

## Terms of Reference

### Southwark Child and Adolescent Mental Health Commission

The purpose of this Commission is to consider, challenge, support and evaluate the actions being taken in the London Borough of Southwark to revolutionise and transform mental health support for children and families. Specifically to ensure that all children and families resident in the borough will have access to support, and where appropriate treatment, to ensure that their mental health needs are met.

#### Background and context

Access to mental health services for children and families in England is not sufficient and NHS England's target, set in 2018, of 35% access is unacceptable. Whilst the 2019 NHS plan for the next 10 years has set a target of 100% access for 2029, the Southwark Health and Wellbeing Board agreed a 100% target within 2 years at the November 2018 meeting of the Board. This places Southwark in a position of much higher aspiration, and to be achieved much quicker, quite simply because the Southwark Health and Wellbeing Board recognises that for children their childhood is not a dress rehearsal but rather sets the foundation for the rest of their lives. It is clear to the Southwark Health and Wellbeing Board that much suffering in childhood, often running through to adulthood, in relation to poor mental health can be prevented or successfully treated if access to support is *early* and *helpful*.

Southwark Council provide the most funding for Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services of any borough in South London. This is in addition to the statutory responsibilities of the NHS to properly fund Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services. Yet, access to NHS support means that currently less than a quarter of children who need to access Mental Health services are able to do so. This is a matter of great concern and a priority for the Southwark Health and Wellbeing Board who have committed to revolutionise and transform the offer to residents of Southwark.

In February 2019 Southwark Council Assembly approved a budget that not only protects Council funding for Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, despite the fact that the Council no longer receives a specific grant from Government to do so and Council funding has been severely cut since 2010, but to additionally make £2m available to ensure that 100% of children and young people resident in the borough get access to emotional wellbeing or mental health services so that we reduce the need for specialist services and ensure that families who must wait for specialist services are well supported, and that this ambition would be achieved by 2020.

This Commission will build on the national work of the Values-Based Child and Adolescent Mental Health System Commission (2016), with the London Borough of Southwark as the community to implement the key learning and recommendations of that Commission, to learn *what works* in practice and to openly share that learning and experience with our community and wider stakeholders concerned about the mental health of children and families.

### The Terms

The Commission will run from October 2019 to October 2021 and will meet quarterly and will be supported by Southwark Council officers in undertaking their work. Chief officer support, advice and guidance will be provided by the Strategic Director for Children and Adults (the statutory Director for Children's Services and the Director of Adult Social Services) and the Strategic Director for Place and Wellbeing (the statutory Director of Public Health). The chief officers will be in attendance at Commission meetings.

The Council's Directors of Education, Commissioning, Children and Families, Adult Social Care and the Southwark NHS CCG Director of Integrated Commissioning and Lead GP and Lead Commissioner for Mental Health will make themselves available to the Commission in support of this important work.

Between April and June 2021 the Commission will review a draft report of the Commission's findings and learning for sharing, with the intention of publishing a public report in July 2021.

### Chair

The Commission will be chaired by the Southwark Council Cabinet Member for Children, Schools and Adult Care.

### Members of the Commission:

The members of the Committee will consist of experts in the field of children's mental health, people with first hand experience of mental health services as professionals and or service users.