



Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the Meeting Held on 30 March 2022
at 10 am at County Hall Norwich

Present:

Cllr Steve Morpew (Chair)

Cllr Lana Hemsall (Vice Chair)

Cllr Carl Annison

Cllr Lesley Bambridge

Cllr Graham Carpenter

Cllr Phillip Duigan

Cllr Mark Kiddle-Morris

Cllr Kay Mason Billig

Cllr Ed Maxfield

Cllr Jamie Osborn

Cllr Brian Watkins

Parent Governor representative

Mr Giles Hankinson

Also present (who took a part in the meeting):

Craig Chalmers

Cllr Daniel Elmer

Cllr John Fisher

Cllr Shelagh Gurney

Director of Community Social Work

Deputy Cabinet Member for Children's Services

Cabinet Member for Children's Services

Deputy Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health & Prevention

Jonathan Hall

Karen Haywood

Kat Hulatt

Rebecca Hulme

Committee Officer

Democratic Services Manager

Head of Legal Services

Associate Director for Children, Young People and Maternity

Norfolk and Waveney Clinical Commissioning Group

Rebecca Mann

Head of Integration and Alliance, Children and Young People's

Mental Health Norfolk and Waveney Clinical Commissioning Group

Kelly Semper

Children and Young People Mental Health Programme Manager

Norfolk and Waveney Clinical Commissioning Group

James Wilson

Director of Quality & Transformation Children's Services

1. Apologies for Absence and related issues

- 1.1 Apologies were received from Mrs Julie O'Connor (Church Representative), Cllr Keith Kiddie and Cllr Richard Price (Cllr Kay Mason Billig was substituting)

- 1.2 It was also noted that Rebecca Hulme, Rebecca Mann and Kelly Semper would be joining today's meeting remotely via Microsoft Teams.

2. Declarations of Interest

- 2.1 There were no declarations of interest,

3 Urgent Business

- 3.1 No urgent business was discussed.

4. Public Question Time

- 5.1 There were no public questions.

5. Local Member Issues/Questions

- 5.1 There were no local member issues/questions.

6 Call In

- 6.1 The Chair advised that item 6: Call in of Decision by the Norfolk Parking Partnership: Finance Update, had been dropped from the agenda. Kat Hulatt, Head of Legal Services advised the item had been dropped with the agreement of the Chair, Vice Chair and councillors who had called the item in. A Cabinet Member decision would be undertaken and published and would be subject to call in within the usual 5 day period.

7 Mental Health Services for Children and Young People

- 7.1 The annexed report (7) was received and noted.
- 7.2 The report provided an update on Mental Health Services for Children and Young People as part of the work programme agreed in 2021, and included an introduction to the service, an outline of partnership working arrangements and how moving out of the pandemic the delivery of services and key challenges would be addressed.
- 7.3 The Committee discussed, received answers to questions and considered the following:
- The level of need in the system is high and has increased significantly due to the pandemic.
 - Whilst individuals were waiting to receive treatment, a number of services, especially from the voluntary sector, were available to provide support and guidance.
 - Early intervention of treatment was required as a long-term goal to help make the service provision more manageable and sustainable. A leaflet had been produced giving details to signpost individuals and their parents to the help they could access outside of the NHS.
 - The Cabinet Member reflected that much progress had been made over the past 6 months with the new teams and roles taking shape.
 - There was a large programme of work being undertaken with both Primary Care providers and schools who often see and can spot the first early symptoms of mental health difficulties in children and young people particularly around eating disorders.

