

SCRUTINY BOARD (CHILDREN'S SERVICES)

THURSDAY, 17TH JULY, 2008

PRESENT: Councillor W Hyde in the Chair

Councillors B Cleasby, R D Feldman, B Lancaster and E Taylor

CO-OPTED MEMBERS (VOTING):

Mr I Falkingham	- Parent Governor Representative (Special)
Prof P H J H Gosden	- Church Representative (Church of England)
Mrs S Knights	- Parent Governor Representative (Primary)-

CO-OPTED MEMBERS (NON-VOTING):

Ms J Morris-Boam	- Leeds Voice Children and Young People Services Forum Representative
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9 Chair's Opening Remarks

The Chair welcomed all in attendance to the July meeting of the Scrutiny Board (Children's Services).

10 Declaration of Interests

Councillor B Lancaster, Mr I Falkingham and Mrs S Knights declared a personal interest in relation to agenda item 7, Inclusion Statement – Formal Response, due to being governors at the North West SILC (Minute No. 13 refers).

Councillors R Feldman and E Taylor declared a personal interest in relation to agenda item 7, Inclusion Statement – Formal Response, due to being governors of Allerton High School (Minute No. 13 refers).

Further declarations of interest were made at later points in the meeting (Minute Nos. 13 and 14 refer).

11 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted by Councillors G Driver, J Elliott, J McKenna, V Morgan and K Renshaw and by Mr T Britten, Ms C Foote and Ms T Kayani.

12 Minutes - Scrutiny Board (Children's Services) - 26th June, 2008

Draft minutes to be approved at the meeting to be held on Thursday, 18th September, 2008

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 26th June, 2008 be confirmed as a correct record.

13 Inclusion Statement - Formal Response

Further to Minute No. 135 of the meeting held on 24th April, 2008, consideration was given to a report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development, which provided Members with information in relation to the Board's statement on inclusion and the Department's formal response.

A copy of the statement on inclusion and the Department's formal response was appended to the report.

The Chair welcomed to the meeting the following officers:-

- Carol Jordan, Director of Integrated Children's Services; and
- Gary Nixon, Head of Service, SEN, Statutory Assessment and Provision (SENSAP).

Officers reported a number of additional proposed actions. It was agreed that a copy of the revised action plan would be circulated to the Board, after the meeting.

The main highlighted points were:-

Recommendation 2

- The Board stressed that the recommendation referred to professionals as well as parents. The Head of Service, SENSAP, reported that there would be regular meetings involving trade union groups, teachers and non-teacher representatives.
- Members indicated that they remained concerned especially about parental consultation and would be looking to see improvement as a result of the actions proposed in the formal response when the next progress report was presented.

Recommendation 6

- It was suggested that a **voluntary sector** representative could be included on the revised **Programme Board**.

The Board agreed that progress with recommendations 1, 2, 4 and 5 would be incorporated into the next recommendation tracking report in October.

The Chair thanked both officers for attending the meeting.

(Councillor B Cleasby declared a personal interest in this item due to being a Governor of Benton Park School).

(Mrs S Knights declared a personal interest in this item due to being Chair of Leeds City Wide Family Forum and Member of the Area Management Board).

RESOLVED –

- (1) That the report and information appended to the report be noted;
- (2) That the Board notes the revised responses provided; and
- (3) That the Board continues to monitor progress with recommendations 1,2, 4 and 5 through the recommendation tracking process.

14 Recommendation Tracking

Further to Minute No. 98 of the meeting held on 14th February, 2008, the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report, which requested Members to confirm the status of scrutiny recommendations (Children's Services).

Appended to the report was the recommendation tracking flowchart and draft status of recommendations.

The following officers were in attendance:-

- Keith Burton, Deputy Director of Children's Services;
- Rodger Walker, Resources Team Manager (Children);
- John Paxton, Head of the Integrated Youth Support Service; and
- Carol Jordan, Director of Integrated Children's Services.

The Chair also welcomed to the meeting, Steve Wainwright, METRO, who was in attendance to respond to Members' queries and comments in relation to recommendations and actions arising from the 'catching the bus' report.

