

Report to:	CHILDREN'S AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
Relevant Officer:	Merle Davies, Director, Blackpool Centre for Early Child Development
Date of Meeting:	20 June 2019

BLACKPOOL BETTER START UPDATE

1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 To consider an update on the work being undertaken by the Centre for Early Child Development (CECD) on behalf of the A Better Start (ABS) partnership.

2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 To note the update and identify any matters for further scrutiny.

3.0 Reason for recommendations(s):

3.1 To ensure effective scrutiny of Blackpool Better Start.

3.2a Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No

3.2b Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? N/A

4.0 Council priority:

4.1 The relevant Council priority is

- "Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience"

5.0 Background information

5.1 Blackpool was awarded £45 million from the National Lottery as part of a ten-year strategic investment, to develop new approaches to improve early child health and development. Using a place-based approach, the A Better Start Partnership (Police, Blackpool Teaching Hospital, Clinical Commissioning Group, Local Authority, NSPCC and the community) work collectively to break the intergenerational cycle of poor outcomes for children. The partnership aims to reduce critical pressures, (e.g. mental health and substance misuse) and build capabilities (e.g. self-efficacy and positive parent-child interaction) in a collaborative manner to achieve collective impact. By using a public health approach, behaviour change is being achieved at a population level. Early indications of success include a significant

reduction in childhood dental caries, reduced numbers of children being admitted to hospital due to unintentional and serious injury, and an increase in the number of children achieving a good level of development by the end of reception. Key elements of the approach have been identified as 1) coproduction of services alongside the community; 2) building community capacity through the creation of volunteer support structures and providing entry-level jobs for local parents; 3) collaboratively implementing a range of innovative and evidence-based programmes to tackle systemic issues; 4) the creation of a common language for professionals and parents to discuss early child development and 5) workforce and systems reform through the implementation of trauma-informed practice. The CECD works with and through partners to deliver the ABS strategy on behalf of the Partnership Board.

5.2 The legal partnership with the National Lottery Community Fund (NLCF) is made up of the Local Authority, Clinical Commissioning Group and the NSPCC. The NSPCC is the accountable body.

5.3 **Governance - Reporting Structures and Accountability**

5.3.1 The Governance of the Partnership is shown in Appendix 7(a) attached. Membership of the groups is attached at Appendix 7(b). The main decision making Board is the Executive Board which will only approve new work if they have sign off from the 3 key decision making Boards. The role of these groups is as follows:

5.3.2 **The Executive Board:** has decision making powers and agrees the work of the CECD and where investment will be made. Members have to be able to make decisions on behalf of their organisation. The Board is Chaired by the NSPCC National Director of Children's Services. However, no decisions are agreed without sign off from the following 3 boards, each of which has equal weighting. These are:

5.3.3 **Community Partnership Board:** this Board is made up of community representatives voted onto the Board by 'Community Voice' members to represent their views. This Board is responsible for ensuring that the work of the CECD and any interventions have community agreement and support and are based on strengthening communities through being strengths focused.

5.3.4 **Operational Partnership Board:** made up of Assistant Director level posts from across the partnership and Chief Executives of relevant Voluntary Sector Groups and/or Organisations. The group ensures that programmes and interventions being developed are 'do able' and will be able to be delivered within the current structure. The Board is Chaired by Merle Davies, Director CECD.

5.3.5 **Finance Board:** made up of the Senior Finance Officers from the three partner agencies named in the legal agreement with the NLCF. The Board is responsible for ensuring value for money but most importantly for the long term planning of how programmes and interventions that are showing evidence of improving outcomes are sustainable and can be funded after the end of the NCLF funding. The Chair of this Board is Steve Thompson,

Assistant Chief Executive, Blackpool Council.

- 5.3.6 As shown in Appendix 7(a) there are several sub groups that feed into the Executive Board (EB) and are chaired by EB members to ensure they are integrated into mainstream practice. These are:
- Communications – chaired by Arif Rajapura, Director Public Health
 - Workforce – chaired by Linda Dutton, Head of Organisation and Workforce
 - Monitoring, Evaluation and Research – chaired by Arif Rajapura, Director Public Health
- 5.3.7 Expert Advisory Board – brings together a range of national and international experts to advise the CECD on specific areas of work.
- 5.3.8 Expert Research Group – brings together a range of national and international experts to advise the Monitoring, Evaluation and Research Group. Currently being established by Professor Leon Feinstein, Director of Research, Office of the Children’s Commissioner.
- 5.3.9 In addition a range of working groups feed into the Operational Partnership Board including the Enhanced Healthy Child Programme Group, led by Public Health, the Public Health Early Years Group, led by Public Health and the Early Years Group, led by Children’s Services.
- 5.3.10 The NSPCC, as the accountable body, is responsible for ensuring appropriate governance procedures are in place regarding, finance, Human Resources and ethics. These are monitored by their internal procedures and ultimately through the NSPCC Board of Trustees.
- 5.4 **Key area of work:**
- 5.4.1 Implementation of the Enhanced Health Visiting Offer now entering year four of a service transformation, see Appendix 7(c).
- 5.4.2 Delivery of a range of evidence based parenting programmes, see Appendix 7(d).
£1.6 million development of Parks and Open Spaces across the 7 ABS wards, see Appendix 7(e).
- 5.4.3 Investment in Early Years Park Rangers - £90,000 per annum.
- 5.4.4 £450,000 investment in the Volunteer Academy and volunteering infrastructure. Including the co-ordination of ‘Community Voice’ across the town to give parents a chance to have their say on the support they want.
- 5.4.5 Development of Dad’s4 Life and enabling Dads to be more involved in their children’s lives.
- 5.4.6 Development across the town, led by Glasgow University, focusing on the ‘Town We Want’ involving a wide range of Voluntary Sector organisations and working towards a National

