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**Childrens Services Improvement Board**  
**Chair – Stuart Smith**  
**Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> September 2019 2.00 pm to 5.00 pm**  
**Committee Room1, City Hall**

**Attendees:**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Job Title</b>
Stuart Smith	Chair
Mark Douglas	Strategic Director Children’s Services
Ian Tomlinson	Children’s Improvement Programme Director
Maggie Smallridge	West Yorkshire Probation
Heather Lacey	Headteacher Shirley Manor Primary Academy
Marium Haque	Deputy Director Education and Learning
Helen Hirst	Bradford Clinical Commissioning Group’s accountable officer
Jenny Cryer	AD Performance, Commissioning and Partnerships CBMDC
Cllr Adrian Farley	Lead Portfolio Holder Children and Families
Cllr Mike Gibbons	Chair of Children’s Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Mustansir Butt	Children’s Overview and Scrutiny Lead - Observer
Michelle Turner	Director of Quality of Nursing
Jane Booth	Chair Bradford Safeguarding Children Board
Helene Stewart	DfE Case Lead – Local Authority Interventions
Janice Hawkes	Barnardos/Young Lives
Mark Douglas	DCS Bradford MDC
Fiona Broadfoot	Build a Girl Project Director
Sue Thompson	Designated Nurse CCG
Anne Chester-Walsh	Interim AD Social Care Improvement CBMDC
Craig Tupling	Bradford College Deputy CEO
Traci Taylor	Principal Social Worker
Kersten England	Chief Executive
Joanne Hyde	Strategic Director Corporate Resources
Lyndsey Brown	Headteacher, Oastlers School
DCI Steven Greenbank	West Yorkshire Police
Dawn Lee	AGM Community Children’s Services BDCFT
Barry Scarr	Section 151 Finance Officer
Jo Newman	Named Nurse Safeguarding Children Airedale NHS FT
Cllr Carol Thirkhill	Councillor – Chair of Corporate Parenting Committee
Sally Scales	Deputy Chief Nurse BTHFT
Cllr Susan Hinchcliffe	Leader of the Council
<b>In attendance</b>	
Anne Chester-Walsh	Interim AD Social Care Improvement CBMDC
Phil Witcherley	Head of Policy and Performance OCX
Laura Copley	Senior Business data Intelligence Officer OCX
Michelle Moverley	Head of HR - Sub for Anne Lloyd
Heidi Hardy	Programme Support Officer (minutes)
<b>Apologies</b>	

Ann Baxter	Local Government Associate
Ali-Jan Haider	Director of Strategic Partnerships Executive Lead for Bradford Districts CCG
Anne Lloyd	Director Human Resources CBMDC
Cath Knowles	Children's Consultant Improvement Advisor
David Horn	CEO Beckfoot Trust – Secondary representative
Ginny Robinson	Abbey Green Nursery - Nursery representative
Steve Hemming	Head of Communications
Rachel Stirland	District Achievement Partnership (DAP) representative

Ref.	Action / Decision	Action Owner
1.	<b>Welcome and apologies</b> Introductions were made. See above for list of apologies.	
2. 3.	<p><b>Minutes of last meeting held July 2019</b> The minutes were agreed as an accurate record subject to a spelling correction on page 3 to say “regularly”.</p> <p><b>Matters arising</b></p> <p><i>Item 11.3 Front Door to Children's Social Care – Contacts made with no further action (NFA)</i></p> <p>ACW reported that an analysis has taken place which showed that 10% of contacts that didn't convert to a referral were genuine NFA and a smarter way of recording needs to take place.</p> <p>JB reported that the Performance and Audit board which took place this morning the audit of cases and statistical analysis showed a significant proportion NFA. A follow up will take place and JB will report back to this board. It was suggested that a clear flowchart aligned with policies and procedures would help improve conversion rates. There is a need to ensure that staff are trained in triaging and signposting to other agencies supported with guidance. Locality Based model commissioning going out today which will support the process across the Bradford locality.</p> <p><b>Action: JB to report back to on reporting of contacts NFA as part of the Safeguarding Board update.</b></p> <p><b>Action: JB ad HL to discuss how information is made available as part of S175 and School Data.</b></p>	<p><b>JB</b></p> <p><b>JB/HL</b></p>
4.	<p><b>Action tracker</b></p> <p>0007 – ACW confirmed that all newly qualified staff work in suitable areas – item to be closed off.</p> <p>0035 – JC confirmed that IROs had been alerted of the need to ask for SDQ returns as part of all reviews of children looked after. ACW confirmed that Area teams and Through-Care teams are pushing on these and that SDQ performance is starting to improve.</p> <p>JC confirmed that the new Safeguarding Lead Amandip Johal started on Monday 2 September 2019.</p>	

