

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

Date: Wednesday 20th March 2024

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

Title: CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND FAMILIES PORTFOLIO PLAN –
2023/24 Q3 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 3 update.
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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: No Executive decision.
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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 3) is provided in Appendix 1.
- 3.5 Please see below a few key highlights for Quarter 3:
- a) Caren Boiling – Interim Head of Service, Early Years, School Standards and Adult Education** – As of 17th January 2024, there were 371 (65%) of eligible children accessing 2-year old funded places (National benchmark 72%). 98.35% of early years settings in Bromley that have been inspected are rated as Good or Outstanding (National benchmark 96%). As of 17th January 2024 DAF funding has been paid out for a total of 30 children in early years settings during the 2023/24 academic year.
- b) Scott Bagshaw, Head of Access to Education & Inclusion** – 390 children electively home educated. Education transformation restructure has created new dedicated Access to Education officer posts, which will include EHE duties within the revised Education Welfare Service.
- c) Rob Bollen, Head of Sufficiency** – Scheme to create new 30 place Additionally Resourced Provision (ARP) at Oaklands Primary School underway.
- d) Rachel Dunley, Head of Service Early Intervention and Family Support** – The Children & Family Hub is moving into Phase 2 with the introduction of a Portal in Spring 2024 and the MAPE will be revised to run after the Portal has gone live, giving a single message regarding access options. Early Years Education run termly and attendance is excellent with sell-out dates. A range of bespoke training is available to Children Social Care colleagues, alongside Single Point of Contact ('SPOC') surgeries for case and intervention options discussions.
- e) Cathy Lloyd-Williams, Head of Children Looked After (CLA) and Care Leavers** – Local London have funded the commissioning of bespoke 1:1 ETE support for care leavers aged 16 plus. Delivery began January 2024. Creation of ETE Improvement board in March 2024 to support engagement with local business community to create roles and opportunities for care leavers. 79% of Review Health Assessments held in timeframe for CLA and 81% of immunisations for CLA are in timeframe.

f) Mark Smith, Head of 0-25 Service – Children and Young People with Disabilities - Future events are to be considered to inform families of localised options. Marjorie McClure held a transition event and the Local Authority held a local offer event in the autumn term 2023 which supported the sharing of information on preparing for adulthood. An initial Transitional Working Group has been held and a further meeting planned for March 2024. The group will aim to move forward on future Preparing for Adulthood (PfA) events and developing information and operational practices on the 4 PfA pathways. A new Integrated Transition Register has been developed, which will support future commissioning of services.

g) Johanna Dench, Senior Commissioning Manager for Children & Young People Mental Health & Wellbeing – Work continues to progress on the creation of an integrated single point of access between Bromley Y and CAMHS, which will see a joint screening and triage process to support CYP accessing the right support in a timelier manner. Focused work to reduce the wait for CAMHS also continues, with significant reductions in both the overall waiting list and those waiting the longest – with total waits at 155 as of December 2023, down 61% on December 2022 and a reduction of almost 30% of those waiting 52 weeks plus, over the same period. However, waiting times continue to be a challenge, particularly within the neuro pathway.

A full deep dive analysis has been conducted to review presentations to A&E. A working group will be established to review the findings and develop a cross-organisational action plan that seeks to promote early intervention and prevention. The Pilot is progressing well and developing increased staff confidence to support children and promote early identification, advice and support, through specialist consultations with Maudsley Centre for Child & Adolescent Eating Disorders (MCAEDS). The second element to this pilot is the delivery of the 'me and my body' and 'happy being me' programmes, to promote positive self-esteem/image, which is being successfully piloted in 3 Primary Schools and 3 Secondary Schools across the borough.

h) Wenifred Marshall, Head of Service for Permanency – THRIVE have received 64 referrals for children subject to adoption and children looked after. 9 additional referrals for foster Carers and children subject to Special Guardianship Orders from April 2023 to date. The work undertaken by THRIVE with children and their carers, prevents placement breakdown and enable children and their care-givers to develop positive strategies to help regulate emotions, pre-empt dysregulated behaviours and develop pro-social responses to manage difficult feelings.

