

EXECUTIVE MEMBER REPORT TO COUNCIL 20 OCTOBER 2021

CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Safeguarding and Care Planning

1. 15 students have now joined us through the frontline programme and 10 newly qualified Social Workers have started their ASYE's (Assessed and Supported Year in Employment) in the social work academy and are currently being inducted.

Early Help and Prevention

2. The **Seen Heard Believed Project** (SHB) has recently launched and is a collaborative approach between Children's Early Help Services, Safer Communities (voluntary sector organization) and public health to bring additional expertise and capacity into the Early Help Service with an additional £300k funding. As part of the project, two Social Workers will work preventatively with those families that are at risk of re-escalating from Early Help into Children Social Care. The SHB project team and the outcomes from this project will be fully evaluated by Teesside University and will support the aims of the Early Help Strategy, to increase capacity of the Early Help partnership. Since it launched in August the team have already accepted **74 children**.
3. **Pause North East**. As part of our Prevention offer in Childrens Social Care, we have joined Pause North East with a number of other regional Local Authorities. Pause works with women who have experienced or are at risk of, repeated pregnancies that result in children needing to be removed from their care. The aim of this programme is to give women the opportunity to 'pause' and take control of their lives, breaking a destructive cycle that causes both them and their children significant and deep trauma.

The priorities of the women that Pause are currently working with include; relationships with their children, as many of the women still have contact with their children, physical and mental health including support around grief and loss and also practical support to secure safe and adequate housing. All women are supported by a dedicated Pause Practitioner who is able to build trusted relationships and provide personalised support.

Futures for Families

4. Rosecroft Children's Home has now changed its registration with Ofsted. The service offers an independence programme to prepare each young person for living on their own. Once assessed each young person will have their own flat with support from the Residential team. It offers 5 places to young people aged 16/17 with care needs. The service admitted its first young person on the 2nd September 2021 and all is going well.

Multi Agency Children's Hub

5. Demand has seen a recent increase with a conversion rate of 44% (cases that progressed for assessment by Children's Social Care). This is an increase from 36% previously. Meetings to take place to establish if there has been an increase in referrals received from any one agency or whether the increase is linked to a particular stated issue i.e. domestic abuse, homelessness etc.

Assessment Teams

6. The focus remains ensuring that all assessments are evidence based and capture the voice of the child, to inform the delivery of services and demonstrate impact in terms of outcomes for the children and young people who require a service from CSC (children's social care), whether at CIN (children in need), CP (child protection) or CLA (children looked after) level.

Review and Development Unit

7. The Social Work Academy has been launched in the Centre for Practice Excellence. This offers newly qualified Social Workers a protected learning environment, to put learning into practice with enhanced reflective supervision, training and support. The Academy aims to improve workforce stability by ensuring staff get the support and time they need to transition from teaching to employment. This will give our children and families good quality and consistent Social Work support.
8. On 27th September, for 1 week, Colleagues in Children's Services and partners internally and externally were invited to participate in 20 workshops. Our focus this time was Prevention – which is the first principle of our Permanency Strategy. To support children to remain safely with their families.
9. Our Practice Priority for October will build on learning from Practice Week – as we focus on Permanence and how we achieve it for our children when they cannot be kept safe at home with their families. Our aim is to achieve permanence for our children as early as possible.