	<p><i>0039 – Care leavers living in suitable accommodation</i> MD confirmed a check of 59 individual cases had been carried out by ACW and can report that all the these children are safe and none of the children were under 16.</p> <p><i>0046 and 0047 – recording of supervisions</i> ACW confirmed that a HR rep is working directly with managers and that testing of the Evolve system is taking place to ensure it is fit for purpose. The chair asked for a comparison against other areas of the Council in the future.</p> <p><b>Action: AL to include detail of the programme for appraisals as part of a future HR report.</b></p> <p>0043 - JB confirmed that she has had a conversation with Mark Griffin around priority 2 tracking and monitoring. Action completed.</p>	<p>AL</p>
<p>4.</p>	<p><b>Children’s Services Director’s Report - Mark Douglas</b></p> <p><b><i>4.1 Update on preparations for monitoring visit and interdependencies</i></b></p> <p>MD confirmed that the next Ofsted Monitoring Visit would take place on 16<sup>th</sup> 17<sup>th</sup> October 2019. It was noted that improvement activity is starting to have an impact and is shown in the Vital Signs and HR update reports. In terms of supervision we will ensure managers have full oversight and there will be more QA work. The 12 week improvement plan started in July and the impact of actions will be tested out through the Performance Team.</p> <p>Priority 1 – all managers have completed Back to Basics training. Supervisions now reported on a monthly basis with a target of 90% being achieved during August. Further work around QA of supervisions to be undertaken Performance Management framework is on-going and a dashboard of key indicators for managers is now in place and welcomed by managers and staff.</p> <p>Priority 2 – review of CPP for those over 12 months. ACW explained that service managers are responsible for reviewing and ensuring a reasonable explanation is given for those children in this process rather than drift and delay and is now supported by information against each case.</p> <p>Priority 3 - New audit tool looking at compliance and quality is in place. This is beginning to shift quality of practice and reflection of work on the system and is showing positive impacts. Further work to embed supported by partner agencies is ongoing. Partner agencies to ensure that Continuum of need is embedded. JB confirmed that this will be picked up through the safeguarding leads meeting.</p> <p><b>Action: JB to ensure that the Continuum of Need is embedded by all Partner agencies and will pick up through the safeguarding lead meeting.</b></p> <p>The Vital Signs report indicators now showing positive movement however need to see compliance on a longer term basis.</p> <p><b><i>4.2 Interdependencies</i></b> A lot of work is going on with interdependencies such as HR, Finance and Procurement to ensure we have the right staff and support for improvement actions. MD assured the board that the same standards and expectations were applied to all staff including agency</p>	<p>JB</p>

	<p>workers.</p> <p>The recruitment campaign is on-going with the next event scheduled for Tuesday, 10 September at Margaret McMillan Tower from 4.30pm to 8pm. Further Autumn activity is also planned.</p>	
<p>5.</p> <p>5.1</p>	<p><b>Audit and Performance</b></p> <p><b>Audit Report – Jenny Cryer</b></p> <p>JC confirmed that the Wakefield audit template had been adopted and adapted. As the basis for Bradford reporting of audit synopsis.</p> <p>JC gave highlights from the May/June 2019 report. The August report was shared but it was noted the data is unmoderated at this point due to the timing of the meeting.</p> <p>There has been a gradual increase in compliance and will continue to work with staff to increase these. More good practice is being seen. CIN still remains a challenge and a piece of work will be undertaken around this. JC stressed the need as a collective of agencies to ensure we support these children better.</p> <p>Monthly meetings and audit training is taking place and individuals who need support in terms of supervision and practice have been identified and support is being given. JC will update further on this at the next Improvement Board. Learning from the Safeguarding Board is also being taken on board.</p> <p><b>Action: JC to bring update as part of her report to the next Improvement Board on training and support for staff in auditing.</b></p> <p>In terms of the August return rate which is lower, ACW is having individual conversations with members of staff to get an understanding behind this taking disciplinary action if required. TT confirmed that the supervision template had been updated and this will cover learning objectives.</p> <p><b>Action: JC to seek to ensure that the learning from audit with practitioners and managers is embedded and recorded and to ensure 100% audit returns are received on time and that the audit reports to this board reflect on the corrective actions from previous months at the chair’s request.</b></p>	<p>JC</p> <p>JC</p>
<p>5.2</p>	<p><b>Vital Signs – Phil Witcherley</b></p> <p>PW explained that a new “Diagnostic tool” had been created which supports social care managers. This has been rolled out to managers and demonstrated by PW and his team at live roadshows which was welcomed by staff. PW reminded the board that the live data refers to July data and that this is due to data being verified the first Friday of each month.</p> <p>Demand – calls and contact Front Door – it is noted August data has dropped slightly. Referrals – trend since Ofsted moving closer to statistical neighbour average. Child Protection Plans (CPP) – it was noted that Children’s Overview &amp; Scrutiny Committee will ask for deep dives on certain areas. Reduced number of CPP over one year gone down by 24 cases. Demand – trend and forecast – it is anticipated there will be 1400 by middle of next year however the trend is stabilising currently at 1224 which is moving to statistical neighbour rates. Timeliness – a positive month but more to do. Early data from August suggests single</p>	