Virtual Reality continues to be a well embedded practice tool in Bromley Children Social Care as well within the practice of Education Partners. There are trained VR practitioners within each service area of Children Social Care and champions to lead and promote VR as a practice tool in their services. 25 additional practitioners have received VR training from April 2023 to date with a total of 66 certified VR across Children Social Care since April 2022. From April 2023, 19 foster carer attended VR training on Trauma and Child Sexual exploitation and the feedback was overwhelmingly positive.

i) Sonia Aulak, Interim Head of SEN – There have been significant improvements in clearing the backlog of assessments and improving overall 20 week timeliness.

j) Betty McDonald, Head of Youth Justice Service – YJS has continued to strengthen and enhance preventative work with children and young people, including the implementation of Engage and Turnaround projects. The increased focus on the preventative support offer continues to support the positive trend achieved in reducing numbers of first time entrants into the YJS.

Commission Youth Ink peer to peer mentoring network work with CYPs offering additional support and mentoring, which includes contributing to interventions delivered by the YJS by seeking the views of the children who access this service.

Providing positive and aspirational interventions with children and young people which has continued to improve, with support through funding from the Jack Petchey award. This includes CYPs having the opportunity to engage with projects including music production, street art, boxing and cooking, and receiving awards for their contributions/achievements.

The YJS has monthly multi-agency meetings with SEN to ensure all SEN children open to the YJS, and who require an EHCP, receive the appropriate educational support according to their needs. There are fortnightly education and health panels for health specialists to discuss any potential referrals where children's health support is part of their YJS intervention.

- k) Linda King, Youth Support Programme Manager** – The youth service review continues, and we are now relooking at the service in light of the statutory positive activity duties in the newly issued guidance in September 2023 for “Statutory guidance for local authorities on services to improve young people’s well-being.”

The service continues to deliver positive activities across its hubs and mobile team offering a safe environment and personal social education. NEET performance for care leavers is now directly monitored by the Care Leaving team. The youth support programme team offer support to the CLA/LCT NEET panel meetings and via informal support between workers. The service has the statutory responsibility for tracking and supporting young people who are NEET or at risk of being NEET and we continue to ensure all young people have an offer of individual or small group support for information, advice and guidance and employability support.

- l) Helayna Jenkins, Principal Loneliness Champion** – In November 2023, the Principal Loneliness Champion met with over 500 residents across the community at the Children and family centres, Library ‘baby rhyme time’ sessions, Bromley Market, and the Inspired Youth Conference (29th November 2023) providing printed leaflets, information and signposting services to parents and young people to support these groups through loneliness and social isolation.

In December, 44 schools (primary and secondary), 6 children and family centres and a Mytime Active afterschool club made 5,000 cards which were delivered to a variety of local community locations including care homes, libraries, charities, health and hospitals.

The Bromley Children’s Project continue to support efforts to connect people via the Children and Family centres during various celebration days and awareness weeks i.e., religious festivals and Month of Community (June 2024).

The PLC continues to deliver the [Tackling Loneliness Workshop](#) to front line professionals supporting childing and young adults who may be experiencing loneliness within Bromley. Dedicated sessions with teachers and Health visitors are scheduled for late 2024.

A Tackling Loneliness [SharePoint page](#) was created for all staff at the LBB which will help the signpost services within their role. Bromley Childrens Project is taking part in a survey to capture, specifically how the Children and Family centres are helping to bring people together within the community and its impact around loneliness and isolation. This is a multi-agency study and results will be shared when the results are gathered in spring 2024.

The PLC delivered the now professionally accredited Tackling Loneliness Workshop to 11 Bromley Youth Council members in December 2023. We have now created a group of Youth Loneliness Champions. Future training will be delivered in March 2024 for all new Council members.

m) Kelly Sylvester, Head of Community Living Commissioning Programmes Team – The commissioning team have had the opportunity to utilise the new Short Breaks for Disabled Children Framework, resulting in school holiday activities that maximise the skills and potential of children and young people. The team are preparing for the upcoming Domiciliary Care tender which will include a service for children with disabilities and children that have Continuing Care needs. The Team is working with other boroughs to consider how the Family Drug and Alcohol Service will be commissioned in the future.

n) Michael Watts, Engagement Strategy Manager – New framework and toolkit developed during 2022/23. Framework endorsed by CEF PDS on 20 June and ACH PDS on 27 June 2023. 6 monthly ‘You said, we did’ highlight reports are presented to the Children’s Executive Board and CEF PDS. Digital “Childs Voice Hub” is enabling the Children Executive Partnership to share best practice, a toolkit and feedback findings amongst other professionals.

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