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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 Meeting on 9th December 2021**

**Present**

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| * Jane McSherry (JM - Chair) – LBM Director of Children, Schools and Families * Cllr Eleanor Stringer (ES) – LBM Cabinet Member for Children’s Services & Education * Karl Mittelstadt (KM) LBM Head of Policy, Improvement and Partnerships * Dominic Mackie (DM) – LBM Policy, Improvement and Partnerships Officer * Maisie Davies (MD) – LBM Policy, Improvement and Partnerships Manager * Celia Dawson (CD) – Headteacher of Cricket Green School * Carla Chandler (CC) - Executive Headteacher of Melbury College * Dheeraj Chibber (DC) – LBM AD for Children’s Social Care and Youth Inclusion * Elizabeth Fitzpatrick (EF) – LBM AD for Education and Early Help * Julia Groom (JG) – LBM Consultant, Public Health * Karthiga Sivaneson (KSi) – LBM Senior Commissioning Manager * Keith Shipman (KSh) – LBM Head of Education Inclusion * Sarah Momber (SM) – LBM Policy, Improvement and Partnerships Service Improvement Adviser * Simon Boyle (SB) – DWP Partnership Manager for Merton Council * Simon Shimmens (SS) – CEO, Merton Connected * Sukpal Uppal (SU) - LBM Participation and Engagement Manager * Matthew Walsham (MW) – Partnership for Young London * Iris Bos (IB) – Partnership for Young London | * Charlene Norman (CN) – LBM MSCP administrator, Policy, Improvement and Partnerships * Halima Mehmood (HM) – Merton Young Inspector representative * Hannah Green (HG) – LBM Participation Officer * Hollie Watts (HW) – NGDP Trainee on placement with LBM Policy, Improvement and Partnerships * Lola Kareem (LK) – Merton Young Inspector representative * Sharon Long (SL) – Partnership for Young London * Sheena Rufus – CLCH Locality Lead for Merton Integrated Complex Need Services * Toby Podger-Taylor (TBT) – Merton Young Inspector representative * Denise Vidal-Candengue (DVC) – Merton Young Inspector representative * Marakie Tilahun (MT) – Merton Young Inspector representative * Allison Jones (AJ) – Head of Early Years, Family Wellbeing and Early Help * Alison Roberts (AR) - Deputy Director of Commissioning, Integrated Care, Children, Continuing Health Care and Mental Health, Merton and Wandsworth LDU * DCI Gabriel Cameron (GC) - Neighbourhood Policing, SW London BCU, Met Police * Mahdi Abbas (MA) * Ted Mikhailov (TM) * Fede – visual minute taker |

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| 1. **Welcome/Intros/good news stories**   CTB member introduced themselves. |
| 1. **Annual Review of the six outcome areas**   MD advised have meetings have taken place with each of the outcome champions to reflect on the outcomes over the past year. MD briefed on a presentation detailing the key achievements and barriers to progress for each of the outcome areas below.   * Being healthy * Staying safe * My Merton * Getting involved, having a say * Enjoying and achieving * Becoming Independent   MD advised that the young inspectors have changed from today and the new young inspectors have allocated themselves across the 6 outcome areas going forward and so a new young inspector is listed on the slides for each of the outcome areas.  The impact of covid has been a significant feature across the outcomes. In the second half of the meeting attendees would be divided into breakout groups to look at the outcomes and consider and discuss plans for next year and suggested that group members reflect on the information given in the Merton Story and also the outcomes of the young residents survey in the next agenda items in their thinking about our plans for the next year. |
| 1. **Merton Story – key findings from Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)**   JG briefed on key points from a presentation detailing the key findings from the Merton Story which is .the overarching JSNA that provides a high level health profile of Merton’s population and is a statutory requirement of the Health and Wellbeing Board. The JSNA doesn’t review services or go into recommendations but is a resource for people across the borough to use to inform their service planning, strategy planning, commissioning and development. The presentation included a list of useful resources available on the Merton website including the full JSNA document and details of the impact of covid on the population and in the Start Well, Age Well, Live Well in Merton as a Healthy Place categories. JG briefed on some factors in Start Well where there had been an increase in vulnerabilities for children and young people due to covid including poorer mental health and healthy weight challenges.  JG advised that the additional covid prevention measures had had a big impact on access to services in education, leisure and health eg there has been a drop in immunisations at 12 months and not in other ages so it is thought that that would be related to babies born in lockdown and nationally there is growing evidence that suggests that communication, language and development have been negatively impacted. |