	<p>assessments completed within 45 days is 76%. Calls increased during August. Discussion whether because this was related to school holiday periods. There were 400 fewer calls than last August.</p> <p><b>Action: Laura Copley to look into more detail around number of calls received during August to see the reason behind the trend.</b></p> <p>JB highlighted that not much progress is being made with Section 175 cases.</p> <p>SH queried what we are doing to address those children who have been on CP plans over 12 months. MD assured the CP chair will formally review all cases at the 18 month mark and step up or down. ACW explained that some were due to complex needs and changes of circumstances. MD assured that he will work with ACW and JC to re-assure that all children are in the right part of the system and is this done in a timely manner and with the right level of support. JC clear that the new HoS will look at formal managing reviewing of cases.</p> <p>HL asked that children with Special Guardianship are also being taken into consideration.</p> <p><b>Action: MD explained that Special Guardianship was a different form of adoption that his service will look at this as part of the improvement journey</b></p> <p>The Chair explained that nationally longer term stabilisation of cases is pointing towards Early Help.</p> <p>JB requested that the data in respect of the allocation of cases by experience of social worker that was included in this report.</p> <p><b>Action: PW to look in the longer term at amalgamating the HR and Vital Signs report and will include an analysis of complexity of cases in the future.</b></p> <p><b>Action: JB to forward ACW the report from Safeguarding Board on complexity of cases.</b></p>	<p>LC</p> <p>MD</p> <p>PW</p> <p>JB</p>
<p>6.</p> <p>6.1</p>	<p><b>Critical Priority Reports</b></p> <p><b>HR update – Michelle Moverley</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Progress in terms of recruitment and retention is positive. Website up and running and recruitment has been made to many of the posts advertised. Rec event 10<sup>th</sup> sept next week at 4 – 8 pm will take place.</li> <li>• Agency staff – consistent but slight reduction.</li> <li>• Supervisions and performance goals – increase of 2.4% in terms of managers recording active performance goals. Work with department to ensure support is given through HR intervention on a 1:1 Basis. This has been well received by staff and has resulted in more accurate reporting. Managers have also been trained on SAP and MSS and HR Plus system to ensure cases managed effectively.</li> <li>• Absence management and Disciplinarys – some under recording was taking place and this is now being reflected however being dealt with quickly as part of the new arrangements.</li> <li>• Increase in sickness absence around mental health referrals to OH and support given to staff to manage their returns to work. It is noted there is an Increase in confidence of managers.</li> </ul>	

	<p><i>What Good Looks Like</i> It is anticipated to see a more stabilised workforce by autumn.</p> <p>A discussion took place around performance and appraisals. It was noted that there are few recorded appraisals on the system for Children’s services. MD has asked staff to undertake and record their appraisal on the system and this position should improve during the year.</p> <p>KE announced that the long list for the Deputy Director Social Care post was taking place this week.</p> <p>In terms of the wellbeing of staff - 40% of absences are due to stress or mental health issues. MD assured the board that good supervision, manageable caseloads and a good personal develop offer is a key part of the improvement work. A number of wellbeing workshops have already taken place and Occupational Health will continue to roll out these sessions. The Mindfulness course will also be running again.</p> <p>It was agreed to continue to celebrate good performance of staff in different ways including verbally. The Strategic Director Children’s Services also meets with members of staff to congratulate them on their successes and harness and retain good ideas to strengthen the service.</p> <p>LB and HL agreed there is some outstanding practice out there but want to see a system where can they can feed back. MD and MH planning on meeting with HT’s to allow educationalists to feed back.</p> <p>The chair advised that numerous approaches to publicly recognising and celebrating good performance are used by a range of LA and these are often shared with the council’s Scrutiny Committee, public blog, DfE colleagues and partners where appropriate.</p> <p><b>Action: AL’s next report to show detailed analysis of number of new starters to the council against staff leaving children’s services completely.</b></p> <p>SH asked to see the target timeline for appraisals. <b>Action: MD requested ACW and JC to come up with a clear target on appraisals to be completed by staff. To be shared with Cllr Farley by end of next week.</b></p>	<p>AL</p> <p>ACW/JC</p>
<p>6.2</p>	<p><b>A review of findings of contacts made with no further action (NFAs) – Anne Chester-Walsh</b></p> <p>A discussion took place around what needs to take place around recording. It was Agreed that further work needs to take place with staff to ensure they record contacts correctly. Needs a conversation around DV (Domestic Violence) to ensure the MASH only has to deal with high end DV. MD reported he met with Supt Osman Khan in respect of this. Mr Khan assured MD the Police are open to different ways of working around dealing with referrals.</p> <p><b>Action: MD to provide the Improvement Board with examples where positive impacts of contacts have been made. MD to meet with Police and Health colleagues to consider the appropriate triage of contacts to the MASH to avoid inappropriate referral as far as possible. The Police will also meet with Mandy Helm – Head of the MASH. MD reported that the Borough Commander has agreed to allocate additional resource should it be required. MD confirmed that the recording system will be reviewed in next 4 weeks and includes changing some of the</b></p>	<p>MD</p>

