

WILTSHIRE COUNCIL

CHILDREN'S SELECT COMMITTEE

17 April 2018

Public Question received from Cllr Sue Hughes, Royal Wootton Bassett Town Council

Question

Given what is understood, by Wiltshire County Council and the Children's Select Committee, about the state of young people's mental health in young people across Wiltshire:

1) From the Wiltshire pupil health and well-being survey 2017, which reported that:

- **Poor mental health:** *"by year 12/FE nearly a third of the sample reported poor mental health."*
- **Satisfaction with life:** *"reduced to 57% for the year 12/FE girls"*
- **Confidence in the future:** just *"49% of year 12/FE respondents...felt confident about their future"*
- **Happiness:** 1 in 5 or 21% of secondary and 23% of Year 12/FE, reported being unhappy/quite unhappy over the last week.

2) Which was further documented, in the Wiltshire Children and Young People's Health and Wellbeing Survey 2017: Overview Report as follows:

- **Poor mental health:** *"A national survey found a mean score for 15-year olds of 47.6 (What about youth WAY survey, 2014/15). The mean score from Wiltshire's Secondary children was 47.2. This could suggest slightly poorer mental health in children in Wiltshire than in England."*
- **Satisfaction with life and confidence in the future:** *"Many of the key indicators in the secondary phase have declined since 2015, in particular the percentage of young people who are satisfied with their life and are confident about the future; both of these have dropped significantly in 2017."*

3) Whose findings were echoed, in the report by the Children's Society for James Gray MP, written in the Autumn of 2017:

- **Poor mental health:** *"Based on the latest prevalence survey we estimate that there would be 1,349 young people aged between 5 and 16 with clinically diagnosed mental health problem in Wiltshire"*
- **Satisfaction with life / happiness:** *"The proportion of 10 to 15-year-old girls who are unhappy with their life as a whole has risen from 11% to 14% in just 5 years"*

• **Referral and treatment:** “...thresholds for clinical interventions from their local Child Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) are too high...too many are left waiting an average of 94 days from referral to first appointment.”

4) Which were echoed by findings of:

a) The Princes Trust Macquarie Youth Index Survey 2017:

• • **Happiness:** “young people’s happiness across every single area of their lives has never been lower”

• • **Confidence:** “54% believe a lack of self-confidence holds them back”

• • **Confidence in the future:** “Two in ten young people (21 per cent) think that their life will amount to nothing, no matter how hard they try”

b) The Sport England Youth Insights Pack sport England August 2018:

• • **Stress & Pressure:** “A challenging economic environment has added pressure to this generation. They feel more stressed and believe that experiences need to help them develop and progress in life.”

Response

How can Wiltshire County Council be confident, that it can successfully utilise alternative providers, to meet the needs of young people across Wiltshire and protect their mental health and well-being?

Improving children and young people’s mental health and wellbeing is a shared national and local priority. Like many areas across the country the key challenges we are working hard to overcome include rising demand; children, young people and parent/carers feeling ‘bounced’ around what to them feels like a complex system when they do not require a mental health response; long waiting times for assessment and treatment; children and young people having to re-tell their stories to multiple professionals; arbitrary divisions between services; a lack of clarity about thresholds and what support is available; and not enough investment in early help.

Working with the NHS Wiltshire CCG (through our joint commissioning arrangements) along with key partners from across health, education and social care (as well as children, young people and parents/carers) we have developed a Local Transformation Plan for Children and Young People’s Mental Health and Wellbeing. This sets out our vision for improving children and young people’s emotional wellbeing and mental health and how we are using additional investment from central Government to drive service transformation across the whole system. Key priorities include enhancing early intervention and prevention; improving access to the right support first time around; and providing better care for our most vulnerable children and young people.

Through our Local Transformation Plan, in Wiltshire overall annual spend on CAMHS (including the local authority, the CCG and NHS England Specialist Commissioning) has increased from £6.5m in 2015-16 to £6.9m in 2016/17. The

increase is the result of new CAMHS funding which has been made available nationally to CCGs to support the implementation of Local Transformation Plans.

Key local achievements that are making a positive difference to children and young people's life chances include:

- A re-commissioned new and modern CAMHS service across Swindon, Wiltshire and Bath and North East Somerset, which started on 01 April 2018
- Significant improvement in waiting times for both referral to assessment and referral to treatment. For example, the % of CYP waiting 12 weeks from referral to assessment for primary CAMHS have increased from 65% in 2015/16 to 95% in 2017/18 (Year to date). 83% of CYP wait 12 weeks for access to treatment. This compares to a national average of 17 weeks
- Wiltshire has a community eating disorder service that is recognised nationally as an example of best practice – waits from referral to assessment are already on track with the national target that doesn't need to be achieved until 2020/21
- Online counselling service put in place for teenagers – over 2000 registered for the service, 97% would recommend to a friend
- 118 schools engaged with Healthy Schools programme
- 10 secondary schools delivering peer mentoring, 20 school staff trained, 115 peer mentors trained and 123 mentees supported
- Mental Health Liaison workers put into acute hospitals – 100% of children and young people who arrive at A&E presenting with self-harm have a psychosocial assessment
- 100% of referrals to CAMHS that don't need a specialist mental health response are getting an offer of early help
- CAMHS workers co-located / integrated into Wiltshire Council Children and Families teams, 170 children and young people supported
- 12 Thrive Hubs established in secondary schools with named CAMHS workers

There are a wide range of organisations and agencies (including the voluntary and community sector) which are supporting the delivery of these priorities.

The physical and emotional wellbeing of children and young people is also being supported by our successful community led model for youth activities where we have seen better engagement rates than ever before – probably because young people are actually involved in deciding what activities they want. Through our community led model for youth services we've seen our voluntary and community sector grow and take up the challenge of supporting children and young people's needs within their local community. All 18 Area Boards have identified mental health and wellbeing of young people as one of their three top priorities 2017-2019 and, of those, 12 have made it their No.1 priority for action.

We are therefore confident that with the strong commitment of all partners across the system and by working together we can continue to transform services so that all our children and young people have timely access to an integrated system of excellent,

coordinated and effective promotion, prevention, early intervention, and community support and treatment programmes that work.

The proposals to close Braeside and Oxenwood Outdoor Education were reviewed in a special session of the Wiltshire Council Scrutiny Committee on 10/04/18 at which members of the public were present. Key issues were aired and the resolution was that an appropriate process has been followed by the council. It was noted that currently, only approximately 30% of Wiltshire Schools use the residential provision at Oxenwood and Braeside with many choosing to go outside of the county to one of the numerous alternative providers within reasonable travelling distance from Wiltshire. There is no evidence that Wiltshire based children will lose out as a result of the decision because there remain many outdoor education options in the market, many of whom offer a greater range of activities at cheaper rates currently than Braeside and Wiltshire.