The Board considered the draft status of recommendations and the main highlighted points were:-

- In relation to recommendation 3 of the adoption inquiry, the Resources Team Manager (Children) confirmed that Leeds had invested in three additional **Adoption Officers**, as opposed to 3 fostering officers. It was agreed to provide the Board with an update in October to report on the progress made in recruiting to these posts.
- One Member referred to the **public engagement events** in Beeston and Chapeltown, which aimed to raise awareness of people who could adopt children. Members suggested extending this initiative to public events across all areas of Leeds.
- The Board was informed that the **Breeze Youth Promise** was close to being finalised and signed-off by the **Leeds Youth Council**. It was suggested that young people present the Promise to Scrutiny Board Members.
- Members considered efforts made to consult with **non-service users** about their views on the **Youth Service**. They requested further work on this recommendation.

- The Board was advised that the Leader of the Council was looking into the cost of **departmental publications** as a corporate issue.
- The Board discussed travel initiatives for young people, including the **'get around for a pound'** promotion and the timetable for implementing the **smart-card facility**.
- The Board was informed that a report was being submitted to the Executive Board on proposed changes to the **Home to School Transport Policy**.
- The Board asked for an update on September 2008 admission numbers for **Fountain Primary School**.

The Chair thanked officers and Steve Wainwright, METRO, for attending the meeting.

(Professor Gosden left the meeting at 11.30 am during the consideration of this item).

(Councillor B Cleasby declared a personal interest in this item due to being a Member of South Leeds Fostering Board).

(Councillor B Lancaster declared a personal interest in this item due to being Chair of the Foster Carers' Liaison Group and Member of the Adoption Panel).

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the report and information appended to the report be noted; and
- (2) The Board agrees the status of recommendations, subject to continued monitoring of recommendation 3 on adoption; recommendation 7 on youth services; and recommendation 9 on Fountain Primary School.

15 Children and Young People's Plan 2009: Consultation Process

The Director of Children's Services submitted a report, which outlined the arrangements for developing the **Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) 2009-2014**.

The following information was appended to the report:-

- Consultation for CYPP – Towards the Leeds Children and Young People's Plan 2009-2014; and
- Feedback Form – Priorities for the Children and Young People's Plan 2009-2014.

The Chair welcomed to the meeting John Maynard, Strategic Leader – Children's Services, to present the report and respond to Members' queries and comments.

The Strategic Leader – Children's Services, reported on the timescale for developing the CYPP.

One Member stated that the **Feedback Form** could be more inviting. The Board was advised that the form would mainly be used by partner organisations, and that other ways of engaging stakeholders such as parents were also being employed.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the report and information appended to the report be noted; and
- (2) The Board agrees the proposed arrangements for being involved in developing the new CYPP.

16 Work Programme

A report was received from the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development, which invited Members to consider and approve the draft work programme for 2008/09.

Appended to the report for Members' consideration was the draft work programme for the current municipal year.

The Board was informed that the draft work programme reflected the discussions that had taken place at the June Board meeting, and potential items for consideration which had been identified by the Board during 2007/08.

The main areas of discussion were as follows:-

- **Teenage Conception** – It was agreed that the Scrutiny Board (Health) was the most appropriate Board to lead on this Inquiry. It was suggested that the Health Scrutiny Board considered co-opting one or two Children's Services Board Members to join the Inquiry. Councillor B Lancaster was nominated to serve as the Children's Services representative on this Inquiry.
- **Education Standards** – The Board agreed to undertake an Inquiry focussing on those entering the education system. The Board agreed to establish a working group to scope this Inquiry.
- **14-19 Education** – Consideration was given to undertaking a further Inquiry on progress with the 14-19 agenda. The Board agreed to establish a working group to scope this Inquiry.
- **Attendance** – The Board agreed to establish a working group to look into a number of linked issues.
- **Transport** – It was agreed to await the response to recommendation 9 of the Inquiry into '**services for 8-13 year olds**' before deciding on any further work.
- **Community Cohesion** – It was suggested that the Scrutiny Board (Environment and Neighbourhoods) considered co-opting a Children's Services Board Member in relation to any work that Board undertakes on Community Cohesion. Councillor Driver was nominated to serve as

the Children Services representative. The Board also noted that Councillor Cleasby was already a member of the Board.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the report and information appended to the report be noted; and
- (2) The Board agrees the work programme, subject to comments and amendments raised at the meeting.

17 Date and Time of Next Meeting

Thursday 18th September, 2008 at 9.45 am in the Civic Hall, Leeds.
(Pre-meeting scheduled for 9.15 am).

(The meeting concluded at 12.10 pm).