

SCRUTINY BOARD (CHILDREN AND FAMILIES)

WEDNESDAY, 20TH JUNE, 2012

PRESENT: Councillor J Chapman in the Chair

Councillors C Gruen, A Hussain, A Lamb,
P Latty, M Rafique, K Renshaw, A Sobel
and B Urry

CO-OPTED MEMBERS (VOTING):

Mr E A Britten – Church Representative (Catholic)

Ms A Craven – Parent Governor Representative (Primary))

Ms N Cox – Parent Governor Representative (Special)

CO-OPTED MEMBERS (NON-VOTING):

Mrs S Hutchinson – Early Years Representative

9 Chair's Opening Remarks

The Chair welcomed everyone in attendance to the June meeting of Scrutiny Board (Children and Families).

She particularly welcomed Councillors C Gruen, A Hussain, A Sobel and B Urry to their first meeting.

10 Late Items

There were no formal late items of business to consider, however the Chair agreed to accept the following as supplementary information:-

- Child Poverty Report (Agenda Item 14)(Minute 21 refers)

The document was not available at the time of the agenda despatch, but subsequently made available to the public on the Council's website prior to the meeting.

11 Declarations of Interest

The following personal declaration of interest was made at the meeting:-

- Councillor A Lamb in his capacity as a Member on the Leeds Education Challenge Board (Agenda Item 9) (Minute 16 refers)

12 Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillor B Gettings, Councillor A Khan, Ms J Ward, Ms C Foote, Ms C Raftery, Ms T Kayani and Ms J Morris-Boam.

Minutes approved as a correct record
at the meeting held on Thursday, 26th July, 2012

13 Minutes - 26th April 2012 (Ordinary and Call-In meetings) and 7th June 2012 (Call-In meeting)

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the following meetings be approved as a correct record:-

- a) Scrutiny Board (Children and Families) – 26th April 2012
- b) Scrutiny Board (Children and Families) (Call-In) – 26th April 2012
- c) Scrutiny Board (Children and Families) (Call-In) – 7th June 2012

14 Co-opted Members

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report on the options available with regards to the appointment of co-opted members to the Scrutiny Board.

Sandra Newbould, Principal Scrutiny Adviser, Scrutiny Support presented the report and responded to Members' queries and comments.

In her presentation she informed the Board that, to date, she was still awaiting details of a nomination for the Church of England diocese representative.

Discussion ensued on the contents of the report.

RESOLVED-

- a) That the contents of the report be received and noted.
- b) That the following be appointed as co-opted members to the Scrutiny Board for 2012/13:-

Co-opted Members (Voting)

| | |
|----------------|--|
| Mr E A Britten | - Church Representative (Catholic) |
| Vacancy | - Church Representative (Church of England) |
| Ms A Craven | - Parent Governor Representative (Primary) |
| Ms J Ward | - Parent Governor Representative (Secondary) |
| Ms N Cox | - Parent Governor Representative (Special) |

Nominated Co-opted Members (Non-Voting)

| | |
|------------------|---|
| Ms C Foote | - Teacher Representative |
| Ms C Raftery | - Teacher Representative |
| Mrs S Hutchinson | - Early Years Representative |
| Ms T Kayani | - Leeds Youth Work Partnership Representative |
| Ms J Morris-Boam | - Young Lives Leeds |

15 Changes to the Council's Constitution

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report on the changes to the Council's Constitution in relation to Scrutiny.

Minutes approved as a correct record
at the meeting held on Thursday, 26th July, 2012

Appended to the report was a copy of the following document for the information/comment of the meeting:-

- Scrutiny Board (Children and Families) – Council Committees’ Terms of Reference (Appendix 1 refers)

Sandra Newbould, Principal Scrutiny Adviser, Scrutiny Support presented the report and responded to Members’ queries and comments.

Discussion ensued on the contents of the report and appendices.

RESOLVED-

- a) That the contents of the report and appendices be noted.
- b) That this Board notes the amendments to the Council’s Constitution in accordance with the report now submitted.

16 Presentation by Children's Services - Leeds Education Challenge

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report advising Members of a verbal presentation to be given regarding the Leeds Education Challenge which was an ambitious city – wide campaign to accelerate improvement in learning outcomes for 180, 000 children and young people.

The following representatives were in attendance and responded to Members’ queries and comments:-

- Councillor J Blake, Executive Board Member
- Paul Brennan, Deputy Director – Learning, Skills and Universal Services, Children’s Services
- Simon Flowers, Headteacher (Carr Manor)
- Sarah Ruddy, Headteacher (Bankside)

At the request of the Chair, Paul Brennan, Deputy Director – Learning, Skills and Universal Services, Children’s Services gave a brief presentation regarding the Leeds Education Challenge which covered the following specific areas:-

- Realigning resources
- Developing a school led improvement strategy
- Ensuring equality
- Promoting challenge, partnership and innovation

At the conclusion of the presentation, detailed discussion ensued on the key areas.

