

SCRUTINY BOARD (CHILDREN'S SERVICES)

THURSDAY, 18TH JUNE, 2015

PRESENT: Councillor S Bentley in the Chair

Councillors N Dawson, C Dobson, J Elliott,
C Gruen, M Harland, A Lamb, P Latty,
A Ogilvie, K Renshaw and B Urry

CO-OPTED MEMBERS (VOTING)

Mr E A Britten – Church Representative (Catholic)

Mrs J Ward – Parent Governor Representative (Secondary)

Ms J Hazelgrave – Parent Governor Representative (SEN)

CO-OPTED MEMBERS (NON-VOTING)

Ms K Jan – Teacher Representative

Ms S Hutchinson – Early Years Representative

Ms C Bewsher – Looked After Children and Care Leavers Representative

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 F Venner and Co-opted Members, Ms C Foote, Mr A Graham and Ms T Kayani. Notification was received that Councillor M Harland was to substitute for Councillor F Venner.

4 Minutes - 23 April 2015

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the Scrutiny Board (Children and Families) meeting held on 23 April 2015, be approved as a correct record.

5 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 to the Board.

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 2015/16:

- Ms C Foote – Teacher representative
- Ms K Jan – Teacher representative
- Ms S Hutchinson – Early Years representative (after consideration of two nominations)
- Ms T Kayani – Young Lives Leeds representative
- Ms C Bewsher – Looked After Children and Care Leavers representative.

6 Scrutiny Board (Children's Services) 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.

7 Sources of Scrutiny Work for 2015/2016

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 (2015-16 update)
- Leeds Children and Young People's Plan 2015-19 'From Good to Great'
- List of previous scrutiny inquiries relating to Children's Services.

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

- Councillor L Yeadon, Executive Member (Children and Families)
- Councillor M Rafique, Executive Member (Employment, Enterprise and Opportunity)
- Nigel Richardson, Director of Children's Services

- Paul Brennan, Deputy Director (Learning, Skills and Universal Services)
- Steve Walker, Deputy Director (Safeguarding, Specialist and Targeted Services)
- Sue Rumbold, Chief Officer (Partnership Development and Business Support).

Nigel Richardson, Director of Children's Services, provided an update on the Leeds Children and Young People's Plan 2015-19. Other key areas of work included:

- Ensuring that children were equipped for learning, particularly in relation to speech, language, behaviour and communication skills.
- Development of breakthrough projects, e.g. domestic violence and other key cross cutting themes.
- An update that Leeds City Council and its partners had secured £4.8 million from the Department for Education's Innovation Programme, which aimed to kick-start the most promising proposals for new ways of providing children's social care.

Councillor L Yeadon, Executive Member (Children and Families), highlighted the importance of the 'every disabled child matters' agenda and improvements needed to support disabled people access services.

Councillor M Rafique, Executive Member (Employment, Enterprise and Opportunity) suggested a potential review of work experience placements to compliment the request of the Youth Council, as referred to in the report. He added that work experience placements were not always a positive experience for young people.

The following sources of work were also put forward for consideration:

- Concern about an under provision of school places in certain parts of the city and basic need.
- Support for disabled and SEN children and the wider family, including transition to adulthood.
- Developing the role of SILCs and other specialist provision, including dyslexia, dyspraxia and mental health support. Members also discussed the role of the youth service and the need for early intervention and support. In addition, concerns were raised about signposting and access arrangements to support families and the cost of screening.
- Concern about increased demands on the targeted youth service. Members also requested an update on universal activities delegated to community committees.
- The reorganisation of children's homes in Leeds.
- Concern about an inconsistent approach to pre-school and after-school childcare provision across the city.
- Promoting healthy, active lifestyles in schools.

- The changing pattern of school funding and the impact on school clusters. Members were advised that work was on-going involving the schools forum and health professionals to develop a sustainable way forward.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That a number of the above issues be incorporated into the Board's work schedule for the 2015/16 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 A Lamb joined the meeting at 10.15am during the consideration of this item.)

(Ms S Hutchinson joined the meeting at 11.20am during the consideration of this item.)

8 Date and Time of Next Meeting

Thursday, 23 July 2015 at 9.45am (pre meeting for all Board Members at 9.15am)

(The meeting concluded at 11.20am)