across the teams and services.
- Further work is planned over the next few months which will further contribute to both improving practice and retention of staff, these include:
  - Work with the Operational Improvement Group around what is innovation, what is meant by innovative practice and how it is developed into a model where this is encouraged and promoted by staff. This has been completed.
  - Work on exploring good social work intervention models and looking at what would be beneficial for Lancashire in moving practice forward. A paper on the various options is hoping to be completed by September 2017.

### **What is Audit Telling Us – Sally Allen**

- Moving in the right direction.
- No cases have been escalated for further action.
- Improvement in compliance: basic details, including school & GP (CLA: 100%). But missing court & identity documents.
- Increase in CLA with up to date assessment: May: 75% (6 out of 8 cases).
- 93% of CLA reviews within timescale.
- No Leaving Care cases were inadequate.
- Increase in cases that had improved in last three months: May: 58%, April: 46%
- Impact of the Voice of the Child has shown improvement: May: 96% of cases good or requires improvement compared to April: 92%.
- 87% of auditors met with the Social Worker as part of the audit process to discuss the audit findings with them.
- There was positive feedback from children and young people who were spoken to as part of the audit.

### **12 Week Improvement Plan**

The items below also need to be included in the plan:

- Commencement of the MASH Pilot in the North from 1 September 2017.
- More explicit targets need setting out for WPEHS and practitioners for Early Help.
- Needs to be a stronger action plan around Governance – Debbie Duffell will speak to Richard Cooke regarding this.

Jane Booth was going to speak with Richard Cooke with regards actions against her name.

#### **Actions:**

- To update the improvement plan to include additional actions – Richard Cooke.
- To discuss a stronger action plan around Governance – Debbie Duffell/Richard Cooke.
- To discuss actions against their name – Jane Booth

**Resolved:** that the Board agreed the next 12 week improvement plan.

### **Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) Redesign – Simon Fisher**

Developments since May 2017 include:

- Created a Single Point of Contact (SPOC). 'Front Door' for all contacts and referrals on cases not open to CSC.
- Removed the distinction between MASH and CART. Now – MASH, Single Point of Contact with information gathering/sharing not restricted to police PVP's (protecting vulnerable persons).
- Changes to the role of Customer Access Services. Social workers answering telephone calls and making a Continuum of Need (CoN) recommendation for cases not open (North, Central and East).
- Co-located partners in MASH on a locality footprint (North, Central, East).
- Established a pilot in the North (NMP). Triaging and info sharing within one locality.
- Adult duty social worker co-located within the north pilot.
- Established a regular liaison meeting with the north district managers.
- Established a social work triaging team for cases not open in East and Central - undertaking initial triage and transfer to East or Central MASH teams.
- MASH Service Development Plan in place (based around 7 areas).
- MASH Operational Group established (first one 3 August 2017).
- MASH multi-agency footprint facilitating team briefs and training in each locality (one team approach).
- Early Help offer in place.
- Privacy statement/impact assessment, information sharing agreement in draft.
- Good multi-agency buy-in and engagement with the changes.
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Further developments are to:

- Implement MASH Module and CSE workspace.
- Improve information sharing with schools.
- Finalise social work triage model (stand alone or within locality teams).
- Roll-out Police and Health learning from pilot to Central and East – this will be agreed at the next Board meeting on 13 August 2017.
- Deliver MASH Service Development Plan.
- Strengthen MFH and CSE work flows.
- Further develop joint training and briefings and one team identity.
- Implement multi-agency Key Performance Indicators.
- Co-locate early help officers into locality teams and ensure CAF database checked for every child (from 1 September 2017).
- Test MASH model against Ofsted inspection framework.

Overall, comments from the North model is that it is working well and this is also replicated from Health colleagues too.

Jane Booth updated the Board that the incoming work for adults around domestic violence issues is still being developed.

Possibly look at having a Pan Lancashire Strategic Body.

**8. Any other business**

Jane Booth commented that the aspiration to have a single Lancashire CoN Framework for October is now complete.