| 1. **Young Residents Survey findings**   MW and IB showed a draft video made involving 2 of the young inspectors, HM and DVC, which summarised some of the findings from the Young Residents Survey. The draft summary report was also circulated which includes details of the young people’s feedback on the impact of covid on mental and physical health, on personal relationships, on education, safety in Merton and the police and the impact of covid on how young people felt about their local environment. Young people were also asked what changes they would like to see in Merton. The young inspectors co-designed the survey with Merton Council and took part in over 40 interviews and focus groups speaking to over 200 children and young people. Focus groups also took place with the Children in Care Council, young people in the Youth Offending Service and SEND young people. In total over 2000 young people completed the survey and over 20 primary and secondary school took part.  MW advised that some editing will be done on the video and the final version will be played in schools to ensure that the young people who took part in the survey or spoke during interviews with the young inspectors see the results of what was said and hopefully can relate to the findings. It was suggested that feedback from the survey should be given to particular key groups of young people who would be most disproportionately affected including care experience young people and young people with SEND.  Board members discussed the some of the issues coming out of the survey eg food poverty, obesity, mental health and what changes could be implemented to improve things.  It was noted that we are refreshing our child healthy weight action plan and the findings from the survey will feed into that work. We are also doing work around food insecurity and food poverty and the findings from the survey can feed into the work Sustainable Merton are doing for us.  SS said that in the last year a lot of work had been done to coordinate all organisations and the whole food network. In the last panel of Merton Giving funding exceeded £600k which had gone out in over 160 grants since last April. Phase 4 is just being planned to begin in April next year and will begin with applications early new year. SS said were also thinking whether there should be a strand of funding that needs to focus specifically around transport as one of the issues around food distribution and accessibility is being able to move it from one place to another and there were good examples of organisations to do that.  JM said that should also consider how families and young people access support so they are able to get the resource needed and are not singled out.  ES said that should bear in mind that some of the findings from the survey are very lockdown specific and some are more general and so need to be clear when people say they are missing a meal as to whether that was a one off thing or before the HAF was set up or whether it’s indicative of a more general rise in poverty. Also in regards to mental health, things may have changed since the lockdown.  KS said that he and some other board members had attended the CAMHS Partnership Board meeting earlier that day and it was striking that similar data to that from the young people’s survey was being presented by CAMHS and Off the Record about young people’s mental health needs. KS said that there was definitely a return to pre pandemic levels of referral for issues around anxiety and low mood. There were more young people with much higher levels of highly complex mental health needs and a longer waiting list for appointments. There were also some new mental health issues being presented.  It was noted that around 100 young people had self identified in the survey as young carers and in nearly every outcome their experience was worse. |
| 1. **Youth Parliament Recommendations for the Children’s Trust**   MD shared the recommendations made by the Youth Parliament following discussions at recent meeting of the Youth Parliament on the young residents’ survey and TM fed back from discussions at the meeting including.   * Young people wanting to be more involved in decision making and decision making involving issues involving them. * Making young people aware of the Youth Parliament and what the Youth Parliament is doing. * Need to raise awareness of different ethnical issues * There has been a rise in mental health issues since the start of covid 19 including fear of the virus that seemed to be targeting vulnerable groups and ages, feelings of isolation and not being able to do normal things were issues raised. A couple of suggestions had been made eg setting up a hotline for young people to call if they need help, setting up tiered ‘buddy’ counselling schemes, setting up education catch ups that people could attend and targeted tutoring for children who were lagging behind since the pandemic for particular subjects. It was suggested that older student volunteers could help with tuition for younger years. * Environmental issues including a lack of bins, litter, improving parks and green spaces. KS advised that the number of public bins and the bins near public transport were previously reduced due to the threat of terrorism. TM suggested could begin some campaigns for young people who want to make a difference to help with tackling environmental issues perhaps involving the schools eg tidying and improving the parks, planting more trees and making sure that the green space available is accessible. KS advised that in both the residents and young person’s survey litter came up as a significant issue but parks and green space were seen as something positive.   JM said that there were a number of overlaps between the young person’s survey and the wider residents’ survey including mental health and wellbeing and the environment.  JM said that need to make sure we are communicating correctly what resources are available to young people and how young people can access them and identifying what we are missing in terms of how young people might want to receive that information or know where to go to get it.  ES said that some work was already being done in the Council on how we respond to lots of the issues raised in the adults’ survey and that some of the findings from the young people’s survey were similar to those raised in the adults’ survey so should be able to include young people’s concerns in the work taking place. |
