



Children's Service Working Locally

26 January 2007

KEY ISSUE

A report from the Children's Service due in September 2006 was postponed due to the recent restructure as there were still some key vacancies waiting to be filled and new staff in post who were still coming to terms with changed priorities. Social care provision for Children and Families is complex and varied but a business plan is now under consideration and the new Locality Manager is attending to give an overview of local arrangements, to receive Members' comments and to feed them back into the process.

SUMMARY

For some time now Children's Service has been working towards integrating Social Care with Education as these frequently overlap and officers from both disciplines work with the same family at different times. It is more productive for one professional to liaise with others so that the family has continuity of care rather than sporadic interaction with a number of officers who may not necessarily be aware of other interventions. The restructure has put in place Locality Managers in each borough/district towards making this process more robust.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is asked:

- (a) to note the content of the report and reflect back to the service any local issues of concern or interest, and
- (b) to offer continuing support to local projects and make suggestions concerning what they would like to see in the new business plan.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. Children's Service has recently restructured and, as part of this process, specialist functions such as Disabilities, Adoption and Fostering have been separated out under one senior manager and these are now delivered countywide from bases in the east and/or west of the County.
- 1.2. The former Area Team Managers are now known as Integrated Service Managers and have responsibility for setting up and maintaining integrated Social Care and Education provision to children and families on an area basis.
- 1.3. Although integration of services is not a new concept, its implementation requires significant cultural change in order to make it work effectively at the point of delivery. The recent restructure has created an opportunity to move this forward with the introduction of Locality Teams in each district/borough.

2. SPECIALIST TEAM WORKING

- 2.1. The specialist teams cover a wide area and are also undergoing review. The Fostering team is in the process of an assessment due to be completed in late January and the outcomes will be available to Members shortly thereafter.
- 2.2. The Disabilities team, which was previously split into four area teams coterminous with the Children's area teams and reporting to each area manager, has reverted to two teams countywide covering the east and west and now reports to a Specialist Manager.
- 2.3. The primary concern of the specialist teams is to work with looked after children and it is hoped to bring a separate report to a future Local Committee meeting.

3. LOCALITY TEAM WORKING

- 3.1. Surrey Children's Service locality team co-located Education and Social Care teams in August 2006 and has only recently appointed a manager for the Tandridge team, which is based at Omnibus Building in Reigate.
- 3.2. The Locality Team Manager is responsible for ensuring that a fully-integrated, locality-based, targeted service for defined vulnerable young people, and children and families in Tandridge, is identified and delivered at the earliest point by its multi-professional team.
- 3.3. These vulnerable young people will include children with special educational needs, children with English as a second language, children

Item 7

with social/emotional/behavioural difficulties and children with school attendance issues.

- 3.4. The Locality Team Manager is also responsible for ensuring effective performance management for both individuals and the team and that action to meet targets and improved service delivery are met as well as the appropriate risk management of all cases and effective management of the local budget.
- 3.5. As the designated complaints officer, the Locality Team Manager will deal with stage one complaints in accordance with Departmental and Children Act criteria. The Local Education Officer will address parental complaints about schools.
- 3.6. This is a challenging time for the locality teams on a number of levels.
 - Professionals have had to adopt a different way of working, sharing their knowledge and best practice with colleagues from other disciplines
 - moving to the area office in Reigate has inevitably increased the distance between base and the schools and families that the team works with, and
 - the facilities for parking or providing family friendly rooms has diminished.
- 3.7. However, despite some initial misgivings, there is now a more positive approach by members of the team who acknowledge the benefits of a multi-professional team sitting alongside each other.

4. STRUCTURE AND WORKLOAD

- 4.1. The Tandridge Locality Manager is supported by one Assistant Team Manager, who is responsible for the monitoring and supervision of 'open cases' allocated to Social Workers and Family Support Workers.
- 4.2. The team also provides:
 - 4 Social Workers – 2 full-time and 2 part-time
 - 3 Family Support Workers
 - 4 Educational Psychologists
 - 2 Behaviour Support Teachers
 - 1 Behaviour Support Assistant
 - 2 Education Welfare Officers
 - 1 Learning and Language Teacher
 - 2 Alternative Education Teachers
 - 2 Alternative Education Mentors
- 4.3. Currently there are 82 children open to Social Workers in Tandridge, 15 of whom are on the Child Protection Register. There are 4 looked after children in the Tandridge area. During the autumn term there have been 44 Child in Need meetings.

Item 7

- 4.4. The Education Welfare Officers have currently 141 'cases' open to them. There have been 3 court cases and there are 9 impending ones. Tandridge will have truancy patrols in the area on 18th January, 27th March, 10th May and 20th June. Tandridge has 465 children with a statement of special educational needs and another 624 who are on School Action Plus.

