

 	Health and Wellbeing Board 20 October 2020
	Report from the Chair of Brent Children's Trust
Brent Children's Trust update October 2019 – September 2020	

Wards Affected:	All
Key or Non-Key Decision:	
Open or Part/Fully Exempt: <small>(If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)</small>	Open
No. of Appendices:	0
Background Papers:	0
Contact Officer(s): <small>(Name, Title, Contact Details)</small>	Gail Tolley Strategic Director Children and Young People, Brent Council Gail.Tolley@brent.gov.uk Wendy Proctor Strategic Partnerships Lead for Safeguarding Children and Young People, Brent Council Wendy.Proctor@brent.gov.uk

1.0 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1. The Brent Children's Trust (BCT) is a strategic partnership body made up of commissioners and key partners. The primary functions of the BCT include commissioning, joint planning and collaborative working to ensure that resources are allocated and utilised to deliver maximum benefits for children and young people in Brent.
- 1.2. The BCT reports to the Brent Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB) and provides the HWB with an annual priorities report at the start of each municipal year plus one additional six monthly update report per year.
- 1.3. The most recent report was presented to the HWB in October 2019.
- 1.4. Due to the impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic, the BCT was not required to provide a report in April 2020, therefore this paper provides an update of the BCT work programme covering the period between October 2019 and September 2020.

2.0 Recommendation

2.1. The Health and Wellbeing Board is asked to note the work of the Brent Children's Trust for the period October 2019 to September 2020.

3.0 Detail

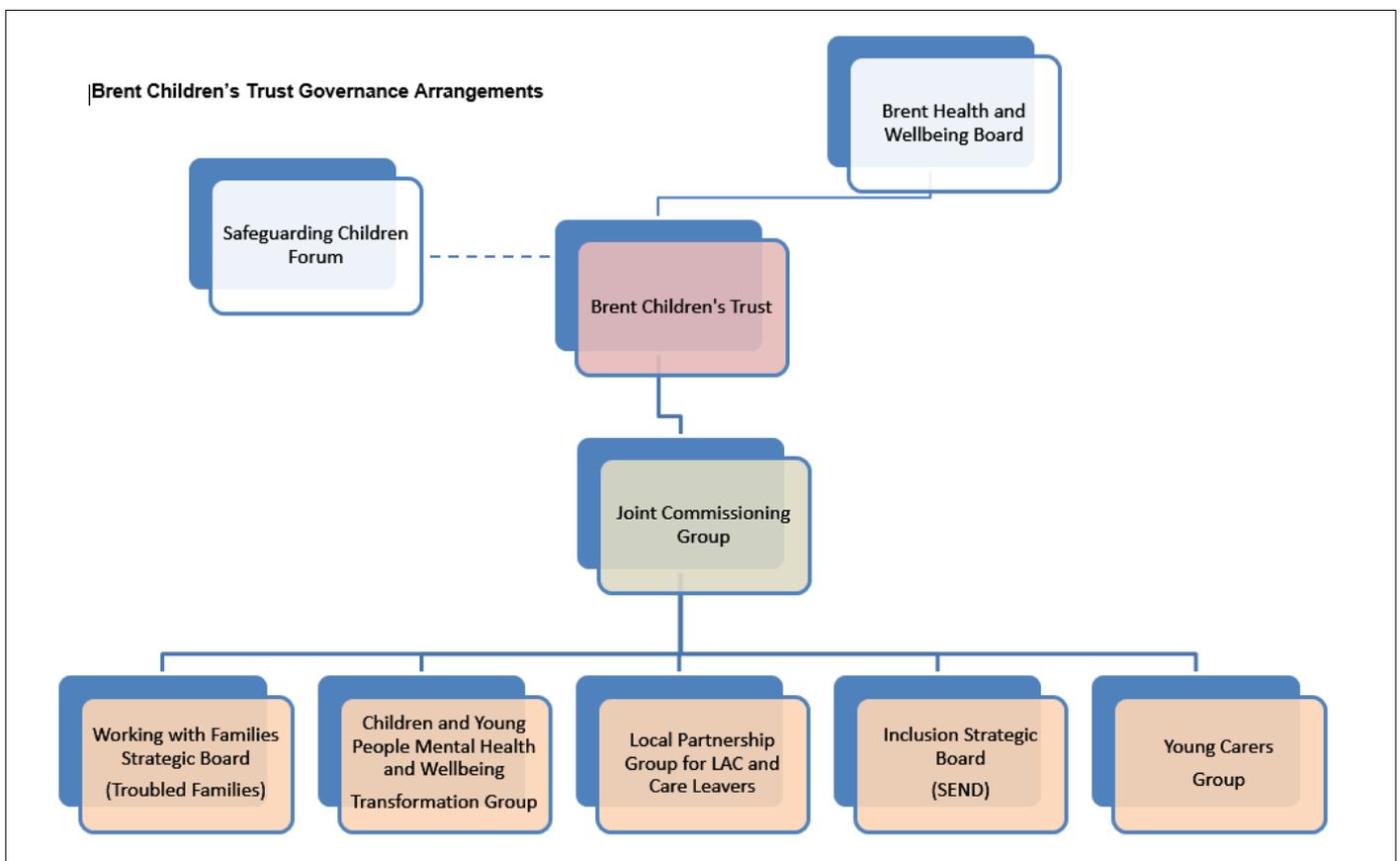
3.1. The BCT meets every two months to review progress of its work programme and address emerging local and national issues. Between October 2019 and September 2020 the BCT met six times on 19 November 2019, 14 January 2020, 10 March 2020, 12 May 2020, 14 July 2020 and 22 September 2020.