	<p><b>operational processes as part of invest to save.</b></p>	
<p>7.</p>	<p><b>Staff Focus Group update – Traci Taylor</b></p> <p><i>Good News Stories</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TL reported that communication has improved from service managers down to all staff.</li> <li>• MASH listening sessions have been set up and replicated throughout service areas.</li> <li>• Stress and Mental Health – ACW keeping eye on drift and delay staff managing less cases positive in terms of working practice. All AYSE’s have 18 or less cases.</li> <li>• Back to Basic training – initial lunch and learn sessions were not very well attended due to timing. These continue to be offered in terms of practice issues and uptake has improved. 50% of staff now trained on back to basics including capturing voice of a child and writing a good analysis preventing drift and delay. Will continue to drive through supervisions. All staff receive 1 Minute Guide. Next audit will show how this has embedded.</li> <li>• Sickness – high number of agency but stable. It is noted that overall morale is improving especially due to supervisions being undertaken.</li> <li>• Staff Reference Group have contributed towards ideas around the Improvement Plan.</li> <li>• Celebrating success on next agenda for the group.</li> </ul> <p>SH encouraged to hear the positive feedback from staff. MD agreed Bradford’s biggest asset was its staff. Any member of staff is welcome to join the group.</p> <p>It was noted that the Annual Social Work Healthcheck survey will start in October and the HR staff survey will also come out at around the same time.</p>	
<p>8.</p>	<p><b>Review of Health Services to Children Looked After – Ruth Hayward</b></p> <p>Highlights from the key findings include:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working to address Leadership capacity.</li> <li>• It would be helpful to have a single administration process for systems and processes.</li> <li>• Timing of requirement of assessments needs to be addressed and duplications avoided.</li> <li>• A review of the courts accessing assessments to take place.</li> </ul> <p>An action plan has been developed and will be continue to be reviewed through the steering group and will be signed off at a System Leaders meeting where it will be updated and any barriers identified and addressed.</p> <p>Cllr Thirkhill Corporate Parenting panel welcomed the report.</p> <p>KE asked to seek assurance to ensure we fulfil our statutory compliance. It was agreed that the Health and Wellbeing Board would detailed have oversight of the action plan.</p> <p><b>Action: The chair asked for (in addition to the above) that the Review of Health Services to Children Looked after action plan be kept as a standing item on the Improvement Board forward plan, updating the board each quarter.</b></p> <p>RH explained that a monthly steering group will oversee the action plan and will feedback to the ICB. Need to agree what can be done by different professionals.</p> <p>It was agreed that RH will draft a process map showing how we become compliant through the interdependencies. It was noted recruitment of paediatricians is an issue to</p>	<p>HH</p>

