

Decision Maker: CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND FAMILIES POLICY
DEVELOPMENT AND SCUTINY COMMITTEE

Date: 13 September 2023

Decision Type: Non-Urgent Non-Executive Non-Key

Title: CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND FAMILIES PORTFOLIO PLAN –
2023/24 Q1 UPDATE

Contact Officers: Naheed Chaudhry, Assistant Director Strategy, Performance and Corporate
Transformation
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Chief Officer: Richard Baldwin, Director of Children’s Services

Ward: All Wards

1. Reason for report

1.1 This report presents the Children, Education and Families Policy Development and Scrutiny Committee with a Children, Education and Families Portfolio Plan 2023-24 Quarter 1 update.

2. **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

2.1 Members are asked to note progress on the actions associated with the Children, Education and Families Portfolio Plan (Appendix 1, note key highlights in this report):

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Impact on Vulnerable Adults and Childre

1. Summary of Impact: To provide the Scrutiny Committee with a regular update on the performance of services for children.
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Transformation Policy

1. Policy Status: Existing Policy: The monitoring of the Portfolio Holder Plan is part of the performance management framework developed to ensure that there is strong leadership and management oversight of children's services in Bromley.
 2. Making Bromley Even Better Priority:
 - (1) For children and young People to grow up, thrive and have the best life chances in families who flourish and are happy to call Bromley home.
 - (5) To manage our resources well, providing value for money, and efficient and effective services for Bromley's residents.
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Financial

1. Cost of proposal: Not Applicable
 2. Ongoing costs: Not Applicable
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Personnel

1. Number of staff (current and additional): Not Applicable
 2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours: Not Applicable
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Legal

1. Legal Requirement: Non-Statutory - Government Guidance
 2. Call-in: Not Applicable: No Executive Decision.
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Procurement

1. Summary of Procurement Implications: Not Applicable
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Property

1. Summary of Property Implications: Not Applicable
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Carbon Reduction and Social Value

1. Summary of Carbon Reduction/Sustainability Implications: Not Applicable
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Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users or customers (current and projected): Not Applicable
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Ward Councillor Views

1. Have Ward Councillors been asked for comments? Not Applicable

3. COMMENTARY

- 3.1 The Children, Education and Families Portfolio Plan focuses on delivering the longer-term strategic priorities for children and families in Bromley and has been refreshed in line with the Council's Transformation Programme and the Corporate Strategy, Making Bromley Even Better.
- 3.2 The Children, Education and Families Portfolio Plan focusses on five priority outcomes:
- Safeguarding
 - Affordable, Decent and Secure Homes
 - Life chances, resilience and wellbeing
 - Supporting and challenging effective multi-agency working
 - Ensuring efficiency and effectiveness
- 3.3 Within each priority are a number of statements which are underpinned by actions and measures of success within the work of Children's Services and other departments which impact on children and families.
- 3.4 Full progress against the Portfolio Holder Plan as at start of financial year 2023-24 (Quarter 1) is provided in Appendix 1.
- 3.5 Please see below a few key highlights for Quarter 1:
- a) Expansion of the successful Family Learning Outreach pilot supporting Ukrainian pupils and their parents in schools. Working in partnership with 3 maintained primary schools and the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) on a pilot project focussed on metacognition and narrowing the attainment gap for vulnerable and disadvantaged pupils. **(Carol Arnfield – Head of Service, Early Years, School Standards and Adult Education)**
 - b) An associated action plan has been drafted in-order-to monitor our performance in relation to the strategy. This action plan is updated every quarter. LBB are also signed up to the Commissioning Alliance as a commissioning platform who offer a Quality Assurance framework and support for all providers. **(Philip White – Children's Commissioner)**
 - c) The scheme for free prescriptions for care experienced young people aged 18-25 has been rolled out in June 2023 to all our young people in conjunction with Pharmacy Alliance and CLA health. Our Mental Health Practitioner who sits within our Leaving Care service has been funded for another year by ICB and will support with hospital discharge and complex multi-agency work. **(Cathy Lloyd-Williams – Head of Service, Care & Care Leavers)**
 - d) The THRIVE service has a dedicated worker who works in conjunction with CAHMS to provide therapeutic services to children looked after. Therapeutic sessions are also undertaken with the children and their carers. The work includes therapeutic life journey, which supports young people and the carers to consolidate the experiences of the child's emotional care journey. **(Wenifred Marshall – Head of Service, Permanency)**
 - e) We are working over the next few months on future recommendations on the ASD pathway model to address waiting time pressures. We are also looking at short term improvements to address current waiting time pressures. **(Tony Parker – Assistant Director for Children & Young People's Integrated Commissioning)**