5. LOCAL INITIATIVES AND PARTNERSHIP WORKING

5.1. Confederation of Schools

- 5.1.1. Tandridge has 32 schools: 26 primary, 3 secondary and 3 special schools. All 32 schools in the district are in a single confederation with its own co-ordinator. For administrative and local convenience they operate in two clusters: Tandridge north and south.
- 5.1.2. The confederation is having a positive impact on the extended services' agenda and on sharing best practice within schools. Its work is managed by a Steering Group of Headteachers and the Local Education Officer. The Locality Team is working together with the confederation co-ordinator to hold multi-professional planning meetings, where needs and services are identified.
- 5.1.3. It is possible that in the future it may become a Children's Trust which commissions and employs staff directly. Immediate operational challenges for the confederation are how to involve school governors in its strategic direction and how to integrate the secondary schools into the agenda set by the primary heads. To this end the Principal of de Stafford School has joined the Steering Group.

5.2. School Worker Projects

- 5.2.1. Members are aware and have previously supported the two school liaison worker roles in Caterham and Hurst Green. The Locality team works closely with both of the project workers.
- 5.2.2. Headteachers acknowledge the importance of continuing the excellent work undertaken in ensuring that the partnership between home and school is maintained. Initial funding for the Caterham project ceases in 2007 and Hurst Green has secured funding till 2008. Bids for continuation of the projects from the preventive budget are currently under consideration
- 5.2.3. The Caterham project worker has also worked with pastoral staff at de Stafford School to ensure that the transition to secondary school of year 6 students has been a very positive experience for the young people.

Item 7

- 5.2.4. We would like to thank Members for their continued support and would ask them to consider supporting a similar project in the three secondary schools.

5.3. Childrens Centres

- 5.3.1. Members will also be aware that there are advanced plans to provide a number of Children's Centres within the area. These will be crucial for delivering a core offer to parents and families which will include integrated early years and early education provision; family support and parental outreach; child and family health services, and a 'warm phone' with links to other key services such as benefits advice, Job Centre Plus etc.

5.3.2. Sites identified for Children's Centres are:

- The National Centre for Young People with Epilepsy, serving families in the Burstow, Lingfield and Dormansland areas. It is hoped that this will open at Easter 2007.
- Furze field school, serving Bletchingley, Nutfield and Merstham. It is hoped that this will open later this year.
- Hillcroft Primary, serving the Caterham area;
- Kestrels at Marden Lodge School, serving Woldingham and Tatsfield;
- Hurst Green Infant and Holland Junior Schools, serving Hurst Green and Godstone (This will be a mobile provision.)
- Hillcroft and Marden Lodge will have a joint coordinator and hope to open later this year.

- 5.3.3. Not all of these Centres will involve new buildings; some will have a small amount of remodelling; others may be served by existing facilities or a mobile unit.

5.4. Other local initiatives

- 5.4.1. A centre for young people needing help and advice can be offered at Respond in Redhill.
- 5.4.2. School nurses are working at de Stafford School, running drugs awareness programmes for parents.
- 5.4.3. School nurses in Tandridge are also running a programme at Whyteleafe School for young mothers.
- 5.4.4. Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service workers attend the locality team planning meetings held at the Tandridge schools. They provide advice and support to other professionals working with children and families 'open' to their service.
- 5.4.5. Jigsaw, which is based at East Grinstead, is providing bereavement counselling to children in Tandridge.
- 5.4.6. The Tandridge school confederation coordinator is looking into a 'drop in centre' for young people in Caterham, at de Stafford School.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1. It is too early to state what impact the new structure has had on the local community but there is good collaborative working between the Tandridge locality team, LEO (Local Education Office) team, confederation coordinators, Headteachers and PCT (Primary Care Trust.)
- 6.2. The priority is safeguarding children. An integrated team ensures that the most effective resources are targeted and delivered, thus ensuring the best outcomes for children/young families. A prompt response is ensured through information sharing, resulting in allocating the appropriate professional.
- 6.3. Any concerns can be raised through the Contact Centre, Locality Team Manager, Integrated Services Manager or Local Education Officer and will be dealt with promptly.
- 6.4. The locality Team Manager will be formulating a business plan for the locality at the earliest opportunity and would welcome input from Members at this early stage.
- 6.5. Any support that Members can give to existing or future initiatives would be most welcome.

LEAD/CONTACT OFFICER: Lynne Martin, Area Director, Local Partnerships Team East

TELEPHONE NUMBER: 01737 737694
