

**Document Control**

**Protective Marking** [*✓ tick one below*]

<b>Unclassified</b>		<b>Protected</b>	
<b>Restricted</b>		<b>Confidential</b>	✓

**Children's Services Improvement Board  
Chair – Stuart Smith  
Minutes of meeting held 1 July 2021**

<b>Attendees:</b>	
<b>Name</b>	<b>Job Title</b>
Ali-Jan Haider	Executive Lead for Bradford Districts CCG
Amandip Johal	Head of Service - Safeguarding Reviewing and Quality Assurance
Bev Wilson	DfE Case Lead representative
Chris Chapman	Director of Finance and IT
Christina Holloway	Associate Director - Keeping Well (CCG)
Claire Threapleton	HR Manager, Children's Services
Darren Minton	Bradford Safeguarding Board Manager
Dominic Barnes-Browne	Head of IT
Geoff Winnard	Councillor – Chair of Children's Overview and Scrutiny
Ginny Robinson	Acting Headteacher, Midland Road Nursery and Abbey Green Nursery School
Heather Lacey	Headteacher Shirley Manor Primary School
Irfan Alam	Deputy Director Social Care
Janice Hawkes	Barnardo's VCS representative
Jeanette Sunderland	Leader - The Liberal Democrat and Independent Group
Joanne Hyde	Strategic Director Corporate Resources CBMDC
Laura Copley	Senior Data Analytics & Intelligence Officer OCX
Marium Haque	Deputy Director, Education and Learning
Mark Douglas	Strategic Director Children's Services CBMDC
Michelle Holgate	General Manager Community Services, Bradford District Care NHS Foundation Trust
Phil Hayden	Director of Programmes Children's Services and Innovation and Improvement
Richard Fawcett	Interim AD Safeguarding & Reviewing, Commissioning and Provider Services
Richard Padwell	Superintendent West Yorkshire Police
Shahnaz Akhter	Apprentice Social Worker/Staff Reference Group rep
Stuart Smith	Chair of the Improvement Board
Sue Duffy	Lead Portfolio Holder Children's
Sasha Bhat	Head of mental wellbeing CCG
<b>In attendance</b>	
Heidi Hardy	Programme Support Officer (Minutes)

<b>Apologies</b>	
Ann Baxter	Local Government Associate
Anne Lloyd	Head of HR – Claire Threapleton sub
Chris Chapman	Director of Finance and IT
Craig Tupling	Vice Principal, Bradford College
Duncan Cooper	Public Health Consultant
Heather Wilson	Commissioner (Youth Provision)
Helen Hirst	CCG Ali-Jan Haider representing the CCG
Jane Booth	Chair and Independent Scrutineer – The Bradford Partnership
Karen Dawber	Chief Nurse Bradford Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust. Jo Hilton, Assistant Chief Nurse sub
Kersten England	Chief Executive
Maggie Smallridge	Head of Bradford & Calderdale National Probation Service
Michelle Turner	Strategic Director of Quality and Nursing Bradford District and Craven CCG
Mustansir Butt	Scrutiny and Overview Lead Officer (Corporate Resources)
Nick Hawley	Head of Bradford & Calderdale Probation Delivery Unit. Louise Mullaney Senior Probation Officer sub
Patrick Scott	Chief Operating Officer and Deputy Chief Exec Bradford District Care NHS Foundation Trust. (Michelle Holgate sub)
Peter Horner	Young Lives Bradford Manager VCS representative
Philippa Hubbard	Interim Chief Operating Officer & Director of Nursing Professions and Care Standards / DIPC (Michelle Holgate sub)
Susan Hinchcliffe	Councillor and Leader of the Council
Tehmina Hashmi	Executive Principal, Bradford Academy
Traci Taylor	Principal Social Worker

<b>Ref.</b>	<b>Notes / Action / Decision</b>	<b>Action Owner</b>
1.	<b>Welcome and apologies</b> Introductions were made. Apologies were noted as above.	
2.	<b>Minutes of last meeting held 13 May 2021 and matters arising</b> The minutes were agreed as an accurate record.	
2.1	<b>Matters arising</b>	
3.	<b>Action Tracker</b> The action tracker was updated accordingly.	
4.	<b>Staff Reference Group update – Traci Taylor</b> RF gave an update on the key achievements of the group.	

