

Lancashire County Council

Cabinet Committee on Performance Improvement

**Minutes of the Meeting held on Thursday, 28th November, 2013 at 2.00 pm
in Cabinet Room 'B' - The Diamond Jubilee Room, County Hall, Preston**

Present:

County Councillor David Borrow (Chair)

County Councillors

J Mein
A Ali

M Tomlinson
A Atkinson

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from County Councillor Geoff Driver.

2. Disclosure of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

None declared.

3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 4 October 2013

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held on 4 October 2013 be agreed as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

Matters Arising:

Jonathan Hewitt reported that the GCSE results previously reported to the Cabinet Committee were still not fully confirmed but that 61% of pupils would achieve five A* - C which was a 1% increase and mirrored the national trend.

4. Quarterly Corporate Performance Monitoring and Improvement - Quarter 2 Report

Michael Walder, Senior Policy and Performance Officer, presented a report setting out details of the corporate performance monitoring for quarter 2, July - September 2013/14. It was reported that 88% of Directorate Key Performance Indicators were performing well and improving/making progress. The report set out details of two areas; Uptake of NHS Health Checks and the Demand for Children's Social Care, where performance was highlighted to the Cabinet Committee for further information and review.

Janet Walton, Head of Public Health Commissioning, and Steve Owen, Public Health Specialist, Adult Services, Health and Wellbeing Directorate attended to provide further information on the Uptake of NHS Health Checks. This was a

national programme to help prevent a number of serious conditions such as heart disease, diabetes and stroke through primary intervention and early diagnosis and is aimed at those aged between 40 and 74 who had not already been diagnosed with one of the conditions.

Three schemes had been commissioned by the former Primary Care Trusts and work was ongoing to standardise these and complete the transition following the transfer of public health to the County Council. Work was being undertaken to encourage those GP practices which had not already done so, to sign up to the scheme and to address some of the barriers being highlighted by GPs. These included further analysis of performance data and the financial envelope within which GPs operated and this work was being taken forward by localities officers within the Public Health Service.

Once quarter 4 figures were available a more accurate picture would allow a detailed plan to be drawn up setting out milestones and this would be brought to a future meeting of the Cabinet Committee.

Reference was made to the importance of working with the prison population, trade unions, employers and the Third Sector to encourage take up of the scheme, together with the need to target those areas most in need.

Ann Pennell, Director of Targeted and Assessment Services, Directorate for Children and Young People, attended and gave a presentation on the demand for social care in Lancashire over the last 18 months.

It was reported that there had been a significant rise in demand over the last 18 months at all levels. This included a 38% rise in referrals and a 29% rise in re-referrals. Initial assessments had increased by 26% and core assessments by 22%. Other categories of increase included: Section 47 Child Protection investigations at 53%; Initial Child Protection Conferences at 67%; Children subject to a Child Protection Plan at 73% and Children Looked After at 17%.

Key drivers brought to the Cabinet Committee's attention as impacting on the increases included the impact of the economic climate and recent welfare reforms; an increased awareness of domestic abuse and neglect; together with a number of high profile child abuse cases and what is termed the 'toxic trio' of substance misuse, mental health and domestic abuse.

Prevention measures highlighted to the Cabinet Committee included the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) which involved working with and sharing information with a number of agencies; early support; the Working with Families programme; Edge of Care Services and ten joint funded social work posts in schools.

It was reported that the 2012 Safeguarding and Looked After Children Inspection had rated Lancashire as 'Good'. The presentation concluded with reference to the ethos of 'The Right Response by The Right Service with The Right Families at The Right Time'.

Resolved: - That:

- (i) The report, update on NHS Health Checks and presentation on demand for social care, now presented, be noted;
- (ii) In relation to NHS Health Checks, a further report be brought back to a future meeting of the Cabinet Committee on a detailed plan to be drawn up setting out milestones for achieving the required targets.

5. Lancashire Early Intervention Strategy - Best Start Lancashire

Jonathan Hewitt, Head of Quality and Continuous Improvement, and Sally Nightingale, Best Start Lancashire Officer, Directorate for Children and Young People, attended and presented a report providing progress on the Best Start Lancashire Project.

