

4 December 2018

ITEM: 9

Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Children and Young People's Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health – School Wellbeing Service

Wards and communities affected:

All

Key Decision:

Key

Report of: Councillor James Halden, Portfolio Holder for Health and Education

Accountable Assistant Director: Assistant Director and Consultant in Public Health (Vacant)

Accountable Director: Rory Patterson, Corporate Director of Children's Services and Ian Wake, Director of Public Health

This report is Public

Executive Summary

Nationally one in ten children and young people have a diagnosable mental health condition and for many, mental health problems will continue in adulthood. Local knowledge and research as well as discussions with Head teachers highlight a clear need for further support for children and young people around mental health.

In Thurrock the issues around the mental wellbeing of our younger population was highlighted through the Brighter Futures Survey and prompted a more in-depth review of the needs of local children and people's relating to their mental health. As such, Children and Young People's Mental Health JSNA was undertaken and from these clear recommendations for tackling poor mental health outcomes in this population were developed.

This need is also included in the Transformation Plan for Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health – Open Up, Reach Out which was adopted as the local strategy by the Health and Wellbeing Board. This aims to improve access and equality; build capacity and capability in the system; and build resilience within the community

One of the recommendations uncovered a need for the School Wellbeing Service and this report provides a description of the progress made so far in working a proposal to implement a preventative offer for schools to improve children and young people emotional wellbeing and mental health.

1. Recommendation(s)

- 1.1 That Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny discuss the strategic direction of travel for implementing a School Wellbeing Service as a preventative offer to improving Children and Young People's Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health.**
- 1.2 That Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny discuss the funding required to implement a School Wellbeing Service in Thurrock.**

2. Introduction and Background

- 2.1 Children and young people's mental health is increasingly recognised as a significant area for concern nationally and within Thurrock. For example, Head Teachers have, on numerous occasions, expressed concern to council officers about the level of mental health problems in their schools. They have also expressed a desire for more support to help children and young people suffering from mental health problems.
- 2.2 For the first time, in 2017, the Council carried out a health and wellbeing survey amongst children and young people in Thurrock: the Brighter Future's Survey This is an annual health and wellbeing survey targeted towards Y5, Y8 and Y10 pupils which aims to provide an insight into the experiences, behaviours and attitudes of children and young people living in the borough. The initial survey undertaken in 2016/2017 was targeted towards Y6, Y8 and Y10 pupils. The change from Y6 to Y5 pupils was followed feedback from head teachers relating to issues the survey identified during transition from Y5 to Y6. Head teachers felt that they needed to understand these issues to enable them to effectively to provide support to this cohort of children.
- 2.3 Although results from the first two years of implementation of the survey have had a lower than anticipated uptake and the results of the survey cannot be generalised to the whole of the CYP population as it is a data source currently in isolation; a picture of surveillance can be built year on year as engagement with the survey in schools increases.
- 2.4 The survey was completed by 1,010 school pupils in years 6, 8 and 10 in 2016/2017 and 1218 in 2017/2018 for years 5, 8 and 10. Although the 2016/2017 and 2017/2018 surveys produced a number of positive findings (e.g. very low rates of smoking), the results do add weight to the concerns expressed by teachers about poor mental health outcomes.
- 2.5 The survey found, for example, that 20% of students in years 6 and 8 reported having been bullied in the past 12 months and that 14% of year 8's reported engaging in self-harming behaviours as one of the coping mechanisms they use when they feel overwhelmed by worries.
- 2.6 The survey has also highlighted the use of the internet and its impact on emotional wellbeing as a major cause for concern. For example, the survey

found that 96% of year 6 pupils (aged 10 – 11) had access to the internet without parental supervision and 12% said they had shared things online which they regretted. Internet safety and cyber-bullying have been raised by Headteachers as a major cause for concern and something which they spend a lot of time focussing on.

- 2.7 Alongside the issues identified within the survey, discussions with Headteachers and NHS partners and anecdotal evidence that mental health problems in school aged children are one of the factors driving local school exclusions it was decided that a Children and Young People's Mental Health JSNA should be developed.
- 2.8 The CYP JSNA 2018 discussed the increasing incidence of mental health problems in children and young people at both a national and local level, and the associated rising demand on treatment services.
- 2.9 The JSNA also identified the significant need for a strengthened universal and preventative mental health and wellbeing offer which focusses on building CYP and their families' strengths and resilience to ameliorate risk factors, thus reducing the predisposition for mental health issues.
- 2.10 The JSNA set out six broad recommendations, one of which suggested developing a partnership model and creating school-based wellbeing teams.
- 2.11 In May 2018, Thurrock Council and NHS Thurrock Clinical Commissioning Group delivered a Children and Young People's Mental Health Summit. The summit was used to launch the JSNA and begin a consultation on children and young people's mental health with schools and other key health and third sector partners.
- 2.12 The summit highlighted feedback from stakeholders on the need for a universal preventative offer for schools to support them with the identification of lower levels of mental health need and promotion of mental wellbeing, thereby shifting the focus towards prevention and early intervention and aiming to address rising demand on treatment services.