- An integrated front door was being developed by the key stakeholders in the provision of services to provide a digital platform that will guide and support individuals as they present with symptoms or seek help. It was hoped this would be available from late 2022.
- The clinical team behind the Integrated front door had already been recruited and can offer support to the helpline of which over 4000 calls are made every month.
- Transition from young people's services (aged 25 and under) was carefully managed, working with colleagues in adult services commission - although there were not hard edges to the transition, especially for eating disorders where an all-age strategy was currently in development.
- It was thought that the pandemic had increased the level of acuity when individuals first present with symptoms as earlier signs could normally be spotted at schools and other social activities which had ceased during lockdowns.
- Disordered eating was now a major symptom for referral as opposed to the more recognised disorders such as anorexia and bulimia. This has increased significantly since the pandemic.
- There was a programme of prevention in progress to talk about eating disorders with schools and colleges. Healthy eating and lifestyle choices were also part of the national curriculum in schools to help promote prevention.
- It was acknowledged that all have a role to play in helping and supporting young people from parents, through to schools and other youth organisations as well as primary care providers.
- Historically, mental health had not been as well funded as physical health. Although there had been levelling up of funding more recently, it still lags behind but the critical targets of increases in proportionate spend had been achieved within Norfolk and Waveney CCG. The investment in long term goals such as early prevention was critical to ensuring funding stays proportionate to the numbers requiring treatment.
- Whilst the direction of travel was felt to be positive, it was acknowledged that much work in reducing waiting times and receiving treatment was required.
- Norfolk has a waiting list of over 3900 which, when benchmarked against the national average, was around 800 more patients requiring help. It was recognised that higher referral numbers sometimes are not necessarily an indicator of poor performance and that higher detection rates were good.
- A child is four times more likely to present with mental health issues if their parents have also done likewise. It was noted that sometimes an intergenerational need was required.
- Whilst there were key targets and goals to reach, the service was realistically always within a period of transformation as needs and demands change and fluctuate. There was a desire to continually enhance and improve services to the end that all children can meet the [County Council's Children's Services 'Flourish'](#) aims.
- The Council and the CCG worked closely together to co-develop policies and services to meet the needs of the children and families.

The Chair acknowledged at this point that the committee needed to take care to ensure there wasn't an obvious overlap with the Health & Overview Scrutiny Committee (HOSC), as outlined in the papers, and that boundaries should not be crossed as both committees work closely together but don't scrutinise the same subject areas.

- Working with Rethink Partners, feedback was obtained and as a result a model

called participation in the social recovery has been developed to continue to receive live feedback from service users. This feedback has helped shape future services.

- The CCG would encourage the County Council to sign up to the Children and Young People's Mental Health Charter.
- The Cabinet Member for Children's Services advised the charter will shortly be considered by Cabinet.
- The CCG has committed to working more actively and to commission services from the voluntary sector to help improve services and the flow of information.
- A request was made for the members to receive benchmark national figures against the data provided in the report so meaningful comparison could be made.

The Chair thanked all those who had taken part in the discussion and suggested a way forward for the committee to consider.

7.4 The Committee **agreed** to:

1. Refer the future scrutiny of Mental Health Services for Children and Young People to the Health and Overview Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) and ensure that capacity is determined to place this item on HOSC's forward work programme.
2. To request that the Peoples and Communities Select committee consider the Children and Young People's Mental Health Charter.
3. Consider whether the Performance Review Panel would have a role to play in the future assessment of the Charter.

8 **Performance Review Panels – 6 Month Review**

8.1 The annexed report (8) was received.

8.2 Cllrs Elmer and Gurney, the chairs of the panels, were present to answer questions about the performance review panels meetings and the actions that were being taken as a result of the issues raised. Cllr Elmer advised the committee that his panel relating to Children's Services was set up on the basis of monitoring data from the vital sign indicators already in place and undertaking a deep dive analysis as to when the data reflected a significant under or over performance.

8.3 The Committee discussed, received answers to questions and considered the following:

Children's Services

- The deep dive topics have been selected by the members of the panel, however, Cllr Elmer indicated that he was open to suggestions from any member as to what topic they might like to examine.
- Some topics had been broken down into smaller sections to ensure sufficient time had been allocated to every element of the topic.
- Cllr Elmer said he was not opposed to the meetings being held in public; however he was unsure as to whether the current Terms of Reference would allow such a move.
- There was a backlog of Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP)

outstanding, and the position was recognised as a countrywide issue brought about by a lack of child psychologists.

