

SCRUTINY BOARD (CHILDREN AND FAMILIES)

THURSDAY, 16TH NOVEMBER, 2017

PRESENT: Councillor S Bentley in the Chair

Councillors J Akhtar, D Cohen, J Elliott,
C Gruen, P Latty, D Ragan, K Renshaw
and B Selby

CO-OPTED MEMBERS (VOTING)

Mr E A Britten – Church Representative (Catholic)

Ms J Hazelgrave – Parent Governor Representative (Special)

CO-OPTED MEMBERS (NON-VOTING)

Ms C Foote – Teacher Representative

Ms M Owen – Teacher Representative

Mrs S Hutchinson – Early Years Representative

Ms C Bewsher – Looked After Children and Care Leavers

39 Late Items

There were no late items.

40 Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

There were no disclosable pecuniary interests declared to the meeting, however the following matters were brought to the attention of the Scrutiny Board for information:

- Councillor D Ragan advised that she had previous experience as a foster carer and was currently involved with the Leeds St Anne's Shared Lives Scheme.

Councillor D Ragan remained present for the duration of the meeting.

41 Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes

Apologies for absence were submitted by Councillor N Dawson and Co-opted Members, Mr A Graham, Ms C Hopkins and Ms J Ward.

Notification had been received that Councillor D Ragan was to substitute for Councillor N Dawson.

42 Minutes - 19 October 2017

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 19 October 2017 be approved as a correct record.

43 Making Corporate Parenting Everybody's Business

The Head of the Virtual School submitted a report which provided the Board with an update on the progress made by the Corporate Parenting Board.

The following information was appended to the report:

- Department for Education – Applying corporate parenting principles to care and pathway planning – Statutory guidance for local authorities
- Children and Families Scrutiny Board Review into Corporate Parenting – Initial recommendations and update (October 2017)
- Children and Families – ‘Our promises to looked after children in Leeds’
- Briefing Note on Transport Issues for Care Leavers (29 March 2017).

The following were in attendance:

- Councillor Jonathan Pryor, Deputy Executive Member, Children and Families
- Councillor Helen Hayden, Chair of Corporate Parenting Board
- Andrew Eastwood, Chief Officer, Learning Improvement
- Jancis Andrew, Head Teacher Virtual School (LA Children).

The key areas of discussion were:

- Confirmation that Joel Hanna had recently been appointed Head of Service (Children Looked After) at Leeds City Council. Board Members were advised that Joel was due to start in the New Year.
- An update on apprenticeships, training, education and employment opportunities for care leavers.
- The different levels of higher education support for care leavers in different parts of the country. The Board was advised that this was to be raised with Joel Hanna once in post.
- Clarification sought regarding the ring fencing of apprenticeships for care leavers in the Council, the provision of holiday accommodation for care leavers in higher education and attainment data for children in care and care leavers.
- Transport support for care leavers and current concession in West Yorkshire and the limited support this provided for care leavers that studied outside West Yorkshire.
- The support available to kinship carers.
- Developing work with governing bodies in relation to looked after children and kinship care arrangements.
- Training and development for Elected Members. The Board was advised of the requirement for Member Management Committee to consider requests for the introduction of mandatory training for Elected Members. Members requested early notification of training and inclusion in the Council diary.
- Perceived differences regarding the support for looked after children and young people with disabilities, particularly young people accessing

education and learning settings outside of the Leeds area and the role of personal advisers in supporting children and young people with disabilities. Councillor Helen Hayden as the Chair of the Corporate Parenting Board undertook to look into these matters further at the next Corporate Parenting Board meeting and provide a response.

- The voice and influence of children looked after.
- The recommendation that short updates be provided to Community Committees six monthly and that the reports stipulated the level of attendance of elected members at Corporate Parenting Board.

RESOLVED – The Scrutiny Board (Children and Families)

- (a) Noted the contents of the report and appendices.
- (b) Requested that information regarding the ring fencing of apprenticeships for care leavers in the Council, the provision of holiday accommodation for care leavers in higher education and attainment data for children in care and care leavers be provided as requested.
- (c) Requested a further corporate parenting report in approximately 12 months' time.
- (d) That all Scrutiny recommendations in appendix 2 to the report also be reviewed at this time.

44 Scrutiny Inquiry - The Impact of Child Poverty on Attainment, Achievement and Attendance

The Head of Governance and Scrutiny Support and the Director of Children and Families submitted a report which presented information as part of the Board's inquiry into 'The Impact of Child Poverty on Attainment, Achievement and Attendance'.

