

SCRUTINY BOARD (CHILDREN AND FAMILIES)

THURSDAY, 18TH DECEMBER, 2014

PRESENT: Councillor J Chapman in the Chair

Councillors J Elliott, C Gruen, A Lamb,
P Latty, K Mitchell, M Rafique, B Selby,
A Sobel and C Towler

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)

CO-OPTED MEMBERS (NON - VOTING)

Ms C Foote – Teacher Representative
Ms T Kayani – Young Lives Leeds

46 Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests.

47 Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes

Apologies for absence were submitted by Councillors K Renshaw, B Urry and F Venner and Co-opted Members, J Hazelgrave, S Hutchinson and K Jan. Councillor K Renshaw was substituted by Councillor C Towler and Councillor F Venner was substituted by Councillor B Selby.

48 Minutes - 13 November 2014

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 13 November 2014 be approved as a correct record.

49 Youth Activity Funding

The Head of Early Help Services (Children's Services) and Area Leader (Corporate), Citizens and Communities submitted a report which presented a response to questions raised by the Scrutiny Board (Children and Families).

The following information was appended to the report:

- 2013/14 Budget and project data for each Community Committee
- 2014/15 Budget and project data for each Community Committee

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

- Councillor Judith Blake, Executive Member (Children and Families)

- Councillor Jane Dowson, Deputy Executive Member (Children and Families)
- Councillor Peter Gruen, Executive Member (Neighbourhoods Planning and Personnel)
- Nigel Richardson, Director of Children's Services
- James Rogers, Assistant Chief Executive (Citizens and Communities)
- Rory Barke, Area Leader (Corporate)
- Andrea Richardson, Head of Service, Early Help
- Jean Ellison, Youth Offer Lead.

The key areas of discussion were:

- The resolution of initial problems with the new scheme over the past few weeks and how the delegation to Community Committees can be improved.
- Positive proposals to improve the inclusion of Children and Young People in decision making and supporting the right projects, whilst balancing this with Community Committee objectives and priorities.
- The work to be done to develop voluntary and community sector involvement across all communities and make them aware of the funding available.
- The future direction of Community Committees and the delegation of responsibility and resources. Collaborative working between departments and Community Committees.
- Budget management and surplus and the investment in youth activity. The Board were advised that there is a formula for distribution of funds and spend is closely monitored. Community Committee champions have an important role to ensure that investment is being made effectively.
- Quality assurance and the variation of the quality of service provided across localities. It was stated that good practice in localities should be shared city wide. The Board were advised that quality assurance and improvement will remain a function of Children's Services. A cross council steering group has been set up which includes wider council partners with regard to the provision of youth activities.
- That the proposal to integrate the youth offer team to work in the localities will support quality assurance, commissioning and engagement processes.
- Youth panels in some areas are working better than others, further work is to be done to improve.

RESOLVED –

The Scrutiny Board (Children and Families)

- a) noted the content of the report and endorsed the proposals on page 6 of the agenda.
- b) requested Universal Youth Activity budget information be provided at a later date for each Community Committee which reflects the year end position for 2014/15.

50 Universal Infant Free School Meals

The Director of Children's Services submitted a report which provided an update on the implementation of Infant Free School Meals (UIFSM), overall free school meal take up/promotion and how this links to reducing poverty.

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

- Councillor Judith Blake, Executive Member (Children and Families)
- Councillor Jane Dowson, Deputy Executive Member (Children and Families)
- Nigel Richardson, Director of Children's Services
- Andrea Richardson, Head of Service, Early Help
- Anne Cowling, Healthy Schools co-ordinator
- Mandy Snaith, Head of Catering and Cleaning
- Helen McLeod, Healthy Eating Advisor
- Stephen Hoggart, Asset Planning Manager.

The key areas of discussion were:

- The new capital fund pot announced by the Government. A bid has been made to the Education Funding Agency and any funding allocation will be known in January 2015.
- With regard to uptake of school meals, there is no definitive data as yet however the Board were advised that the impact at the 190 Catering Leeds sites demonstrates a significant uptake in key stage 1 , some sites 100%. The knock on effect to uptake of school meals at KS2 is around 7% which is a bigger increase than anticipated.
- Healthy eating, and free school meals as part of the obesity prevention agenda. The Board were advised that there is no national or international guidance of what works. The impact of UIFSM will provide valuable information.

RESOLVED –

The Scrutiny Board (Children and Families)

- a) Noted the information provided.

- b) Requested data on update of free school meals once census information has been collated early in 2015.

(Councillor M Rafique left the meeting at 10.45am and Councillor A Lamb joined the meeting at 10.50am.)

(At 11am the Scrutiny Board and all attendees observed a one minutes silence in memory of those killed at the school in Peshawar)

51 Financial Health Monitoring Children's Services- Budget Update Period 7 2014/15 and Budget Proposals for 2015/16

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report which provided a Children's Services budget update for period 7, 2014/15. The budget proposals for 2015/16 were also brought before the Scrutiny Board for consideration.

The following information was appended to the report:

- Children's Services Financial Dashboard - 2014/15 Financial Year Month 7 (April to October)
- Initial Budget Proposals 2015/16 Directorate Children's Services.