- f) We have been working across Bromley Healthcare, ICB and Council on the proposed balanced model implementation. Initial proposals have been agreed and a detailed implementation plan is being worked on. This will be supported by Project Management support and an overarching governance board, plus task and finish engagement group. The implementation will be developed during the next quarter, with the current planned for start of February-April 2024. **(Tony Parker – Assistant Director for Children & Young People’s Integrated Commissioning)**
- g) Initial Preparing for Adulthood Group was held on the 17th July 2023. **(Mark Smith – Head of Service, 0-25 Service, Children and Young People with Disabilities)**
- h) A Carers Plan has been agreed between LLB, the ICB and Bromley Well and this will be presented to the Executive in September. The Plan includes a support offer to young carers and actions to improve the offer. A Carers Charter, to be led by Bromley Well, will ask a wider range of local agencies to sign up to a service offer to Carers. **(Sean Rafferty – Assistant Director of Integrated Commissioning & Vicky West – Assistant Director of Specialist Services)**
- i) London Borough of Bromley’s rate of first-time entrants has reduced annually by 1% and is 27% lower than the average for London. The rate is also 19% below the national average and 27% lower than London. First-time entrant rate is also 8% lower than stat neighbours and is the lowest rate compared with the 6 surrounding boroughs. **(Betty McDonald – Head of Service, Youth Justice Service)**
- j) London Borough of Bromley hosted a Tackling Loneliness Summit at the end of Loneliness Awareness Week in July 2023. Over 100 people attended this event with people representing various professions, organisations, community groups and more within Bromley and surrounding boroughs. **(Helayna Jenkins – Principal Loneliness Champion)**
- k) The commissioning team have completed the Short Breaks for Disabled Children Tender, resulting in the award of new contracts which will support school holiday activities that maximise the skills and potential of children and young people. The Direct Payment prepayment cards contract has been extended to support SEND and is currently being adapted to support care leavers to transition into adulthood. In April 2023 the new all age integrated community equipment contract commenced. Bromley is one of 21 London local authorities that committed to the consortium approach. **(Kelly Sylvester – Head of Service, Community Living Commissioning Programmes Team)**
- l) Virtual Reality continues to develop within each service area. From April 2022 to date, 41 practitioners were trained as VR practitioners across Children Social Care. In addition, VR is being used as a promotional tool to recruit Social Workers. **(Wenifred Marshall – Head of Service, Permanency)**
- m) Operational and strategic partnership work is ongoing and mature. Escalations are used appropriately within agencies to enable resolutions to emerging issues. Strategic Threat Assessments shared across partnership with contemporary intelligence. **(Jo Gambhir/Kerry Davies – Bromley Safeguarding Children’s Partnership Managers)**
- n) New framework developed during 2022/23. Framework endorsed by CEF PDS on 20 June and ACH PDS on 27 June 2023. Toolkit is being developed with full launch planned for Autumn 2023. **(Michael Watts – Engagement Strategy Manager)**

4. IMPACT ON VULNERABLE ADULTS AND CHILDREN

- 4.1 Examination of performance by elected members holding scrutiny roles is part of a broader performance management framework which supports improvement of services delivered to children, including those vulnerable to poorer outcomes.

5. TRANSFORMATION/POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The monitoring of key performance measures is part of the performance management framework developed to ensure that there is strong leadership and management oversight of children's services in Bromley.

6 CUSTOMER IMPACT

- 6.1 A Children's Performance Management Framework agreed in 2018 and updated in 2023, stipulates that the Children's PDS Committee should receive a regular updates ton the Portfolio Holder Plan in respect of children's services. Reports should enable Members to *'ask challenging questions about areas of underperformance and make recommendations accordingly to the Executive'*.

Non-Applicable Sections:	Financial/Personnel/Legal/Procurement/Property/Carbon Reduction and Social Value Implications and Ward Councillor Views
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	Portfolio Holder Plan 2023/24