

Wirral Improvement Board
Wednesday 26th July 2017
Wallasey Town Hall, 2.00-4.00pm

Minutes and Actions

Present:

Tony Crane	Chair of Improvement Board/DfE Advisor
Cllr Bernie Mooney	Lead Member for Children & Family Services
Cllr Lesley Rennie	Conservative Group, Deputy Leader
Cllr Phil Gilchrist	Liberal Democrat Leader
Cllr Moira McLaughlin	Member of Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Prof. Maggie Atkinson	Chair of WSCB
Dee Davies	NHS England
Satwinder Lotay	Nursing, Therapies and Patient Partnership
Deborah Gornik	Interim Director for Children's Services
Tracey Hayes	Merseyside Police

Officers in Attendance:

Simone White	Deputy Director for Children's Services
Gani Martins	Interim Head of Practice Improvement
Carly Brown	Head of Performance, Quality & Improvement
Matthew Humble	Business and Transformation Manager
Alison Watson	Quality Assurance & Auditing Officer
Jane Clayson	Interim Programme Manager – Customer Experience Transformation Programme
Andrew Roberts	Senior Manager - Finance
Lynn Campbell	Senior Manager – Child in Need/Child Protection

Apologies:

Eric Robinson	Chief Executive, Wirral Council
Cllr Phil Davies	Leader of the Council
Ian Hassall	Merseyside Police – Area Commander
Lorna Quigley	Director of Policy & Patient Safety Clinical Commissioning Group
Philippa Malcolm	Chair of Wirral Primary Headteacher Consultative Group
Lisa Ayling	Chair of Wirral Association of Secondary Headteachers
Annette Roberts	CEO Community Action Wirral
Kerry Mehta	Head of Children's Safeguarding
Kevin MacCallum	Senior Manager – Marketing & Communications
<u>Avril Devaney</u>	<u>Director of Nursing, Therapies and Patient Partnership</u>

Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed by members of the Improvement Board.

Action Tracker

The progress of completing actions captured in the 'Action Tracker' was noted.

Directors Update

Deborah Gornik provided a presentation on the latest improvement progress which included performance and quality assurance overviews.

Cllr Bernie Mooney queried what makes Wirral different from other authorities in terms of the high numbers of children in care? Simone White responded that Wirral has very complex cases which has been recognised by Ofsted who took the unusual step of including reference to the significant levels of complexity in the inspection report. Tony Crane agreed this was the first time he has seen this statement from Ofsted. Cllr Bernie Mooney asked whether we are doing any work politically to address this, as there is the need to work with other departments and partner's (police, school etc.) to intervene to address this cycle. Tracey Hayes stated that work has started around intervention, including identifying children at nursery where parents are addicted to drugs/alcohol and the Safer Wirral Hub is working with partners to support families and reduce the number of statutory interventions by social care.

Cllr Moira McLaughlin queried the level of support provided to foster families. Simone White stated that the courts are pushing the local authority towards placing with family members, 41% of our Foster Carer's are currently connected carers. Simone White will ask Diane Hollis to carry out a piece of work as to the educational outcomes of children and young people supported through Special Guardianship Orders.

Simone White stated that we need to understand more about what is going on with regards to the application of thresholds and plan accordingly. Information helping to understand our children is more robust, for example there are currently 422 children who have been looked after for over six months and are aged over 10 years old. Work needs to be undertaken to understand the reasons why. The Children and Young People's Departmental Transformation Board will undertake a modelling exercise on the profile of children in care. Tony Crane requested that this work also be presented to the Improvement Board.

Action: The work of the Transformation Programme to be shared with the Improvement Board at a future meeting.

The Transformation programme is currently dealing with four priority areas – Accommodation, Finances, IT and HR.

Jane Clayson provided an update on the Children and Young People's Department Transformation Programme. The programme will deliver change through controlled mechanisms; applying these controlled mechanisms will also support the Improvement Journey. To ensure that improvement activity is delivered at an accelerated pace a number of 'Sprint' meetings have been arranged to assist in removing blockages in the system and help support practice improvement.

Tony Crane asked Jane Clayson to provide an example of the type of areas transformation is supporting. Jane Clayson stated accommodation - exploring the possibility of co-locating front line delivery – and IT – how support can be provided to social workers to work more mobile and agile.

Action: A report updating on progress of Sprint meetings is to be provided to the next meeting of the Improvement Board

The next Ofsted monitoring visit will take place on 30 and 31 August 2017. The proposed theme of the visit is Care Leavers and will be clarified at a meeting with Ofsted on 27th July 2017.

