

SCRUTINY BOARD (CHILDREN'S SERVICES)

THURSDAY, 15TH OCTOBER, 2015

PRESENT: Councillor S Bentley in the Chair

Councillors B Anderson, N Dawson,
C Dobson, J Elliott, C Gruen, H Hayden,
J Jarosz, A Lamb and B Urry

CO-OPTED MEMBERS (VOTING)

Mr A Graham – Church Representative (Church of England)

Mrs J Ward – Parent Governor Representative (Secondary)

Ms J Hazelgrave – Parent Governor Representative (SEN)

CO-OPTED MEMBERS (NON-VOTING)

Ms C Foote – Teacher Representative

Ms K Jan – Teacher Representative

Ms T Kayani – Young Lives Leeds

Ms C Bewsher – Looked After Children and Care Leavers

29 Late Items

There were no late items.

30 Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

There were no disclosable pecuniary interests declared to the meeting.

31 Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes

Apologies for absence were submitted by Councillors P Latty, A Ogilvie and F Venner. Notification had been received that Councillor B Anderson was to substitute for Councillor P Latty, Councillor J Jarosz for Councillor A Ogilvie and Councillor H Hayden for Councillor F Venner.

32 Minutes - 10 September 2015

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 10 September 2015 be approved as a correct record.

33 Preparing for the Future, Supporting Special Educational Needs and Disabled Young People

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report which presented information as part of the Board's Inquiry into 'Preparing for the Future, Supporting Special Educational Needs and Disabled Young People'.

The following information was appended to the report:

- Local Authority Disabled Children's Charter
- Responses to Every Disabled Child Matters (EDCM) Charter Commitments
- Making Leeds a great place to learn for all our children and young people: the Leeds Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Strategy 2014-17
- Leeds Local Offer Annual Feedback Report
- Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) Review Report – Special Educational Needs Statutory Assessment and Provision (SENSAP), Complex Needs Service
- Children and Young people with SEND – Demographic information
- Leeds SEND attainment and attendance data
- National Sensory Impairment Partnership (NATSIP) benchmarking data.

The following were in attendance:

- Councillor Jane Dowson, Deputy Executive Member (Children and Families)
- Sue Rumbold, Chief Officer (Partnership Development and Business Support)
- Barbara Newton, Head of Service (Complex Needs)
- Andrew Eastwood, Head of Service (Learning Improvement)
- Hannah Lamplugh, Voice and Influence Lead.

The Board received a brief presentation on recent voice and influence work that had been undertaken, particularly in terms of improving services for children and young people with SEND.

The key areas of discussion were:

- Clarification sought about feedback on the EHCP. The Board was advised that feedback from partners and young people cohort had been positive. The Board requested a copy of the EHCP template and details about the action plan that was being developed.
- Confirmation of a multi-agency approach to the assessment process.
- The importance of tracking destinations and preparing SEND young people for adulthood. The Board sought clarification about restorative approaches to service provision by Adult Services and how this differed from Children's Services. The Board was advised about support available to those with severe complex needs and other vulnerable groups. In addition, the Board was advised that preparation for adulthood and the work of the Transitions team was being discussed at the December Scrutiny Board.
- The different settings to support SEND young people with their educational or life skills development.
- An emphasis on providing services with people and not to them.

- A rise in the number and complexity of children and young people with SEND and the challenges associated with balancing increased need, available resources and school places.
- Ensuring that young people felt empowered and involved in discussions about service delivery. The Board was advised that an advocacy service was in place to support this process where necessary.
- A request that the outcome of priorities identified by children and young people in a recent 'Make Your Mark' ballot be brought back to the Board.
- A further request that attendance and attainment data be included in the next inquiry session.
- Concern that some of the information contained within the SEND Strategy Action Plan was in need of updating. It was requested that an updated version be brought back to the Board.
- The Leeds Local Offer, 'You Said We Did' Annual Report 2015 regarding feedback about the local offer website and the documented response.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the issues raised as part of the Board's Inquiry be noted.
- (b) That the above requests for information / updates be provided.

(Ms K Jan joined the meeting at 10.20am, during the consideration of this item.)

(Councillor J Elliott left the meeting at 11.15am and Ms C Bewsher at 11.40am, during the consideration of this item.)

34 Leeds Residential Children's Homes review and update

The Head of Service (Children Looked After) submitted a report which provided an update on the findings and recommendations of the Residential Review and progress towards modernising the provision for Leeds' children.

The following were in attendance:

- Councillor Jane Dowson, Deputy Executive Member (Children and Families)
- Sue Rumbold, Chief Officer (Partnership Development and Business Support)
- Rob Murray, Head of Service (Children Looked After)
- Jacquie Edhouse, Service Delivery Manager (Children's Homes).

The key areas of discussion were:

- Clarification that placements to external providers were required to be rated 'good' or 'outstanding'.

- The benefits of developing good practice with external providers and acting as a 'critical friend'.
- A request that the Board be kept updated on the outcomes of the review.
- Development of a model to increase the level of wrap around support across children's homes in Leeds.
- An update on the recruitment of foster carers and a more targeted approach to kinship care.
- The need to maintain existing school provision for children in need of care.
- A request that an update on respite care be included in future reporting.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the above requests for information / updates be provided
- (b) That the Board supports the following:

- The development of children's homes as an integral part of the Children's Services offer to vulnerable children and families in Leeds;
- The plan to provide small homes for up to four children which reflect the accommodation of a family home rather than an institution; and
- The refurbishment of the children's homes to reflect modern family living.

(Mr A Graham left the meeting at 11.55am, Ms K Jan at 11.55am, Ms T Kayani at 12 noon and Ms C Foote at 12.20pm.)

35 Work Schedule

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report which invited Members to consider the Board's work schedule for the 2015/16 municipal year.

The following updates were provided:

- Confirmation that a joint working group with Adult Social Services, Public Health, NHS, was taking place next week to consider safeguarding arrangements in relation to taxi and private hire licensing.
- The Board was advised that consultation on BESD / SILC provision had been deferred by Executive Board. It was agreed that the Scrutiny Board's work schedule be amended accordingly.
- A request that the Board received an update on the review of Leeds Residential Children's Homes, possibly in early 2016/17 municipal year.
- Potential visits to SILCs and other educational settings as part of the Board's ongoing inquiry work.
- A request to receive information about the role of 'Empowering Parents Improving Choice' (EPIC).

RESOLVED – That subject to the above comments, the work schedule be approved.

36 Date and Time of Next Meeting

Thursday, 12 November 2015 at 9.45am. (Pre-meeting for all Board Members at 9.15am.

(The meeting concluded at 12.30pm)