

**Minutes of:**

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE -  
CHILDREN'S SAFEGUARDING SUB COMMITTEE**

**Date of Meeting:** 9 July 2019

**Present:** Councillor Susan Southworth (in the Chair); Councillor R Caserta, Councillor J Grimshaw, Councillor K Hussain, Councillor M Powell, Councillor C Walsh, Councillor M Whitby

**Also in attendance:**

Lynne Ridsdale – Deputy Chief Executive  
Tony Decrop – Assistant Director Safeguarding  
Steve Denton – Head of IT  
Sue Harris - Strategic Lead for Placement Services  
Kirsty Walton – Early Help Development Manager  
Julie Gallagher – Democratic Services

**Apologies for absence:** There were no apologies for absence.

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**CS.01 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

**CS.02 MINUTES**

**It was agreed:**

The minutes of the meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2019, be approved as a correct record.

*The Chair agreed that further to the published agenda the items will be re-arranged and the item "Social Work IT Update" would be considered first.*

**CS.03 SOCIAL WORK IT UPDATE**

Lynne Ridsdale, Deputy Chief Executive and Steve Denton, Head of IT attended the meeting to provide members with an update in respect of work being undertaken to improve ICT provision for social workers.

An accompanying report circulated to members prior to the meeting included information in respect of the roll out of new devices, prioritisation, installation software, future plans and priorities.

Responding to a Member's question, the Deputy Chief Executive reported that the new equipment is compatible with the liquid logic software which is used by a number of other Local Authorities within Greater Manchester. The roll out of the new devices was staggered with social workers and personal advisors receiving their devices first. The staggered roll-out process has worked well and additional training for staff has been provided, if and when required.

With regards to sharing of data, the Assistant Director reported that the Virtual Head would work with schools with regards to sharing data in respect of Looked after however this still remains problematic with partners in the health service.

In response to a Member's question, the Assistant Director reported that the devices are very secure, with several different verification/security access processes.

The Deputy Chief Executive reported that the completion dates for the roll out and issuing of the remaining equipment is expected to be completed by October 2019.

**It was agreed:**

The Deputy Chief Executive and the Head of IT be thanked for their attendance and a further update report be considered in 12 months.

**CS.03 OASIS TEAM UPDATE**

The Early Help Development Manager attended the meeting to provide members with an overview of the work currently undertaken by Team Oasis to prevent children, young people and their families from needing more specialist intervention and to support and empower families in accessing Universal Provision.

A presentation submitted to members in advance of the meeting provided information in respect of the following areas:

- Referral pathway
- Green contact outcomes – 5,660 contacts were managed by team Oasis between April 2018 and April 2019
- Team Oasis referrals – 343 new referral from April 2018 and April 2019.
- Early help Assessments
- Performance
- Feedback
- Early Help Transformation

The Early Help Development Manager reported that a three month consultation period in relation to the early help team, commenced in February and concluded in May 2019. The proposal will include three locality teams working across the authority these will be integrated and aligned with wider services, including health. Schools will have named early help social workers and be supported by a team around a school model. The results of the consultation are currently being reviewed and analysed.

Responding to a Member's question, the Early Help and Development Manager reported that a single point of referral had been established. From April 2019 all green contacts transferred under the management of the multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH).

Members discussed the Oasis Teams' Youth Offending Practitioners. The Early Help and Development Manager reported that this work would be targeted; working with vulnerable children at risk of committing crime to prevent offending behaviour.

Responding to a Member's question in relation to the reported figure of 81% of green contact outcomes result in no further action; the Early Help and Development Manager reported that no further action will include instances when advice and information had been given as well as cases when the client may have been referred on to another agencies.

The Assistant Director report that any referral to the MASH would be assessed by a MDT, these team would include social workers. The Team would review the information, talk with partners and make a judgement as to whether statutory support or early help support is required. In the recent Ofsted inspection, Ofsted commented that they were confident that the assessment process was safe and robust.

The Early Help and Development Manager reported that the Oasis Team had introduced more robust quality assurance and performance processes, with monthly performance reports and greater management oversight of casework.

Members raised concerns in relation to the proposed target to increase the percentage of Early Help Assessments being completed within 20 working days to 100%, the current number is 78%. The Early Help and Development Manager reported that the assessment process has changed; going forward the assessments will include an initial snapshot of need and a quicker turnaround for any subsequent plan of support.

**It was agreed:**

The Early Help and Development Manager be thanked for her attendance and information with regards to the numbers of repeat referrals contained within the no further action cohort will be forwarded on to members in advance of the next meeting.

**CS.04 FOSTERING TEAM UPDATE**

Sue Harris - Strategic Lead for Placement Services, attended the meeting to update members on the fostering team. The presentation contained the following information:

- Fostering Panel
- Team Structure
- Bury Data
- Home from Home Scheme
- Service Developments
- Community Events

The Strategic Lead reported that the fostering service is the largest resource in terms of placements for Bury's children in care. There are currently 343 children in care with 233 places with foster carers. 105 are placed with Bury foster carers, 67 with family and friends foster carers and 61 with independent foster agencies.

From the 1<sup>st</sup> January 2019 the fee paid to Bury Carers increased to £130 per week for children 0-10 years and £140 per week for children aged 11 and over. The Council also agreed to remove the deduction for any additional children from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2019.

Members discussed the 61 children that are placed with Independent Foster Agencies. The Strategic Lead reported that reducing the numbers of Looked after Children (if safe to do so) and the reliance on more costly independent placements remains a priority. This will be helped by the establishment of the Bury Foster Career Ambassadors Scheme and increasing the availability of supported lodgings.

In response to a member's question, the Strategic Lead reported that the Council does not have a problem recruiting foster carers within the BME community.

**It was agreed:**

Sue Harris, Strategic Lead be thanked for her attendance.

**COUNCILLOR S SOUTHWORTH**

**Chair (Note: the meeting started at 5pm and ended at 7.10pm)**