

SCRUTINY BOARD (CHILDREN'S SERVICES)

THURSDAY, 16TH JUNE, 2016

PRESENT: Councillor S Bentley in the Chair

Councillors J Akhtar, N Dawson, C Dobson,
K Groves, C Gruen, M Iqbal, A Lamb,
P Latty and K Renshaw

CO-OPTED MEMBERS (VOTING)

Mr E A Britten – Church Representative (Catholic)
Mr A Graham – Church Representative (Church of England)
Mrs J Ward – Parent Governor Representative (Secondary)
Ms J Hazelgrave – Parent Governor Representative (SEN)

CO-OPTED MEMBERS (NON-VOTING)

Ms C Foote – Teacher Representative Ms
Mrs S Hutchinson – Early Years Representative
Ms C Bewsher – Looked After Children and Care Leavers

1 Late Items

There were no late items.

2 Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

There were no disclosable pecuniary interests declared to the meeting.

3 Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes

Apologies for absence were submitted by Councillor J Elliott and Councillor S Field and Co-opted Members, Ms C Foote and Ms K Jan. Notification had been received that Councillor K Groves was to substitute for Councillor S Field.

4 Minutes - 21 April 2016

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 21 April 2016 be approved as a correct record.

5 Matters arising from the minutes

Minute No. 88 – Leeds Safeguarding Children's Board Update

The Board received a brief update regarding investment in therapeutic social work.

Minute No. 89 – Young Carers

The Board emphasised the importance of receiving up to date cluster information.

6 Co-opted Members

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report which sought the Board's formal consideration for the appointment of co-opted Members.

The following nominations for statutory voting co-opted members had been received:

- Church of England diocese representative – Mr A Graham
- Roman Catholic diocese representative – Mr E A Britten.

Parent governor representatives were as follows:

- Parent Governor (Primary) representative – Vacancy
- Parent Governor (Secondary) representative – Ms J Ward (23/04/15 – 22/04/2019)
- Parent Governor (Special Educational Needs) representative – Ms J Hazelgrave (12/09/14 – 11/09/18).

RESOLVED – That in addition to the above statutory voting co-opted members, the following be appointed as non-voting co-opted members to the Scrutiny Board for 2016/17:

- Ms C Foote – Teacher representative
- Ms K Jan – Teacher representative
- Ms S Hutchinson – Early Years representative (after consideration of two nominations)
- Ms C Bewsher – Looked After Children and Care Leavers
- Young Lives Leeds representative – Nomination not yet received.

7 Scrutiny Board Terms of Reference

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report which presented the Board's terms of reference.

RESOLVED – That the Board's terms of reference be noted.

8 Sources of Work for the Scrutiny Board

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report on potential sources of work and areas of priority within the Board's terms of reference.

The following information was appended to the report:

- Vision for Scrutiny at Leeds
- Summary Best Council Plan 2015-20 (2016-17 update)
- Leeds Children and Young People's Plan 2015-19 'From Good to Great'
- Draft work schedule for 2016/17
- Table of Scrutiny Inquires and Statements relating to Children and Families.

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

- Councillor M Rafique, Executive Member (Employment, Enterprise and Opportunity)
- Nigel Richardson, Director of Children's Services
- Steve Walker, Deputy Director (Safeguarding, Specialist and Targeted Services)
- Sue Rumbold, Chief Officer (Partnership Development and Business Support)
- Andrew Eastwood, Head of Service (Learning Improvement)

The Board was advised that Councillor L Mulherin, Executive Member (Children and Families) and Councillor J Dowson, Deputy Executive Member (Children and Families) were unable to attend today's meeting and had submitted their apologies for absence.

The Board acknowledged the financial challenges facing children's services and the impact on partner organisations

The following sources of work were put forward for consideration:

- Behaviour management in schools and the importance of developing good behaviour at an early age. The Board discussed the need to consider behaviour triggers, particularly in relation to mental health. The Board also discussed exploring positive discipline and restorative practices.
- School exclusions – what happens afterwards, alternative provision and the outcomes for young people.
- Home education and missing children.
- Developing the voice and influence of children and young people.
- The need to raise attainment levels.
- Children's centres and exploring opportunities for more joined up working.
- The role of clusters in light of changes to the funding model.
- The types of support in place for children and young people with mild and moderate learning difficulties.
- CAMHS transitions and the need to develop closer links with adult social services.

