

## SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Partnerships Review Committee held on  
Friday, 20 January 2017 at 10.00 a.m.

PRESENT: Councillor Ben Shelton – Chairman  
Councillor Bunty Waters – Vice-Chairman

Councillors: Henry Batchelor Andrew Fraser  
Janet Lockwood Ray Manning  
Ingrid Tregoing

Councillors were in attendance, by invitation.

Officers: Gemma Barron Head of Sustainable Communities and Wellbeing  
Mike Hill Health and Environmental Services Director  
Ian Senior Democratic Services Officer

### 1. APOLOGIES

Councillors David Bard and Kevin Cuffley sent apologies for absence.

### 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

### 3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Committee authorised the Chairman to sign, as a correct record, the minutes of the meeting held on 16 September 2016.

### 4. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

There were no public questions.

### 5. REVIEW OF FINDINGS OF LOCAL PROVISION OF MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

The Chairman and Vice-Chairman invited Members to contribute to a discussion about the local provision of mental health services.

Each of the Members present reported verbally on enquiries made, and discussions held, within their wards. Councillor Ingrid Tregoing addressed the meeting in her capacity as a Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo). During the ensuing Committee debate, the following points were made:

- The lack of education funding locally and the need for a fairer determining formula. There was a lack of therapists and counsellors available to support schools due to cost. Lack of funding of education locally and mental health support was the key issue
- Mental health issues often presented between the ages of 13 and 15. There was growing evidence that the need for intervention was now earlier than this average – at primary school age.

- 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.

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**The Meeting ended at 11.00 a.m.**

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