3.2. The BCT, through its Joint Commissioning Group (JCG), oversees five groups tasked with implementing specific priorities across the partnership. These five groups are:

- Children and Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing
- Local Partnership Group LAC and Care Leavers
- Inclusion Strategic Board/Children and Young People with SEND
- Working with Families Strategic Board
- Young Carers Group

3.3. The BCT receives updates from the JCG and each of the five transformation groups as part of a standing item at every meeting.

3.4. The diagram below illustrates the current BCT governance structure.



- 3.5. The BCT, JCG and the transformation groups have consistent attendance with representation from Brent Council and Brent Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG). Other key stakeholders also attend the JCG which includes three school head teachers who have been active members since September 2017.
- 3.6. In November 2019, the BCT carried out an annual review of its Terms of Reference and agreed a planned schedule of activity for the next 12 months. This included the following priority areas of focus;
 - SEND
 - Children and Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing
 - 0-25 Service - Children with Disabilities
 - Transitional safeguarding between children and adult services
 - Early Help and Family Wellbeing Centres
- 3.7. In May 2020, the BCT also identified an additional priority area of focus arising from the COVID-19 Pandemic. This area considered the BCT partnership's response to the pandemic as well as recovery planning and any preparation for further outbreaks.
- 3.8. Between October 2019 to September 2020 the BCT examined five main strategic themes:
 - 1) Transitional Safeguarding
 - 2) Learning points for BCT on inspection outcomes (2019)
 - 3) COVID-19 Brent Children's Trust partnership response
 - 4) COVID-19 Brent Children's Trust recovery planning
 - 5) Preparation for possible Ofsted/CQC SEND visit Autumn 2020

Transitional Safeguarding

- 3.9. The BCT, with the support of the Brent Safeguarding Adults Board and the then Brent Local Safeguarding Children Board, held a facilitated multi-agency workshop for multi-agency partners to begin exploring this topic in Brent on 7 November 2019.
- 3.10. The workshop was facilitated by Dez Holmes, Director of Research in Practice and it was attended by a number of senior and strategic leads from Brent Council (including Children and Young People and Community Wellbeing), Health Sector partners and Education.
- 3.11. Gail Tolley, Strategic Director Children and Young People, Statutory Director of Children's Services and Chair of Brent Children's Trust, introduced the workshop and set the context for the event drawing upon the complexities previously highlighted by the BCT in May 2019.
- 3.12. Dez Holmes delivered an engaging presentation that challenged current practice and encouraged critical thinking and discussion about transitions in the widest sense. The presentation also highlighted the fragmentation of services and the differences that exist between the safeguarding children system and safeguarding adults system.

- 3.13. The BCT reflected on the workshop in November 2019 and commissioned a desktop audit focussing on a number of professional decision making forums and panels in Brent to help inform next steps in developing Brent's transitional safeguarding approach. This audit was undertaken in January and February 2020.
- 3.14. The BCT revisited transitions and transitional safeguarding on 10 March 2020 where it was recognised that Brent has strong foundations in place to support a transitional systems approach through:
- The Brent Practice Framework
 - The development of an Integrated Disabled Children and Young People Service 0-25
 - Support for Looked After Children and Care Leavers
 - Operational protocols between services
 - Supporting Inclusive Schools Programme
- 3.15. In response to the audit findings, the following next steps were identified:
- Further review of decision making panels, with consideration of the consolidation of the Violence and Vulnerability Programme Panel and the Vulnerable Adolescents Panel, as part of the developing contextual safeguarding approach.
 - The Brent Practice Framework is refreshed to include learning from best practice and research regarding Transitional Safeguarding, including national learning from Adult Social Care and the Brent Community Wellbeing Department.
 - Shared practice development and shared training between CYP and CWB in particular reviewing of the learning opportunities through Brent's partnership safeguarding arrangements (Children & Adults).
 - A continued focus on integrated service commissioning and service design with CYP, CCG, Community Protection and Community Wellbeing.
 - Active consideration of the practice changes needed to deliver Liberty Protection Safeguards, informed by the Code of Practice (when published).
 - Multi agency audit across CYP, Community Protection, CWB, Police and health partners should be undertaken to confirm effective practice and to test impact of current arrangements and panels.

