



**ST HELENS**  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

# Children and Young People Services Scrutiny Committee

**31 January 2022**

<b>Report Title:</b>	<b>Children's Mental Health and Wellbeing Services Spotlight Review Report</b>
<b>Cabinet Portfolio</b>	Children and Young People
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Councillor Nova Charlton
<b>Exempt Report</b>	No
<b>Reason for Exemption</b>	N/A
<b>Key Decision</b>	No
<b>Public Notice issued</b>	N/A
<b>Wards Affected</b>	All
<b>Report of</b>	Jim Leivers Director of Children's Services <a href="mailto:JimLeivers@sthelens.gov.uk">JimLeivers@sthelens.gov.uk</a>
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<b>Borough priorities</b>	Ensure children and young people have a positive start in life	X
	Promote good health, independence, and care across our communities	X
	Create safe and strong communities and neighbourhoods for all	
	Support a strong, thriving, inclusive and well-connected local economy	
	Create green and vibrant places that reflect our heritage and culture	
	Be a responsible Council	

## 1. Summary

- 1.1 The Covid-19 pandemic has impacted on children's education and personal lives, and in some cases has had a negative effect on their mental health and wellbeing. Members of the Children and Young People's Services (CYPS) Scrutiny Committee expressed concern regarding the level of the pandemic's impact and wished to understand what services were in place to address this. In December 2021, Members held a spotlight review to consider children's mental health and wellbeing services in the borough that are commissioned by St Helens Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG).

## 2. Recommendations for Decision

**The Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:**

- i) Note the comprehensive range of children's mental health and wellbeing support commissioned by St Helens CCG in the borough, and the progress that had been made with partner organisations rising to the challenges of the unprecedented effects of the Covid-19 pandemic;**
- ii) Agree that children's mental health and wellbeing services remain on the CYPS work programme, with an update to be provided to this Committee in the next twelve months; and**
- iii) Agree the recommendations as set out in Appendix 1 and submit to NHS St Helens CCG for comment and response within the defined timescales.**

## 3. Purpose of this Report

- 3.1 In December 2021, Members of the Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Committee held a spotlight review to consider the Children's Mental Health and Wellbeing Services in the borough commissioned by NHS St Helens CCG. This report provides an overview of the spotlight review held and the initial findings and recommendations of the Group.

## 4. Background / Reasons for the recommendations

- 4.1 As a part of the CYPS Scrutiny Committee's *Mental Health Services for Children and Young People with SEND* spotlight review held at the end of 2020, Members expressed interest in scrutinising the mental health and wellbeing services available to children without SEND, particularly due to the ongoing impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. As such, the 2021/22 CYPS Scrutiny Committee agreed to hold a further spotlight review to provide Members with an opportunity to be informed of the mental health and wellbeing services available to children in the borough commissioned by St Helens CCG.
- 4.2 The spotlight review was held in December 2021, and membership of the review included the following Members and officers:
- Councillor Trisha Long – Spotlight Review Group Chair
  - Councillor Donna Greaves – Spotlight Review Group member
  - Councillor Linda Mussell – Spotlight Review Group member
  - Councillor Teresa Sims – Spotlight Review Group member
  - Councillor Michelle Sweeney – Spotlight Review Group member
  - Dominic Rowan – Scrutiny Support Officer
  - Suzanne Rimmer – Assistant Director Children's Health (Integrated Commissioning), NHS St Helens CCG
  - James Hardy-Pickering – Senior Transformation & Commissioning Manager, Children and Young People's Mental Health, NHS St Helens CCG
  - Pamela Nkyi – Interim Public Health Specialist, St Helens Borough Council

In addition, the following witnesses from across the local health sector were also in attendance:

- Laura Williams – CAMHS
  - Nicholas Ashall – CAMHS
  - Mia Leyland – Barnardo's Resilience Teams
  - Allison Lyon – Barnardo's Resilience Teams
  - Gel Sutton – Mental Health Support Teams (Mersey Care)
  - Lisa Simpson – Mental Health Support Teams (Mersey Care)
  - Stephanie Lord – Kooth
  - Jayne Hobin-Wright – Listening Ear
  - Lisa Best – PATHS (Barnado's)
  - Liam Stowell – CYP Crisis Response (Mersey Care)
  - Alexandra Bellamy – CYP Eating Disorder Service (Mersey Care)
  - Lindsey Lawrence – CYP Eating Disorder Service (Mersey Care)
- 4.3 Members of the spotlight review group (the Group) received a presentation led by the Senior Transformation & Commissioning Manager (Children and Young People's Mental Health) for NHS St Helens Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG). The presentation is attached as Appendix 2 to this report.
- 4.4 The presentation covered the whole system approach that had been taken by the CCG, particularly in respect of the context of the Covid-19 pandemic and its effects on children's way of life and impact on education. The Group heard how the sustainability of services was a key focus of delivery in St Helens, with the CCG acutely aware of the need to build a breadth of provision in regards to children's mental health and wellbeing services. The Group heard the latest development from the CCG, including the total investments made and the latest access and activity data for the various services available in the borough.

- 4.5 As a part of the presentation, representatives from the following organisations provided an update on the services they provide in the borough: St Helens Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS); Barnardo's; NHS Mersey Care CYP Eating Disorder Service; St Helens Mental Health Support Team; Listening Ear; Barnardo's PATHS Programme; and Kooth. The presentation slides set out in Appendix 2 to this report provides further detail of each organisations 'offer' and services available.
- 4.6 A presentation was also shared by the Council's Interim Public Health Specialist, which is attached as Appendix 3. The second presentation detailed how the Covid-19 pandemic had impacted on domestic abuse-related incidents and crimes, as well as the rising numbers of school children with social, emotional and mental health needs, which had been coupled with a reduction in safeguarding referrals with children being out of school exposing some to an increased level of potential harm. The presentation further updated the Group on recent progress and developments including the immediate action taken, as well as the longer-term strategic plan.
- 4.7 Following both presentations, the Group welcomed the comprehensive range of children's mental health and wellbeing support in the borough, commenting that in their opinion. partner organisations had risen to the challenges of the unprecedented effects of the Covid-19 pandemic.
- 4.8 The Group asked a range of questions of the officers and guests present including on waiting times, and responsibility for leading on complex cases (referred to as tier four). Whilst acknowledging that there existed a dedicated webpage on the CCG's website that listed all the support available in the borough, the Group commented that ensuring effective communication with resident was vitally important. As such, the Group recommended that there would be merit in the production of an easy-read leaflet. Members requested that the leaflet should detail the range of mental health and wellbeing services; the support offered by each service; and the thresholds for referral to each service. The Group believed that this downloadable leaflet would be useful to those who make referrals such as GPs, social workers, teachers, and play-group staff etc. Members commented that it was important to build in a way of updating the leaflet as required (e.g. annually).
- 4.9 The Group expressed concern around the sharp increase in the number of young people suffering from eating disorders, which had a clear impact on mental health and wellbeing. Members commented that this was clear in their work with young people generally, alongside reports that the pandemic had had massive impact on this already growing problem. In the UK, more than 3,000 young people start treatment every month, with services are struggling to see people quickly enough. The Group also commented that they were aware that many children and young people are presenting later with more complex symptoms which are harder and take longer to treat, and there was a significant increase in crisis hospital admission in the last year.
- 4.10 Members discussed whether there was sufficient professional curiosity in St Helens to identify the onset of eating disorders early so that children and young people in the borough could receive swift help. Members also asked about the local availability and timeliness of help when referrals were made and whether there was a specific strategy to address the issue of eating disorders. The Group would welcome further consideration from colleagues in the CCG on how to address the growing issue of eating disorders amongst children and young people.
- 4.11 Overall, the Group welcomed the improvements made regarding the access to, and provision of, children's mental health and wellbeing services within the Borough. However, the Group wished for this topic to remain on the Committee's work programme, and for a further update

be provided to this Committee in the next 12 months, which should include progress on the initiatives discussed, as well as case studies and examples of what had not gone well / lessons learned.