3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

- 3.1 Children and Young People's Mental Health is a priority for the Government and is detailed in the Transforming Children and Young People's Mental Health Provision: A Green Paper, published in December 2017. The green paper sets out proposals to create a network of support for children and young people and their educational setting. The three core proposals included:
 - A designated senior Mental Health Lead in every school
 - Incitation of Mental Health Support Teams linking schools to NHS treatment services, provision of training for teachers and self-regulating interventions for pupils

- Reducing waiting time standards for treatment in NHS Services from the current 12 –weeks to 4 weeks.
- 3.2 The Open up Reach Out 2015 – 2020 Strategy sets out a programme of service transformation for Children and Young People’s Mental Health across Southend, Essex and Thurrock. This strategy has been approved and signed off by the Health and Wellbeing Board. The proposed School Wellbeing Service would support and align with the current initiatives and delivery of the key priorities identified within this strategy.
 - 3.3 The Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Service (EWMHS) operates as the main treatment service available to children and young people across seven Clinical Commissioning Groups and three local authorities (including Thurrock CCG and Council) through a collaborative commissioning arrangement. The Open Up, Reach Out Transformation plan initially focussed on commissioning a service which improved quality and access for CYP presenting with Mental Health needs which required specialist intervention. This has resulted in a 50% increase in the number of CYP receiving support through the Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Service.
 - 3.4 The Transformation Plan also identified the need to strengthen the links between mental health services and educational settings. This work is progressing with the service employing a educational psychologist and developing systems of working. The proposed offer would align and strengthen this work and provide the key interface to implement at scale and at a faster pace
 - 3.5 It is recognised, however, that the EWMHS service is not appropriate for those with low level mental health issues and that the volume of demand for this service is greater than its capacity, meaning that there can be significant waiting times for some children and young people before they can access this service. There are national challenges in regards to recruitment and retention and the Mental Health workforce leading to difficulties in responding to increasing demand and providing a timely response to CYP needs.
 - 3.6 Whilst it is vital that children and young people with serious mental ill-health are treated quickly, a greater focus on treatment will not solve the underlying problems of emotional wellbeing and mental health. Focusing on prevention and promotion of mental wellbeing will prevent many children and young people from becoming mentally unwell in the first place and as such will reduce the pressure on treatment services. The proposed preventative offer is in line with national and local transformation plan of focusing on a system wide approach to addressing the complexities associated with children’s emotional wellbeing and mental health.
 - 3.7 In view of the above and following the recommendations of the JSNA and the summit on children’s mental health in Thurrock, Thurrock Council and Thurrock CCG have developed proposals for a new School Wellbeing Service to support schools and education staff in Thurrock.

3.8 The School Wellbeing Service is a partnership model between Thurrock Council, Thurrock Clinical Commissioning Group and Thurrock schools and academies that will primarily focus on prevention in order to strengthen and improve the emotional and mental wellbeing of children and young people as well as school staff. As mentioned this is in response to feedback from the School's Mental Health Summit guided by the following principles and outcomes;

Principles:

- A multi-agency approach to addressing the complex nature of CYP mental health issues
- A focus on working in partnership to deliver evidence-based interventions aimed at promoting protective factors and reducing risk factors.
- A tailored and flexible approach that meets the needs of individual schools in supporting their pupils and students.
- Strong alignment with all elements of the Brighter Futures Strategy and the Open Up, Reach Out Transformation Plan.

Outcomes:

- Children and young people needing support are identified early and supported within the school thereby reducing the need for specialist services
- Increased number of CYP who are able to cope and ask for help when needed within a school setting
- Improved protective factors and reduced risk factors

The outcomes are not exhaustive and will be redefined once the evaluation strategy for this service is fully developed.

3.9 The foundation of the School Wellbeing Service will centre on supporting schools to have a better understanding of the needs of children and young people who are in their care. This will allow a tailored offer of support to be provided to schools and will enable progress to be tracked year-on-year. The main tool for improving our understanding of mental health needs is through the Brighter Futures Survey, alongside completion of a self-assessment that highlights the needs of individual schools. Both of these resources can be used to develop an action plan that is tailored to the needs of each school. The goal is to have all schools in Thurrock take part in this survey each year and may act a pre-requisite to gaining support through the SWS.