Learning points for BCT on inspection outcomes (2019)

- 3.16. The BCT reflected upon partnership learning points from the outcomes from both the Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP) inspection of Brent Youth Offending Service in August 2019 and the Inspecting Local Authority Children's Services (ILACS) focused visit on care leavers in November 2019 (final reports published on 18 December 2019).

- 3.17. The BCT were pleased to hear that inspectors had recognised the strong partnership working in Brent and were assured that action had already been undertaken to address the areas identified for improvement from both inspections.
- 3.18. It was also recognised that Brent could possibly be the only London Borough inspected in YOS, ILACS, SEND and SEND revisit that had been considered 'good' across the board.

COVID-19 Brent Children's Trust partnership response

- 3.19. The BCT's first virtual meeting took place on 12 May 2020 following the COVID-19 Pandemic UK lockdown restrictions imposed on 23 March 2020.
- 3.20. The BCT praised the achievements of CCG colleagues in responding to COVID-19 whilst also recognising the preparatory work being undertaken for potential further waves later in the year.
- 3.21. The BCT also recognised and supported the huge amount of focussed work undertaken in preparing for the phased wider return of children back to schools and early years settings from 1 June 2020.
- 3.22. The BCT expressed concern that since the lockdown, GPs had seen fewer children and it was thought that this decline could be due to parents and carers being scared of contracting COVID-19. It was also considered that parents and carers may not be aware that GP services were still open and accessible. The Trust agreed that they would support the CCG to raise awareness with parents and carers that support was still available and parents could still access surgeries for immunisations, consultations and advice.
- 3.23. The BCT were assured that support was being given to parents and children around trauma and bereavement experienced as a result of COVID-19.
- 3.24. The partnership response in Brent during the lockdown period had meant the Trust remained in a strong position to address challenges whilst moving towards the recovery process.

COVID-19 Brent Children's Trust recovery planning

- 3.25. In May 2020, the BCT agreed that partnership recovery planning would remain a priority focus area and expressed support to three main recovery areas of focus identified by Brent Council; child mental health, domestic abuse and poverty.
- 3.26. The North West London CCG COVID-19 response for mental health, learning disabilities and autism was considered by the BCT as part of a phase 2

response to the pandemic looking at restoration of services. The Trust recommended that the Local Authority be involved in the governance and approval arrangements of this plan.

- 3.27. The trailblazing pilot for mental health services in schools, recently agreed to be led by CNWL NHS Trust in Brent, is planned to begin in November 2020. The BCT agreed that Brent CYP department will support the collaboration with schools to progress this pilot.
- 3.28. The BCT acknowledged the excellent work that had taken place due to the flexibility of a multiagency workforce, with London as a whole being in a strong position nationally providing children's mental health services. It was agreed that the Joint Commissioning Group would:
 - Further investigate how coordinated services were for children's emotional health and wellbeing in Brent.
 - Consider what partnership action could be taken to develop a deeper understanding of young people's concerns.
 - Consider how best to utilise the successful bid for the mental health in schools pilot as a vehicle to bring services together.

Preparation for possible Ofsted and CQC SEND visit - autumn 2020

- 3.29. Following the suspension of routine Ofsted inspections due to the COVID-19 pandemic on 17 March 2020, Ofsted announced a phased return to inspection, including a series of 'interim visits' to local areas from autumn 2020.
- 3.30. An operational note setting out the approach to be taken with these interim visits was published on Friday 9 September 2020. The note sets out that the aim of these visits is to understand the impact of the pandemic on children and young people with SEND as well as the services they rely on.
- 3.31. Ofsted and CQC will share the learning from visits in national reports with the aim of promoting whole-system improvement. Interim reports will be published during the period of the visits, with a final national report likely to be published in spring 2021. These reports will keep the participating local areas anonymous.
- 3.32. During the September meeting, the BCT considered the priority actions to ensure preparedness for these visits across all relevant partnership services.
- 3.33. The BCT supported the local authority and the CCG to demonstrate leadership in preparing for a possible visit in Brent.

