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|  | Merton Partnership children and young people logo with strapline "working with Merton's communities" |

**Notes of the Children’s Trust Board (CTB) Meeting on 28 March 2023**

**Present –**

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| * Jane McSherry – (JM – Chair) Executive Director CLLF
* Elizabeth Fitzpatrick – Assistant Director for Education and Early Help
* Cllr Brenda Fraser (BF) – LBM Cabinet Member for Children’s Services
* Keith Shipman (KSh) – LBM Head of Education Inclusion
* Gillian Moore (GM) – LBM Head of Integrated Learning Disabilities and Transitions Service
* Celia Dawson (CD) – Headteacher, Cricket Green Special School
* Julia Groom (JG) – LBM Public Health Consultant
* Karla Finikin (KF) – LBM Head of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Integrated Service
* Karthiga Sivaneson (KSi) – LBM Senior Commissioning Manager
* Sukpal Uppal (SU) - LBM Participation and Engagement Manager
* Kezziah Hallam (KH) – LBM Participation Worker
* Sandra Howgarth – Scribe
 | * Lisa Francis (LF) – Headteacher, Hillcross Primary School
* Penny Marchant (PM) – Named Nurse for Looked After Children, CLCH (rep for Sheena Rufus)
* Maisie Davies (MD) – LBM Head of Performance, Improvement and Partnerships
* Sarah Momber (SM) – LBM Policy, Improvement and Partnerships Manager
* Helena Davey (HD) – LBM Policy and Partnerships Officer, LBM
* Dominic Mackie (DM) – LBM Policy and Partnerships Officer
* Marakie Tilahun (MT) – Merton Young Inspector representative
* Lola Kareem (LK) – Merton Young Inspector representative
* Celene Kirby (CK- notetaker) – Interim Executive Assistant to Director of Children, Schools and Families
* **Note - Richard Jackman will be the new representative attending future meetings for DWP and replaces Simon Boyle.**
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| 1. **Welcome/Introductions/minutes of last meeting**

Jane opened the meeting and suggested when we have the next one that it is in person.Minutes from previous meeting on 10 October 22 discussed. One outstanding action page 4 – Sukpal to meet with Karla* JamBoard introduced and slides shared for discussion/questions.
1. **Merton Story (JG)**

Discussion around slides that were shared and read through with team.* 22/23 Merton story now published and available on the Merton website - resource for everyone working in the borough.
* Deep dive focus agreed on smaller number of areas including special education needs, substance misuse and health co benefits of climate action.
* Looking at automatic data update to make systems more timely and easier to update.
* Merton population is ageing – falling births and becoming more diverse – high levels of people moving in and out of borough.
* Persistent health equalities – more towards wards in East of Borough.
* Covid 19 pandemic - effect on communities particularly children and young people. Long Covid still a challenge for significant group.
* 12% of children 16 and under living in poverty.
* 1 in 5 children in reception - increasing to 1 in 3 children in year 6– overweight or living with obesity.
* 50 % children and young people not physically active enough.
* Surge in eating problems and eating disorder referrals.
* Food poverty increasing challenge for families across Borough.
* Estimate of mental health disorders 9% - equates to nearly 3,000 15-16 year olds
* Higher rates of pupils receiving SEN support with EH&C plans.
* Increase in vaping among young people, particularly young girls.
* Priority on mental health for parents and families.
* New public health public annual report to be shared shortly.

National report around 16/17 year olds – pre pandemic to post pandemic gone from 1 in 6 to 1 in 4. Deep dive around this data and ascertain what services we have on offer and if they are the right services.1. **You Said, We Did**

Discussion around slides that were shared and read through with team.* Young Inspectors put presentation together over last 12 months
* Young people wanted to be more involved in decision making and have their say in their local borough.
* Effective utilisation of social media has helped in particular Instagram.
* Further promotion in youth clubs and school visits – hoping to get monthly bulletin into schools.
* Year 6 after school club has been set up to build relationship with children with police. Six week programme covers lots of different aspects around crimes- how to report a crime, speak to victims, stop and search etc. Focus is about learning and made fun and ends with a mock arrest and use of handcuffs. Around 200 children have participated in this programme.
* Young people have opportunity to share their opinions.
* Approached T&M Football Club Academy discussions with 16-18 year old boys who shared their views and this was fed back.
* Ongoing developments being made – liaising with many groups including National Trust, youth clubs etc, will continually roll indefinitely.

Further feedback from Young Inspector - discussion around slides that were shared and read through with team.* Young people feel like they have fallen back on their studies after lockdown. To help with this Connecting Merton are providing laptop loans for age 18 plus.
* Will be exploring the Dons Local Action Group for a donation scheme.
* Booster sessions before and after to provide extra support. Head teachers will be emailed if this is in place in the schools or if we need to provide.

JG spoke on behalf of Brandon, a new young inspector who has taken over the lead for My Merton outcome. Discussion around slides that were shared and read with team including:-* Refresh of air quality action plan – how can we contribute.
* Young people have difficulty getting to meetings due to timing.
* Findings from sitting resident’s survey went to Merton Partnership.
* New walking and cycling plan for the Borough due to start in April.
* Borough of sport a priority for young people.
* Schools have been proactive in setting up a green schools network and chart
* Climate action sub group has been established – a sub group of the youth parliament.
* Schools have been proactive in setting up green schools network and agreeing a green schools charter.

