

SCRUTINY BOARD (CHILDREN'S SERVICES)

THURSDAY, 25TH FEBRUARY, 2010

PRESENT: Councillor W Hyde in the Chair

Councillors B Cleasby, D Coupar, G Driver, G Kirkland,
B Lancaster, K Renshaw, B Selby and E Taylor

CO-OPTED MEMBERS (VOTING):

Mr E A Britten	- Church Representative (Catholic)
Ms N Cox	- Parent Governor Representative (Special)
Prof P H J H Gosden	- Church Representative (Church of England)
Mr B Wanyonyi	- Parent Governor Representative (Secondary)

CO-OPTED MEMBERS (NON-VOTING):

Ms C Foote	- Teacher Representative
Ms C Johnson	- Teacher Representative

91 Chair's Opening Remarks

The Chair welcomed all in attendance to the February meeting of the Scrutiny Board (Children's Services). In particular, the Chair welcomed Co-opted Member Ms N Cox (Parent Governor Representative (Special)) to her first Scrutiny Board meeting.

92 Declaration of Interests

Councillor Driver declared a personal interest in agenda item 7, Scrutiny Inquiry – The Impact of Population Growth on Children's Services in Leeds, in his capacity as Governor at Windmill Primary School. (Minute No. 96 refers)

Councillor Renshaw declared a personal interest in agenda item 7, Scrutiny Inquiry – The Impact of Population Growth on Children's Services in Leeds, in her capacity as Governor at Rodillian High School, Seven Hills Primary School and East Ardsley Primary School. She also declared a personal interest as a Member of the Ardsley and Tingley Extended Services Cluster and Rothwell Extended Services Cluster. (Minute No. 96 refers)

Councillor Selby declared a personal interest in agenda item 7, Scrutiny Inquiry – The Impact of Population Growth on Children's Services in Leeds, in his capacity as LEA Governor at Cross Gates Primary School. (Minute No. 96 refers)

(Further declarations of interest were made at later points in the meeting. (Minute No. 96 refers)

93 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted by Councillors R D Feldman and Gettings and Co-opted Member Ms J Morris Boam (Leeds VOICE Children and Young People Services Forum Representative).

94 Minutes - 28th January 2010

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 28th January 2010 be confirmed as a correct record.

95 Matters Arising from the Minutes

Minute No. 84 – Ofsted Inspection of Safeguarding and Looked After Children's Services in Leeds: Outcomes and Wider Improvement Activity

Members emphasised the need to appoint a greater number of frontline social care workers. The Chair advised that the Scrutiny Board was closely monitoring the situation. Members agreed to invite Unison to the next working group meeting.

96 Scrutiny Inquiry - The Impact of Population Growth on Children's Services in Leeds

Further to Minute No. 60 of the meeting held on 12th November 2009, the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report which presented evidence as part of the Board's inquiry into population growth.

Appended to the report was the following information:

- A copy of the agreed terms of reference
- Leeds Neighbourhood Index – report of the Chief Regeneration Officer
- Submission from Housing Services on changing patterns of housing provision and occupation
- Submission from the Planning Division of City Development – Briefing Note: Development in Leeds and its impact on Population
- Remit and Membership of the Joint Information Group involving NHS Leeds and the Council / Education Leeds
- Further information on proposals to accommodate increased pupil numbers in primary schools and, in the longer term, secondary schools.

The following officers attended the meeting to present information to the Board and respond to Members' questions and comments:

- Sue Wynne, Head of Regeneration Policy and Planning
- Jacky Pruckner, Neighbourhood Information Officer
- Simeon Perry, Housing Policy and Monitoring Manager
- Rob McCartney, Housing Strategy and Commissioning Manager

- David Feeney, Head of Planning and Economic Policy
- George Turnbull, Education Leeds, Head of Service – School Organisation
- Jackie Green, Education Leeds, Strategic Manager Planning.

