

Written Questions & Responses – FINAL

County Council Meeting – 24 November 2016

Questions to the Cabinet Member for Community Engagement and Public Health (Questions from Mrs Davies)

I was pleased to receive the Members' briefing on the child health programme. I understand that of necessity this was an overall summary, so I am asking for more detail in some areas. The briefing takes as its basis children in traditional family settings.

- 1. What measures will be taken to provide similar services to travellers, children from other cultures, immigrant families in detention centres, and homeless families for example?**

Answer

All resident children under 5 and all children 5 and over 5 in Buckinghamshire state funded education receive the 0 – 19 public health nursing service. This includes people who are temporary residents or homeless in Buckinghamshire. Health Visitors also provide an outreach service for travellers and liaise with neighbouring local authorities where traveller's sites are located on a county border. There are no detention centres in Buckinghamshire but this service will cover all asylum seekers who are accommodated in Buckinghamshire.

All children in receipt of 0 – 19 public health nursing services will receive an initial assessment which will identify children with specific needs in the above areas

Question

The school nursing service is only for local authority schools. Free schools and academies can purchase this service but it is of course their decision as to whether they want to use their budget in this way. Presumably all children and young people need this service so:

- 2. What measures are there in place to ensure the school nursing service is provided in free schools and academies?**

Answer

The School Nursing service is commissioned as part of the 0 – 19 public health nursing service to provide public health nursing for children in all state funded education, including free schools / academies. The service will have a named school nurse for each school. This is regularly reviewed by BCC as part of contract management processes.

Question

If the Buckinghamshire Healthy Child Service is supposed to 'form the foundation of the universal health service' but is not being delivered to groups of young people outside school, such as home schooled, apprentices, and young people in detention,

3. Who is taking responsibility for the service for these groups?

Answer

In relation to children in detention centres this is the responsibility of NHS England so not commissioned by local authorities.

Question

Young people may also switch from a school setting to an alternative setting for a temporary period but they need to be tracked and there needs to be continuity.

4. If there are other services involved, how do these link into the Healthy Child Service?

Answer

The 0 – 19 public health nursing service is a major part of, but not the complete delivery of the Healthy Child Programme. The Programme also requires contributions from other disciplines. For 0 – 5 year olds and 5 – 19 year olds, there are clear pathways for linking with other services based on need. For example each school has a named school nurse who maintains links with all key services both within and outside the school. School nurses also work with the named link therapists for Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services who support both primary and secondary schools. These workers support and promote whole school approach to emotional wellbeing and mental health and have already run 2 waves of locality based training events this year with a further wave planned for Jan 17 – delivery is based around the 7 CCG localities around the county to c. 500 + professionals so far to date ranging from social workers to education staff.

*They also work closely with the school Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator and with safeguarding. The School Nurses will also be using and promoting the new CAMHS website which provides a wealth of resources for both children/families and professionals: <http://www.oxfordhealth.nhs.uk/fresh> as well as the 'advice line' that anyone (child/parent/professional) can call for help, guidance or advice including how to make a referral include self-referrals:
<http://www.oxfordhealth.nhs.uk/fresh/contact-us/>*

Question

It seems to me that often young people with a safeguarding risk are precisely those young people who are outside the school environment and therefore have the greatest need.

- 5. In the service, what priority has been given to mental health problems and bullying? As well as health promotion sessions to deal with mental health what practical help is in place other than referral to mainstream NHS services, where talking therapies are in short supply?**

Answer

School Nurses do an annual health assessment for all children in 3 year groups (Reception, Year 6 and Year 9). This assessment identifies children with possible mental health and bullying issues and then responds to these issues according to agreed pathways. In addition, they also do universal health promotion in schools which includes mental health and they deliver 1:1 service based on need in the school. Public Health also provide practical help through the Emotional Wellbeing Programme.