Ref.	Notes / Action / Decision	Action Owner
	<p>This group is now embedded, is becoming increasingly dynamic and meets every 3 weeks.</p> <p>The recent staff celebration was a huge success, was well attended by staff to share lots of pride and success. Thanks to everyone who organised the event.</p> <p>Recruitment of Practice Supervisors is welcomed.</p> <p>Staff are receiving information through a number of channels including "Pass it on" bulletin.</p> <p>The group have embarked on practice focus months and a practice and learning campaign to increase quality of practice. It is noted that training can be accessed by other services not just social workers and the weekly bite-size learning is welcomed. Mandatory workshops are also taking place.</p> <p>Home wifi will always be an issue however the provision of IT has improved and staff on sick leave have arrangements in place to get new kit.</p> <p>Staff have worked with Claire Threapleton around recruitment campaign and branding.</p> <p>The recommendation was that the staff reference group continue.</p> <p>SA felt that training had moved on and corporate training to gain an understanding processes and other areas would also be welcomed.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> The Staff Reference Group supply the Chair of the Improvement Board with a list of things to pick up including training.</p> <p>The chair acknowledged that that agency workers don't get paid leave pension or benefits and this was not always understood by permanent colleagues. CT agreed this is important to explain and would be drafting a comparison note to dispel the myths.</p> <p>The Chair thanked the Staff Reference Group for their efforts.</p>	<p><b>Staff Reference Group</b></p>
5.	<p><b>Directors update – Mark Douglas</b></p> <p>MD gave an update on the publication of 5<sup>th</sup> Ofsted Monitoring visit letter. The visit was held on site and led by Jan Edwards, Her Majesty's Inspector, and Victoria Horsefield, Her Majesty's Inspector with the focus on child protection and children in care subject to a private fostering arrangement.</p> <p>The letter whilst balanced, recognised a number of challenges around a stable workforce. Key messages from the report include:</p>	

Ref.	Notes / Action / Decision	Action Owner
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cases do remain high although caseloads are reducing with a target aim of 22 for a level 3 worker.</li> <li>• Evidence of good multi agency planning and safety planning.</li> <li>• Section 47's include view of multi-agency professionals, parents and wider family. All of this facilitates effective decision making – core cp process</li> <li>• Previous practice has been sustained form previous visits.</li> <li>• Dip in compliance and timescales for child protection conferences which was due to demand and challenge of the wider partnership. A targeting piece of work is underway in this area.</li> <li>• Change of social workers continues to be a challenge</li> <li>• Newly commissioned social work teams are leading to clear focussed planning and driving out drift and delay.</li> <li>• Application of regulations – confident in decision making of cases and outcomes are recognised.</li> <li>• Evidence some social workers able to deliver creative pieces of work.</li> <li>• Good case summaries evidenced.</li> <li>• QA and management information systems continue to improve and audits continue to improve although further work to embed learning from audits still needs to happen.</li> <li>• It is recognised a full management team is now in place.</li> <li>• It is acknowledged that improvement is being delivered in a phased approach leading to a transformed basic infrastructure, improved front door, training and all with investment from the Executive which is welcomed.</li> <li>• There is improved and regular supervision.</li> </ul> <p>Overall social workers are positive and this is leading to improved practice. There is a need for stability in the workforce and to continue to drive out variability of practice. It is anticipated the next visit will be August with a focus on Children looked after and care leavers for which work is underway on the SEF.</p> <p>Cllr W felt whilst overall a positive letter, the Ofsted report still concludes that quality of social work practice is too slow to show impact to children and families which is a consistent message whilst appreciating the current team has not been in post very long. MD explained he did challenge that comment and had invited Jan Edwards to discuss further. MD stressed the need to understand the District and its issues however agreed the need to clearly demonstrate progress in this area before next visit.</p> <p>AJH made an observation about communication to staff and agency workers and asked whether there was any key links with morale with the impact of variation of new leadership and management style of new leaders. MD</p>	

