

Report to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Date of meeting: 15 April 2021



Subject: Local Mental Health Services for Young People - Scrutiny of External Organisation

Responsible Officer: Gary Woodhall (01992) 564470

Democratic Services: Vivienne Messenger (01992) 564243

Recommendations/Decisions Required:

(1) That the Committee undertake appropriate external scrutiny of the current provision, planning, management and performance of local mental health services for Young People across the Epping Forest District.

1. The Committee has previously requested an opportunity to undertake appropriate external scrutiny of the current provision, planning, management and performance of local mental health care services for Young People. This issue is included in the current work programme for the Committee.

2. When the Committee was preparing to undertake external scrutiny of Local Mental Health Services across the District at its meeting on 15 October 2020, the following issue was raised by Members:

(a) how apparent mental health concerns amongst local students could be referred to service providers by primary and secondary schools in the Epping Forest District and how quickly such referrals could expect to be assessed.

3. Ms Stephanie Rea from the Essex Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust (EPUT) and the West Essex Clinical Commissioning Group who attended that evening, advised that her organisation EPUT does not provide children's mental health services, so the issue above could not be covered at that meeting. However, she did provide the Council with a contact and the Committee determined to undertake external scrutiny of Local Mental Health Services for Young People later in the municipal year.

4. The Youth Council have also been invited to give their annual presentation at this meeting, and the Committee felt that there was a synergy between the two items, given the work previously undertaken by the Youth Council in this area. An invitation has been extended to Ms Sarah Garner, who is the Assistant Director for the Southend, Essex & Thurrock Children & Young Peoples Emotional Wellbeing & Mental Health Collaborative, and she has confirmed her attendance at the meeting.

5. The identification of relevant lines of questioning to be raised with Ms Garner has also been sought from members through the Council Bulletin, and via email. Ms Garner has been notified of the issue previously raised in paragraph 2 above, but if there are any further issues that Members wish to raise then inform the Democratic Services Team prior to the meeting.

6. The Committee should also note that the contract for the Southend, Essex & Thurrock Children & Young Peoples Emotional Wellbeing & Mental Health Collaborative is Essex-wide.

Therefore, Ms Garner will be able to update Members on what is available in West Essex, but not necessarily specifically for Epping Forest, although the District does form part of the West Essex region.

Resource Implications:

The recommendations of this report seek to enable scrutiny activity to more effectively meet work programme requirements.

Legal and Governance Implications:

The Council's constitution sets out rules for the management of its Overview and Scrutiny responsibilities. Although external organisations are not generally required by legislation to attend a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, it is hoped that most would be willing to engage constructively with the Council's scrutiny activity when invited to do so.

The review and scrutiny of matters relating to the planning, provision and operation of health services across Essex is a function reserved to Essex County Council through the auspices of its Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee, although the County Council has not normally been averse to this authority undertaking appropriate health scrutiny where local concerns exist. As a matter of courtesy, the intentions of the Committee in this regard have been communicated to the Health Overview Policy and Scrutiny Committee.

Safer, Cleaner, Greener Implications:

There are no implications arising from the recommendations of this report in respect of the Council's commitment to the Climate Local Agreement, the corporate Safer, Cleaner, Greener initiative, or any crime and disorder issues within the District.

Consultation Undertaken:

The proposed scrutiny of the current provision, planning, management and performance of Local Mental Health Services for Young People is included in the current work programme for the Committee.

Background Papers:

None.

Impact Assessments:

Risk Management

The Council's constitution sets out rules for the management of its Overview and Scrutiny responsibilities.

Equality:

There are no equality implications arising from the recommendations of this report.