Lola – new young inspector feedback on her findings. Discussion around slides that were shared and read with team including:-* Attended the Mental Health Board meeting – lots of questions from panel that are being looked at.
* Employment service that commenced on 1 June successful.
* Particularly focusing on people with autism.

EF asked what happens when young people give feedback what is done with this and if they are taken seriously. Do they feel they are being responded to and their views are being taken seriously? Denise confirmed it is a work in progress that keeps being updated. Social media being used to show that we are listening to them but also going into schools for those that are not using social media. Sukpal mentioned the recent report that says it takes 13 different paths until a young person engages or gets in contact.Maisie – very good examples of work that had been done. Were there any challenges that were not working well or were worried about. Lola said finding young people with SEN and also communicating with them has been challenging. There are also problems with keeping young people engaged.1. **Refresh of the CYPP Plan**

Maisie slides were shared with overview given of the Children and Young People’s plan.* Current plan is 2019-2023 – will come to an end this year so need to start thinking about refreshing the plan.
* How can we do joint work and make sure priorities are aligned with relation to the refreshes that will be carried out.

**Group fed back their thoughts*** Structure easy to understand looking at children and young people experience. Were there any cross cutting themes – how can we work better together. Also, in terms of the actions – but how much they reflected the work that young inspectors are leading. Have had a gap from My Merton but lots going on now.
* Do not just rely on the young inspectors or champions – we try and get everyone involved – hope to have this in the plan for next year
* A signpost with different directions – would this be effective? Show how they have been done or what is left to be done.
* Engagement on refresh plan - how do we engage our social workers.
* Need to encourage all leaders in this group that everyone can make a difference too. It should drive in a very strategic way what we are doing.
* Could it be taken to the Overview & Scrutiny group of council members.
* Could we make it cultural language friendly, language from different areas and easy to understand for young people.
* Councillor Fraser went to South Thames College regarding digital studies – need to use digital side effectively.
* To link step by step with changes.
* SEN – ensuring that young people are heard.

Helena fed back on the voices of younger children and those with SEND. Feel there is not much in the way of their voice being heard. Young Inspector and Outcome Champion want to ensure that early years also included.Sarah * How we can improve the plan for children and young people – how to keep engagement and reflecting their voice
* Reflecting the changing priorities of young people over time – a “live” plan
* Structure for young people and how young inspectors and champions are not the only ones to take things forward that all are contributing to the work plan.
* If anyone has any further updates to email Sarah to add into the work plan.

Maisie* Reflected this was the first plan based on young people’s views and very positive.
* Reflected on 2019-23 plan and the work plan from last year.
* Changed to be more about influencing - Do we have the right ownership of the actions within the plan and do we have the right seniority of members on the Children’s Trust Board or do we need more partners and internal members across the council.
* Do we want to have more schools on the board.
* Timing of the meetings made slightly later to enable Youth Parliament engagement – meetings in general are they at a time when young people can engage
* Ideas of this year’s plan – food poverty – keep on the plan – cost of living crisis and wider poverty – young people being affected by not being able to heat homes, bills etc.
* Young carers – a lot of work required to support the young carers – to continue to be a focus.

Jane relayed some of the storied from the jam board.* Adultification of black children – this is coming back to coming back to MSCP full partnership for partners to respond to.
* Good news on Health visitor recruitment – nationally an issue but in Merton we have 3 that have returned to us from other boroughs.
* Young people and police have engaged through mentoring programmes.
* 7 Young people aged between 18-30 have achieved work through the employment pilot for young people with an education health and care plan or with additional needs.
* Lots of professionals joined with 2 young adults who spoke at Merton’s Safeguarding Children and Adults joint partnership conference.
* 20 Merton sixth formers from across Merton – involved in inter faith and belief group forums.
* Excellent feedback from clients who attended pre-school communication groups- speech therapy – stopped during pandemic but have re-started.
* Secured funding to expand holiday and food programmes in 22/23
* Family hub transformation programme – great opportunity for partnership working
* 19,500 participating in beat the street – almost 10% of the borough and so far 130,000 miles have been covered.
* Actively and successfully offered apprenticeships to care experienced young people
* Previous young inspectors coming back to work for Council again in new roles.

Keith * Around 40 different programmes delivered by 34 providers
* More things for young people of secondary age including days out
* Residential activities
* Two film schools
* Two extra fleets of bikes purchased with links to Melrose
* Lots more

**Action: Young Inspectors and Policy & Partnerships team to incorporate feedback into planning for refreshed CYP plan and 2023-24 Children’s Trust workplan.**1. **AOB**

Celia Dawson awarded an OBE Jane thanked team and suggested future meeting to be in person. **Action: Sarah and Jane to think about this in terms of the young inspectors availability.**  Cllr Fraser – Thanked all the Young People for all their work and easy to follow information.Next meeting – Wednesday 21 June 23. |
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