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## **Report to West Sussex Health and Wellbeing Board**

**2 November 2023**

### **Update on the Children First Board (a sub-group of the Health and Wellbeing Board)**

**Report by Lucy Butler, Director of Children Services**

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#### **Summary**

This report provides a summary of the work of the Children First Board.

#### **Recommendation(s) to the Board**

##### **The Health and Wellbeing Board is asked to;**

- (1) Note the contents of this report.
  - (2) Circulate invitation for Early Years and Childcare Strategy Stakeholder events and across partnership (Appendix 1)
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#### **Relevance to [Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy](#)**

1. Starting Well
2. Living Well
3. Working Well

#### **1. Background and context**

- 1.1 The purpose of the Children First Board is to provide the leadership, governance and engagement opportunity for the strategic planning and delivery of services for children and families within West Sussex. Meetings are held four times a year and the inaugural meeting was held on the 8<sup>th</sup> October 2020.
- 1.2 The Board is made up of a wide range of West Sussex organisations and groups. It includes representatives from a wide range of stakeholders and specifically from young people, parents and carers. It also includes staff and senior managers from the County Council; people elected to represent the views of the people of West Sussex, Districts and Boroughs, schools, colleges, police, health partners, and representatives from the voluntary and community sector.

## **2. Governance Arrangements**

- 2.1 The Board is in the process of recruitment to the new role of Partnership Manager who will support and coordinate the Board and its working groups to ensure that effective cooperation between all partner agencies is facilitated. This role will be advertised this month.
- 2.2 Cllr Jacquie Russell, Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Learning is the current chair of the Board. Following the recent review of governance, the Board has now agreed to recruit an independent chair and work is underway to progress. Cllr Russell will continue to chair the Board until this appointment has been made.
- 2.3 The move to a new two-part format: part 1 focussing on the strategic and operational business of the board; and part 2, focussing on the engagement with children and young people and other stakeholders commenced at the October meeting. This was well received and facilitated productive engagement from young people and their advocates.

## **3. The Children and Young People's Plan update**

- 3.1 The final version of the Children and Young People Plan was published in an electronic format on 7<sup>th</sup> December 2022. The plan can be found here: [Children and Young People's Plan | Your Voice West Sussex](#)
- 3.2 A short animation of the plan has been drafted and will be published and distributed to partners by the end of the month.
- 3.3 A series of key performance indicators relating the plan are being drafted and will be shared at the next Board meeting as well at future stakeholder events which are being scheduled for early 2024.

## **4. Childrens First Board Update**

- 4.1 The last meeting of the Childrens First Board was held on 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2023. Aside from an update on progress on the Childrens and Young People's Plan and governance arrangements, four further reports were received:
- 4.2 Part 1 - Update on the Pan- Sussex Childrens Board
  - Pan Sussex Childrens Board is currently chaired by the East Sussex County Council Director of Childrens Services and meets quarterly and has been agreeing the Pan Sussex Children and Young Peoples priorities.
  - Agreed that feedback and progress on this Board and its priorities should become a standing item on the Children First Board agenda.
- 4.3 Children and Young Peoples Emotional Health Place Based Strategic Priorities 2023-24
  - The West Sussex based plan aims to deliver continuous improvement across the children's and young people's emotional health and

wellbeing system, delivering against the Foundations for our Future Strategy and the shared delivery plan.

- 6 priority areas have been identified and identified leads will be developing clear SMART objectives which are measurable with clear milestones against the priority deliverables.

#### 4.4 West Sussex Early Years and Childcare Strategy

- West Sussex County Council and the Integrated Care Board are developing a joint Early Years and Childcare Strategy.
- Two Engagement events will be held on 8<sup>th</sup> November as well as an online survey.
- The outcomes from these events/survey will feed into the strategy.

#### 4.5 Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

- Preparation for the imminent Ofsted Joint Targeted Area Inspection (JTAI) remains a key priority across the Partnership.
- Improvement to the local SEND system are an integral part of the wider Council Education and Learning Strategy and the Transformation Programme of activity that is related to it. A key component and priority is to improve the timeliness of Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) which should be completed within 20 weeks. Current performance at the end of September 2023 was 20.6% (NB. impacted by less referrals due to school holidays).
- Other priorities include a review of transport arrangements and changes to the Alternative Provision programme.
- The new interim Assistant Director for Education also report that the Council is part of the national Delivering Better Value programme which will provide over £1m in service development and improvement activity as well as being members of a regional consortium for the DfE Change Programme which will also help develop more effective SEND service and Alternative Provision models.

#### 4.6 Part 2 - Engagement Session with Young People

- 5 Young People engaged with Board in a thematic session about access to Emotional Health and Mental Wellbeing support following a Freshers Fair event at Chichester College. The outcomes were summarised into 3 problem statements:
  - Access to Services – young people need more access to the right help at the right time;
  - Young people can't access support/safe space when needed;
  - Data tells us that young people feel they are least supported through professionals/teachers at school.

4.7 The workshops with Board members focused on developing solutions to meet the feedback from previous young people consultations on the effectiveness of mental health and wellbeing services. Solutions around these statements will be taken forward for consideration as part of the Children and Young Peoples Emotional Health Place Based Strategic Priorities 2023-24 and will be reported in future reports.

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**Background papers**

Link to Children and Young People's Plan: [Children and Young People's Plan | Your Voice West Sussex](#)

Appendix - letter re Early Years and childcare Stakeholder Engagement event.