

## CABINET TRANSFORMATION SUB COMMITTEE

TUESDAY, 2 NOVEMBER 2021

PRESENT: Councillors Stuart Carroll (Chairman), Gerry Clark, Andrew Johnson and Samantha Rayner

Also in attendance: Councillor Gurpreet Bhangra and Councillor Helen Price

Officers: Duncan Sharkey, Hillary Hall, Dan Brookman, Kevin McDaniels, David Macfarelane and David Cook.

### APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received by Cllr Hilton and Cllr Stimson, Cllr Rayner attended as a substitute.

### DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest received.

### MINUTES

**Resolved unanimously: that the minutes of the meeting on 22 September 2020 were approved.**

### PRESENTATION ON THE CURRENT TRANSFORMATION PRIORITIES

The Director of Children's Services gave a presentation on transformation items his directorate were currently working on and their context with some case studies. Cabinet were aware of the issues and work being done. Some of the volume implications are seen nationally driven by the pandemic. Members were informed that the first table showed the volume coming through Children's Services giving a comparative snapshot year on year on 31st March. The table showed increased volume, more child protection plans and increased complex cases. The data gave members a comparison with our statistical neighbouring authorities and the national average for England.

Members were next given an update on the statutory work force position. At March 2022 there were 25 agency social workers, this reflected the trend in Berkshire with a difficulty in recruitment of professionals. Agency "uplift" at current level costs us £340,000 a year compared to a permanent workforce. The churn in the system often results in children not have a consistent social worker. The additional demand during the pandemic have resulted in our caseworkers holding more cases than the national average. More posts have been brought in to meet demand and retain quality of service. A decision had been made to keep employing domestic support abuse workers even though the pilot scheme had ended, this was an example of having a workforce that met demand. Pay and reward had been set to realistically meet the need of working in Berkshire and work continued within the market place regarding our children in care with focus on local placements and support for adoption. It was important that when possible we keep families together. Case studies showing the placement supply and costs were shown.

The presentation went on to show transformation opportunities with the graphic showing in grey showing a typical path a young person may take through the system from early help to becoming a child in need, maybe becoming a child in care and then becoming a care leaver. They may also have had additional needs, often during the school environment. With regards

to transformation we would look at the way we work within our practices, with our partners, making sure we get the right services in the right places and being involved early so we can effectively prevent escalation. It was important to make sure more young people stayed locally rather than having to move away from the area for support. Work was ongoing to increase the volume of foster careers and supporting more family members to come forward were appropriate. We want more people to be educated locally, live locally and be able to be part of their local community. To achieve this, we are working on effective connected systems and a sustainable stable workforce. Examples of how this would be achieved was shown on the following two slides, such as early support work with health colleagues regarding well being and mental health, supporting local provision and replacing outdated systems with a digital end to end system making the best use of data.

The Chairman said he was aware of the excellent work being done by the directorate but asked if the director could expand on the foster care system and high needs placements. Members were informed that we were looking at increasing foster careers, we currently had about 50. Care placements currently cost about £3,500 per week where a foster placement cost about £500 per week. Officers were looking at better ways of supporting foster parents and families to help support children in care. We were looking at joined up support for the whole family such as access to our leisure facilities.

Cllr Clark mentioned that there had been increased costs over the last few years but transformation was helping provide effective services. He mentioned the impact of the pandemic and asked if we were ready for future problems. He was informed that there was no guarantee for future problems but working on increasing early intervention, better support for young people and families and increasing the fostering system. It had been a difficult 18 months during the pandemic and support would be provided.

Cllr Price asked if more could be done to help prevent children entering the care system and was informed that yes more could always be done but there will always be a need for support and that was why there was investment in family hubs, investment in supporting families, being ready to meet future demands and working with our partners. We were looking at better internal processes, better particle support such as getting a child to school on time so the benefit from learning opportunities and signposting families to services. Cllr Price mentioned that there was a wealth of community volunteers and we could look at what more support we could provide them in their work.

Cllr Rayner congratulated officers for the work they were doing as it was very complex and changing peoples lives for the better. She said how she admired those who became foster parents, taking on the responsibility to help children especially during these difficult pandemic times. If we can help foster parents with extra support we should. With regards to agency social workers she asked if there was anything that could be done regarding recruitment of permanent staff and also asked about the Paris system. She was informed that with regards to social workers the pandemic had shown that they could make their visits during one day and spend the next one at home writing up their notes from home which helps with their work life balance. It also meant they did not have to live locally and some were attracted to the higher agency rates of pay. We paid compatible with other authorities but could not match £43 per hour some agencies paid. There was a shortage of skilled social workers and thus they could command higher prices as local authorities had a statutory duty to provide these services. The authority had looked at creating roles for newly qualified social workers who needed experience before they could take on full caseloads, nearly all of these additional posts have moved into permanent positions within the authority. Bonuses were also available when social workers stayed within their roles which has helped with stability of care for children. With regards to the Paris system this had come to an end of its lifespan and work was underway getting a more modern system in place. We were only one of three authorities still using the system as we had customised it to our need that made it difficult to replace. It was not just about replacing like for like but getting a new system that helps us work better, better data sharing and supporting our partners.

The Sub-Committee noted the presentation.

## UPDATE ON CORPORATE FOCUS

The Chief Executive introduced the presentation about Corporate Transformation.