3.10 The offer will embed evidence-based interventions designed to strengthen mentally protective factors and reduce risk factors relating to mental health. Examples of these include further implementation of the Daily Mile to enhance participation in physical activity which is related to better mental health outcomes, the KiVa programme which is effective in addressing bullying and

it's associated outcomes, the Penn Resilience programme which is effective in teaching children and young people how to cope thereby improving positive coping strategies and reducing anxiety and depression. Further details of effective interventions are available within the Children and Young People's Mental Health JSNA, 2018.

- 3.11 The School Wellbeing Service will work collaboratively with clusters of secondary and feeder primary schools across each locality area to develop a collaborative approach to identifying risk factors for mental health and enhancing protective factors and providing support to prevent escalation of mental health problems in this population by providing them with resilience skills and tools to support self-regulation.
- 3.12 The proposal for the SWS is to develop its work with each school in the context of the current range of existing provision for and in schools (for example Mental Health Lead at Gateway Academy, and schools commissioned offer through Open Door) and in the local area by extending and deepening existing work on promoting mental health, emotional wellbeing and supporting children who are experiencing problems with the help of a dedicated team. The SWS and schools will develop networks and effective relationships with other parts of the system i.e. EWMHs, third sector organisations.
- 3.13 The School Wellbeing Service will be funded for a minimum of three years at an estimated minimum cost of £300,000 per annum with 6.5 members of staff. Due to the complex nature of CYP mental health, strong partnership working between agencies is vital and could help create a joined up services. The funding secured to date for the SWS proposal is from a combination of funding from partners - Public Health, the CCG, Children's services, Schools and Academies as well as Council funding that is expected to be available in December. This is broken down below:
 - Local Authority Funding of £450,000 (£150,000 per annum for 3 years). This will be available by December
 - £50,000 from Public Health
 - £50,000 from the CCG
 - £50,000 from schools and academies
- 3.14 The attached paper sets out the proposed model for the School Wellbeing Service in detail. Section 4 of the proposal document elaborates on the cost analysis associated with this proposal.
- 3.15 As highlighted above, significant investment for this proposal has been secured and will provide the following staff:
 - **1 WTE x Team Manager (Band 8):** To lead the School Wellbeing Team by providing strategic oversight of the service, co-ordinate the work of the entire School Wellbeing Service and provide supervision as needed.

- **3 WTE x Full-time Senior Schools Wellbeing Workers (Band 7):** This will be one per locality and will lead on working with schools to promote the protective factors and reduce risk factors associated with mental health. They will also be responsible for ensuring that the interventions needed to achieve a mentally healthy school environment are easily accessible to schools. This will be achieved by the workers collaborating with and influencing organisations and services at the right level. Part of this role will involve delegation of some elements of work to the School Wellbeing Workers where appropriate and to work with Schools / Academies to ensure outcomes are met.
- **1.5 WTE x School Wellbeing Workers (Band 6):** To support the work allocated by the Senior Schools Wellbeing Workers.
- **1 WTE x Administrator (Band 3):** to complete the administrative tasks associated with the service.

- 3.16 This proposal does NOT anticipate that any of the posts will be case holding roles however, they will work closely with the Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Service delivered by NELFT to ensure that cases are escalated where needed. It has been decided that a direct delivery model will be applied as this is a new service and this model provides a greater opportunity to adapt the service as it evolves.
- 3.17 It is anticipated that the operational effectiveness of this service will start with the recruitment process of the Service Manager January 2019 to provide strategic oversight and scope out each school's need. School representatives will be involved with this recruitment at the time.
- 3.18 The mobilisation and delivery of the service will be overseen by a Stakeholder group which involves head teachers, Council and CCG representatives, as well as representatives from the voluntary sector. The Stakeholder group will report to the Brighter Futures Board ensuring links between the SWS and other relevant functions of the Brighter Futures Strategy.
- 3.19 The officers leading on this proposal are working with the London South Bank University to develop an independent evaluation of the SWS service. This will provide evidence of effectiveness and identification of potential impact of the service across the landscape of CYP mental health. A detailed evaluation strategy will be developed.

4. Reasons for Recommendation

- 4.1 A range of initiatives which prevent mental health problems can yield a good return on investment is well established.
- 4.2 Evidence suggest that a lot of mental health illness can be prevented, this will not only improve the quality of life of the individual but also provide economic

benefits by reducing the financial burden of mental ill health as well as improving health inequalities associated with educational outcomes, generational presentation of mental ill-health, unemployment etc.