Tony Crane asked members for comments on the Performance Report. Cllr Phil Gilchrist highlighted a matter in the quality assurance report which referred to the quality of case summaries as variable, referred to their being no clear framework, the use of cut and paste, chronologies, variable lengths etc and commented on why case summaries are this is still being reported as variable 6 months on. Simone White responded that it remains an issue due to the changing workforce. The refreshed induction process should help address this and reissuing clear guidance regarding case summaries. Lynn Campbell also stated that a standardised template has been provided to staff with appropriate guidance.

Prof Maggie Atkinson requested that the next steps and recommendations from the Quality Assurance report should be monitored by the board, to see how many recommendations have been enacted.

Tracey Hayes queried the high Independent Reviewing Officer vacancy rate and asked what we are doing to fill gap. Simone White stated that this is linked to pay and reward. There is a plan to look at pay and reward of Independent Reviewing Officers alongside Social Workers.

Carly Brown commented on the success of the breakfast bitesize training sessions which were well attended. Three dedicated sessions on back to basics auditing training have also been held and feedback was positive.

Wirral Safeguarding Children's Board Update

Prof. Maggie Atkinson presented an update of the work of the Wirral Safeguarding Board. The financial resourcing of the Safeguarding Board continues to be an issue. The Board is £90,000 short of what it needs in order to operate in its current form. If this budget is not found then the Safeguarding Board will need to review support and staffing.

The Wirral Safeguarding Children board is prepared for the implementation of the forthcoming Children and Social Care Act and proposals for the new arrangements will be agreed by April 2018.

Information regarding the implementation of the recently launched 'Supporting Families, Enhancing Futures' model; materials can be found on the Safeguarding Board website.

Satwinder Lotay stated that a number of her staff had attended the Supporting Families, Enhancing Futures workshop who found it very useful and they were glad that this model has been adopted. Tracey Hayes stated that Police have also attended the event and also found it useful.

Wirral Refreshed Improvement Plan

Carly Brown presented the draft Wirral Refreshed Improvement Plan which has been circulated to Board members by email today and feedback to be sent direct to Carly by 31st July 2017. The plan will be presented back to the board in September to be approved.

Cllr Bernie Mooney stated that it is a really good working document. It is a piece of work that people can understand easily, is adaptable, has accountability and allows for progress to be monitored which is very important. Cllr Phil Gilchrist queried comments around compliance by managers. Carly Brown responded that information from audits and performance dashboards is now more regularly reported to the Deputy Director, Children's Services to ensure that manager are held to account.

Action: The refreshed Wirral Improvement Plan is presented to the next meeting of the Improvement Board for approval.

Safer Wirral Hub

Tracey Hayes presented an update on the Safer Wirral Hub. In addition, an update was provided on the Youth Offending Service Inspection in July 2017. Feedback was positive and inspectors interviewed young people, parents and partner agencies.

The Safer Wirral Hub team acts on intelligence to disrupt criminal/anti-social behaviour and ensure that perpetrators know they are on the radar. Tony Crane asked what the wider impacts on vulnerabilities on young people and domestic abuse were. Tracey Hayes stated that they have good statistics, there is a more

joined up approach across partners in the hub and the benefits such as a better understanding of thresholds for referral to statutory social care services are more visible. Tony Crane said that he would like to revisit the outcomes of the Safer Hub model at a future meeting to assess the impact.

Finance – levels of need and impact on resources.

Andrew Roberts presented a finance and transformation fund update to the Improvement Board. Work was ongoing for the recruitment incentives and retention of staff and will need to be reflected in the £10 million Transformation Fund. There is a recognition that the transformation fund is as a 'one off' cash injection. Simone White stated that the transformation fund is about managing pressures - numbers of children in care are rising and new placements are externally commissioned as Local Authority Foster Carers are full. Work will continue to ensure that the local authority is getting quality, value for money and children are in the right placements.

Forward Plan

Members were asked to note the forward plan and provide any items for inclusion for future meetings

Any other business

Members of the board agreed to cancel the August meeting of the board due to annual leave commitments.

In future the Improvement Board will be extended from 2 hours to 2 ½ hours in order to cover all the business. Tony Crane asked members of the board to give some thought to the creation of a sub group looking at performance.

Actions arising from the meeting:

Action
Action: The work of the Transformation Programme to be shared with the Improvement Board at a future meeting.
Action: A report updating on progress of Sprint meetings is to be provided to the next meeting of the Improvement Board
Action: The refreshed Wirral Improvement Plan is presented to the next meeting of the Improvement Board for approval.