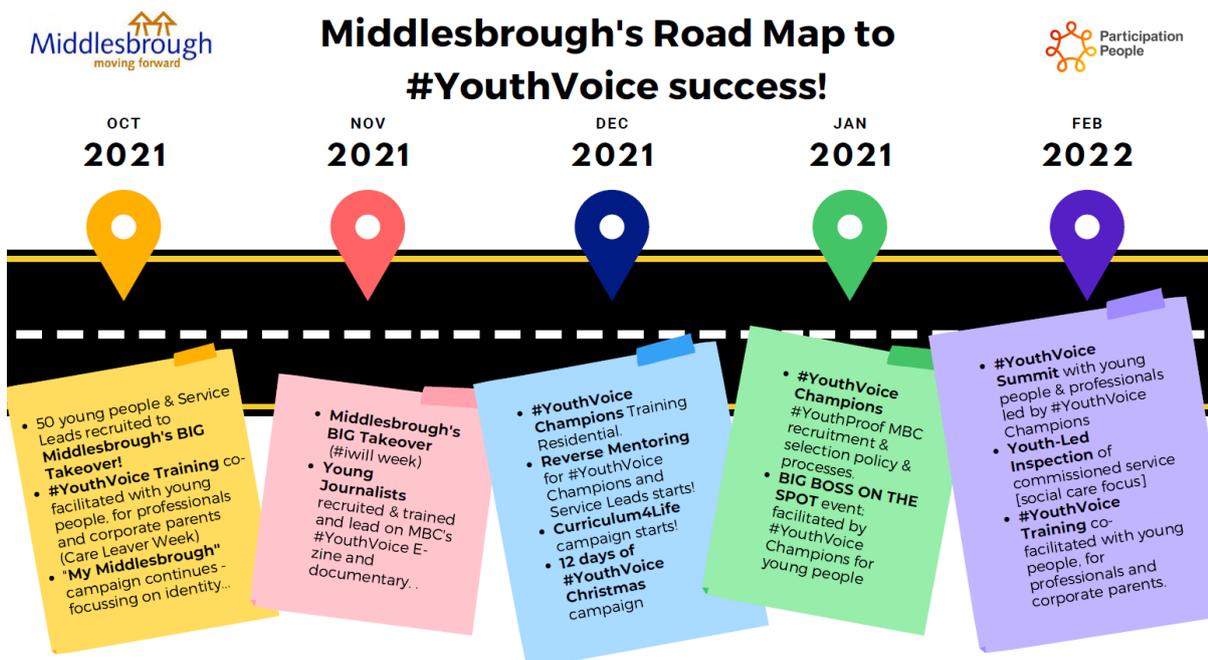
Looked After Children

10. The staff have been taking part in Lifestory work training that has been delivered by Strengthening Practice. They have also undertaken Berri training in September which will allow us to start to understand, assess and intervene more effectively to ensure young people are supported with their emotional health.
11. The team have secured 3 Adoption Orders this month and continue to progress children in to adoptive placements in a timely way.

Strategic Services

Participation and Communication

12. We are currently preparing for the Middlesbrough Big Take Over taking place in November. This gives young people the chance to work with adults and co-produce solutions to the Big Business Challenges in Middlesbrough together. Young people benefit from the opportunity to experience how decisions are made. Adults get a real insight into what it is like accessing their service through the youth lens. The Children's Services senior leadership team have all signed up to the challenge.
13. We are also developing training for our Corporate Parenting Board, led by our young people in care. We believe this will be an enriching experience for elected members and our leadership team and will strengthen our Middlesbrough Children Matter vision.



14. We have been working closely with the Corporate Communication team to develop a coherent communication plan in line with the Councils priorities and support the key messages we need to communicate to our key stakeholders. Our Communication and Participation Board have agreed on the following 6 priorities:

- Levelling Up (the case for investment in Children's Services in the North East)
- The Improvement Journey
- Becoming an employer of choice
- Education outcomes
- Young people not in education, training or employment and adult learning
- Fostering recruitment

Audit and Performance

15. We have continued to deliver our Audit to Excellence programme and our performance framework. We are developing our Education performance dashboards and our multi-agency dataset. Our audit programme includes an accreditation programme for managers to become skilled auditors. This is a key initiative to embed a strong audit process for the future.

ADULT SOCIAL CARE, PUBLIC PROTECTION AND PUBLIC HEALTH

Temporary emergency accommodation

1. The number of individuals in temporary accommodation are reducing, we now have 70 people in temporary accommodation compared to 90 last month, the majority are all single people. We still have a long way to go to get to the numbers pre-Covid, which were between 25 and 30.
2. The funding secured from MOJ/MHCLG will be used to secure accommodation for:
 - Adults with a history of offending of all genders who are aged eighteen or above.
 - Assessed as ready to take on an Assured Shorthold Tenancy.
3. Homeless or at a risk of homelessness/rough sleeping, and fall within one of the following groups:
 - Moving on as homeless from Community Accommodation Service;
 - Moving on as homeless from Approved Premises accommodation;
 - Moving on as homeless from Bail Accommodation Support Service;

Rough sleeping

4. All must have served a custodial sentence within the 12 months prior to needing accommodation. This will free up temporary accommodation by placing individuals straight into private rented accommodation that will be furnished, affordable and supported to reduce reoffending.

Rough Sleepers

5. We are experiencing an increase in the number of rough sleepers. There are several reasons for this, evictions from temporary accommodation; evictions from supported housing; rough sleepers coming to Middlesbrough from out of area and 'everybody in' due to Covid no longer applies which means those with no priority need are not offered temporary accommodation. The rough sleeper action group are working alongside our outreach workers to ensure welfare checks are carried out and actions agreed to try and get people off the streets. Funding has been secured from Public Health which will support the employment of two additional rough sleeper outreach workers.

Community Reading Coach Project

6. On Tuesday 14th September the regional launch of the Community Reading Coach project took place at the Gala Theatre, Durham. South Tees is one of five areas in the region that are delivering the innovative scheme. In South Tees we have recruited a community reading coach (due to start imminently) that will work with parents and their children in the Thorntree area of Middlesbrough as well as the Loftus area of Redcar and Cleveland.