Lottery Bid.

- 5.4.7 Development and implementation of Community Connectors across the 7 ABS wards and Health Connectors across the Town. This has led to Blackpool being the only Harvard University Frontier of Innovation site in the UK and one of only two in Europe.
- 5.4.8 'Be Your Baby's Hero Keep Alcohol to Zero' town wide public health campaign using local role models. Done in consultation with parents and supported by Frameworks, Washington DC
- 5.4.9 Training events including seconding trainers into the LA Training team to work across police, health professionals (including GPs) and Children's Services. To date 3711 professionals have been trained.
- 5.4.10 Developing a Quality Mark across all Early Years Settings and skilling up the workforce.
- 5.4.11 Sustainability of targeted parenting programmes.
- 5.4.12 Developing a Trauma Informed approach across the town. This is taking place with professionals but also with local parents and community members and building the approach into the way services work with families.
- 5.4.13 Commissioned by NHS England to write the national guidance for Trauma Informed Care Pathways in Perinatal Mental Health and Maternity Services.
- 5.4.14 Consultations with Community on a range of subjects that will inform future practice i.e. Diet and nutrition, Early years and Alcohol in pregnancy etc.
- 5.4.15 Putting Blackpool on the map by partnering with International Centres of excellence in Early Child Development, for example:
- Harvard University, US
 - Murdoch Children's Research Institute, Australia
 - New York Academy of Science, US
 - University of Michigan, US
 - Oxford University, UK
 - Cambridge University, UK
- 5.4.16 Our Expert Advisory Group along with other international experts regularly give their time to train the Blackpool workforce. The Dad's Conference on 17 June is being Chaired by Professor Paul Ramchandani, the Lego Professor at Cambridge University. Our Annual conference on 14 November has Professor Frank Oberklaid from Murdoch Children's Research Centre keynoting. Members of the Centre for Early Child Development are regularly invited to international conferences to showcase the work taking place. As part of the Royal Commission interest in ABS, Blackpool hosted TRH's the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge visit to the town in March.

5.5 **Current Challenges**

- 5.5.1
 - Working with partners to develop the 'Town We Want'
 - Increasing volunteering across the town
 - Working to agree additional funding for a central shopfront to raise the profile of volunteering
 - Ensuring the work of Headstart on Resilience and ABS on Trauma is framed to show synergy between the two approaches. Embedding these approaches with professionals and community members.
 - Development, with Headstart, of a Junior Park Ranger Scheme to complement the EYS Park Rangers
 - Finalising the evaluation strategy to identify which key areas will be the focus of the next six years to see what works and how it has been implemented
 - Establishing a Creative Evaluation approach with the Grand Theatre which over the next six years will build resilience in communities but also capture the lived journey

5.6 **Next Steps**

- 5.6.1 ABS is a 10 year Systems Change programme. Alongside the Community element of the approach, work is taking place with services to improve commissioning processes and work with professionals and communities to identify what the community need and how services can support an asset based approach.

Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

6.0 **List of Appendices:**

- 6.1 Appendix 7(a) - Governance structure of Blackpool A Better Start
- Appendix 7(b) - Membership of Executive Board, Operational Partnership Board, and Finance Board
- Appendix 7(c) - Implementation of the Enhanced Health Visiting offer
- Appendix 7(d) - Evidence based programmes offered
- Appendix 7(e) - £1.8 million development of Parks and Open Spaces

7.0 **Legal considerations:**

- 7.1 Not Applicable.

8.0 **Human resources considerations:**

- 8.1 Not Applicable.

9.0 **Equalities considerations:**

- 9.1 Not Applicable.

10.0 Financial considerations:

10.1 Sustainability is considered through the ABS Finance Board and governance arrangements.

11.0 Risk management considerations:

11.1 Not Applicable.

12.0 Ethical considerations:

12.1 Not Applicable.

13.0 Internal/external consultation undertaken:

13.1 Not Applicable.