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

- Councillor Judith Blake, Executive Member (Children and Families)
- Councillor Jane Dowson, Deputy Executive Member (Children and Families)
- Nigel Richardson, Director of Children's Services
- John Bywater, Principal Financial Manager

The key areas of discussion were:

- Period 7 £3.6m budget pressures due to placements of looked after children. There has been a change in referral patterns recently following the publicity generated by Rotherham. The aim is to reduce this pressure by the end of the financial year.
- 2015/16 budget. The strategy is working, more needs to be done around partnership working and co-location. There is a requirement to make a saving of £16m with additional pressures that may be carried forward from 2014/15. Since 2010 direct funding the Children's Services has reduced and funding direct to Schools has increased.
- The development of services that Schools can buy back from the local authority.
- The requirement for a fundamental restructure to support locality working with Clusters and partners.
- The size and scale of Children's Services which will be smaller.
- The need for greater focus on targeted and specific support, early prevention and intervention, narrowing the gap and learning improvement, learning and skills.

RESOLVED –

The Scrutiny Board (Children and Families):

- a) Noted the financial position for period 7 2014/15

- b) Considered the budget proposals and confirmed that no feedback is required to the Scrutiny Board (Resources and Council Services) for consideration.

52 Performance update for April to September 2014

The Director of Children's Services and Deputy Chief Executive submitted a report which provided a summary of performance information relating to the first two quarters of the 2014/15 financial year.

The following information was appended to the report:

- Indicator performance for the CYPP indicators as at the end of September 2014 (quarter 2)
- Children and Young Peoples plan key indicators dashboard – city level September 2014
- Children and Young Peoples plan key indicator dashboard – cluster level September 2014
- Safeguarding Specialist and Targeted Services September monthly practice improvement report.

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

- Councillor Judith Blake, Executive Member (Children and Families)
- Councillor Jane Dowson, Deputy Executive Member (Children and Families)
- Nigel Richardson, Director of Children's Services
- Peter Storrie, Head of Performance Management and Improvement
- Chris Hudson, Principal Performance Officer.

The key areas of discussion were:

- The positive performance of the department in general, the challenge is now pace of change.
- Significant improvement in school attendance. Improvement is still required in unauthorised and persistent absence at secondary level.
- Improvement in NEET figures and reducing the number of 'not knows'
- The general improvement in learning performance. There is however a mixed pattern of achievement. FSM children achievement needs to be improved.
- The impact of the 'first results' measure for the GCSE's achievement indicator
- Improvement in dental checks for looked child after children and child protection conferences
- Apprenticeships, the decline in numbers that have started and how this could be enhanced

RESOLVED – The Scrutiny Board (Children and Families) noted the performance information presented.

(Councillor M Rafique re-joined the meeting at 11.40 during this item.)

53 Children and Young Peoples Plan - Scrutiny and the Budget and Policy Framework

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report which outlined the process for developing the Budget and Policy Framework and the role that Scrutiny has in its development. The Director of Children's Services submitted a report which set out the intention to consult with stakeholders on the development of the CYPP 2015 – 2019.

The following information was appended to the report:

- Our vision, obsessions, outcomes, priorities and indicators (including indicators under review)
- Challenges

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

- Councillor Jane Dowson, Deputy Executive Member (Children and Families)
- Nigel Richardson, Director of Children's Services
- Peter Storrie, Head of Performance Management and Improvement.

The key areas of discussion were:

- The momentum that the current CYPP has generated. The aim to maintain consistency going forward and the basic proposition of Child Friendly City, the five outcomes and priorities.
- The current debate around extending the number of obsessions, potentially to include early start and ensuring children are ready to learn.
- Relationships with partners and the influence of a city wide plan.
- The Board requested that the following be included in the key indicators/ priorities
 - a) ensuring that young people are ready to work
 - b) reducing the attainment gap in Leeds, in particular for disadvantaged children, including pupil premium children and groups where underachievement is more prevalent.
 - c) improving child and adolescent mental health support

RESOLVED –

The Scrutiny Board (Children and Families) considered the information provided and recommended that the following be included in the key indicators/ priorities:

- a) ensuring that young people are ready to work

- b) reducing the attainment gap in Leeds, in particular for disadvantaged children, including pupil premium children and groups where underachievement is more prevalent.
- c) improving child and adolescent mental health support

The above will be reported to Executive Board for consideration with the draft Children and Young Peoples Plan 2015-2019.

54 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 2014/2015 and the Executive Board minutes for 19 November 2014 were appended to the report.

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

RESOLVED –The Scrutiny Board (Children and Families) noted the content of the report and agreed the revised work programme.

55 Date and Time of Next Meeting

Thursday, 29 January 2015 – The Scrutiny Board will be visiting a number of Schools to discuss learning improvement as part of the learning improvement inquiry

The next full meeting of the Scrutiny Board will take place on 26 February 2015 at 9.45am in the Civic Hall, Leeds. (Pre meeting for Board Members at 9.15am)

(The meeting concluded at 12.30pm)