



Name of meeting: Corporate Parenting Board

Date: 30th September 2020

Title of report: Mental Health Support for Children in Care and Thriving Kirklees Review

Purpose of report: To provide an overview of the Emotional wellbeing and mental health support provided to Children in Care and the commissioning review of the Thriving Kirklees Partnership

Key Decision - Is it likely to result in spending or saving £250k or more, or to have a significant effect on two or more electoral wards?	Not Applicable
Key Decision - Is it in the <u>Council's Forward Plan (key decisions and private reports)?</u>	Key Decision – No
The Decision - Is it eligible for call in by Scrutiny?	Not Applicable
Date signed off by <u>Strategic Director</u> & name Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Finance? Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Legal Governance and Commissioning?	Mel Meggs Not applicable Not applicable
Cabinet member portfolio	Cllr V Kendrick (Children)

Electoral wards affected: None

Ward councillors consulted: None

Public or private: Public

Has GDPR been considered? Yes, no person identifiable information is included in this report.

1. Summary

Emotional wellbeing and mental health support provided to Children in Care

We recognise that Children in Care are among the most vulnerable in our society and are likely to require additional support to maintain their mental health and emotional wellbeing. It is well documented that Children in Care have already grown up in vulnerable circumstances and face a range of equality challenges in particularly in relation to mental health. The Mental Healthy Schools organisation reports:

“Because of their experiences both before and during care, looked after children are at much greater risk of poor mental health than their peers. Almost half of children in care have a diagnosable mental health disorder (compared with 10% of their peers) and two-thirds have special educational needs.

Many will have difficulties with developing and maintaining relationships, trauma and self-esteem. They are also more likely to leave school with fewer qualifications, are at higher risk of offending, becoming a teenage parent, or not being in education, employment or training.”

Government research highlights statistics that “show that 62 per cent of looked after children are in care due to abuse or neglect, which can have a lasting impact on their mental health and emotional wellbeing.”

In order to address these issues, in Kirklees we have commissioned dedicated services to ensure that Children in Care receive a timely, high quality service.

A dedicated multi-disciplinary team is embedded within Kirklees Council Children’s services to provide holistic support to children and families.

Embedded within the team are a number of specialised clinicians employed by South West Yorkshire Foundation Trust (SWYFT) to provide a high level of clinical support to children and their carers.

The team includes a Clinical Psychologist who, as well as providing direct mental health support to children and families, also provides clinical support and advice to the clinical teams and staff in residential settings. This includes supporting their learning and development and providing training.

There is a dedicated Child Psychotherapist who provides in depth support and therapy, particularly to younger children and their carers, providing rapid access to this specialist service.

As a result of a recommendation in the 2016 Ofsted report, a Senior Mental Health Practitioner role was commissioned to work with Care Leavers (17+ years). The practitioner provides direct therapeutic work with young people, including Cognitive Behavioural Therapy, Moodmasters group therapy and holds drop-in sessions at no. 11 and no.12. The drop-in sessions had to be postponed during the Covid restrictions but work is currently underway to re-open these facilities.

In addition to individual caseloads the team also holds regular 'Emotional Wellbeing Clinics' where cases can be discussed in a multi-disciplinary environment. Support and advice is provided to families and carers if the child is subject to an Interim or Final Care Order. Between April and August 2020 111 clinics were carried out.

The team also includes a manager and five further Senior Practitioners who work closely to support carers but are increasingly working more directly with children and young people.

A tier two worker from Northorpe Hall Trust performs another important role within the service by attending the weekly screening sessions to ensure that children and carers are directed towards the most appropriate provision, as well as the Wellbeing Clinic sessions. A valuable contribution of this role is to provide a link with the Northorpe Hall provision and access to case information to help inform decision making. This may result in Children in Care being referred to Northorpe Hall Trust for support from the Children's Emotional Wellbeing Service (ChEWS) where they have priority access to therapists and counsellors.

Currently there is no waiting list for Children in Care. In the past year 53 children have accessed the service. The average waiting time from referral to first appointment has been 4 weeks, compared to 20 weeks for the equivalent general service. The length of intervention for Children in Care is, on average, 15 weeks longer than that experienced by a young person in the ChEWS service.

The team continues to develop its approach to care and support, they are building strong links with the Multi-systemic therapy service and are jointly developing a formulation based approach. This will involve the development of a framework and a staff training programme and will provide a more consistent and holistic view of the child or young person.

The team support the learning and development of the fostering team, including the supervising social workers. Work is ongoing to develop the use of a trauma informed approach, which will take into account adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) with the aim of making decisions more needs led, rather than resource led.

Further support to foster carers and placements is being developed in the form of the reflective fostering programme. This will allow professionals to have a confidential supervision group in which they can reflect on their cases and practice in a restorative way. This has begun with the formation of a clinicians group and will be expanded to include foster carers, with the aim of using restorative practice to discuss the child they are caring for and to prevent placement breakdown.

Thriving Kirklees Review

The Thriving Kirklees partnership was developed throughout 2016 with the aim of bringing Health services for children together and create a more integrated service with more seamless patient journey and better relationships with families. The partnership included health visitors, school nurses, mental health services and many

more. Funding is provided by Kirklees Council, North Kirklees CCG and Greater Huddersfield CCG.

The contract was awarded to Locala, in partnership with SWYFT, Northorpe Hall Trust, Yorkshire Children's Centre and Homestart. This is a 5 year contract initially, beginning in April 2017. As part of the Council's commissioning approach and commitment to continuous improvement it was decided to commission an independent review of the partnership to inform future developments and service improvements.

The scope of the review will include:

- how well the partnership has developed
- whether the original aims and spirit of the service have been achieved
- how well the services integrate with other provision for children and families, such as Early Support
- opportunities to integrate other services not currently within Thriving Kirklees

The review has two components, the first looking at the partnership as a whole and the second with a focus on mental health provision. The two components of the review are taking place simultaneously and in conjunction. A report will be produced in early October with a summary of findings and initial recommendations. Stakeholder events will be held to inform an action plan, which will be developed between October and December.

2. Information required to take a decision

Not applicable

3. Implications for the Council

3.1 Working with People

Not applicable

3.2 Working with Partners

The Thriving Kirklees review will look at the effectiveness of partnership working in Children's services and recommend improvements if identified.

3.3 Place Based Working

The Thriving Kirklees review will explore possibilities for increased Place Based Working.

3.4 Climate Change and Air Quality

Not applicable

3.5 Improving outcomes for children

Continuous improvement of Thriving Kirklees and the mental health support provided to Children in Care will contribute towards improving outcomes for children.

3.6 Other (eg Legal/Financial or Human Resources) Consultees and their opinions

Not applicable

4. Next steps and timelines

An update on the findings of the Thriving Kirklees review will be presented at a future Corporate Parenting Board.

5. Officer recommendations and reasons

That the report above and Thriving Kirklees review is noted.

6. Cabinet Portfolio Holder's recommendations

Not applicable

7. Contact officer

Name and job title of report author, contact details (telephone and e-mail)

8. Background Papers and History of Decisions

Not applicable

9. Service Director responsible

Tom Brailsford – Service Director – Resources, Improvements and Partnerships