Other BCT work programme activity

3.34. During this period, the BCT's work programme also covered the following areas:

Family Wellbeing Centres

3.35. In January 2020, the BCT received an update on the progress of the development of Family Wellbeing Centres in Brent and provided guidance on engaging partners in the process.

3.36. The BCT recommended that:

- Brent CCG and health service providers (including LNWHUT, CNWL and CLCH NHS Trusts) should be more involved in the development of the Family Wellbeing Centres.
- The project would be discussed at the CCG's locality GP meetings to ensure that the practices around the borough are kept informed of the changes.
- Further consideration should be given to how Family Wellbeing Centres link into the existing CCG primary care network to avoid duplication of services.
- Consideration could be given to utilising existing health service buildings should there be a gap in the distance between the new sites.

3.37. In July 2020, the BCT received an update that due to the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown the planned launch date for the Family Wellbeing Centres scheduled for September 2020 had been delayed.

3.38. It is expected that Brent Family Wellbeing Centres would be ready to be opened from December 2020.

3.39. In September 2020 the BCT ratified the draft Governance, Management and Partnership Plan for Brent Family Wellbeing Centres.

3.40. The BCT continues to remain sighted on the progress of the development of Family Wellbeing Centres in Brent and the next update to the Trust will focus on the opening arrangements and final design elements.

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) 6 months progress report

3.41. In July 2020, the BCT provided direction and endorsed progress made against the priorities within the SEND strategy from January to July 2020. The priorities had been set in September 2019 and it was agreed that they would be revised in light of the COVID pandemic.

3.42. The BCT was encouraged to hear from the Brent Safeguarding Forum Independent Convener that relevant lessons have been identified from recent Brent safeguarding children rapid reviews specifically involving children and young people with SEND. The BCT suggested that these lessons are shared with the Inclusion Board to inform the revision of the SEND strategy priorities.

- 3.43. The BCT agreed that the Brent Safeguarding Partners Annual Report focussing on rapid review activity would be shared with the Trust to ensure that lessons learned can be shared and work to address the lessons is not duplicated.
- 3.44. It was also recommended that when the SEND strategy is revised, safeguarding input would be included.

Integrated 0-25 Children and Young People with Disabilities service

- 3.45. Following from the progress updates in January 2019 and May 2019 the BCT received a further update regarding the development of an Integrated Disabled Children and Young People 0-25 Service in January 2020.
- 3.46. To achieve the vision of a fully integrated service, a 2-phase process of project development was agreed. Phase 1 focused on developments within the Brent CYP department and has been completed. The previously separate services made up of the 0-13 CWD team, the Transitions team (within Adults Social Care) and the Ade Adepitan Short Break Centre were brought together into one service area and placed under a permanently appointed service manager from January 2019.
- 3.47. The BCT continues to support the progress of Phase 2 of the project and encouraged the development of greater integration with health partners during this phase.

Young Carers

- 3.48. The BCT maintains oversight of the work of its Young Carers transformation group (Young Carers Champions) and the joint work of the statutory and voluntary sector providers in delivering an integrated approach to supporting Young Carers and strengthening their rights.
- 3.49. In September 2020, the BCT received an annual update on the progress of the Young Carers (YC) Champions Group and activity to support Young Carers during the 2019-20 financial year.
- 3.50. The BCT recognised the positive progress on identifying and supporting increasing numbers of young carers in Brent.

Changes to the Working with Families Strategic Board

- 3.51. The BCT agreed that from 29 September 2020 the Working with Families Strategic Board would merge with the existing Early Help Task and Finish Group to create a new Early Help and Prevention Group.
- 3.52. The Early Help and Prevention Group will combine the memberships of the previous groups including representatives from Brent Council (CYP, Public Health, Community Safety, Employment and Skills and Transformation), NWLCCG, Police and Young Brent Foundation.

- 3.53. The group would retain the core purposes of the previous groups (including ensuring the success of the Troubled Families programme and developing, coordinating and promoting the borough's Early Help offer) along with a new work plan that focuses on looking beyond the end of the Troubled Families programme to develop what comes next.
- 3.54. The BCT governance structure will be updated to reflect these agreed changes in November 2020.

4.0 Financial Implications

- 4.1 There are no financial implications as a result of this update report.

5.0 Legal Implications

- 5.1 There are no legal implications as a result of this update report.

6.0 Equality Implications

- 6.1 There are no equality implications as a result of this update report.

7.0 Consultation with Ward Members and Stakeholders

- 7.1 Brent Council and Brent CCG are members of the BCT and its sub groups and have contributed to this report.

8.0 Human Resources/Property Implications (if appropriate)

- 8.1 There are no Human Resources/Property implications as a result of this update report.

Report sign off:

Gail Tolley

Strategic Director Children and Young People