- The headline figure for vital signs indicators was not always a reflection on the service and that by undertaking a deep dive the panel could better appreciate the nuances of an issue and the complexities surrounding it
- The Chair did not believe the sale of Holt Hall was an issue directly for the panel, but they could look at the performance of outdoor learning per se.
- Members were not appointed as party political representatives on the panel although it was acknowledged in terms of feedback there was no Independent or Green councillor on either panel.
- The chair was open to other members, not appointed to the panel, to join the meeting and observe as well as emailing him between meetings if they had questions or matters that they wished to raise.
- The monitoring of home-schooled children was an issue that members were keen to establish further details and information about, particularly as it was felt this is an issue an Ofsted would consider.
- It was thought the circulation of the panel's forward work programme would open-up discussion and comment generally for the panel to consider in due course.
- The chair advised that outcomes from the panel would be addressed formally through committees such as People and Communities Select to develop and strengthen policy. Informally, discussions directly with the Cabinet Member may, in the first instance, provide a solution for the panel to consider at a later point.
- It was thought important to also consider topics that had over performed so that any best practice lessons could be learnt and maybe transferred to other areas.
- Clearer and simpler information was required in future reports to help members identify issues examined, actions taken and resulting outcomes.

Adult Social Care

Cllr Gurney advised that her panel was starting from a different base position to Children's Services as inspections to the Adult Social Care department had not taken place for over 10 years and preparation for such activity was circumspect. A more detailed report had been provided than previously and although minutes to the panel meetings were not included in the bundle to members, these could be provided upon request. The Chair also advised she was directly engaging with a local group called 'Making it Real' who were providing very candid and useful feedback.

- In response to the issue examined at the last panel meeting concerning Swifts and Night Owls, leaflets and quick access information cards had been produced for distribution by Swifts and Night Owls themselves at the last full council meeting on 28th March 2022 to all attendees as it was thought that many members did not know that this vital free service existed.
- Intelligence is being gathered from other local authorities and professional bodies as to what is being examined at inspection and what processes are involved. This preparation work should help when inspectors do eventually arrive.
- Members of the panel have had to quickly understand some significant changes to services such as the Discharge to Assess process (D2A). Officers had welcomed the 'fresh pair of eyes' approach to challenge them to improve services.

- Deep dive assessment of the issues is vital to getting behind the headline data to ensure all angles are examined and all solutions considered. Members had engaged positively with the process.
- The Deputy Cabinet Member advised that she had regular updates with officers and weekly meetings with the Cabinet Member responsible to update on progress.
- Public awareness of the panel could be improved by further promotion, although considering the remit of the panel, public involvement may dilute the work of the panel, and if so then this was something to be avoided.
- The Chair indicated input from Member Champions would be welcomed.

8.4 The Chair thanked, on behalf of the committee, both Cllr Elmer and Gurney for their attendance and for their work to date on their respective panels.

The committee **agreed** to:

- note the reports and the ongoing work to monitor service performance.
- ask the panels to consider how they might be more open and transparent without it detracting from the vital work it undertook.
- request future reports to be clearer and simpler to help identify issues raised, actions proposed and outcomes achieved.

9 Update from the Chair of the Norfolk Countywide Community Safety Partnership (NCCSP) Scrutiny Sub Panel.

9.1 The Committee received a report (9) which provided an update on the Safer Norfolk Plan 2021-24. The Panel had met once on 24 February 2022 since the last update received by the committee. The December meeting had been cancelled due to Covid restrictions.

9.2 The Committee **agreed** to endorse the report and the progress being made by the Scrutiny Sub Panel.

10 Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme

10.1 The annexed report (10) was received and noted.

The meeting concluded at 1.21pm

Chair

Cllr Steve Morphew