

SCRUTINY BOARD (CHILDREN AND FAMILIES)

THURSDAY, 14TH NOVEMBER, 2013

PRESENT: Councillor J Chapman in the Chair

Councillors J Akhtar, J Elliott, C Gruen,
G Hussain, A Lamb, P Latty, K Mitchell,
M Rafique, K Renshaw and A Sobel

CO-OPTED MEMBERS (VOTING)

Mr E A Britten – Church Representative (Catholic)
Mr A Graham – Church Representative (Church of England)
Ms A Craven – Parent Governor Representative (Primary)
Ms J Ward – Parent Governor Representative (Secondary)

CO-OPTED MEMBERS (NON-VOTING)

Ms C Foote – Teacher Representative
Ms J Morris-Boam – Young Lives Leeds (0-13 age group)

48 Late Items

In accordance with her powers under Section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972, the Chair agreed to accept the following late information:

- Agenda item 9, appendix 3 of the report 'Recommendation Tracking – Private Care Homes and Children's Residential Charter' (Minute No. 54 refers)

The above document had been updated since the time of agenda despatch and was subsequently made available on the Council's website.

49 Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests.

50 Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes

Apologies for absence were submitted by Councillor Bill Urry and Co-opted Members, Sandra Hutchinson and Taira Kayani. Notification had been received that Councillor Ghulam Hussain was substituting for Councillor Bill Urry.

51 Minutes - 10 October 2013

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 10 October 2013 be approved as a correct record.

Draft minutes to be approved at the meeting
to be held on Thursday, 12th December, 2013

52 Cluster Inquiry - Session 1

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report providing an overview of the evidence to be presented at Session 1 of the Cluster inquiry.

The following information was appended to the report:

- Ward, Cluster and Area Committee area maps
- Children's Trust Board Report, Cluster update – governance and performance arrangements, 5th September 2013
- Schools Forum – A guide for schools and academies on its role and their responsibilities, June 2013, Schools Funding Agency.

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

- Councillor Judith Blake, Executive Board Member, Children's Services
- Nigel Richardson, Director of Children's Services
- Sue Rumbold - Chief Officer, Partnership Development and Business
- Ken Morton, Head of Service, Young People and Skills
- Jim Hopkinson, Head of Service, Children's Services, Targeted Services
- Martin Fleetwood, Chair of Schools Forum.

The key areas of discussion were:

- History of Cluster development and Cluster governance models. The Board requested further analysis on any correlation between governance models and the success of Clusters.
- Acknowledgement that the lives of children and young people are better as a result of cluster arrangements however the importance of getting lines of accountability right was stressed. The Board requested that Schools Forum and CTB provide an annual 'health check' report on the performance of Clusters to the Scrutiny Board.
- Geographical cluster areas and how they fit with Wards and Area Committee areas.
- Resources provided. The Board requested further information relating to all resources provided in addition to delegated cluster funding.
- Role of Schools Forum with regard to Clusters.
- Ambition of the Children's Trust Board and the aspirations and objectives of Clusters.
- Role of Target Service Leaders.
- Commissioning and how this operates on a cluster level. Further clarity was requested.

RESOLVED –

The Scrutiny Board (Children and Families):

Draft minutes to be approved at the meeting
to be held on Thursday, 12th December, 2013

- a) Noted and considered the information contained and referenced in the report and presented verbally to the Board.
- b) Requested additional information to be circulated to Board members and where appropriate will be discussed in Session 2 on 12 December 2013.

53 The implications of academies for the Leeds Children's Services and education in general

The Director of Children's Services submitted a report which provided information requested by the Scrutiny Board in December 2012 regarding the increase in the number of schools becoming Academies, the full implications of cost and resources on Leeds Children's Services and the development of a comprehensive Leeds position statement.

The following information was appended to the report:

- Converter and Sponsored academies in Leeds (October 2013)
- List of continuing responsibilities for all schools and academies funded from ESG
- Leeds Children's Services functions to Leeds maintained schools funded from ESG
- Leeds4Learning – A Strategy for Learning Improvement 2013.

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

- Councillor Judith Blake, Executive Board Member, Children's Services
- Nigel Richardson, Director of Children's Services
- Gail Webb, Head of Learning Improvement
- Nigel Wilson, Programme Manager, Academies and Trusts.

The key areas of discussion were:

- The level of Academy engagement with the School Improvement Team and the scope for robust challenge should concerns arise. The Board acknowledged the importance of the School Improvement Team and expressed a desire to write to the Secretary of State for Education with regard to the ongoing Ofsted evaluation of local authorities for the performance of all schools, including those that are no longer in local authority control.
- Summary of Academy provision in Leeds, conversion costs and impact on local authority funding. Further clarity was requested with regard to free schools, financial impact due to changes in non-domestic rates, and the net funding impact taking into consideration that some expenditure will no longer be required on/after conversion.

RESOLVED – The Scrutiny Board noted the content of the report and has requested further information to be circulated to all Board Members.

54 Recommendation Tracking - Private Care Homes and Children's Residential Charter

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report which provided an update from the Director of Children's Services with regard to recommendation 1, on the progress of the development of the Children's Residential Home Charter.

The following information was appended to the report:

- Recommendation Flow Chart and Classifications
- Review of Private Care Homes Inquiry
- Children's Home Charter.

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

- Councillor Judith Blake, Executive Board Member, Children's Services
- Nigel Richardson, Director of Children's Services
- Steve Walker, Deputy Director of Children's Services, Safeguarding, Specialist and Targeted Services
- Sandra Pentelow, Principal Scrutiny Adviser, Democratic Services.

The key areas of discussion were:

- The inclusion of Children and Young People in the development of the charter.
- That children should feel happy, safe and secure in their home.

RESOLVED –

The Scrutiny Board (Children and Families):

- a) Noted the information contained in the report
- b) Resolved to stop monitoring recommendation 1.

55 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.

The draft Scrutiny Board (Children and Families) work schedule for 2013/2014 was appended to the report.

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

RESOLVED – That the contents of the report and appendices be noted.

56 Date and Time of Next Meeting

Thursday, 12th December 2013 at 9.45 am in the Civic Hall, Leeds
(Pre meeting for Board Members at 9.15 am)

(The meeting concluded at 12:25pm)