7. The project aims to improve family wellbeing through the medium of reading, supporting parents to read for their own and their child's wellbeing.
8. The press release for the regional launch was picked up and featured in a number of local and national news outlets:
 - [Vera author Ann Cleeves on how reading will help people improve their health through new scheme - Chronicle Live](#)
 - [Vera author Ann Cleeves launches reading for wellbeing project | The Northern Echo](#)
 - [Vera creator backs Reading for Wellbeing scheme | Evening Standard](#)
 - [Vera creator backs Reading for Wellbeing scheme | indy100](#)

Health and Wellbeing Recovery Partnership

9. A working plan has been developed which maps all current activity against the evidence base and local research findings and contains some high impact actions for health and wellbeing recovery. The partnership will now move towards establishing itself as a Community of Practice where learning and insights in delivering the actions can be shared to shape the ongoing approach to recovery, promote partnership working and share best practice.
10. The Community of Practice will meet quarterly and will have an expanded membership including all the organisations that have been issued grants and wider partners with an interest in the agenda. The format will be shaped by the group but will eventually (restrictions pending) provide a space for informal connection and collaboration as well as learning and reflection.
11. As a reminder over the last 18 months the partnership has collectively:
 - Co- produced key areas for focus, captured cross sector action against each area and shared themed discussions on a number of key areas
 - Identified the need for community voice and completed co-produced research which is informing the council's wider approach and has been recognised regionally and nationally as good practice, and will be published in the Lancet
 - Secured and disseminated through the Council grant programme funding to allocate on the key areas of focus at grass roots level (£366k in grass roots grants across 24 organisations issued to address co-produced key areas of focus and a further £195k for mental health and isolation support)

- Established and grown a community champions model – over 40 community champions recruited covering a range of target groups (older people, those with addictions, a number of BAME communities, council and non-council champions representing target ward and locality working)
- Took a citizen led approach to communications issuing 21 comms grants of up to £5k each, resulting in a range of modes of communication of key messaging on testing, isolation, vaccination, available support in formats and from sources trusted and understood by communities;
- Supported a number of Community based vaccine pop ups and outreach
- Secured and allocated £490k from MHCLG to expand community approach for moving into recovery – increasing community development capacity, supporting VCS delivery, increasing vaccine uptake and building further the champions network enhancing their work.

Illicit tobacco trader shut down

12. Using Closure Order powers the Vilem Grocery in Crescent Road was ordered by Teesside Magistrates to close for 3 months after investigations led to the seizure of more than 10,000 illicit cigarettes and 2.75kg of illicit hand-rolling tobacco. Vilem Grocery was visited as part of a multi-agency intelligence- led operation, which included Trading Standards Officers, Police, Street Wardens and a tobacco detection dog. The tobacco was concealed in a purpose built hide in the ceiling. They did not display the correct labelling including health warnings and many of them were counterfeit. Such illicit tobacco is regularly found to not contain the reduced propensity ignition strips which means they won't extinguish safely. The investigation into the sale of illegal tobacco is ongoing.

Drinking at home research

13. The Drinking at Home project, involving partner agencies across South Tees, aims to raise awareness about alcohol-related health harms. It delivers messages through various media and social events including educating young people about alcohol-linked adverse health impacts and responsible drinking, which is linked into the Headstart survey in schools and colleges. Promotion of the scheme through Facebook has reached more than 10,000 people. The project has been supported through Thirteen Community Fund. Teesside University is also engaged in the project and has been carrying out research into the changes in alcohol consumption among adults over 18 in Middlesbrough during the Covid-19 pandemic.

New food labelling laws set to enhance consumer safety

14. The Public Protection Service is working with local food businesses in preparation for new food labelling laws, which come into effect on 1st October. The new rules, known as “Natasha's Law” are named after Natasha Ednan-Laperouse who, at the age of 15, sadly passed away due to a severe allergic reaction. Natasha had a sesame allergy and was not made aware that sesame seeds had been baked into the bread of a sandwich she had purchased. The new labelling rules require all food that is wrapped at the same place where it is sold to be clearly labelled with the name of the food, a full list of ingredients and allergenic ingredients highlighted within the list.

You've Got This – Sport England South Tees Local Delivery Pilot Update

15. 'You've Got This' is the Sport England Local Delivery Pilot across South Tees, taking a whole system approach to increasing physical activity at a population level, with the vision of 'An active life as a way of life'.
16. A whole system approach means looking beyond the actions individuals can take themselves to become more active. To encourage greater activity amongst more people we need to change policy, improve the local environment in a way that promotes physical activity and consider how, as organisations, we can all encourage those who we work with to be more active.
17. YGT is focused on two key themes: Communities of Place and Communities of Interest. Communities of Place cover four focus wards, where work is with the whole community. These are North Ormesby and Brambles & Thorntree in Middlesbrough. Communities of Interest include groups where increasing physical activity can help improve medical conditions and quality of life.
18. As an example of the approach, working with James Cook University Hospital, the Prehabilitation programme is supporting patients to increase their physical activity prior to major surgery. This is being shown to improve clinical outcomes for the patients. Moreover, early results also indicate that a high proportion of patients are more active after they have recovered from surgery, bringing longer term benefits. As part of the system change, consultants from the hospital are working to broaden the use of the approach across the specialties. YGT is also working with the hospital team to identify ways to encourage more patients to take up the Prehabilitation offer.
19. YGT is about to enter the next stage of the programme, “Accelerator”, which will continue through to 2025. The proposal will be submitted shortly to Sport England and will focus on bringing about some of the policy and system changes to help people become more active, expand successful work streams and kickstart some work streams that were postponed due to Covid.