In summary, specific reference was made to the following issues:-

- clarification of how the department were addressing the drop in levels in relation to Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2

(The Deputy Director – Learning, Skills and Universal Services, Children’s Services responded and confirmed that a dialogue was being undertaken on this issue with individual schools. He made specific reference to a Governing Conference entitled ‘ Landscape of Learning’ which was due to be held on 28th June 2012 at 9.00am at Elland Road Football Ground where Chair’s of Governors would be invited to attend. The Conference was also open for all Board Members to attend. The Executive Board Member also briefed the meeting on the extensive work being undertaken around Governance arrangements and confirmed that the role of Governor was developing well with a consistent approach required throughout the city)

- the need for the Board to acknowledge that Governors had a duty in running the school
- clarification if the changes around Corporative Trust Schools and Academies would make a real difference for our children
(The Deputy Director – Learning, Skills and Universal Services, Children’s Services responded and informed the meeting that supporting standards of achievement was the key in this area and that Governors needed to be asked that question)
- clarification if any Academies had opted to ‘buy out’ of the Leeds Education Challenge
- concerns expressed that Early Year’s had not been referred to in today’s presentation and that an urgent review of this issue was now required
(The Deputy Director – Learning, Skills and Universal Services, Children’s Services responded and informed the meeting that parts of the structure of Leeds Education Challenge did include reference to Early Years, especially around post 16 provision. The Executive Member confirmed that Early Year’s was crucial to the work being undertaken)
- concerns expressed over persistent absences and clarification of how the department would achieve the national average in time
(The Deputy Director – Learning, Skills and Universal Services, Children’s Services responded and informed the meeting that there had been a recent significant change in this area with Primary schools who were now achieving a position of 61st in the national average tables)
- the need for the Board to acknowledge that leadership of schools was a key element with a requirement for Headteachers, Governors and parents leading the initiative, especially in BME communities
- concerns expressed around poor results in GCSE maths and English
(The Deputy Director – Learning, Skills and Universal Services, Children’s Services responded and outlined the procedures in place in relation training teachers and recruitment measures to support the changes. He also stipulated that achievement in Maths and English was a concern at all stages)

In concluding, the Chair thanked officers for an informative and helpful presentation which would form part of the discussions when considering the Board’s work programme.

RESOLVED-

- a) That the contents of the report be received and noted.
- b) That the presentation on Leeds Education Challenge be noted and welcomed.

(Councillor A Lamb left the meeting at 11.25am at the conclusion of the above item)

17 2011/12 Quarter 4 Performance Report

The Assistant Chief Executive (Customer Access and Performance) submitted a report summarising the quarter 4 performance data relevant to the Scrutiny Board.

Appended to the report were copies of the following documents for the information/comment of the meeting:-

- Appendix 1a – Performance Reports for the 3 City Priority Plan
- Appendix 1b – Children’s Services Directorate Priorities and Indicators
- Appendix 1c – Summary of performance for all the Children and Young People’s Plan priorities. NB full performance reports for each priority is available on request.
- Appendix 2 – Proposed changes to the Council Business Plan

The following representatives were in attendance and responded to Members’ queries and comments:-

Councillor J Blake, Executive Board Member
Paul Brennan, Deputy Director – Learning, Skills and Universal Services, Children’s Services
Sue Rumbold – Chief Officer, Partnership Development and Business Support – Children’s Services
Peter Storrie – Head of Performance and Improvement – Children’s Services,

In summary, specific reference was made to the following issues:-

- to welcome the fact that there were no red indicators contained within the scorecards.
- clarification if any academic research was undertaken in relation to key stage issues
(The Deputy Director – Learning, Skills and Universal Services, Children’s Services responded and confirmed that officers did focus on university research in this area which was rolled out across schools and to interested parties)
- clarification of the quarter 4 increases in Looked After Children numbers and the overspend in the budget.

(The Chief Officer, Partnership Development and Business Support – Children’s Services responded confirming the current position reflects a reduction in Looked after Children and the budget position was not in overspend. Board Members welcomed this information)

RESOLVED –

- a) That the contents of the report and appendices be noted.
- b) That this Board notes the quarter 4 performance information and the issues which had been highlighted.
- c) That Board Members be requested to provide challenge and feedback on the proposed changes to the Council Business Plan to ensure that this plan remains both challenging but also realistic and achievable.

(Councillor A Hussain left the meeting at 11.40am during discussions of the above item)

18 Equality Improvement Priorities 2011-2015

The Assistant Chief Executive (Customer Access and Performance) submitted a report on the new Equality Improvement Priorities and revised Equality and Diversity Policy.