Questions to Cabinet Member for Education and Skills

Question from Mrs Davies

In your recent response to correspondence from Pitstone Parish Council in my Division on the matter of the cost of post 16 (non-statutory) student travel you did not address the matter of banding, whereby students in my division are paying about £1000pa, not far off double the lowest band fare you quoted as £570pa in your letter, so they have asked me to pursue this further.

Pitstone Parish Council were prompted to write to you because a parishioner had brought to their notice the £300 difference between the cost of a Bucks County Council bus pass for specified journeys on five days a week three terms a year and the Arriva annual pass for any bus seven days a week 52 weeks a year.

I have raised this issue twice since 2011 with two other education portfolio holders and not yet received a satisfactory answer.

- 6. Please can you tell me how the different band rates are arrived at, and reassure me that the high bands are not subsidising the lower bands, and please give me clear evidence that in no way the non-statutory payments from 16+ and out-of-catchment students (ie not attending the nearest school) are subsidising the statutory provision, including taxis and minibuses?**

Answer

In 2013 CSCL commissioned LG futures to undertake work on the banding and price point of the paid-for transport against the cost of delivering the service.

The outcome highlighted the following conclusion on unit price

The average costed price per pupil per annum (which would then need to be scaled across the bands) would therefore be £1,072.

This link <http://www.bucksccl.gov.uk/media/3178205/paid-for-places-fares.pdf> takes you to the current price point for the current years passes and demonstrates that none of the in-county price points exceed this value. Therefore all price points are subsidised by the Council and none are subsidised by the higher end out of catchment/ post 16 passes.

Questions from Mr Stuchbury to the Cabinet Member for Education & Skills

The National Government is currently conducting a consultation on the future of the school system: <https://consult.education.gov.uk/school-frameworks/schools-that-work-for-everyone/consultation/intro/>

The wording of the questions on faith and selective schools limits respondents to choices about expanding the current arrangements and do not allow respondents to challenge the principles of having them.

Best practice in consultations is to allow open questions and these are guiding respondents to agree with something in which they haven't been given the opportunity to register any negative thoughts alongside positive remarks.

I'm sure as this consultation says it's looking for schools that work for everyone so I ask would you seek an understanding on why the consultation methodology is so restrictive.

- 7. Will you be writing to the Secretary of State for Education to ask why the consultation questions posed on the future of faith and selective schools are not open questions to allow for the public and councils to provide a variety of views on the principles of having faith and selective state schooling?**

Answer

*We are considering a response to the consultation regarding the future of faith and selective schools. The questions are open and they allow a variety of stakeholder groups such as local authorities and members of the public to offer their views as appropriate on faith and selective schooling. Our aim in Buckinghamshire is to ensure that we provide **choice and diversity** of educational provision in order to achieve the best possible outcomes for children and young people in our schools*

- 8. Regardless of whether you agree to write to the Secretary of State for Education, please can you confirm if you agree that the questions posed in this consultation are not neutral and are leading?**

Answer

*Irrespective of whether the questions are neutral or not, our aim is to secure the best outcomes for all children and young people in Buckinghamshire and this is achieved by delivering **choice and diversity** of provision.*

Questions to the Chairman of the Health and Wellbeing Board

Question from Mrs Davies

The Aylesbury Vale clinical commissioning group operating plan for 2015/16 committed to parity of esteem for mental health by increasing spending on mental health services in real terms in line with capital Five Year Forward View (FYFV) recommendations. This included for example early intervention in the psychosis waiting time standard, improved access to psychological therapy waiting time standards, and embedding liaison psychiatry as piloted at Stoke Mandeville and Wycombe hospitals, NICE compliant ADHD pathway, the delivery of the Buckinghamshire dementia strategy, and sustain the complex needs service for patients with personality disorders.

I can find nothing in the annual report for that year to suggest those ambitions were or were not met and no further mention in the current operating plan.

However, I worryingly heard today that on 16th November BBC radio 4 will broadcast a documentary on homelessness, shadowing someone in a hostel in High Wycombe diagnosed 100% disabled with post-traumatic stress disorder who in the trailer I heard said the waiting list for PTSD therapy for adults is 4 years.