Members were informed that transformation was for the whole organisation, although AFC and Optalis would have their own arrangements. We are developing an organisation that was empowering all staff to be leaders and transform how they deliver their roles. Transformation was everyone's role within the organisation. The Pandemic has had a big impact on our ability to get together and get new concepts embedded. Staff had worked hard in challenging circumstances to get their day jobs done so it had not been an appropriate time to introduce too many changes. This had resulted in the organisation being behind where they had planned to be with regards to transformation. There would be cultural changes based on our values being at the heart of what we do. Members were shown the three main strands of how transformation would be delivered; individual actions, service level and corporate programmes. We will be helping staff share good practices and providing toolkits. We need to work together as we can not have people randomly changing practices we need coordination and allowing small failures to help learn and develop.

Hillary Hall informed members that over the next 12 months we would be focusing on Engagement HQ providing toolkits for staff to use for service redesign, better use of data, developing the website, adult social care and community engagement.

With regards to Engagement HQ there would be a wide range of toolkits to aid teams with transformation, it would be a space where staff to be able to air their views and suggest new ideas, a place where forums could be held to help staff engagement and a space for surveys and quick polls to be undertaken.

With regards to adult social care transformation officers had looked at front door access to services as this was a real area for improvement, we advertised one number to access services but found out there was a plethora of numbers and email addresses that were in use that could result in confusion so they looked at streamlining the system. So part of the work being undertaken is about alignment and analysing what was the best way to access services and having staff with the right skill set to point service users in the right direction and being able to deal with people in crises. With regards to day opportunities there was an upcoming Cabinet report so they left discussion on this until Cabinet. With regards to reablement the approach was to support people to be able to do things for themselves. It was a 'doing with' model, in contrast to traditional home care which tends to be a 'doing for' model. This was enabled by having individual care packages being put in place.

Members were provided information about the use of technology with regards to the use of these, a case management system that by placing hidden quiet non-intrusive devices into a person's home can monitor and predict if there may be a crisis in the near future. The system then alerts the family or services that the person may need help. This enables early intervention rather than responding to a crisis.

Members were also given examples how transformation was making better use of data regarding transformation with work with partners at Slalom and AWS to create a Data Insights Platform to assist with local economic COVID-19 recovery, using local and open-source data in a purposeful 12-week sprint to benefit local business. Lessons would be learnt to help create a RBWM data rich environment.

Cllr Price mentioned that there was a lot of change happening with processes and behaviour changes and asked if the new change processes were being tested on the end user be them officers, member or the public., were their views being sought? She was informed that a lot of what was being done was getting direct feedback, such as using the Corporate Parenting

Forum or Youth Ambassadors, the schools improvement forum and Schools forum. We also asked for direct feedback from our users. There was also better consultation in place and looking at customer experiences.

The Sub-Committee noted the presentation.

### UPDATE ON COMMUNITY FOCUS

There had been a lot of work undertaken during the pandemic supporting residents, especially the vulnerable who had to shield and needed additional support. The Transformation support team provided direct support to helping during the pandemic and the Sub-Committee were given a number of examples how residents were supported and how there was widespread and targeted promotion of support and vaccination information. Further examples of embedding community response were also provided.

The Chairman said that although we were still in the middle of the pandemic it was good to reflect on the excellent work and support provided as well as maintaining the day to day business. There were some fantastic outputs and outcomes during the pandemic that supported the very vulnerable members of our society.

The sub committee noted the update.

### LYON CASE MANAGEMENT DEMO

The Cabinet Sub-Committee received a presentation on the Lyon system that was a low-code software solution used to build collaborative platforms and a smartphone app that social care, primary care, and local volunteers could use to support vulnerable individuals in the community.

Members were informed that the Pandemic had shown that there was a community willingness to help those in need but individuals often don't know "where to start" or "who needs help". The Local Authority, Social Care, Primary Care do know "who needs help" but this information was often on a spreadsheet and it was difficult to know how to share that appropriately.

The solution was to build our own platform and app using the Alpha Software that provided cloud-hosted, low-code development platform with application interface. This was able to be built alongside our existing social care, primary care and community partner relationships and managed low-level needs in the community, creating capacity in statutory services for critical pressures.

Members were provided an overview of how the system worked, it was a secured stand alone webpage, the data shown to members was from their dummy system so no live data was shown. The application showed the residents information who had contacted the council or needed help. Mapping tools were demonstrated as well as analytics linking volunteers to those who needed support. An activity register was shown that recorded actions and any associated tasks that may come out of it. The broad functionalities were shown to members. During the pandemic up to 200 to 300 were being recorded and tracked per day. A mobile application has been continually developed to help volunteers for example a support request may be loaded by someone who need support such as contact or shopping. The application would show registered contact details and location as well as how the task was being progressed.

The next steps was to apply for additional funding, building on the application and looking to take it out locally and nationally. GDPR compliance was built in and thus it could be used by a range of partners. A daft business case for future us was being produced.

The Chairman asked what the major next steps were and was informed that more development capacity was required externally as well as developing in house capacity to use the system for other functions.

Cllr Price said one issue with the volunteering system was that a number of volunteers were now going back to work. So would community groups be able to use the system to ask for volunteers. She was informed that yes they had been working with some community groups on this and the platform was available to them on a restricted area that did not contain sensitive data. They could have their own area of the system free of charge to help manage their volunteers. Cllr Price recommended that there should be some investigation if this could link to the 'next Door' application.

The Cabinet Sub-Committee noted the update.

TRANSFORMATION PLAN

The Chairman announced that a special meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> November 2021 had been arranged to discuss this item.

The meeting, which began at 7.00 pm, finished at 9.20 pm

CHAIRMAN.....

DATE.....