- 4.3 The evidence presented in the Children and Young People's Mental Health JSNA shows that a significant number of interventions are not only effective in improving children's mental health but are also demonstrably good value for money. The School Wellbeing Service will offer tailored packages and interventions according to school's need which are both evidence-based and value for money.
- 4.4 To address the gap in preventative mental health offer and a focus on promoting mentally healthy school environment for children and young people, Cabinet are asked to discuss the strategic direction of travel for implementing a School Wellbeing Service as a preventative offer to improving Children and Young People's Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health.
- 4.5 Furthermore, Cabinet are asked to approve the funding required for implementing a School Wellbeing Service in Thurrock. Following the government response to the Green paper to implement Mental Health Teams across the country and the government having chosen the first local areas to participate in the first trailblazers, this proposal will ensure Thurrock is better prepared for the next wave of funding for implementation of local mental health teams.

5. Consultation (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)

- 5.1 The proposal has been presented at Health and Wellbeing Board on the 21st of September and was warmly received by members of the Board as a way of bridging the gap between pressures experienced by treatment services and the need for support within schools.
- 5.2 Following endorsement by the HWBB, the proposal has been presented to the Head teachers forum to further shape the model and its delivery. Feedback from head teachers has been adequately considered.
- 5.3 The proposal has been presented to the Brighter Futures Steering Group to ensure a link to the Brighter Futures Strategy and all elements within.
- 5.4 The proposals set out in this paper will be presented at the Children's Overview and Scrutiny 4th of December 2018.
- 5.5 A range of partners have collaborated and inputted to developing this proposal to date including:
 - Children's Services – Corporate Director, Principle Educational Psychologist, Interim Assistant Director, Learning, Inclusion and Skills, School Improvement Manager, Children's Commissioning Officer-EWMHS,

- Thurrock CCG – CYP and Maternity Commissioner
- Director of Public Health and Public Health Leadership Team

5.6 It is expected that a Stakeholder group will report to the Brighter Futures Board providing a governance structure for the development of this work-stream.

5.7 It is proposed that the School Wellbeing Service will be a service designed by children and young by children and young people. As such the officers leading this proposal will utilise this year's Thurrock's Next Top Boss project as an opportunity for consulting with children and young people in 1 school (St Clere's) and one College (Palmer's) about this service model and engaging them in the design of the School Wellbeing Service. The rationale for this to provide a view of the mental health needs and how the School Wellbeing Service may support identified needs across the age range from 11-24 years. The pupils (year 9) at St Clere's will focus on designing elements of the School Wellbeing service focussing on the 11-16 year age range, with Palmer's college students focussing on 17-24 year olds. It is hoped that this will aid understanding and support bridging the gap in transition from child to adult services as evidence suggests that this transition period can result in young people falling through the net and as such requires focus and improvement to strengthen the co-ordination between child and adult services. The project has already begun and ideas from young people will be established in January, which is in line with the implementation of the School Wellbeing Service.

6. Impact on corporate policies, priorities, performance and community impact

6.1 Health and Wellbeing Strategy

6.2 Brighter Futures Strategy and service transformation

6.3 Early Help and Troubled Families service transformation

6.4 Open Up, Reach Out. – Transformation Plan for the Emotional Well Being and Mental Health of Children and Young People in Thurrock

7. Implications

7.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **David May**
Management Accountant

There is a direct cost arising from implementing this proposal. The funding have been secured through a combined funding contribution from the Council, Thurrock CCG and schools and academies. A detailed cost analysis has been

provided as an indicative cost for the service with no deficit. To ensure sustainability of this service an independent evaluation of the service is part of the proposals to measure the impact and outcomes towards improving the emotional wellbeing and mental health of children and young people.

7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Lindsey Marks**
Deputy Head of Legal – Social Care

None

7.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Roxanne Scanlon**
Community Engagement and Project Monitoring Officer

The initiatives outlined in this report will address the existing gap in preventative offer to promote good emotional wellbeing and mental health of all children and young people as well as support for educational settings. In doing so, it will enable better joined up working between health and education and will provide earlier support for children and young people in or near schools and colleges.

7.4 Other implications (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder)

None

8. Background papers used in preparing the report (including their location on the Council's website or identification whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):

- Brighter Futures Survey, 2016/2017 – [2017](#)
- Children and Young People's Mental Health JSNA [2018](#)
- Future in mind: Promoting, protecting and improving our children and young people's mental health and wellbeing, [March 2015](#)
- Transforming Children and Young People's Mental Health Provision: a Green Paper – [December 2017](#)
- Government Response to the Consultation on Transforming Children and Young People's Mental Health Provision: a Green Paper and Next Steps – [July 2018](#)
- NHS Five Year Forward View for mental Health - [2016](#)
- Open Up, Reach Out. – Transformation Plan for the Emotional Well Being and Mental Health of Children and Young People in Thurrock

9. Appendices to the report

- Appendix 1 – Thurrock School Wellbeing Model

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