

AT A MEETING of the Children and Families Advisory Panel of HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL held at the castle, Winchester on Wednesday 7th February 2024

Chairman:  
p Councillor Arun Mummalaneni

p Councillor Ann Briggs  
p Councillor Prad Bains  
Councillor Christopher Donnelly  
a Councillor Juliet Henderson

a Councillor Adam Jackman  
p Councillor Stephen Parker  
p Councillor Louise Parker-Jones  
p Councillor Malcolm Wade

**60. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Cllr Henderson and Cllr Jackson. Cllr Broomfield was in attendance as the Conservative Deputy.

**61. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members were mindful that where they believed they had a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in any matter considered at the meeting they must declare that interest at the time of the relevant debate and, having regard to the circumstances described in Part 3, Paragraph 1.5 of the County Council's Members' Code of Conduct, leave the meeting while the matter was discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with Paragraph 1.6 of the Code. Furthermore Members were mindful that where they believed they had a Personal interest in a matter being considered at the meeting they considered whether such interest should be declared, and having regard to Part 5, Paragraph 5 of the Code, considered whether it was appropriate to leave the meeting whilst the matter was discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with the Code.

**62. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as a correct record.

**63. DEPUTATIONS**

No deputations were received.

**64. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman had not announcements to make.

**65. ANNUAL SAFEGUARDING REPORT - CHILDREN'S SERVICES 2022-23**

The Panel received a report from the Director of Children's Services providing an overview of the Annual Safeguarding Report for Children's Services for 2022-23.

Officers set out the key national developments alongside a summary of the Directorate's performance, activity levels and priorities. Members heard that whilst demand for children's social care services continues to increase, the response to the safeguarding of vulnerable children is both robust and timely. It was noted that new and emerging risks to children and identified and addressed collaboratively with partners and that the transformation of children's social care is delivering a modern service fit for future challenges.

Officers set out that Children's Social Care was a highly regulated environment but that the Directorate continued to receive positive feedback following inspections and was proactive with national developments.

In response to questions members found that:

- There were continued efforts to avoid complacency via enhanced assurance reporting and a focus on the continued need to improve.
- The greatest challenges facing the Directorate in this area surrounded the increased demand and complexity of those engaged with the service, the continuing need to focus on financial efficiency and the recruitment and retention of staff. It was noted that these were all national issues, not unique to Hampshire.
- There was significant work on qualified individuals returning to Social Work to reduce the need to rely on agency staff, which currently constituted c.40% of posts within Social Work teams.
- The Family Help model had launched in a limited way and was due to roll out more generally in April 2024.
- The Youth Justice Service had a focus on restorative justice and on reducing the disproportionality of stop and searches on young people from ethnic minorities.

RESOLVED:

That the Children and Families Advisory Panel note the positive progress and continued consistently high performance with regards to safeguarding children in Hampshire.

## 66. **GRADUATE ENTRY TRAINING SCHEME**

The Panel received a report from the Director of Children's Services providing an overview of the Children's Services Directorate's Graduate Entry Training Scheme (GETS).

Officers set out details of the first two years of learning and development for newly qualified social workers joining Children's Services as part of GETS, an Assessed and Supported Year in Employment. This is an employer-led induction programme for the first year of employment for newly qualified social workers.

In response to questions members found that:

- The positive experience of members of the scheme has been used for recruitment. For those who choose not to continue, exit interviews are conducted and efforts are made to undertake retention interviews when individuals are considering not continuing with the scheme.

- There are processes in place to prevent individuals from being trained by Hampshire, then leaving and being employed as agency workers on a higher rate.

RESOLVED:

That the Children and Families Advisory Panel note the contents of this report.

## 67. **HOCKLEY HOUSE**

The Panel received a report from the Director of Children's Services providing an update on the establishment of accommodation for three young people with complex behavioural and mental health needs. Officers noted that young people had chosen to name this home Hockley House after an historic mayor of Romsey.

Officers noted that Hockley House was an existing semi-detached property, re-developed into accommodation to meet the needs of an identified cohort of young people for whom placement stability had been a challenge. It was noted that each room had been carefully planned to maximise independence and skills, whilst also having a communal family kitchen, dining area and outdoor space.

Members noted that Hockley House was funded and run as a multi-agency provision between Children's Services and Health and will also provide a Structured Activity Service. Officers concluded by setting out the timeline moving forwards to the home opening in early summer 2024.

In response to questions members found that:

- The home will assist Children's Services to better manage cases alongside Health professionals.
- There would be a focus on ensuring that the home does not become a permanent placement for young people but instead helps them develop the skills to move onto less restrictive placements.
- The home is a county resource for the most complex and vulnerable cases and that liberty will only be restricted so far as is necessary to ensure the young person's safety.

RESOLVED:

That the Children and Families Advisory Panel note the update provided on Hockley House.

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Chairman, Children and Families  
Advisory Panel