

Membership

Councillors

● absent

- Fiona Asbury (Chair)
Barrie Cooper
Jim Creamer
- Bob Cross
Vincent Dobson
- Tom Pettengell
Mel Shepherd
Keith Walker
Chris Winterton (Vice-Chair)(in the chair)

Officers

Paul Davies – Governance Officer
Helen Lee – Scrutiny Officer
Michelle Lee - Aftercare Services Manager, Children, Families and Cultural Services Department
Yvonne Cottingham - Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services
Helen Scott - Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services

1. Minutes

The minutes of the last meeting held on 17 January 2011, having been circulated were confirmed and signed by the Chair.

2. Apology for absence

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Asbury.

3. Declarations of interest

None.

4. Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services

Yvonne Cottingham outlined the work of the Children Looked After and Adoption Team in Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS). This was a multi-disciplinary team comprising psychiatrists, psychologists, psycho-therapists, nurses and social workers who worked with looked after children, care leavers and adopted children. Helen Scott gave the example of a 20 year old woman who had been in care since four or five years old, whose foster placements had broken down, and who was now sharing

accommodation with partner and friend, with a chaotic lifestyle and no adults in her circle. The woman had become pregnant, giving birth to a baby with life-limiting conditions. When she had become 21, she had not met the thresholds for adult mental health services or child protection. Support had been identified from bereavement counsellors at hospital.

Ms Cottingham explained that there was a care plan for transition from CAMHS to adult services, which ran alongside the care leaver's plan. CAMHS services ended at the age of 18. Although the team was becoming involved with young people at earlier ages, it was recognised that some young people did not benefit from mental health work until they were 16 or 17. Ms Cottingham, Helen Scott and Michelle Lee responded to members' questions and comments.

- Were care leavers advised who they could contact about mental health difficulties? - Low level needs would not be met by adult mental health services. The pathway planning process should identify other contacts. Aftercare workers could give some advice, but were not specialists. Some young people had emotional needs which were not mental illness.
- Did the case study show that young people were left to make their own mistakes? - The Aftercare Team could not force young people in a particular direction, but could help with choices. It was pointed out that a CAMHS nurse and an aftercare worker had met the young woman weekly for about a year. There were occasions when young people would not accept the services which were on offer.
- What were relationships with neighbouring authorities? - Nottingham City had a similar CAMHS team. Where children in care were placed in Nottinghamshire by another authority, CAMHS could charge for their services. The County Council's policy was to place Nottinghamshire children within the county wherever possible, if places were available.
- Were positive experiences shared? - There were achievement awards for looked after children and care leavers.
- How was the transition to adult services managed? - The Aftercare Team could not fast track access. The Adult Social Care and Health Department had its own criteria for mental health, learning disability and physical disability services. Sometimes mental health problems did not surface until young people had left care, by which time they might not meet the criteria for support. Ms Lee saw benefit in being able to refer young people to an adult social care worker with equivalent responsibilities to aftercare workers, because at present some needs were not being met.

The framework contract for the provision of a range of supported accommodation for young people aged 16 plus was discussed. The framework contract would establish a broad range of services options for the 16 plus population of 'looked after or eligible aftercare' children. Members requested additional information regarding how many young people would receive accommodation services using this contract.

It was noted that the next meeting would be at 10 am on 23 March 2011.

The meeting closed at 3.30 pm.