## **5. Community Impact Assessment**

- 5.1 No community impact assessment was carried out for the purposes of this spotlight review into the services available for children's mental health and wellbeing.

## **6. Consideration of Alternatives**

- 6.1 N/A

## **7. Conclusions**

- 7.1 The Group welcomed the comprehensive range of children's mental health and wellbeing support in the borough commissioned by the CCG, commenting that partner organisations had risen to the challenges of the unprecedented effects of the Covid-19 pandemic.
- 7.2 Whilst acknowledging that there existed a dedicated webpage on the CCG's website that listed all the support available in the borough, the Group agreed that there would be merit in the production of an easy-read (and downloadable) leaflet, which should detail the range of mental health and wellbeing services; the support offered by each service; and the thresholds for referral to each service. This leaflet would be useful to those who make referrals such as GPs, social workers, teachers, and play-group staff etc. Members commented that it was important to build in a way of updating the leaflet as required.
- 7.3 Members expressed concern regarding about the sharp increase in the number of young people suffering from eating disorders. The Group agreed that consideration should be given to address the growing issue of eating disorders amongst children and young people as set out within this report at section 4.9-4.10.
- 7.4 Finally, the Group also requested that a further update on children's mental health and wellbeing services be provided to this Committee in the next twelve months. This should include progress on the initiatives discussed, as well as case studies and examples of what had not gone well / lessons learned.
- 7.5 The Group's recommendations for consideration by St Helens CCG are set out in Appendix 1 to this report. The Group's recommendations will be submitted to NHS St Helens CCG under the Local Authority (Public Health, Health and Wellbeing Boards, and Health Scrutiny) Regulations 2013. A response to the recommendations will be requested from the CCG to be provided to the meeting of the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee at a future meeting.

## **8. Implications**

### **8.1 Legal Implications**

- 8.1.1 There are no legal implications as a part of the purpose of this spotlight review.

### **8.2 Community Impact Assessment (CIA) Implications**

### 8.2.1 Social Value

8.2.1.1 There are no social value implications as a part of the purpose of this spotlight review

### 8.2.2 Sustainability and Environment

8.2.2.1 There are no sustainability or environment issues as a part of this spotlight review.

### 8.2.3 Health and Wellbeing

8.2.3.1 The spotlight review considered the mental health and wellbeing support available to children and young people within the borough.

### 8.2.4 Equality and Human Rights

8.2.4.1 The spotlight review did not consider equality and human rights implications as a part of its review.

### 8.3 Customers and Resident

8.3.1 There are no direct customer or resident implications arising from this spotlight review.

### 8.4 Asset and Property

8.4.1 There are no asset or property implications as a part of this spotlight review.

### 8.5 Staffing and Human Resource

8.5.1 There are no staffing or human resources implications as a part of this spotlight review.

### 8.6 Risks

8.6.1 There are no risks identified as a part of this spotlight review.

### 8.7 Finance

8.7.1 There are no financial implications as a part of this spotlight review.

### 8.8 Policy Framework Implications

8.8.1 The spotlight review report forms a part of the achievement of the Borough Priority 1 - Ensuring children and young people have a positive start in life, and Borough Priority 2 – Promote good health, independence, and care across our communities.

### 8.9 Impact and Opportunities on Localities

8.9.1 No localities implications were identified as a part of this spotlight review.

## 9. **Background papers**

9.1 Mental Health Services for Children and Young People with SEND Spotlight Review – CYPS Scrutiny Committee meeting, 8<sup>th</sup> March 2021

## **10. Appendices**

- 10.1 Appendix 1 – Children’s Mental Health and Wellbeing Services Spotlight Review Report Recommendations
- 10.2 Appendix 2 – Presentation from NHS St Helens CCG
- 10.3 Appendix 3 – Presentation from St Helens Borough Council Public Health