Ref.	Notes / Action / Decision	Action Owner
	<p>explained that the practice standards are now fully in place and cases were audited at these higher standards. MD agreed it takes time to develop the team and consistency of approach and that management rigour is in place and to strengthen this IA is working with the team to get this fully embedded.</p> <p>The chair stressed the focus now needs to be on quality of practice, whilst acknowledging the spike in demand due to Covid resulting in a reduction in timeliness.</p>	
6.	<p><b>A stable and well equipped workforce</b></p> <p><b>Training and development</b>            AJ gave an overview of the training systematic approach to learning allowing a key focus on practice. The training is being delivered by small bite size workshops supplemented by team leaders. The training reinforces the messages from the Practice Standards and enables all the conversations to take place in different forums to reinforce the messages whilst recognising different learning styles. A further 6-month schedule responsive to service need to be developed Feedback from staff is positive, there is consistency, its accessible, there is clear guidance and expectations. Evaluation is tracked through team managers and there is evidence of positive change.</p> <p>Cllr Winnard asked for detail of the size of the workforce not receiving mandatory training for one reason or another. AJ confirmed that each manager knows who hasn't received training and this is followed up through a supervision basis and reports fed through to the department. IA explained that the practice model launched in March this year and the training offer is new and will take at least a year to embed.</p> <p>The chair welcomed the new training offer and method of follow up with practice supervisors and noted the positive comments.</p> <p>The Staff Reference Group also welcomed the new training offer.</p> <p><b>Recruitment</b>            There is a strong number of AYSE's closely followed by Level 3's. The Council's recruitment system Engageats has been opened up so the team can see more information. It is recognised that the system is difficult to navigate. A piece of work is underway to look at staff who have applied by cv during last 18 months.</p> <p><b>Progression from Level 2 to Level 3 social worker</b>            A piece if work to train staff who have gaps in their knowledge in order to help them progress to level 3 is currently underway and panels are taking place on a regular basis. It is noted that Bradford have a 100% progression rate at panel.</p>	

Ref.	Notes / Action / Decision	Action Owner
	<p><b>Business Support Review</b></p> <p>The proposed structure was presented to OJC Level 2 on 24 June 2021 and will be presented to OJC Level 3 on 29 July 2021. Consultation has started and timeline should see staff transition into roles from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2021. It is noted that this is a model of growth.</p> <p>The Chair asked if the Social Workers are aware of the consultation. CT confirmed that staff are briefed through a number of methods.</p> <p>Cllr Winnard questioned level 3 recruitment and lack of applicants and whether the quality of applicants are the right people for Bradford. CT assured that the process was rigorous and sifted applicants to ensure they are qualified social workers appropriate experience for level three work before they are considered further.</p>	
7.	<p><b>Improvement Highlight report</b></p> <p>The Highlight Report was presented and welcomed by the Board. Areas of focus are listed in the report.</p> <p><b>Actions:</b></p> <p><b>The Chair felt it would be good to hear about the outcome of the decision regarding the establishment and funding of the health practitioners. Also the progress and timeliness of the S47 – ICPC activity and the trajectory of numbers progressing towards ICPC since April/May at the next board.</b></p> <p><i>Early Help</i></p> <p>HL made the following observations with regard to Early Help:            There is really positive work taking place around developing the Lead Practitioner role but questioned whether all schools have at least 1 practitioner in there who has completed the training? IA assured that a monitor was being carried out through the Partnership Board and where a particular organisation does not uptake training this is challenged. It is noted that take up numbers are now growing. HC said she welcomed a refresher. IA explained that the board is strategic and is supported by partnership sub groups which understand the needs of the district. This is fairly new model and is in the development stage but will grow to target those areas of training. Heather welcomed this approach.</p> <p>The highlight report covered the next areas for progress on the improvement plan.</p> <p><b>Action: The chair asked that a future highlight report to reference anything raised in most recent Ofsted letters i.e. elective home education plus the conclusions and next steps from the annual IRO report.</b></p>	<p>IA/RF</p> <p>IA/RF</p>

