

- Councillor Tregoing reported that 50% of her time as a primary teacher / SENCo was spent doing mental health work / paperwork. There were long delays in accessing services, even though the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough NHS Foundation Trust (CPFT) was now hitting its 18-week target for referrals (down from one year).
- Children and young people were often passed from service to service and waiting times for the most serious cases were still too high. Many GPs saw the child as the responsibility of the school: however, the school was only likely to step in if the child was not meeting age-related educational expectations. If the child was performing well, it was very difficult to get help until a crisis occurred. Referral pathways were not clear.
- Child & Adolescent Mental Health (CAMH) Services were provided by CPFT. CAMH is a “tier 2” service equivalent to a hospital service. Many young people “not sick enough” were turned away, but it was not clear what services they could access via their parents or schools to help with “lower level” mental illness. This was a gap worth exploring in South Cambridgeshire.
- Different people had different needs.
- The causes of mental health issues included the spread of social media, peer pressure, and the break-up of families.
- Mental health and emotional wellbeing concerns were often identified at school rather than through parents. There were lots of initiatives and mental health support providers active in South Cambridgeshire. Note was made of the excellent work of Councillor Neil Davies at Histon & Impington Mental Health Week, and the very successful work delivered by the “Alliance” group of 13 primary schools in the Bassingbourn-Melbourn-Gamlingay cluster working with pupils aged 4 to 11 and, importantly, their families.
- The balance of funding spent on serious cases versus prevention.
- To make sure that recommendations could be made to Cabinet at a later date, it was agreed that the Committee should focus its review on the theme of “Mind the Gap” in support and provision between Schools and the CAMHs:

The Committee needed to address the following key questions:

- What are the referral pathways from schools to mental health services?
- What mental health support measures are schools providing / accessing / buying-in? From where? How much does this cost? How are they funding this?
- How could schools work and prevention work be funded?
- What is actually happening in schools (focus on primary, but include secondary) in our wards in South Cambridgeshire?
- What does it look like from a GP’s and a school’s view-point?

Members asked officers to determine which expert witnesses to invite to the next

meeting, given the concerns raised during the debate. Members indicated to officers that the expert witnesses should include a Head teacher, school nurse, primary school teacher, and General Practitioner. Councillor Bunty Waters and Councillor Andrew Frazer agreed to contact local MPs Heidi Allen and Lucy Frazer to understand their perspective on these issues. Councillor Frazer also referred to a contact he knew at the Care Quality Commission, who worked closely with GP surgeries.

It was agreed that the next meeting should be arranged for March 2017, or shortly thereafter, once expert witness availability had been established.

6. UPDATES FROM MEMBERS REPRESENTING THE COUNCIL ON OUTSIDE BODIES

The Partnership Review Committee received and noted a report from Councillor Hazel Smith about Emmaus, Cambridge.

The Meeting ended at 11.00 a.m.
