

Lancashire County Council

Cabinet Committee on Performance Improvement

Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday, 16th April, 2013 at 2.00 pm in Cabinet Room 'B' - County Hall, Preston

Present:

County Councillor Geoff Driver (Chair)

County Councillors

A Atkinson

M Perks

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from County Councillors Tim Ashton, Susie Charles and Jennifer Mein.

2. Disclosure of Pecuniary and Non Pecuniary Interests

None declared.

3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 26 February 2013

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held on 26 February 2013 be confirmed and signed by the Chair.

4. Impact of Partnership Working on School Improvement

Bob Stott, Director for Universal and Early Support Services and Jonathan Hewitt, Head of Quality and Continuous Improvement (both Directorate for Children and Young People) presented the report.

Bob and Jonathan reported that the performance of pupils against national standards have increased across Lancashire and currently there is no school in Lancashire which has been below the national Floor standards for more than the last 3 years. Of those schools which had been below the floor standards before 2010 currently half are considered to be at a low level of concern, around 38% are considered to be a medium level of concern with 12% requiring intensive support and challenge. In addition just under 60% of the schools were judged to be good in their most recent inspection by Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED).

Over the past 3 years the support for the lowest attaining secondary schools has had a positive impact on the quality of education. Of the 19 secondary schools which were below the Floor standard in 2009, 15 schools reached or exceeded the floor standard of 40% of pupils gaining 5 good GCSEs including English and

mathematics in 2012. Of these schools almost half were above the floor standard in all 3 years (2009 – 2012) and around three quarters were above the floor standard in two of the 3 years. Two schools did not go above the floor standard in this 3 year period.

The current risk assessments indicate that around one third of schools are considered to be at a low level of concern, just over half judged to be at a medium level of concern with around 10% receiving intensive support.

Resolved: The Cabinet Committee on Performance Improvement noted the report.

5. Customer Experience Project - Shared Lives Carers: Review of Assessment Process for Carers

Becki Addey and Oliver Collins, Graduate Management Trainees, presented a report on regarding the Customer Experience Project – Shared Lives Carers: Review of Assessment Process for Carers.

Becki explained that the Customer Experience Project was designed to offer Lancashire County Council services the facility to better understand the needs, experiences and aspirations of their service users to enable service improvements.

Wave 5 of the project (December 2012 – July 2013) is currently underway and 11 projects have now been confirmed and allocated to the corporate graduate management trainees who undertake and lead on the research (supported by the Corporate Policy and Performance Team). The Shared Lives Carers: Review of Assessment Process for Carers is one of the 11 projects that is now reported to the Cabinet Committee.

Becki explained that the Shared Lives Service is family-based care provided by individuals and families which enables adults to live with a family, sharing in family and community life. Being a Shared Lives carer involves supporting people to meet their emotional, social, health, occupational and educational needs. The service offers costs effective high quality support to people with disabilities, older adults and people with mental health issues.

The objectives of the research project where to find out more about Shared Lives carers experiences of the assessment process, focusing on:

- The length of the process.
- Which services the carers wish to provide and to whom.
- The relationships between the carer and the Shared Lives team.
- The support the carers both received and required.

Fourteen participants from all three (Adult Social Care) localities of Lancashire were selected to be interviewed based on their location and stage of assessment. These interviews were mostly carried out in the participants' homes and over the

telephone if more convenient. The interviews were carried out using a discussion guide to ensure the key objectives were met.

Key Findings

- The majority of participants are generally very pleased with the service and would recommend being a Shared Lives carer to others.
- Many found the assessment process to be too lengthy, though they felt the questions asked were very thorough and relevant.
- Key qualities that participants feel are important attributes of the Shared Lives team are a personable service, good communication and approachable staff.
- The majority of participants described the support they have received as very good across all areas of Lancashire.
- Several participants felt there is a lack of clarity on information such as the payment system, insurance, self employment and the voucher scheme.
- Some participants felt the service needed to be better promoted to potential carers.

Recommendations

A number of recommendations were presented in the research, including:

- Implement an 'Introduction pack' for carers undergoing the assessment process.
- Support an increase in communication between the Shared Lives team and carers- recommended that contact should be made monthly.
- Promotion of the service for potential carers through accessible channels.
- Regular carer meetings available throughout Lancashire for all carers.

Future / Next Steps

Becki also presented a number of future / next steps that were already being looked into and/or could be implemented, including:

- Shared Lives team will remain in contact with new carers who currently don't have anyone placed with them to keep them updated on any progresses.
- Shared Lives team will ensure that new carers have an understanding of the 'matching' process of placing individuals with carers.
- The service will audit the time frame it is taking for the carer assessment process to be completed to find out why carers aren't being approved within the 8 week service standard.
- The Shared Lives Service will review the 8 week service standard of completing the carer assessment process. Is this an appropriate time frame? Give scope to potentially shorten or lengthen the process following the audit.
- Communication is paramount to ensure that the team continues to provide a personable service to carers. The Shared Lives team will ensure that

there is a continual focus on good communication, ideally face to face where appropriate.

