

# **MINUTES OF THE SCRUTINY REVIEW ON SUPPORT FOR YOUNG PEOPLE AT RISK OF SUBSTANCE ABUSE**

**17 MARCH 2009**

Councillors \* Alexander and \* Allison, \* Ms Baker, \* Ms Amin and \* Ms Randall

\* Members present

## **7. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were none received

## **8 URGENT BUSINESS**

There was none.

## **9. DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest made

## **10. MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 29 January 2009 were confirmed.

## **11. PRESENTATION FROM GOVERNMENT OFFICE FOR LONDON**

The Panel received a presentation from Ms Sharon Dodds from the Government Office for London on behalf of the Department for Children, Families and Schools. Ms Dodds spoke about wishing to achieve integrated working between authorities. A stock take had found that across London there was a very different approach to delivering the common assessment, integrated working, different threshold levels of need and triggers. Also service provision was very different and there was confusion on the frontline about whom should complete a common assessment and what process should be used. Furthermore there was not sufficient workforce development needs or skills in place to identify risk triggers and there was no regional integrated strategy for joint working.

There was huge variable application of the Common Assessment Framework in London and nationally, in London the range was from 50 to 2000 per authority. Also there was no formal analysis of data although some authorities were doing their own. However the Panel were advised that Tower Hamlets had a good model for common assessment in schools, with teachers having ownership and that Hackney and Leeds had developed integrated Targeted Youth Support teams.

GOL was working on a draft protocol to produce a coherent and coordinated approach to integrated working and the use of the CAF across London local Authorities boundaries.

The CAF was an important tool for the early identification of young people at risk of, or involved in, substance abuse. GOL had developed a threshold guide to risk of substance misuse. It was accepted that ideally need should be met at the lowest level of intervention with clear referral pathways in place with movement between the different levels of intervention. The CAF would also play a vital role in ensuring effective plans were in place for young people needing targeted support or specialist treatment. A set of six standards was proposed to enable cross authority working. The CAF should be completed as an early or the first assessment tool, and so frontline staff must be fully trained. If the common assessment raised a concern about substance abuse, then screening should be undertaken by a worker trained in screening for substance misuse.

The Panel considered that further training for School Governors would improve the understanding around the CAF. In particular it was suggested that schools should not exclude without an assessment. However some concern was expressed over the CAF being used as a further hoop that schools would have to go through before exclusion, instead of it being used as part of the mainstream services, as a referral.

During 2009/10 GOL hoped to be able to be aware of good practice and be able to share this information with Authorities. They would develop action learning sets to support workforce development of frontline workers to be able to:-

1. increase early identification of young people and prevent high intensive need
2. increase the numbers of young people accessing services at tier 1 and 2
3. enhance workforce development

Local Authorities need to review their current referrals to ensure that the focus was on early identification and to consider those attending schools outside the borough. Also they should review the levels of need and carry out a stock take of provision, referral pathways and treatment pathways. Additionally that should examine workforce training needs for frontline staff and service configuration to support increased access and support needs. This information would support the joint needs assessment.

#### RESOLVED

1. That officers examine the good working practices identified in Tower Hamlets, Hackney and Leeds and consider if they could be applied to Haringey.

2. That the need for workforce training and development be acknowledged and specific training be organised for School Governors around the CAF
3. That officers examine the advice given by GOL to ensure that the best practice and processes are adopted in Haringey.

## **12. EARLY IDENTIFICATION AND ASSESSMENT OF YOUNG PEOPLE**

In view of the lack of attendance by statutory partners it was agreed that consideration of this report be deferred to a further meeting. A provision date of Tues 21 April at 2.30pm was agreed.