Appended to the report were copies of the following appendices for the information/comment of the meeting:-

- The Equality Improvement Priorities 2011 – 2015 (Appendix 1 refers)
- Equality and Diversity Policy 2011-2015 (Appendix 2 refers)

The following representatives were in attendance and responded to Members’ queries and comments:-

- Lelir Yeung, Head of Equality, Customer Access and Performance
- Mr G Turnbull, Senior Policy and Performance Officer, Customer Access and Performance

RESOLVED –

- a) That the contents of the report and appendices be noted.
- b) That the equality outcomes in performance reports relevant to this Board be noted.

19 Sources of Work for the Scrutiny Board

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report on potential sources of work for the Scrutiny Board.

Appended to the report were copies of the following documents for the information/comment of the meeting:-

- Children and Young People’s Plan 2011-15 – Refresh April 2012, Extract from the Health and Wellbeing City Priority Plan 2011 to 2015

and Extract from the Safer Leeds Partnership Plan 2011-2015
(Appendix 1 refers)

- Executive Board – Minutes of a meeting held on 16th May 2012
(Appendix 2 and 3 refers)
- Forward Plan of Key Decisions for Scrutiny Board – Children and Families – 1st June 2012 – 30th September 2012 (Appendix 4 refers)
- Table of Scrutiny Inquiries and Statements relating to Children and Families (Appendix 5 refers)

Sandra Newbould, Principal Scrutiny Adviser, Scrutiny Support presented the report and responded to Members' queries and comments.

The following representatives were in attendance and responded to Members' queries and comments:-

- Councillor J Blake, Executive Board Member
- Paul Brennan, Deputy Director – Learning, Skills and Universal Services, Children's Services

For the benefit of the meeting, the Chair invited all Board Members to have an input in relation to their own preferred sources of work for the Scrutiny Board.

In summary, the following sources of work was put forward for consideration/discussion:-

- Early Years, providing good foundations and giving children the best start in education.
- Independent Children's Homes and Private Fostering in Leeds
- Children Play provision
- Academies
- Achievement in Maths and English
- Continuation of the review of the Youth Service
- Review of Children's Services budget
- Safeguarding update

The Principal Scrutiny Adviser informed the Board the Board would receive reports on the budget at the July 2012 and at the January 2013 Board meeting.

She reminded the Board that there were would be ad hoc issues considered throughout the year and at the next meeting in July the Director of Children's Services would be invited to attend as usual.

In conclusion, the Chair thanked Board Members for their contributions for the sources of work and areas of priority.

RESOLVED-

- a) That the contents of the report and appendices be noted.

- b) That the above issues be discussed as part of the Board's work schedule for the forthcoming Municipal Year (Minute 20 refers).

20 Work Schedule

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

Appended to the report was a copy of the following document for the information/comment of the meeting:-

- Draft Scrutiny Board (Children and Families) Work Schedule for 2012/2013 Municipal Year

Sandra Newbould, Principal Scrutiny Adviser, Scrutiny Support presented the report and responded to Members' queries and comments.

The following representatives were in attendance and responded to Members' queries and comments:-

- Councillor J Blake, Executive Board Member
- Paul Brennan, Deputy Director – Learning, Skills and Universal Services, Children's Services

Detailed discussion ensued on the contents of the report.

RESOLVED –

- a) That the contents of the report and appendices be noted.
- b) That priority be given to the following topics identified for Scrutiny and for them to be incorporated into the Board's work schedule for the coming year:-
 - Independent Children's Homes and Private Fostering in Leeds
 - Early Year's
 - Achievement in Maths and English
 - Children's Play Provision
 - Safeguarding
 - Academies
- c) That the Principal Scrutiny Adviser be requested to draw up terms of reference where appropriate, in conjunction with the Chair, and to seek Board Member feedback on the membership of working groups required during the year.

(Councillor K Renshaw left the meeting at 12.05pm during discussions of the above item)

(Councillor M Rafique left the meeting at 12.10pm during discussions of the above item)

21 Child Poverty report

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report on the Board's Inquiry into combating child poverty and raising aspirations.

Appended to the report was a copy of the following document for the information/comment of the meeting:-

- Draft Scrutiny Inquiry Final report Combating child poverty and raising aspirations – 20th June 2012

Sandra Newbould, Principal Scrutiny Adviser, Scrutiny Support presented the report and responded to Members' queries and comments.

RESOLVED-

- a) That the contents of the report and appendices be noted.
- b) That approval be given to the Board's Inquiry report and the supplementary information supporting the recommendations already agreed following its inquiry into combating child poverty and raising aspirations.

22 Date and Time of Next Meeting

Thursday 26th July 2012 at 9.45am in the Civic Hall, Leeds
(Pre meeting for Board Members at 9.15am)

(The meeting concluded at 12.15pm)