

SCRUTINY BOARD (CHILDREN AND FAMILIES)

WEDNESDAY, 30TH MARCH, 2022

PRESENT: Councillor A Lamb in the Chair

Councillors E Flint, A Forsaith, C Gruen,
Z Hussain, J Illingworth, J Lennox,
A Marshall-Katung, J Senior and
R. Stephenson

CO-OPTED MEMBER (VOTING)

Mr E A Britten - Church Representative (Catholic)
Mr A Graham – Church Representative (Church of England)
Ms J Ward – Parent Governor Representative (Secondary)
Mrs K Blacker - Parent Governor Representative (Primary)

CO-OPTED MEMBERS (NON-VOTING)

Ms C Foote – School Staff Representative
Ms H Bellamy – School Staff Representative
Ms L Whitaker - Young Lives Leeds

60 Appeals Against Refusal of Inspection of Documents

There were no appeals against the refusal of inspection of documents.

61 Exempt Information - Possible Exclusion of the Press and Public

There were no exempt items.

62 Late Items

There were no late items.

63 Declaration of Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

64 Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Bithell, Councillor Lay,
Councillor Renshaw and Councillor Richards.

Councillor J Lennox attended as substitute for Councillor Bithell.

65 Minutes - 16th February 2022

Final minutes approved at the meeting
held on Wednesday, 11th May, 2022

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 16th February 2022 be approved as an accurate record.

66 Matters Arising

Further to Minute No. 54 (Notification of Serious Incidents Review), a member of the Board referred to the commitment made by the Director of Children and Families to meet with the Independent Chair of the Leeds Safeguarding Children Partnership (LSCP) to reflect on whether a previous decision not to pursue a notification in respect of a specific 2021 case should be reconsidered. The Deputy Director of Children and Families updated the Board and confirmed that since the Board's February meeting, there has been communication between the Director and the LSCP Chair in terms of reviewing that decision, which has included input from the Chair of the national Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel, Annie Hudson, with the intention of reaching a conclusion within the next week.

RESOLVED – To note the updated position.

67 New Youth Work Model Update

To assist in accommodating the attendance of the Executive Board Member for Communities, the Chair sought the Board's agreement to change the order of the agenda and bring forward the item on the new youth work model.

The Director of Children and Families submitted a report setting out the work that has been undertaken since April 2021 to establish the new model of youth work delivery.

The following were in attendance for this item:

- Councillor Mary Harland, Executive Member for Communities.
- Councillor Jonathan Pryor, Executive Member for Economy, Culture and Education
- Councillor Fiona Venner, Executive Member for Adult and Children's Social Care and Health Partnerships
- Julie Longworth, Deputy Director of Children and Families
- Victoria Fuggles, Head of Early Help Services

The Executive Member for Communities gave a brief introduction and particularly acknowledged the timeliness of reporting back to Scrutiny in terms of providing assurance that the new model of delivery will be fully implemented on 1st April 2022.

In consideration of the report, the Board discussed the following matters –

- The balance of £16,379 allocated for projects in the West/North West area of the city and the commitment of the LCC Youth Service to work with providers in that area to identify how best to utilise this funding.

- National and local challenges regarding the recruitment and retention of qualified Youth Workers, with a recognised need to raise the profile of youth work and for the service to develop and grow its own workforce for the future.
- The distinction between qualified Youth Workers and the Youth Support Worker role, with opportunities being provided to Youth Support Workers to also gain an appropriate Youth Work qualification.
- The focus of enhanced youth work contracts in Wards with highest indices of deprivation in recognition that young people living in the most deprived neighbourhoods have lower attainment at school and are more likely to be NEET, as well as more likely to be involved in crime and anti-social behaviour.
- The important relationship between the Youth Service and the Cluster Partnerships.
- The valuable role of Life Coaches within the LCC Youth Service and the importance of linking in with the Early Help Hubs to ensure integrated working, including links with CAMHS.
- The work being undertaken with Leeds Beckett University to develop an appropriate Youth Work Quality Framework for Leeds to be used by the service and also 3rd Sector providers.

