

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY REVIEW BOARD

14 February 2022

Minute Extract

44/21 Early Help Annual Report 2020/21

The Board received a presentation on Early Help Annual Report 2020/21. This was presented by of the Head of Service Early Help & Children's Safeguarding.

It was noted that the Council was responsible for delivering Targeted Early Help service which included:

- Casework
- Children's Centres
- Evidence Based Programmes
- Missing, Missing Education, Education Welfare, NEET Young Carers
- Safe Families for Children, Supporting Vulnerable Families

It was noted that key findings of the Early Help Annual Report 2020/21 included:

- Number of cases – 610 a reduction on the previous year (those where Eh is the Lead Professional)
- Number of Early Help Assessments - 930
- Number of cases stepped up – 159, a reduction on the previous year of 114
- Number of cases returning within 3 months was 21 similar to previous year
- Number of cases screened for CRE/CSE– 330, an increase on last year

The Board noted that the number of Progression Tools completed was 562, 560 with an improved Direction of travel 98% and that the number of HWIFY completed was 524. It was reported that satisfaction remained high with 96.37% saying they were helped. It was noted that there had been over 60,000 direct contacts with children and young people during lockdown periods. It was reported that a new Staying Together team had been created along with a new dynamic Virtual offer.

It was reported that the Council's ambitions for 2022/23 included:

- Remodelling of existing Early Help Service
- Continue to deliver STT ethos within other teams
- Development of Family Hubs
- Continue to deliver first class service
- Move towards consolidating our strengths based model

It was noted that the service did not have a backlog as a result of COVID-19. The Board thanked the Early help Team for their hard work and dedication.

A councillor commented that they were concerned about NEET children figures. The Board noted that the January 2022 figures had seen an improvement and were up 4.4%. It was noted that the team were having to make savings as part of the MTFP.

A councillor questioned whether these savings could potentially have a long-term impact on the team. The Head of Service Early Help & Children's Safeguarding commented that they were worried about the impact of these savings and that the team were determined to make the most of the resources available to them.

The Board agreed to urge Cabinet to be vigilant that the reduction in scope and capacity of the Early Help Team does not lead to consequent budgetary pressures in the future. The Board urge Cabinet to ensure the funding and sustainability of the Early Help Team.

The Board resolved:

- 1. to note the report and presentation.**
- 2. to thank the Early help Team for their hard work and dedication.**
- 3. to urge Cabinet to be vigilant that the reduction in scope and capacity of the Early Help Team does not lead to consequent budgetary pressures in the future. The Board urge Cabinet to ensure the funding and sustainability of the Early Help Team.**