	<p>be addressed.</p> <p><b>Action: RH to draft a process map showing how compliance is achieved through the interdependencies up to March 2020. To be brought back to December's Children's Improvement Board at the request of the Chair.</b></p> <p>Discussion took place around the CAMHS referrals backlog and strong relation to social care and SEN referrals. HH confirmed a commissioning review of mental health pathways would take place and debated at next week's Health and Wellbeing Board. HH clarified that they are looking at whole children mental health pathway.</p> <p>The Leader asked whether HH could look at capacity to borrow people from other Health providers across West Yorkshire. LB also pointed out that schools are having to invest their own funds into these activities to meet needs which needs urgently addressing. RH assured schools would be involved in talks.</p>	<p>RH</p>
<p>8.2</p>	<p><b>Voluntary Services (VCS) update – Janice Hawkes</b></p> <p>JH highlighted the network of 300 member organisations and the good work they do to support young people in particular Young Lives Bradford for their commitment to support the improvement journey by actively supporting the Continuum of Need and work around the Front Door.</p> <p>JH highlighted the need to get Early Help support to families. It was noted there is strong collaborative working across partners who are willing to support inward investment into the District working collectively alongside the LA e.g. Families First and Trusted Relationships.</p> <p>Currently awaiting outcome of Youth Endowment fund. The Home Office have confirmed funding for Trusted Relationships which will continue to provide flexible support out of hours. This network pools together ideas and resources providing a flexible response to families across the District. Barnardos is a big part of this and Families First.</p> <p><i>Families against Youth Crime</i>          Receiving funding through Troubled Families Programme focussed on working with families with 6-13 year olds and their families to prevent their young people being drawn into crime. This is a good example of how we can work quickly and pull together drawing on expertise and support of the VA working with family key workers and jointed up work with schools including year 6 pupil transition. The project has had £340k funding since February 2019 and the team is fully recruited to in particular with schools. 40 families are receiving support which will hopefully reduce CAMHS and demand on front door. 39 young people attended summer residential will be tracked for progress and outcomes.</p> <p>HL felt that it would be useful to know in localities what is out there as part of the Early Help and Social care offer and KE felt that faith groups could offer a lot of help and it would be good to see these groups included. JH confirmed that wider groups do take place to get the message out and is keen for more faith groups to be involved. It was noted that the Continuum of Need has been welcomed by many sectors.</p> <p>JC confirmed Young Lives Bradford recruiting at the moment. Council for Mosques rep to be appointed to the group.</p> <p>If anyone would like any further information about any of the programmes then please contact Janice Hawkes at <a href="mailto:Janice.Hawkes@barnardos.org.uk">Janice.Hawkes@barnardos.org.uk</a>.</p>	



<p>9.</p>	<p><b>Ofsted visit 3 Action plan update – Ian Tomlinson</b></p> <p>Recruitment event taking place next week 10<sup>th</sup> September and has been marketed and shared widely.</p> <p>The final 4 weeks of the plan will focus on quality and compliance and future structure of the plan. Lessons learned to be put together along with key impacts to be reported at next meeting.</p> <p>A series of co-production design locality based system projects to be tested out and brought back to this board in more detail in October.</p> <p>The Chair asked for a complete review of Strategy Meetings. Action: JC to get clarity as not sure she is best placed to do.</p> <p><b>Action: Review of Strategy Meetings. MD to pick up with JC and report back to a future board.</b></p> <p>JB questioned the ownership of some actions – need to be clear who and by when.</p> <p>The draft structure sits on top of the 12 week plan. Nothing in the original plan has been taken out and is all captured in the new structure.</p>	<p>MD/JC</p>
<p>10.</p>	<p><b>Build a Girl update: Fiona Broadfoot and young people</b></p> <p>The Board were delighted welcome a small group of children called “The Sparkers” who brought with them some of their arts and crafts which they have been working on with Fiona as part of their which play a significant part in helping them deal with their emotions and how they deal with different situations.</p> <p>Early results from the survey of looked after children show that children are saying:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tell me who you will talk to and share my details with, but help me understand why you need to tell particular people</li> <li>• Please stop and think before you respond to what I am telling you – because what I am saying is really important to me</li> <li>• Broken Promises – be honest with us about what you can and cannot do – we would rather you were honest even if its not what you think I want to hear, and if you say you will come on a particular day please do it</li> <li>• Try to allocate me a worker who will stick with me though out and who will have enough time for me</li> </ul> <p><b>Actions:</b>  <b>ACW and JC to re-issue the survey monkey to Social Workers.</b>  <b>Fiona Broadfoot to bring an update report to the next Improvement Board.</b></p>	<p>ACW/JC FB</p>
<p>11.</p>	<p><b>AOB</b></p> <p>KE reported that a full integrated HMI inspection of the Youth Offending Service (YOS) would take place for 2 weeks from 16<sup>th</sup> September 2019 and a report of the findings to be brought to this board.</p>	

<b>Future meetings</b>	
<b>Date and time</b>	<b>Venue</b>
Wed 16 Oct - 1.30 pm to 4.30 pm	Hockney Room, Margaret McMillan Tower
Wed 4 Dec - 1.30 pm to 4.30 pm	Hockney Room, Margaret McMillan Tower