Heather Bryan, from the Shared Lives Service, explained that from a service perspective the Customer Experience Project and feedback received regarding the Assessment Process for Carers was really useful. The research confirmed that many of the service's current improvement areas were the right ones and a number of the additional recommendations will be taken on board and implemented.

The Cabinet Committee thanked the Graduate Management Trainees for their work on the project.

Resolved: The Cabinet Committee on Performance Improvement noted the research, findings and recommendations of the Shared Lives Carers: Review of Assessment Process for Carers Customer Experience Project and asked that the service implement the recommendations as appropriate.

6. Lancashire Break Time

Sally Riley, Head of Inclusion and Disability Support Service, Directorate for Children and Young People presented the report.

Sally explained how the County Council defines the term 'Short Breaks'. A short break is an arrangement by which the primary carer of a child with a disability is given a break from the caring role, usually for a period of at least 2 hours and usually via evenings, weekend and holiday activities.

Sally explained that prior to 2007, service delivery for children with disabilities was different, and had the following implications:

- No service if you did not meet assessment criteria and were unable to access universal services.
- Families fell into a hole with no support.
- No social opportunities for children with additional needs or disabilities.
- Families needed professional involvement to receive support and get an assessment .
- High proportion of these young people were failed by services and ended up Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET).
- No support for families until a crisis happened.

However, from 2008 to 2011 a project known as 'Aiming High for Disabled Children' was introduced, which provided:

- Short breaks for specific groups of children only – complex health and challenging behaviour / severe learning difficulties.
- *“for a regular and reliable break from caring” and “more things to do and more places to go”.*
- 1,600 families receiving short breaks.

- over 100 third sector providers involved across county.
- £3.4m for short breaks programme for 2008/09 and 2010/11(match funded for health services).
- £1.9m capital resources.
- Aiming High delivered 90,874 hours
- To 7,323 children
- 1,652 being unique children
- By 62 providers
- Across 12 districts
- During weekends, weekdays and school holidays

Lancashire Break Time (LBT) was then introduced from 2011/14, which:

- Is driven by parents through **Lancashire Parent Carer Forum (LPCF)** acting as commissioners.
- **Is funded by LCC - £3.5m per year** in 2011/12 and 2012/13 with £0.5m under spend through more effective commissioning arrangements.
- Has cabinet confirmed funding for 2013/14 – **£3.5m**
- Is provided by **third sector** organisations, and;
- Has a wider criteria for access.

Lancashire Break Time provides a range of activities, including:

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|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| • Horse riding | • Swimming |
| • Sports Sessions | • Youth club |
| • Cookery sessions | • Bowling |
| • Cycling | • Gardening |
| • Life skills | • Construction club |
| • Rock climbing/ Zip wire | • Arts and crafts |
| • Canoeing | • Trampolining |
| • Orienteering | • Climbing wall |
| • Abseiling | • Dancing/Drama clubs |
| • Fitness gym | • Wheels for all |
| • Multi-sports | • Football sessions |
| • Badminton | |

Lancashire Break Time has:

- Delivered 100,425 hours of care
- Through 20,222 short breaks
- To 1,980 unique children
- By 52 providers
- Across 12 districts
- During evenings, weekends, weekdays and school holidays, and;
- 91% of all respondents agreed that LBT should continue during the recent Short Breaks Strategy consultation

Sally explained how Lancashire Break Time making a difference to these children and their families by:

- Providing services for all who cannot attend universal services.
- Removing the Service gap.
- Providing a variety of opportunities for children to meet their individual needs.
- Providing main carers receive a break from their caring role.
- Removing the need for many professionals to be involved or to meet criteria for families to get a service.
- Investing now to improve positive outcomes for these young people in the future.

A number of other projects have been commissioned within Lancashire Break Time, including:

- 72 visits already booked for Lancashire Break Time at Lancashire Outdoor Education Centres for day visits, single overnight stays and multi night visits
- Capital developments:
 - Enhanced adaptations to new residential block at Tower Wood for family/group breaks using £863k from LBT
 - Accessible bungalows at Hothersall Lodge and Borwick Hall
 - Adapted bike/wheelchair/cart tracks.
 - New in-house overnight units design specification.

Resolved: Committee members commended the Lancashire Break Time service, the Cabinet Committee on Performance Improvement then resolved to note the report.

7. Urgent Business

None

8. Date of Next Meeting

It was noted that the next meeting of the Cabinet Committee will take place on Friday 14 June 2013 at 2pm in Cabinet Room 'B', County Hall, Preston.

I M Fisher
County Secretary and Solicitor

County Hall
Preston