

SCRUTINY BOARD (CHILDREN'S SERVICES)

THURSDAY, 18TH NOVEMBER, 2010

PRESENT: Councillor J Chapman in the Chair

Councillors M Coulson, G Driver, W Hyde, A Lamb,
B Lancaster, P Latty, J Lewis, K Maqsood, V Morgan
and B Selby

CO-OPTED MEMBERS (VOTING):

Mr E A Britten	- Church Representative (Catholic)
Ms N Cox	- Parent Governor Representative (Special)
Prof P H J H Gosden	- Church Representative (Church of England)
Mr J Granger	- Parent Governor Representative (Primary)

CO-OPTED MEMBERS (NON-VOTING):

Ms C Johnson	- Teacher Representative
Ms T Kayani	- Leeds Youth Work Partnership
Ms J Morris-Boam	- Leeds Voice Children and Young People Services Forum Representative

53 Chair's Opening Remarks

The Chair welcomed all in attendance to the November meeting of the Scrutiny Board (Children's Services).

54 Exempt Information - Possible Exclusion of the Press and Public

RESOLVED – That the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following parts of the agenda designated exempt on the grounds that it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the public were present there would be disclosure to them of exempt information so designated as follows:

Appendix 2 of the Social Care Systems Review report attached to the Work Programme referred to in Minute No. 60 under the terms of Access to Information Procedure Rule 10.4 (3) – information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) and on the grounds that if the information was disclosed it would, or would be likely to, prejudice the commercial interest of the Council in securing best value for money solutions in the future.

55 Late Items

The Chair admitted to the agenda as supplementary information, notes of the working groups visits and meetings which had taken place as part of the Scrutiny Board's inquiry on service redesign, to be considered as part of agenda item 7. (Minute No. 59 refers)

56 Declaration of Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

57 Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes

Apologies for absence were submitted by Councillor Gettings and Co-opted Member, Ms C Foote.

58 Minutes - 21st October 2010

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 21st October 2010 be confirmed as a correct record.

59 Scrutiny Inquiry - Services for children with disabilities, special educational needs and additional health needs - Inquiry into Service Redesign

Further to Minute No. 50 of the meeting held on 21st October 2010, the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report which presented evidence in line with Session 2 of the Board's Inquiry into Services for Children with Disabilities, Special Educational Needs and Additional Health Needs – Inquiry into Service Redesign.

The following information was appended to the report:

- Service model for children under 5, and a further refinement of the model
- Service model for children and young people from 5-14
- Service model for children and young people from 14+
- A paper in relation to funding for over 18s not in statutory education
- Information relating to the provision of short breaks and respite provision
- Scrutiny Inquiry Report – Transitional Arrangements for Disabled Young People into Adult Social Care – Scrutiny Board (Adult Social Care), May 2010
- Recommendation Tracking – Progress Report – Scrutiny Board (Adult Social Care), September 2010.

The Chair welcomed to the meeting, the following Executive Member and officers:

- Councillor Blake, Executive Member (Children's Services)

- Nigel Richardson, Director of Children's Services
- Barbara Newton, Strategic Leader, Performance, Children's Services
- Barbara Shaw, Interim Head of Disability Services, Children's Services
- Linda Randall, Team Manager, Adult Social Care.

Children's Services and Adult Social Care Update

- Update on child and adolescent mental health – discussions had taken place around access to services and delivering a joined up approach.
- Confirmation that transition arrangements for young people (14-25) had transferred to Adult Social Care.
- Greater resources had been allocated as part of the revised transition arrangements – it was reported that 9 officers had been allocated to work across Leeds.

The Chair then invited questions and in brief summary, the key areas of discussion were:

- Concern around some of the definitions used in the service models and the need to ensure that specialist systems were in place, particularly in terms of addressing individual needs.
- Support for young people and families, including those that had not met the eligibility criteria for adult services.
- The role of the voluntary, community and faith sector.
- Helping parents to become more confident.
- The challenges of joint partnership working, especially in view of the proposed changes to health services and the role of GPs.
- Concern around funding and staffing constraints in implementing the service models outlined in the report. The Scrutiny Board was advised that the service models focussed primarily on improving the co-ordination of existing services. The anticipated start date was April 2011.
- Consultation with parents and families through the work of the Family Hub – Members were informed that families were asked how they wished to access / receive information, e.g. via the internet, hard copy, etc.
- Clarification about the timetable for self directed support – it was reported that work was ongoing with Adult Social Care around development of the personalisation agenda linked to Children's Services.

The Chair then invited feedback from Members who had attended the working group visits and in brief summary, the main points of discussion were:

- Members were very impressed with the services they had visited.
- Emerging concerns around insufficient provision of social workers and education psychologists.
- The costs associated with missed appointments

- Development of communication strategy in relation to integrated children's services – it was reported that a series of visits were planned to take place in the New Year. The Executive Member (Children's Services) also reported that an invitation had been sent to all headteachers and Chairs of Governors to discuss elements of the transformation agenda.

The Chair thanked all those present for their positive contribution to the inquiry and for their attendance at working group meetings and visits.

RESOLVED – That the issues raised be incorporated in the draft report of the Board's Inquiry.

(Councillor J Lewis left the meeting at 11.50 pm during the consideration of this item.)

60 Work Programme

A report was submitted by the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development which detailed the Scrutiny Board's work programme for the remainder of the current municipal year.

Appended to the report was the current version of the Board's work programme, an extract from the Forward Plan of Key Decisions for the period 1st November 2010 to 28 February 2011, the minutes of the Executive Board meeting held on 13th October 2010, and a report in relation to the Social Care Systems Review that was considered by the Executive Board in June 2010.

In brief summary, the main highlighted points were:

- The Director of Children's Services provided an update on the recent proposal to proceed with a separate electronic information system for Adult Social Care and Children's Services, as part of the Social Care System Review. It was reported that this was based on national changes, a rapidly changing agenda and the need to develop a system that was fit for purpose.
- The Scrutiny Board agreed to establish a working group to track implementation of the new system. The following Members volunteered to serve on the working group:
 - Councillor Chapman
 - Councillor Lamb
 - Councillor James Lewis.

It was also agreed to establish whether Councillor Gettings might be interested in serving on the working group.

- The Scrutiny Board received and endorsed the notes of the Working Group to scope an inquiry on raising aspirations and combating child poverty. It was agreed to finalise the draft terms of reference by e-mail.

RESOLVED – That subject to the comments raised at the meeting, the work programme be approved.

61 Date and Time of Next Meeting

Thursday 16th December 2010 at 9.45 am with a pre-meeting for Board Members at 9.15 am.

(The meeting concluded at 12.13 pm.)