

## BRIEFING REPORT

### Children and Families Committee

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**Date of Meeting:** 14 February 2022

**Report Title:** Progress update on the Children and Families Mental Health Spotlight Review

**Report of:** Deborah Woodcock, Executive Director Children's Services

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<b>Corporate Plan Priorities</b>			
	<b>Open</b>	An open and enabling organisation	
	<b>Fair</b>	A council which empowers and cares about people	X
	<b>Green</b>	A thriving and sustainable place	

#### 1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. To update Children and Families Committee members on progress made against the recommendations approved in October 2020 as a result of the Spotlight Review into Children and Families' Mental Wellbeing Services.

#### 2. Executive Summary

- 2.1. The report reflects the progress made in responding to the recommendations of the spotlight review report and findings in the context of delivering services while responding to a global pandemic.

#### 3. Background

- 3.1 On 24 February 2020, the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee held a spotlight review day to consider the effectiveness of both the council's and NHS provision of wellbeing and mental health services for children and young people.

- 3.2** The report and recommendations were formally approved by Cabinet on 6 October 2020. The committee made a total of 23 recommendations following its findings from the spotlight review. The full list of recommendations is set out below, and where possible an update on progress delivered to date is included against each recommendation.
- 3.3** This update report on each of the recommendations made by the committee should be read in the context of the global pandemic which has significantly changed both the delivery landscape of both the way that children's mental wellbeing services have been delivered and commissioned, but also the impact on the wellbeing of children and young people as they have missed out on education, routine, social contact and structure.
- 3.4** Recommendations and progress made against each proposal are list below:

Rec no	Agreed action	Progress update
1	That the council and partners endeavour to create a clearer pathway and screening tool for assessing the needs of children and young people presenting with mental health issues, with standardised outcome measures across services to make it easier to identify where other improvements may be made in the future.	The Cheshire and Merseyside Transformation programme for children has agreed mental health review as a priority workstream. The metrics for measuring effectiveness of wellbeing services is being designed in line with this recommendation. The work programme will include new pathways, screening tools and outcome measures that will report/be adopted by summer 2023.
2	That commissioners review the current service provision, and access to services, with a view to ensuring that services are commissioned for children and young people up to the age of 25.	This was a specific request in respect of CAMHS (Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service) which is commissioned by NHS England. We understand that NHS England have commissioned a revised strategy for addressing children's mental wellbeing services and Cheshire East Council is part of the consultation process to agree the strategy. One of the recommendations we will make is that the service extends to support young adults up to the age of 25 where they have a special educational need and/or disability (SEND). The strategy is due for adoption in March 2022.
3	That a review be undertaken of the Cheshire East Live Well programme, and that as part of this, the council specifically considers access and availability to wellbeing support services for children, young people and their parents/carers	The council reviewed the layout of Live Well in September 2020 in order to make the site more accessible. This has included the children's mental health and wellbeing sections.

4	That Cabinet look to use and prioritise the Troubled Families process to improve the level and breadth of support available for parents and carers of children and young people experiencing mental health issues.	The Troubled Families national programme has been renamed the Supporting Families programme in April 2021 with funding extended up to 2024. One of the agreed outcome measures for the new programme and associated funding will be to measure improved mental wellbeing for families. The funding will support the ongoing funding of our targeted youth work activity that is tailored to support young people who are struggling with their wellbeing.
5	That commissioners be asked to provide a further update to the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee in January 2021, on the progress of implementing the Thrive model and an update on service accessibility	This action will be overtaken by the establishment of the strategy for Cheshire and Merseyside integrated care system as referenced above. An update on the strategy could be brought back to committee after publication in March 2022.
6	That commissioners and providers ensure that the eligibility and accessibility criteria for services is clear and transparent for children and young people and their families/carers	As per update above.
7	That Cheshire CCG, CAMHS and the council ensure that all staff who support both children's and adults' services, undertake transition training to secure safe and reasonable handovers of cases when young people leave children's services and enter the adult social care system	Adults Social Care are leading a piece of work to review transition cases between children's mental health services and adults to advise on a revised training programme and pathway for staff. This work is ongoing and is being led by the director of adult social care.
8	That commissioners endeavour to ensure that services provided by Visyon are equitable and available across the whole borough of Cheshire East.	Counselling services for children are available now across all wards of Cheshire East delivered by a range of local providers including Visyon, Just Drop in and CWP. Kooth online support is also available across the whole of Cheshire East.
9	That Cabinet reviews the council's commission for the Emotionally Healthy Children Programme, with a view to ensure that there is a single commissioning strategy that is aligned to the CCG Mental Health Trailblazer project and make it easier to secure future funding	The Emotionally Healthy Child programme is due to run up until April 2022 with the learning from the programme to be fed into the new Children's Mental Health Strategy.