RESOLVED –

(a) That a number of the above issues be incorporated into the Board's work schedule for the 2016/17 municipal year

(b) That authority be given to the Chair of the Scrutiny Board (Children's Services), in conjunction with officers, to draw up inquiry terms of reference for subsequent approval by the Scrutiny Board.

(Councillor M Iqbal joined the meeting at 10.15am during the consideration of this item.)

9 Financial Health - Children's Services

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report which presented an update regarding the financial health of Children's Services.

The following were in attendance:

- Councillor M Rafique, Executive Member (Employment, Enterprise and Opportunity)
- Nigel Richardson, Director of Children's Services
- Steve Walker, Deputy Director (Safeguarding, Specialist and Targeted Services)
- Sue Rumbold, Chief Officer (Partnership Development and Business Support)
- Andrew Eastwood, Head of Service (Learning Improvement)
- Simon Criddle, Head of Finance, Children's Services Finance.

The key areas of discussion were:

- Concern that the budget for children's services was over-ambitious.
- An update on budget pressures, particularly in relation to looked after children and school transport. The Board was advised that a projected overspend of £3.6m was being reported to Executive Board.
- In-house fostering and recent improvements to the quality of residential provision.
- Concern about cuts to youth services and making best use of resources.
- The role of partners in helping to address financial challenges.
- A request that Alan Gay, Director of Resources, be invited to attend a future Board meeting to provide an update on the latest financial position in relation to children's services and whether future budgets could be done differently.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the Board notes the financial report for Children's Services for the financial year 2016/17 and the outturn summary for the financial year 2015/16.

- (b) That the Board invites Alan Gay, Director of Resources, to attend a future Board meeting to provide an update on the latest financial position in relation to children's services and whether future budgets could be done differently.

(Councillor K Renshaw joined the meeting at 11.10am during the consideration of this item.)

10 Children's Services Performance Report - Oct 2015 to March 2016

The Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Children's Services submitted a joint report which presented a summary of performance information in relation to outcomes for Leeds children and young people with a focus on the Children and Young People's Plan and children's social work service.

The following information was appended to the report:

- Appendix 1 – Indicator performance for the CYPP indicators as at the end of March 2016 (some figures at the end of April 2016)
- Appendix 2a: CYPP key indicator dashboard – city level: April 2016
- Appendix 2b: CYPP key indicator dashboard – cluster level: April 2016
- Appendix 3: Safeguarding specialist and targeted services March 2016 monthly practice improvement report
- Appendix 4: Children's settings services inspections dashboard: March 2016.

The following were in attendance:

- Nigel Richardson, Director of Children's Services
- Steve Walker, Deputy Director (Safeguarding, Specialist and Targeted Services)
- Sue Rumbold, Chief Officer (Partnership Development and Business Support)
- Andrew Eastwood, Head of Service (Learning Improvement)
- Peter Storrie, Head of Service (Performance Management and Improvement)
- Chris Hudson, Policy, Planning and Procedures Leader.

The key areas of discussion were:

- Concern about the increase in school exclusions and the use of alternative provision.
- The types of engagement work with children and young people. The Board was provided with an update about the recent 'make your mark' vote and the election of Leeds Children's Mayor. It was suggested that the Board be provided with examples of some interesting engagement work that had been undertaken in Leeds.
- The role of Area Inclusion Partnerships and the importance of sharing good practice across schools.

- A request that the Board be provided with a breakdown of ward based information regarding GCSE results.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the report and appendices be noted.
- (b) That the above requests for information be provided.

11 Date and Time of Next Meeting

Thursday, 21 July 2016 at 9.45 am (pre-meeting for all Board Members at 9.15 am)

(The meeting concluded at 12.15pm)