

SCRUTINY BOARD (CHILDREN AND FAMILIES)

THURSDAY, 12TH DECEMBER, 2013

PRESENT: Councillor J Chapman in the Chair

Councillors J Akhtar, K Bruce, D Coupar,
J Elliott, C Gruen, A Lamb, M Rafique and
K Renshaw

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)

57 **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, Budget update April to October 2013/14 and Budget Proposals for 2014/15

(Minute No. 63 refers)

The above information was not available at the time of agenda despatch and has subsequently been made available on the Council's website.

58 **Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests**

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests.

59 **Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes**

Apologies for absence were submitted by Councillors P Latty, A Sobel, B Urry, K Mitchell and Co-opted Members Ms S Hutchinson – Early Years Representative and Ms T Kayani – Young Lives Leeds (13-19 age group). Councillor A Sobel was substituted by Cllr D Coupar. Councillor K Mitchell was substituted by Cllr K Bruce

60 **Minutes - 14 November 2013**

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 14 November 2013 be approved as a correct record.

Draft minutes to be approved at the meeting
to be held on Thursday, 16th January, 2014

61 Cluster Inquiry - Session 2

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report providing an overview of the evidence to be presented at Session 2 of the Cluster inquiry.

The following information was appended to the report:

- CYPP Key indicator dashboard – City Level April and September 2013
- CYPP Key indicator dashboard – Cluster Level April and September 2013
- Monthly Obsession tracker by Cluster
- Number and rate of young people who are NEET by Cluster
- Children and Young people are safe from harm – October 2013
- Sharing best practice within and across clusters
- Working together to safeguard children, supporting effective early intervention and prevention services in clusters
- Challenges and socio-economic impacts by cluster

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

- Nigel Richardson, Director of Children's Services
- Ken Morton - HOS Young People and Skills
- Jim Hopkinson - Head of Service Childrens Services Targeted Services
- Martin Fleetwood – Chair of Schools Forum
- Martin Stenton – Area Head of Targeted Services
- Melanie Robinson – Targeted Service Leader
- Simon Toyne - Targeted Service Leader

The key areas of discussion were:

- The data available to Clusters to inform priorities and highlight challenges
- Recent evidence from School inspections which refer to the value of cluster working.
- Progress of Clusters in tackling obsessions
- The challenges for Clusters with regard to partnership engagement, cross boundary working, performance, benchmarking and data comparison.
- Best practice models for Clusters and sub groups
- Mechanisms for monitoring investment and spending
- Case examples of partnership approaches to working with families and sharing best practice

RESOLVED –

The Scrutiny Board (Children and Families):

- a) Noted and considered the information contained and referenced in the report and presented verbally to the Board.
- b) In addition to session 3, requested a further working group session in February 2014 to reflect on evidence.

62 Update on the development of the offer to kinship carers in Leeds

The Director of Children's Services submitted a report which provided an update on the development of the corporate offer to Leeds kinship carers and the review of the Kinship Care (Family and Friends) Policy

The following information was appended to the report:

- Formal and informal arrangements where children and young people live with Kinship Carers.
- Leeds City Council, Kinship Care (Family and Friends) Policy Draft V15 (6Nov13)

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

- Nigel Richardson, Director of Children's Services
- Steve Walker, Deputy Director of Children's Services, Safeguarding, Specialist and Targeted Services
- Sarah Johal – Service Delivery Manager

The key areas of discussion were:

- That the work undertaken by Leeds is attracting positive national attention.
- The strategy for communicating with members of the public who are kinship carers.
- Allowance and financial support mechanisms for formal and informal kinship arrangements.

RESOLVED –

The Scrutiny Board (Children and Families):

- a) Noted the developments and supports the work towards providing the offer to kinship carers in Leeds.
- b) Welcomed the draft policy and supports the ongoing development and implementation of the policy.

63 Financial Health Monitoring Children's Services- Budget Update April - September 2013/14 and Budget Proposals for 2014/15

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted reports and supplementary information to facilitate debate regarding the current Children's Services budget position for 2013/14 and the budget proposals for 2014/15

The following information was appended to the report:

- Children's Services Financial Dashboard 2013/14, Month 6
- Children's Services Financial Dashboard 2013/14, Month 7
- Initial Budget Proposals for 2014/15 – Children's Services Extracted from report to Executive Board 18th December 2013.

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

- Nigel Richardson - Director of Children's Services
- Sarah Sinclair – Chief Officer (Strategy, Commissioning and Performance)
- Neil Warren – Head of Finance – Children's Services
- Simon Darby - Head of Finance – Children's Services

The key areas of discussion were:

- The projected overspend for 2012/13 would be £2.7m, against a reduced (£24m) net managed budget of £135m.
- The amount of contribution to be made by Health services and if this is sufficient to sustain required services now and going forward.
- The significant pressures on all budgets in 2014/15 and the increasing demand for children's social services.
- The continued effort to invest in preventative and early intervention services.
- That the Children and Families Bill may create additional budget pressures
- Concern about the capacity to sustain services in the future as austerity measures reduce funding.
- Pupil premium and the increases for secondary (+£35) and primary pupils (+£400)
- Free school meals for children aged 7 and under.

RESOLVED –

The Scrutiny Board (Children and Families):

- a) Noted the financial position of Children's Services April to October for 2013/14
- b) Considered the initial 2014/15 budget proposals relevant to the Scrutiny Board's portfolio.
- c) Confirmed that there are no current concerns to report to the Scrutiny Board (Resources and Council Services)

64 Director's Response - Scrutiny Inquiry into Raising Attainment in Maths and English

The Director of Children's Services submitted a report which set out his formal response to the recommendations of the Children and Families Scrutiny Board inquiry into Raising Attainment in Maths and English agreed in September 2013.

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

- Nigel Richardson - Director of Children's Services
- Kevin Paynes - 11-19 Leadership and Management Lead

The key areas of discussion were:

- Recognition of the work already started in response to the recommendations.
- The continued efforts of the School Improvement Team to work with all schools including Academies.

RESOLVED –

The Scrutiny Board (Children and Families):

- a) Noted the responses to the recommendation and acknowledged the hard work and positive steps that have already been taken by Children's Services Staff and partners since the inquiry.

65 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 –

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

66 Date and Time of Next Meeting

Thursday, 16th January 2014 at 9.30am in the Cluster areas. Locations to be confirmed.

(No Pre meeting)

The next public meeting of the Scrutiny Board will be Thursday, 13th February 2014 at 9.45am in the Civic Hall.
(Pre meeting for Board Members at 9:15)

(The meeting concluded at 12:35pm)