The following information was appended to the report:

- National context
- Analysis of primary schools by pupil poverty levels
- Child Poverty and Learning Outcomes: Key Stage Analysis
- Demographics.

The following were in attendance:

- Councillor Jonathan Pryor, Deputy Executive Member, Children and Families
- Andrew Eastwood, Chief Officer, Learning Improvement
- Peter Storrie, Head of Service, Performance Management and Improvement
- Becky Lawrence, Performance Programme Manager.

The key areas of discussion were:

- The correlation between eligibility for free school meals and low attainment, and the integration of factors such as very high percentages EAL in some schools.
- Clarification sought about the conclusions that officers had drawn from the data collated regarding cause and effect. The Board was advised that it was difficult to draw conclusions and that a one size fits all solution would not fix the problem. The Board was also advised about the merits of an individualised approach, however it was understood that this required high levels of resource.
- The difficulties comparing schools due to the varying characteristics and mass of overlapping issues within each school, which required an individualised approach.
- Concern regarding the expectations of Ofsted for schools that were making considerable effort to support disadvantaged children and the challenges associated with transition from maintained school to academy status, and the impact on attainment on children during that change.
- Concern about the accelerated widening of the gap at KS2 and the lack of progress made in relation to closing the gap between pupils eligible for free school meals and their peers, particularly for those who were persistently disadvantaged. The Board was advised of the changes in national educational policy over the years regarding tracking and monitoring, which may affect the data from KS2 cohorts.
- The role of Clusters in supporting schools and communities in areas of high deprivation, and the funding structures.
- The need to share good practice with statistical neighbours and core cities, to identify and learn from their successes in closing the gap for vulnerable learners.
- The use of resources for wider informal experiences outside of school.
- Accountability of pupil premium funding. The Board was advised that information and data about pupil premium funding was contained on each schools' website.

RESOLVED – That the issues raised as part of the Board's inquiry into the impact of child poverty on attainment, achievement and attendance, be noted

(Mrs S Hutchinson left the meeting at 11.10am, Mr T Britten at 11.55am, Ms C Bewsher at 12.10pm and Councillor J Akhtar at 12.15pm, during the consideration of this item.)

45 Leeds School Status Overview

The Director of Children and Families submitted a report which provided an overview of the current status of schools across the city according to their governance arrangements.

The following were in attendance:

- Councillor Jonathan Pryor, Deputy Executive Member, Children and Families

- Andrew Eastwood, Chief Officer, Learning Improvement.

The Board requested further information regarding the total capacity of places at free schools across Leeds and the number of pupils that attended for each year group.

RESOLVED – That the above request for information be provided.

(Councillor D Ragan left the meeting at 12.25pm during the consideration of this item.)

46 Work Schedule

The Head of Governance and Scrutiny Support submitted a report which invited Members to consider the Board's work schedule for the 2017/18 municipal year.

In relation to the recent working group meeting regarding Moor Allerton Primary School and Allerton Grange High School Expansion, the Board was made aware of the Ofsted inspection that had taken place after consultation had started.

The key areas of discussion were:

- Clarification sought regarding the public engagement process to follow after this stage of the consultation. The Board was advised that this stage of the consultation was informal consultation and, subject to further consideration by Executive Board, further formal public consultation may follow.
- Clarification was also sought regarding the communication of the Ofsted inspection report to Executive Board. The Board was advised that the outcome of the Ofsted inspection would be communicated to the Executive Board in their report along with views expressed as a result of the informal consultation.
- In addition, clarification regarding the likelihood of the Ofsted inspection being known before the conclusion of the informal consultation period. The Board was advised that the date for publication of the Ofsted report could not be determined.

In response to concerns raised regarding the public being aware of the full circumstances when submitting their consultation response, it was requested the Director of Children and Families considers extending the current consultation period, as specified below. However, it was acknowledged that a further period of formal consultation in the future would potentially provide concerned parties with further opportunity to submit their views regarding any future proposal for school expansion.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That subject to any on-going discussions and scheduling decisions, the Board's outline work schedule be approved.
- (b) That the Director of Children and Families considers extending the consultation period, currently in progress, for the Moor Allerton Hall Primary School and Allerton Grange High School Expansion, until one week after the publication of the Ofsted inspection report for Allerton Grange High School.

(Councillor B Selby and Ms M Cox left the meeting at 12.35pm during the consideration of this item.)

47 Date and Time of Next Meeting

Thursday, 14 December 2017 at 9.45am (pre-meeting for all Board Members at 9.15am)

(The meeting concluded at 12.50pm)