RESOLVED –

- (a) To note the comprehensive consultation and partnership work undertaken to ensure the new model of youth work delivery will be implemented by April 2022.
- (b) That the Scrutiny Board supports and endorses the approach being taken to develop a joined up and consistent approach to the quality assurance and promotion of the Youth Work Offer in Leeds.
- (c) That the Scrutiny Board continues to monitor the implementation of the new youth work model and considers a further update within the next 12 months.

68 Update on Thriving: The Child Poverty Strategy for Leeds

The Director of Children and Families submitted a report that provided an overview of ‘Thriving: The Child Poverty Strategy for Leeds’ and the work that sits underneath the strategy, including work that has occurred during the pandemic.

The following were in attendance for this item:

- Councillor Jonathan Pryor, Executive Member for Economy, Culture and Education
- Councillor Fiona Venner, Executive Member for Adult and Children’s Social Care and Health Partnerships
- Julie Longworth, Deputy Director of Children and Families
- David Feeney, Chief Planning Officer
- Anup Sharma, Senior Planner, City Development
- Simon Frosdick, Business Development Manager, Parks & Countryside

In introducing this item, the Chair explained that the Scrutiny Board has maintained a watching brief surrounding the development and implementation of the Child Poverty Strategy for Leeds and back in September 2021, the Board had particularly welcomed the introduction of a new workstream that is focusing on green spaces.

It was noted that while this latest report provides an updated position on all 7 of the workstreams that sit underneath the Strategy, the Board had agreed to invite representation from Planning and Parks & Countryside to today's meeting to contribute to discussions around the new green space workstream in particular.

In consideration of the report, the Board discussed the following matters –

- The effective use of the development process to strategically deliver the best type and the best quality of green space to where it is most needed in Leeds.
- The specific review of the Green Spaces guidance aimed at developers of all types of private residential schemes to help ensure new green spaces are good quality, include play and natural features and are attractive and accessible to all.
- Green space protection and links to the Local Plan Update, with the service currently exploring this as one of the many Green Infrastructure Policy possible improvements to take forward.
- Positive examples of food production initiatives within local communities.
- The importance of collaborative working between Planning, Parks & Countryside, Health and Children and Families in terms of improving outcomes linked to the Child Friendly Leeds ambition.
- Strengthening links between the Leeds Parks and Green Spaces Strategy and the Leeds Play Strategy in terms of the aspiration of having a wide range of good quality play facilities for children and young people of all ages and abilities. This includes ensuring young people are engaged in the design of such facilities.
- The importance of parks and greenspaces being sufficiently maintained and made safe for local community use.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the Scrutiny Board endorses the strategic framework in place to mitigate the impact of child poverty and the work being undertaken by the Council and other partners in the key areas of activity.
- (b) That the Scrutiny Board continues to monitor the implementation of the strategy and receives a further update report within the next 12 months.

69 Inquiry into tackling the long-term impacts of covid-19 on children and families - formal response

The Head of Democratic Services submitted a report that provided a formal response to the recommendations arising from the Scrutiny Board's earlier

inquiry into tackling the long-term impacts of Covid-19 on children and families.

The following were in attendance for this item:

- Councillor Jonathan Pryor, Executive Member for Economy, Culture and Education
- Councillor Fiona Venner, Executive Member for Adult and Children's Social Care and Health Partnerships
- Julie Longworth, Deputy Director of Children and Families
- Dave Clark, Head of Service for Learning Improvement
- Erica Hiorns, Leadership and Management Lead

In introducing this item, the Chair explained that in September last year, the Scrutiny Board had formally approved its inquiry report into tackling the long-term impacts of Covid-19 on children and families. The Board was now being asked to consider the formal response of the Director of Children and Families to the recommendations arising from this inquiry work.