It was reported that the programme was now in its final year, having been implemented in 2011/12 to provide additional early support for children and their families between the ages of four and seven.

The report set out progress against the actions which had been identified in a review of the project which had been undertaken in January 2013.

It was reported that buy in from schools had been good and that the project had attracted national interest. A number of District Children's Trusts had aligned their funding with the Best Start approach in order to enhance it. There had been substantial investment in workforce training and best practice was being shared.

The Cabinet Committee was reminded that the intention had been for an independent evaluation of the project to be undertaken in partnership with the University of Central Lancashire (UCLAN). An evaluation was now being undertaken internally with some external input/challenge. This was due to the high costs involved in commissioning a research project with UCLAN.

In terms of the impact of the project, Lancashire's performance for children eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) at Early Years/Foundation stage was 39.6% in 2013 in terms of achieving a good level of development. There had been a change in the assessment of Early Years Foundation stage attainment which meant that performance was not comparable to previous years.

Key Stage 1 attainment for children at age 7 was now 75% which, whilst still below the national average, was an improving picture having risen from 71%. Other impact data on attendance was not currently available to present as an annual position/comparison but would be made available to the Cabinet Committee following the end of the Spring Term 2014.

The number of no further action referrals to Children's Social Care had risen in 2013 which was a cause for concern but the rate of increase in referrals from schools was lower than the rate of increase from other agencies.

Reference was made to a number of case studies set out at Appendix 'A' to the report which gave details of a cross section of Children's Centres and emphasised that small rural Children's Centres as well as larger urban Centres were also showing positive results through implementing programmes as part of the Best Start Lancashire initiative.

Reference was made to the increase in the Pupil Premium from £900 per child in the current year to £1,300 next year and the potential for schools to fund these initiatives as the County Council's resources reduced. This was something that Governing Bodies and parents could play a part in, in terms of influencing schools. It was also suggested that schools and Children's Centres should be encouraged to involve County Councillors in a more positive and constructive way.

Resolved: - That the report, now presented, be noted.

6. Working Together with Families - Progress Report

Paul Hussey, Working Together with Families Co-ordinator, Directorate for Children and Young People, attended and presented a report updating on the implementation of the Working Together with Families approach across Lancashire.

It was reported that the programme was aimed at increasing the resilience of families across Lancashire and was focussed on a whole system culture change working with families rather than imposing on them with the aim of helping them to take greater control of their circumstances and improving outcomes for their children and young people.

Delivery was through 12 District groups and District Children's Trusts received reports on a monthly basis. £600,000 had been invested in workforce training and awareness.

Families which were identified as meeting the criteria were approached and asked if they would take part in the programme.

The Working Together with Families approach also encompassed the national Troubled Families initiative. The target number of troubled families in Lancashire to be worked with up to the end of March 2015 is 2,630 and, as of 30 September, the number of families identified that met two or more of the national criteria was 2,749. The number of families worked with was 1,136 as of 30 September with 735 families achieving positive outcomes. It was predicted that a further 309 families would achieve positive outcomes by January 2014 giving a total of 1,044.

Further updated results and data had recently been received from central Government and a summary analysis would be circulated to the Cabinet Committee shortly.

Case studies had been developed setting out the positive impact on outcomes and these were set out at Appendix 'B' to the report.

Reference was made to the need to ensure a cohesive approach with other agencies, to maximise external funding, link in to attainment levels and to integrate the approach into early support and intervention. It was suggested that the information should be presented to the Lancashire Health and Wellbeing Board, local health networks and be the subject of bite size briefings for County Councillors.

Resolved: - That the report, now presented, be noted.

7. Urgent Business

There was no urgent business to be considered.

8. Date of Next Meeting

The Cabinet Committee noted that the next meeting would take place on Thursday 30 January 2014 at 2.00pm in Cabinet Room 'B' – The Diamond Jubilee Room, County Hall

I M Fisher
County Secretary and Solicitor

County Hall
Preston