

CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & LEARNING POLICY OVERVIEW COMMITTEE - REVIEW INTO CORPORATE PARENTING

Relevant Board Member(s)	Councillor David Simmonds
Organisation	London Borough of Hillingdon
Report author	Merlin Joseph, Children and Young People
Papers with report	N/A

1. HEADLINE INFORMATION

Summary	<p>The Children, Young People & Learning Policy Overview Committee has recently undertaken a Major Review into the Council's role as a corporate parent.</p> <p>Consequently, the Committee made recommendations to address the issues that had been highlighted. Following Cabinet approval on 21 November 2013, it was determined that these would be most appropriately progressed by the Health & Wellbeing Board.</p>
Contribution to plans and strategies	<p>The Council is committed to discharging its role as a corporate parent to the highest possible level. The recommendations set out below are intended to contribute directly to this aspiration by providing more timely and targeted health services to this vulnerable group.</p>
Financial Cost	<p>There are no financial costs associated with the recommendations set out below.</p>
Ward(s) affected	All

2. RECOMMENDATION

That the Board considers the four recommendations set out below and progress as appropriate.

Policy Overview Committee Recommendations

- 1) Ask the Health & Wellbeing Board to request that the Hillingdon Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and Hillingdon Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) acquire, maintain and share data on the following areas:
 - a. Proportion of total budgets spent on Looked After Children (LAC);
 - b. Proportion of LAC registered with a GP;
 - c. Proportion of the CAMHS caseload that is made up of LAC;

- d. **Information on what intervention / therapy is being provided by CAMHS and what health issues are being dealt with via wider case consultation; and**
 - e. **The number of Tier 2, 3 and 4 assessments that CAMHS undertake for LAC.**
- 2) **Ask the Cabinet Member for Education & Children’s Services to request officers continue to work alongside colleagues from Hillingdon CAMHS to provide a designated point of contact to provide advice and assistance for all mental health issues relating to LAC, reporting to the Health & Wellbeing Board if required.**
- 3) **Ask the Cabinet Member for Education & Children’s Services to request officers continue to work alongside the Council’s partner agencies to develop a comprehensive understanding of where responsibilities lie between NHS England and CCGs for all aspects of the health needs of LAC and report findings back to the Cabinet Member for Education & Children’s Services, the Children, Young People & Learning Policy Overview Committee and the Health & Wellbeing Board as appropriate.**
- 4) **In order to ensure that the mental health needs of LAC are met when placements are out of Borough, ask the Cabinet Member for Education & Children’s Services to request officers produce a protocol on the process of how services are brokered between CCGs and NHS England for agreement by the Cabinet Member for Education & Children’s Services and the Health & Wellbeing Board.**

3. INFORMATION

Between June and September 2013, the Children, Young People & Learning Policy Overview Committee undertook a major review into the Council’s role as a corporate parent. The scope of the review was extremely broad and, amongst other things, explored the provision of education and leisure activities to the Borough’s LAC as well as the support offered to those leaving care. However, it was the provision of health services to this vulnerable group that gave the Committee the most concern and, consequently, formed a major part of its report and recommendations. Given that the Council does not have direct control over much of this area, the Committee determined that these recommendations could be best taken forward by the Health & Wellbeing Board in conjunction with our partner agencies. Cabinet approved this approach at its meeting on 21 November 2013.

Supporting Information

Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) services in Hillingdon are provided by the Central North West London Foundation trust (CNWL), who are commissioned to do so by the Hillingdon Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and by NHS England.

The services provided by CAMHS in Hillingdon are known as tier 3 and 4 specialist and acute services. Tier 3 services are commissioned locally by the CCG, comprising a multi-disciplinary mental health team. Tier 4 services are commissioned by NHS England. These are highly specialist services for young people, including inpatient provision such as hospitals and other residential units. There are acknowledged gaps in the Borough for tier 2 (targeted/preventative) CAMHS services.

As the Board is aware, health services are provided to LAC by a range of bodies including the Council itself, the CCG, CAMHS and NHS England. It became apparent to the Committee from very early in the review that, from the perspective of the LAC themselves, there were a number of concerning gaps in this provision as well as uncertainty about which agency provided what services. Consequently, one of the Committee's primary concerns was to gain an understanding of exactly what was currently been done by each agency to address the health needs of LAC. Getting a comprehensive understanding of current support would provide an evidence base from which to provide informed, effective and meaningful recommendations. During the sessions themselves, the Committee highlighted the following four areas as being particularly important:

- the number of LAC registered with GPs,
- the proportion of the CAMHS' £1.1m budget spent on LAC,
- the number of active LAC cases being dealt with by CAMHS, and
- the number of active LAC cases that are placed out of borough who were in need of a CAMHS service.

With a great deal of disappointment and concern the Committee heard that health colleagues were unable to provide this information at the witness session. It was noted that each point could only be provided by undertaking significant audit work as such data was not collected or monitored as a matter of course. In the session itself witnesses stated that collecting this information would have resource implications for CAMHS and the CCG but witnesses agreed that the data would be collected and reported to the Committee at a later date. Nonetheless, Members were frustrated that senior health colleagues with a statutory responsibility to support LAC (and who had been invited to a witness session on that subject) were unable to provide this most basic of information.