Ref.	Notes / Action / Decision	Action Owner
8.	<p><b>Vital Signs</b></p> <p>It is noted that a higher number of NFA's are now going into Early Help. In terms of caseloads impact is beginning to be seen as more people working cases which is showing benefits and this is beginning to offset against statistical neighbours.</p> <p>Pleased to report that a higher number of dental checks are now taking place.</p> <p>It has been identified that there is a need for PEPs to increase. To target this area the virtual head is looking at the quantity and quality of peps and the need to have stretching targets.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b>  <b>The next Highlight report to include progress with quality and % PEPs in place.</b></p> <p>In terms of health checks, CH felt it was really that overall the number is now decreasing despite slight rise. It was noted that there are some reports from designated doctors where slots are being missed because consent has not been obtained by the person with parental responsibility and work is underway to obtain consents. IA explained by default SW's being asked to sign the form need to be asking the parents to sign the consent form. This is creating some delay but numbers are reducing and an action plan is in place to address the issue.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b>  <b>Future board reports to detail the extent to which lack of consent remains a problem.</b></p> <p><i>Children's mental health and wellbeing (Thrive)</i>            SB presented the latest update. An overview of the 4 quadrants was given and Kooth data. It is noted that referrals although stable are more complex and waiting lists are consequently increasing. It was noted that there are far less children in the universal offer but twice as many in safeguarding additional needs and extensive support.</p> <p>Work is underway on the commissioning roadmap and the 7 priorities, the work as a partnership to support triage and assessment and prioritise appropriately children at risk.</p> <p><i>Vulnerable Children Health Highlight report</i>            CH presented the latest update. It was acknowledged that there is still a large waiting list around autism however a business case is in place and is going through the System Board.</p> <p>Cllr W queried the financial figure put forward to address waiting lists and whether the business case was relating to this year. CH explained there were</p>	<p>Laura Copley</p> <p>Laura Copley</p>

Ref.	Notes / Action / Decision	Action Owner
	<p>two issues the first being in terms of the baseline looking for current funding and also to address the backlog. Any funding released this year will need workforce and training to support this therefore alternatives are being sought at keeping local where possible.</p> <p>It is noted there is an NHSE call out to support the backlog in school nursing and other disciplines.</p> <p>It is noted that the SEND service are still awaiting the call for inspection.</p>	
9.	<p><b>Audit – April/May data</b> AJ presented the latest update to the board. It was noted that despite a dip in April, audits had now picked back up during May.</p> <p>A focus will be taking place in localities and what managers are doing in terms of follow-up on actions and recommendations.</p>	
10.	<p><b>The Bradford Partnership (TBP) update</b></p> <p>DM gave an update on The Bradford Safeguarding Partnership's Covid meetings which are still taking place on a weekly basis – TBP are now reviewing the frequency on these meetings given the improvements around Covid.</p> <p>An overview of the partnerships response was given to the 3 ministerial letters in respect of serious violence and exploitation. The partnership responded well and provided a detailed response to the letter, despite the tight timescales.</p> <p>The training offer has improved and a wider range of topics of training are now offered.</p> <p>The Bradford Partnership have now successfully recruited a new communication and engagement officer.</p>	
11.	<p><b>Any Other Business</b> None.</p>	