**West Cheshire Children’s Trust Executive**

**Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 31st March 2025**

**In attendance:**

Adam Langan (AL) – Councillor – Cabinet Member for Children and Families, CW&C (Chair).

Zara Woodcock (ZW) – Head of Service, Early Help and Prevention, CW&C.

Debbie Edwards (DE) – Head of Education and Inclusion, CW&C.

Helen Bromley (HB) – Director of Public Health, CW&C.

Gill Tyler (GT) – Designated Clinical Officer, SEND, NHS.

Clare Crerand (CC) - Cheshire West Voluntary Action

Isabel Noonan (IN) – Business and Governance Manager, CW&C.

Kirsty Davies (KD) – Performance Support Officer, CW&C (Minutes).

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| **Item No** | **Minute/Action** | **Who** |
| **1.** | **Welcome, Introductions and apologies.**  Adam Langan welcomed everyone to the meeting.  **Apologies were noted from:** Amanda Perraton, Anna Johnson, Matthew Emmerson, Delyth Hughes, Laura Marsh. |  |
| **2.** | **Notes of meeting held on 27th January 2025 and Matters Arising/Review of Actions.**  **AL** – Went through previous actions, all up to date. |  |
| **3.** | **Our Way of Working**  To be updated at next meeting – **7th July 2025.** |  |
| **4.** | **Consideration and approval of West Cheshire Children and Young People’s Plan 2025-26**  **ZW –** Explained that the previous plan concluded in March 2025, and it has been decided to draft a one-year interim plan following engagement with stakeholders including children, young people and their families. There are significant changes coming from the Department for Education including aligning the approach to targeted support and Children in Need through their Families First Partnership Programme. This together with the appointment of the new Director of Children’s Services for the Council has led to the decision to have a one-year interim Plan. The Borough Plan commits to playing a part to support children and young people to get the best start in life and achieve their full potential.    Three Strategic Objectives have been included in the Plan. Prevention remains right at the front and centre. Concept of providing the right support at the right time to avoid statutory services. Also to support children, young people with SEND and their families to have inclusive opportunities, have their needs met at the right time and place ensuring they are happy healthy and safe. Zara explained that SEND will still be part of the Trust but also has a new governance under a SEND Strategic Partnership Board chaired by an Independent Chair, Edwina Grant. Emotional Health and Mental Wellbeing is the third Strategic Outcome supporting children and young people’s emotional health and wellbeing and ensuring they have access to services.  The Trust works as a dynamic partnership; our way of working under pins the work having a trauma informed approach. Effective commissioning and contracting will help deliver the Plan.  Vision kept west cheshire working together to keep children, young people and families happy healthy and safe. Zara explained that we own the plan as the Trust and we will need to publish it, review and monitor progress.  The Trust had previously received the feedback from the engagement exercise and a summary is highlighted in the draft Plan.    Zara asked if anyone has any questions or additions/amendments to the Plan. The Health and Wellbeing Board gave positive feedback to the Plan at its meeting on 26 March and sought clarification that the charity voluntary sector was involved. This was confirmed.  **ACTION – add Adam Langan’s photograph into Plan.**  **ACTION – Adam to write the Foreword the plan.**  **AL –** pointed out that universal services as well as targeted services need a focus and questioned how we can approach the mental health side with the NHS and CWP, as some young people remain unsupported.  **ZW –** Katy Ellison will lead on the feedback going back to the people who engaged with us.  **ACTION – Feedback to those involved in interacting with the Plan.**  Governance and the very early support are something we need to think about what people want. They want to be responded to early and potentially going to have best way of diverting people away from crises.  **CC – suggested our way of working should be amended to read Trauma Informed Approach to Practice in the Plan**.  **GT –** Asked for clarificationwith regard to governance for the SEND Board and the Emotional Health and Wellbeing Board that sit underneath the Trust. There is a new governance set up for SEND in addition to the Trust governance with The SEND Partnership Board having its first meeting last week. There is also an Emotional Health and Wellbeing Board.  **ZW –** Explained that for SEND there is a governance that has been specifically set up for SEND, oversight to be maintained by the Trust, but actions and activity will be through that process. Prevention and Emotional Health and Mental Wellbeing will report directly to the Trust as subgroups as they previously have done. Conversations are taking place with Laura Marsh, Starting Well ICB, about possible future governance and reporting arrangements for children’s partnership working. ICB Place has Place Starting Well thread so conversations will take place at strategic level to work this through. This will be looked at as part of the arrangements for moving on when the one-year transitional plan comes to an end.  **ZW** – Explained that the Trust is the decision-making body and the subgroups do the work going forward. If there is an issue it will be escalated to the Executive for a decision in how to take forward.  **Prevention Strategic Outcome**  Zara will take the lead for the first priority, maximising the contribution from charity. Working collaboratively to increase and maintain high levels of school attendance. Ensuring children are school ready as there is still too much of a distance between those that achieve and those that do not. Post covid more children start school less ready than previously in areas such as toilet training, reading, writing and arithmetic. Positive activities for children, and young people.  Other priorities include ensuring children are ready for transitions at important phases in their lives. Continue to have a think family approach that has been embedded for a long time now. Recognising parental factors, their emotional health and wellbeing, how it can impact on children and their ability to parent well enough. Working towards the government’s commitment to keeping children safe and helping families thrive.  **Action: Zara to re-fine some wording of the priorities further and re-order them.**  **SEND Strategic Outcome**  What we will do for the SEND element will be to enable children and young people to access the appropriate and effective full-time curriculum and environment suitable to their needs. Focus on early intervention, identification and needs, preparing for adulthood, co-production, sufficiency and timeliness of the EHCP.  A new Director of Education and Inclusion has been appointed and will be taking up the post in the near future.  **Emotional Health and Mental Wellbeing** –  Heather Cattrell is the lead, currently Andy Howard is covering the role. The overarching aim is to promote and improve the emotional health and mental wellbeing of children, young people and their families. This is a priority because children and young people are telling us that increasing local mental and emotional health and wellbeing services is important and that happiness, self-confidence, self-esteem and feeling empowered is important to them.  There is a drive to improve young people's mental wellbeing, for example working in train with neuro developmental pathway that meet fortnightly at the moment looking to improve access. Other areas include community emotional, wellbeing and mental health crisis support looking to reduce emergency department attendance, Early Years ELSA and the mental health teams within schools and sixths forms, identifying the gaps and looking at jointly commissioning and looking at a specific programme for emotional based school non-attendance. In addition, developing channels for lived experience and look at improving identifying factors in health and education that could prevent negative emotional impact. The nook being one example and taking a think family approach, the whole family wrapping around the child.  **HB –** Asked if there was still opportunity to re-order the bullet points for Emotional Health and Mental Wellbeing Strategic Outcome and to re-look at some of the wording of the priorities. Zara confirmed that there was still time and Helen agreed to meet with Isabel to re-arrange and re-word some of the priorities.  **ACTION – Helen Bromley to meet with Isabel Noonan to re-order and re-word some of the priorities under the Emotional Health and Mental Wellbeing Strategic Objective.**  **GT –** ICB had looked at the content of the Plan initially and Gill will re-arrange for further approval once priority wording had been amended.  **AL –** Asked How we will involve children and young people and go back to those involved in the engagement for feedback. It was agreed to adopt a ‘You said, we did approach’  **ZW** - Thanked Isabel, Sarah & Katy for their work on the Plan and confirmed that the Plan will be submitted to Cabinet on 11 June. | **Isabel Noonan**  **Adam Langan**  **Katy Ellison**  **Isabel Noonan**  **Zara Woodcock**  **Isabel Noonan**  **Helen Bromley** |
| **5.** | **AOB** |  |
| **6.** | **Date of Next Meeting:**  **Monday 7th July 2025 3.00-5.00pm Via Teams** | **All to note** |