Following a significant period of liaising between officers and health professionals, only the number of active LAC cases currently being dealt with by CAMHS was provided. Health colleagues noted that the proportion of the CAMHS budget spent on LAC could not be provided because an audit would have too great a resource implication that could jeopardise frontline services if undertaken. Furthermore, at the writing of this report, work was ongoing to ascertain who was responsible for monitoring the registration of LAC with a GP (NHS England or the CCG itself). Members expressed their grave concerns that information could not be provided even within a generous timeframe and, even more worryingly, that there was uncertainty as to who should monitor a vitally important health service to vulnerable children.

Whilst the Committee appreciated the resource issues that faced partner agencies, serious concerns were raised that both the CCG and CAMHS had a duty to support LAC and that not enough work was being done to ensure that this duty was being adequately met. The Committee strongly felt that if it was not possible for those caring for this vulnerable and at-risk group to outline exactly what was being done to address the lower health outcomes of LAC, it would be impossible to make improvements to the service. Emphasis was placed on the vulnerability of the LAC community and how they should be identified as a priority group given the lower health outcomes and increased health risks that they are likely to face in their adult lives.

Following discussion between officers and the Chairman as part of the review, it was determined outside of the meeting that more comprehensive information would also be required to provide a full picture of the current service and how these complex and often critical health needs are being met. With a particular focus on CAMHS, the following list was suggested by

officers as being information that would be required for the Council to monitor and make improvements to the health outcomes of LAC:

- What intervention / therapy is being provided for LAC or whether health issues are being dealt with via wider case consultation.
- The number of Tier 2, 3 and 4 assessments that CAMHS undertake for LAC.
- How much of CAMHS' total budget is spent specifically on addressing the needs of the Borough's LAC population.
- How many LAC who have been referred for a CAMHS service are awaiting assessment or intervention and for how long in each case

In recognition of the financial and resource pressures facing the Council's partner agencies, the Committee decided that the data set out above should not be requested retrospectively as acquiring it would require a costly and time consuming audit of case files. Instead the Committee requested that both the CCG and CAMHS be asked to work with officers to put in place measures designed to capture this information in the immediate future and commit to communicating this information to the Council on a regular basis.

With a view to addressing the above concerns and improving the lives of our LAC, the Committee wished to ask, subject to Cabinet approval, the Health & Wellbeing Board to consider and progress the above recommendations. By doing so, the Board will help to ensure that the authority and its partner agencies have clearly defined areas of responsibility, have up-to-date data to act on and are working together to improve the lives of our LAC.

Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications resulting from the recommendations set out above as the four recommendations made by the Policy Overview Committee can be managed within existing Council resources.

4. EFFECT ON RESIDENTS, SERVICE USERS & COMMUNITIES

What will be the effect of the recommendation?

The recommendations in this report are designed with the purpose of improving the services provided to the Borough's LAC. Consequently, it is intended that the improvements suggested here will have a positive impact on the lives of one of the most vulnerable groups in the Borough's community.

Consultation Carried Out or Required

The Committee undertook 3 witness sessions which were attended by a wide range of officers and colleagues from the Council and its partner agencies. This provided a broad evidence based on which the wider report (and the 4 recommendations contained) here have been based.

The Committee also undertook an informal session with a selection of LAC and care leavers who provided valuable insights on their experiences of the services provided to them. It was the Committee's aim throughout the review to address the LAC's concerns raised in this session and deliver real and immediate improvements to their lives.

Policy Overview Committee comments

As set out in this report.

5. CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Hillingdon Council Corporate Finance comments

Corporate Finance note the recommendations in the report and concur with the financial implications set out above.

Hillingdon Council Legal comments

The Health & Wellbeing Board is being asked to work with partner agencies providing health services to the Borough's LAC in order to deliver improvements to how their health needs are being met. Details are set out in the recommendations section.

The legislative and regulatory framework includes:

- The Care Standards Act (2000)
- The Children Act (1989, 2004)
- The Mental Health Act (2007)
- The Children and Young Persons Act (2008)

London Child Protection Procedures, 4th edition.

The Council's statutory duties and functions, for provision of services and support for children in need and young people in the Council's care are set out under Part III of the Children Act 1989, Care Leavers (England) Regulations 2010, Section 118 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002.

The Children and Families Bill 2013 takes forward the Coalition Government's commitments to improve services for vulnerable children and support strong families. It underpins wider reforms to ensure that all children and young people can succeed, no matter what their background. The Bill will reform the systems for adoption, looked after children, family justice and special educational needs. It will encourage growth in the childcare sector, introduce a new system of shared parental leave and ensure children in England have a strong advocate for their rights.

There are no other significant legal implications arising out of this report to bring to Cabinet's attention at this stage.

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

NIL.