| 1. **Forward Plan for year ahead:**   Board members divided into 4 separate groups for group discussion to think of priorities that the board could take forward next year. This would be the start of a period of planning some actions in response to what had been discussed in the previous items during the meeting.   1. **Feedback to wider group and next steps**   The wider group meeting resumed and the 4 groups fed back from their group discussions.  SM fed back on suggestions put forward by the group involving SM, LK, JM, AR, CN, CC   * Mental health * Potentially creating a simple way for young people to find where they can go to get help, perhaps a picture map of different services as well as trying to upskill other young people and parents and friends to be able to help with advice and know when young people might need more professional help and guide them in that way. * Mental health champions and helping with access to the GP which can be quite difficult in terms of availability and taking that step. * Environment and getting young people involved * Doing clean ups where young people could all come together and clean up a part of the area and getting young people’s ideas on which areas they want that to happen in and what would make places more enjoyable for them to spend time in. * Community areas where young people can develop skills and start learning new things * Mapping services on offer and making sure that they are right and understanding where the gaps might be and what could be improved. * The need to communicate services in the right way.   MD fed back on suggestions put forward by the group involving MD, TBT, TM and HG   * It was felt that the session earlier showed the value of involving and listening to children and young people * Mental health - talked about having some physical signs or plaques up that showed where could signpost support in a range of services where young people could go and find out information of what is available * Generally increasing opportunities in decision making and ensuring that the current opportunities that are already established like becoming young inspectors and joining the Youth Parliament continue and consider different ways of promoting them. * Education particularly around languages – TM highlighted that in his school there was no support for some of the young people who were doing exams in some of the less common languages and that perhaps there could be a designated person or a dedicated centre or person or group to give support on that.   KM fed back on suggestions put forward by the group involving KM, SR, HW and DV   * Raising of awareness to children and young people around stop and search and also the impact of stop and search to the police. It was suggested the police be asked to give some feedback about stop and search to the Children’s Trust or Youth Parliament. * Mental health –could look at an agreement with the CAMHS Partnership or mental health trailblazers to consider the feasibility of the rollout of some mental health first aiders in schools. DV advised that Harris Merton already have a system like this in place. * Engagement - how children and young people could be involved in decision making. Whether there were opportunities for a small funding pot that the Children’s Trust holds that the Youth Parliament could have some control in determining how that is spent in response to some of the issues that were raised.   JM said that there was a piece of work taking place between young people and the police around stop and search and that JM and KS would pick up with the relevant police rep as to how feedback could be given to the Children’s Trust.  JG fed back on suggestions put forward by the group including JG, KS, MA, DM, HM, SU and Fede   * How can we be more effective in communicating with young residents. * Food – following on from the discussions held earlier around young people being able to access food and the rise in eligibility for free school meals, how can we how can we make sure that it is built into the conversations that case workers and practitioners have with young people whether that’s in relation to poverty or around healthy eating. How can we work with schools to make sure that their healthy food offer is right and children are positively taking those messages forward. * Environment and parks – think about the offer in our parks and how we can make sure as well that they are litter free and welcoming to everyone.   MA said it was difficult in the winter to be more active and that most people just stay indoors. MA suggested could give access to an indoor sports hall to do sports activities. |
| 1. **Minutes of last meeting**   The minutes of the last meeting were agreed. |
| 1. **AOB**   Family Hub bid  JG advised that we are putting in an application to be a family hub pilot where would be looking to join up services for families 0-19 to bring together services in a more integrated and connected way so that they are improving outcomes for families and young people. There were no objections raised and board members confirmed they were in support of the bid. |