Both the Head of Service for Learning Improvement and the Leadership and Management Lead gave a brief introduction to the report and also updated the Board on the following:

- *Recovering from lost learning* – the written formal response had referred to a conference being arranged for 1st March 2022 to support teachers and leaders around educational assessment to ascertain what students have, or have not, learnt and make changes to curriculum design and subsequent teaching as a result. Linked to this, the Board was informed that over 70 delegates had attended this conference.
- *Reading deep drive reviews* – there had been an increased number of bookings made by primary schools from 84 to 102.
- *Training session on 'meeting the needs of children with SpLD and literacy difficulties'* – with the SENIT team offering all primary schools access to this training session, it was noted that 47 schools have now signed up for that training.
- *Mental health and wellbeing of pupils and school staff* – Board Members were reminded of Priority 4 within the new 3As Strategy in terms of all children and staff working in learning settings being supported with their wellbeing. Linked to this it was reported that the Headteacher Support Service is being continued having recently appointed new postholders to that service, who will also be working to increase co-ordination to the range of support offers currently available.

In consideration of the report, the Board also discussed the following matters:

- The recruitment and retention of teachers, with links to the professional development available to early career teachers at the start of their careers.
- The low take up of the training offer to secondary schools aimed at supporting staff working with KS3 pupils who struggle to read fluently and

the intention to relaunch the offer following the Ofsted conference being held on 31st March 2022, that will be including a focus around the reading ability of older pupils.

RESOLVED – To note the content of the report and request that the successor Scrutiny Board continues to monitor progress linked to the inquiry recommendations.

70 SACRE Annual Report 2020 - 2021

The Director of Children and Families submitted a report which presented the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) Annual Report for 2020-21.

The following were in attendance for this item:

- Councillor Jonathan Pryor, Executive Member for Economy, Culture and Education
- Councillor Fiona Venner, Executive Member for Adult and Children's Social Care and Health Partnerships
- Julie Longworth, Deputy Director of Children and Families
- Dave Clark, Head of Service for Learning Improvement
- Erica Hiorns, Leadership and Management Lead

The Executive Member for Economy, Culture and Education gave a brief introduction and praised the commitment and positive work that has been undertaken by SACRE.

The Leadership and Management Lead Officer then provided a more detailed overview of the key areas of work undertaken by SACRE.

The Scrutiny Board also congratulated and thanked SACRE for the work undertaken during 2020/21, as well as acknowledging its ongoing commitment in supporting all schools and academies within the city.

RESOLVED – To note the content and recommendations set out within the SACRE Annual Report for 2020/21.

71 Work Schedule

The report of the Head of Democratic Services set out the forthcoming work schedule, with the latest version appended to the report at Appendix 1.

The Principal Scrutiny Adviser introduced the report and highlighted that an additional meeting had been proposed during May to allow the current Board the opportunity to receive an update on the local review of the notifications process that was referenced during the Board's February meetings and also the findings of the recent Ofsted Inspection. Linked to this, it was agreed that this meeting would be held on Wednesday 11th May 2022 at 10 am.

In relation to the Board's inquiry work around exclusions, elective home education and off-rolling, it was also agreed that the Scrutiny Board would produce an interim report setting out the preliminary findings of Scrutiny based on the evidence that has been considered so far, as well as reflecting on what further considerations may be warranted by the successor scrutiny board.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That an additional meeting of the Children and Families Scrutiny Board is scheduled for Wednesday 11th May 2022 at 10 am.
- (b) That an interim report of the Scrutiny Board is produced in terms of setting out the preliminary findings of Scrutiny based on the evidence that has been considered so far linked to the inquiry work around exclusions, elective home education and off-rolling, as well as reflecting on what further considerations may be warranted by the successor scrutiny board.

72 Date and Time of Next Meeting

RESOLVED – To note the next formal meeting of the Children and Families Scrutiny Board will be on Wednesday 11th May 2022 at 10.00 am (pre-meeting at 9.45 am).