- 9. With his overview of health commissioning in Buckinghamshire, will the Chairman of the Health and Well-being board confirm whether investment in mental health is continuing towards parity of esteem in both Aylesbury Vale and Chiltern clinical groups, and if so, what is the CCG's self-assessment of its progress, or has investment and improvement fallen back as campaigners continually assert?**

Answer

The Health and Wellbeing Board recognises the crucial importance of mental health and wellbeing to the lives of its residents and has included a specific priority on mental health, 'to promote good mental health and wellbeing for everyone' in its refreshed [Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2016-2021](#)

The Health and Wellbeing Board reviews the commissioning intentions of all of its partner organisations to meet its statutory obligation in ensuring that commissioning priorities are aligned to the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy priorities. We are taking a theme led approach to focusing on specific priorities throughout the year and will be specifically reviewing mental health at our January meeting. A more detailed response can be provided after this meeting and members are of course able to attend these meetings which are open to the public. However if a response is required sooner it is suggested the member contacts the Clinical Commissioning Group directly.

Questions to the Chairman of the Health, Adult Social Care Committee

Questions from Mr Stuchbury

The Sustainability and Transformation Plan for Bucks, Berks and Oxford proposes nearly £500 million more cuts to the NHS by 2020.

- 10. In the light of those proposed cuts, will HASC be calling NHS decision-makers to account for these plans, in line with BCC's statutory duties and powers?**

Answer: The HASC Select Committee is continually monitoring the progress and development of the plans and will be scrutinising the contents of the Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West (BOBW) plan once it has been formally published. The Committee understands that this will be early in 2017 and representatives from the Clinical Commissioning Groups and Bucks Healthcare Trust have been invited to attend a HASC meeting in the New Year.

- 11. In particular will it be calling Buckinghamshire Health NHS Trust to provide the service impact assessment of these changes and cuts urgently?**

Answer

See above – this will form part of the scrutiny process.

- 12. Will the HASC be asking the Trust why these changes were not taken into account in the attached 2015/16 Buckinghamshire Health NHS Trust report and how the Trust, which has run at a loss of millions of pounds for the last two years and is planned to run at a loss this year, will be able to absorb the massive cuts proposed in the STP, particularly as the Trust has continually missed its targets on waiting times for example for cancer treatment and A&E and had to close the birth centre at Wycombe due to the lack of nursing staff?**

Answer

Just to clarify the position with the birthing centre at Wycombe. The birthing centre was temporarily closed for 3 months to ensure patient safety and allow the newly recruited midwives to commence. The centre opened again as planned on 1 November. The financial sustainability of the Hospital Trust will be considered as part of the wider scrutiny of the BOBW plan.

13. Will the HASC be asking for a full breakdown of actual and proposed funding for the NHS in Bucks from the Clinical Commissioning Groups to allow scrutiny of the changes of funding planned up to 2020, including funding per head of population, and scrutiny of where the cuts will fall?

Answer – see above but just to reiterate, the financial plans will be considered as part of the scrutiny of the BOBW plan. The HASC will be scrutinising the Better Care Fund, which is part of the CCGs budget, at its meeting on 28 March 2017.

14. In the light of BCC's responsibility for delivery of community health will the HASC be seeing if changes or cuts will directly impact on BCC's ability to deliver community healthcare?

Answer – the plans for delivering Community health care will be considered as part of the scrutiny work around the BOBW plan.

15. Conversely, will the HASC be scrutinising BCC's performance in providing community care for those leaving hospital and how any failure of BCC to provide this care might be contributing to bed blocking in the NHS?

Answer – the HASC Select Committee will be discussing the scope for their next Inquiry at a special meeting to be held on 29th November. The proposed Inquiry is a review of Hospital Discharge to include performance around delayed transfers of care (both from a social care and NHS perspective) and the Reablement Service. The Inquiry will be focussing on those people awaiting further non-acute NHS care (including community and mental health) and those awaiting care packages in their own home as these were areas showing the highest reasons for delays.