

## People Scrutiny Committee – 11<sup>th</sup> July 2017

### Public Questions

#### Question from Mr Webb to the Executive Councillor for Children & Learning

##### Question 1

*“Looking at the Annual Education Report 2015- 2016 there are many positive aspects that schools, teachers, pupils and parents are doing very well - What strategies are Southend Council implementing to support schools in addressing the gender gap where girls out performing boys in all subjects and levels with the exception of the higher standard in maths where boys achieved better and do you think the cuts in education will widen this gap because of less money for pupil premium to address gender gap?”*

##### Answer

Thank you for your question Mr Webb, I am pleased that you recognise the strong performance of learners and schools in a number of areas as set out in the latest Annual Education Report 2015-16.

You will recognise that this is a retrospective view of the performance at the end of the last academic year. Since then, the Council has instigated the Education Board as a means of ensuring it maintains oversight and influence on school performance in the world of academisation. Part of that initiative is the School Performance Sub Group, a group of professionals and officers charged with monitoring performance and commissioning intervention where this is required. This group undertakes detailed analysis of all performance data, including all gaps in performance for particular groups.

At a recent meeting, the group advised Board to bid for school improvement funds from the Department for Education, in particular in relation to improving the performance in reading for deprived learners in Primary Schools, and improving the GCSE performance of Looked After Children as priorities. If successful, this money will be used alongside the funding that the Council has already identified in the budget for the next two years to support school improvement.

The Council is determined and passionate to work with school leaders to continue to improve the results for all learners. At the time of writing, the outcome of the National Funding Formula implementation is not clear, but we are confident that the Council, through Education Board, is doing its utmost to support schools.

Lastly, it should be celebrated that the Southend Education Board has been recognised nationally for its innovative and leading edge approach, and was Highly Commended as a finalist in the National MJ Awards, 2017, in the category of excellence in governance and scrutiny.

## **Question from Mr Webb to the Executive Councillor for Health & Adult Social Care**

### Question 2

*How many children, adults in Southend have been diagnosed with a mental illness (ranging from depression, anxiety, biopolar) and what has been the funding for Mental Health Therapy service from Southend Council in 2014 – 2015, 2015 – 2016, 2016 – 2017 and do you think there are adequate services and funding to support the increasing mental illness for children and adults in Southend?*

### Answer

This area is the responsibility of the CCG and they have supplied the following information:

It is not possible to say how many children and adults in Southend have had a formal diagnosis of a particular mental illness. What we do know is that the number who have will be considerably smaller than the number of children and adults who experience mental health problems and the number who seek help for those problems.

The best information we have about this relates to the people who make use of the local specialist mental health services. In February 2017 (the most recent month for which we have information available) there were 760 people from Southend aged 0-18 and 3830 aged 19 and over in contact with these services, but it should be borne in mind that this will not give a complete picture as a large number of people with the most common mental health problems receive the treatment, care and support they need to help them with these problems in primary care, that is from their GP and from local charities and community organisation., and we have very limited information available about that.

Broadly speaking, all of the NHS mental health services available for people in Southend are “therapy services”, as they are all designed to treat people’s problems through a mixture of medication (drug therapies), psychological interventions or talking therapies, and support to address specific problems that people have in their lives that are linked to their illness.

All CCGs in England have been instructed to increase their funding for mental health services each year from 2015/16 to 2020/21. Southend CCG has increased the amount it spends on mental health for the last two years in line with this requirement and intends to continue to do so going forward.

Over the last three years the CCG expenditure on mental health services was:

<b>14/15</b>	£19,620,326
<b>15/16</b>	£19,653,933
<b>16/17</b>	£20,361,468.

The Council and the CCG have collaborated with other organisations across Essex to develop the Southend, Essex and Thurrock Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy which describes how we want to change local services to improve what is available for our residents and make sure that people who need therapeutic help and support can get it quickly and easily.