10	That the Leader of the council write to the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care and the Minister for Education, to request further investment to improve the access to therapeutic support services for children and young people in Cheshire East.	Action complete
11	That the council and NHS partners work together to review the way in which data relating to children and young people's mental health is collected, to more consistently align to national targets and measures	The Cheshire and Merseyside Transformation programme for children has agreed mental health review as a priority workstream. The metrics for measuring effectiveness of wellbeing services is being designed in line with this recommendation. The work programme will include new pathways, screening tools and outcome measures that will report/be adopted by summer 2023.
12	That the Leader of the council write to the Department of Education to request that funding for the Adoption Counts service be continued and prioritised, and encourage each of the partner authorities receiving the Adoption Counts service to do the same, to lobby for more funding for this important service.	This action has now been resolved with a three year contract in place until 2024.
13	That full Council be asked to ensure its Budget is adjusted to accommodate the cost required to re-commission Adoption Counts, provided that the other local authorities put forward their contributions also.	Complete. See above
14	That the council and partners ensure that the joined-up working arrangements relating to adoption are sustained and properly funded, to secure positive long-term outcomes for adoptive children and families in Cheshire East	Complete and ongoing as part of the North West approach to support adoption. Local work is underway to agree Early Help services are sustained to support families who adopt children and live in Cheshire East.
15	That the outcomes of the council's Bespoke Project be reviewed, and its successes be used to inform future commissions and projects.	The Bespoke project and the progress around our residential homes is ongoing and reported on a regular basis via the children's services scorecard and into the Corporate Parenting Committee.

16	That a review be carried out to ascertain best practice in areas where a 24/7 crisis offer is already in place, and how this type of crisis service could be provided in the most effective, joined-up way in Cheshire East.	A review has taken place of the best practice in relation to crisis care across the Merseyside and Cheshire region and funding has been identified by NHS England to fund Cheshire Wirral Partnership to establish an Urgent Care Mental Health service here in Cheshire. The staffing model and team are being recruited to currently and an operating base is being sourced with support from Cheshire East Council. The work of this new urgent care children's mental health team is modelled on work that is undertaken in Wirral and will be operational by March 2022.
17	That the council and Cheshire CCG work together to ensure that commissioning and contract management arrangements are more closely and effectively integrated	This will be monitored by the new Integrated Care Board arrangements in 2022 and onwards.
18	That the council monitors the impact of alternative education service provisions to support young people and reduce rates of exclusions.	The ongoing provision of alternative education will be monitored by the Director of Education and exclusion rates reported to the committee via the quarterly scorecard measures
19	That CAMHS and commissioners urgently review the support provided to children and young people who are unable to leave their homes to attend their scheduled appointments	See response to recommendation 16 above. The newly established urgent care team will offer support beyond standard clinic appointments in response to need.
20	That commissioners consider the commissioning of specialist health visitors to support schools in their teaching and managing of students' mental health and wellbeing	Specialist Health Visitors for addressing Mental Health issues in children and parents now in place as part of the refreshed 0-19 contract. This will be reviewed on an annual basis.
21	That CAMHS, Cheshire CCG and the council work together to review and improve the way in which support is targeted and provided to young people that do not attend school, college, training or work due to their mental health struggles	See response to recommendation 16 above. The newly established urgent care team will offer support beyond standard clinic appointments in response to need. Also the extension of the Supporting Families programme means that we are able to continue our targeted youth support work to children for whom school environment compounds their poor mental health.
22	That the council and partners work together to make sure that the offer of online support services is refreshed and promoted, and that it is equitable for all young people in the borough	Action completed - Kooth is now available to all wards of Cheshire East. A whole range of online digital support is in place plus the creation of a 24/7 phone line has been put in place in response to increased demand for

		talking support throughout the pandemic operated by Cheshire Wirral Partnership.
23	That schools in Cheshire East be asked to use a consistent title for the designated Mental Health Leads	Action to be progressed beyond current Covid crisis via schools' forums.

#### **4. Implications**

##### **4.1. Legal**

4.1.1. No implications.

##### **4.2. Finance**

4.2.1. No implications.

##### **4.3. Human Resources**

4.3.1. No implications.

<b>Access to Information</b>	
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Appendices:	None
Background Papers:	None