In brief summary, the main areas of discussion in relation to the various departments were:

Regeneration

- The Scrutiny Board received a powerpoint presentation on the Leeds Neighbourhood Index. An example Neighbourhood Profile was circulated for Members' information.
- Managing changing datasets and the need to introduce other indicators, e.g. relating to children's health and well-being.
- Concern about pockets of deprivation that were not reflected in the neighbourhood profiles at the current level of analysis.

Housing

- Issues relating to private accommodation provision, particularly around regulation of private landlords.

City Development

- The effect of changes to the planning system, especially the Local Development Framework. Greater emphasis on infrastructure linked to longer term regeneration.
- Challenges aligning Regional Spatial Strategy with local strategies, particularly in relation to growth in housing.
- Challenges identifying suitable sites for development and work being undertaken as part of the Easel project.

Education Leeds

- The effect of birth rates and other national trends.
- The potential implications of the Pupil Guarantee and 21st Century Schools agenda.
- Concern about the consultation process relating to future school expansion proposals, particularly whether Ward Members were being consulted or told.
- The need to consult with neighbouring schools, frontline teaching staff and children.
- Concern that this was not just a capacity issue, but was about the capacity of schools to provide a quality educational experience for all pupils
- The impact of future expansion proposals on school playing fields.

- Work being undertaken locally as part of the National Challenge. It was also reported that the world class schools strategy for primary schools was being submitted in late March.
- PFI schools and the need to ensure value for money.
- The role of the Leeds Inclusive Learning Strategy (LILS) and recognition of individual needs.
- The need for further information about the demand on secondary school places.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the report and information appended to the report be noted;
- (b) That the issues raised be incorporated in the draft report of the Board's Inquiry.

(Councillor E Taylor declared a personal interest in this item as Governor at Millfield Primary School.)

(Councillor Lancaster declared a personal interest in this item as LEA Governor at Carr Manor High School.)

(Councillor Coupar arrived at 10.17 am and Councillor Cleasby at 10.23 am during the consideration of this item.)

97 Formal Response to Scrutiny Recommendation - Interim Safeguarding Inquiry Report

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report which presented the formal response to the Scrutiny Board's recommendation arising from its inquiry on safeguarding.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the report and information appended to the report be noted; and
- (b) That progress continues to be monitored in the quarterly recommendation tracking report.

98 Draft Scrutiny Inquiry Report - Meadowfield Primary School

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report which presented the conclusions and recommendations arising from the Scrutiny Board's inquiry regarding Meadowfield Primary School.

Members agreed an addition to recommendation 6 as follows:

'That Education Leeds reports back to the Scrutiny Board on the handover process for new school buildings and alterations to existing school buildings where appropriate.'

RESOLVED –

Draft minutes to be approved at the meeting to be held on Thursday, 25th March, 2010

- (a) That subject to an addition to recommendation 6, the Scrutiny Board's final report and recommendations be approved; and
- (b) That a formal response to the recommendations be produced in line with normal procedures for scrutiny inquiry reports.

99 Work Programme

A report was submitted by the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development which detailed the Scrutiny Board's work programme for the remainder of the current municipal year.

Appended to the report for Members' information was the current version of the Board's work programme, an extract from the Forward Plan of Key Decisions for the period 1st March 2010 to 30th June 2010, which related to the Board's remit, together with the minutes from the Executive Board meeting held on 12th February 2010.

In brief summary, the main highlighted points were:

- The Independent Chair of the Improvement Board, Bill McCarthy, had agreed to attend the March meeting of the Scrutiny Board.
- Councillor W Hyde and Co-opted Member Ms J Morris-Boam had been added to the membership of the Youth Services Commissioning Working Group.
- The next meeting of the Joint Safeguarding Working Group was taking place on Monday, 15th March 2010 at 11.30 am.
- The Scrutiny Board asked to be provided with a briefing on school balances at a future meeting.

RESOLVED – That subject to comments raised at the meeting, the work programme be approved.

100 Date and Time of Next Meeting

Thursday 25th March 2010 at 9.45 am with a pre-meeting for Board Members at 9.15 am.

(The meeting concluded at 12.05 pm.)