

SCRUTINY BOARD (CHILDREN AND FAMILIES)

THURSDAY, 11TH OCTOBER, 2012

PRESENT: Councillor J Chapman in the Chair

Councillors C Gruen, A Lamb, P Latty,
M Rafique, K Renshaw, A Sobel and B Urry

CO-OPTED MEMBERS (VOTING):

Mr E A Britten – Church Representative (Catholic)

Ms A Craven – Parent Governor Representative (Primary)

Ms J Ward – Parent Governor Representative (Secondary)

CO-OPTED MEMBERS (NON-VOTING):

Ms C Foote – Teacher Representative

Ms C Raftery – Teacher Representative

Mrs S Hutchinson – Early Years Representative

Ms J Morris-Boam – Young Lives Leeds

61 Chair's Opening Remarks

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

62 Late Items

In accordance with her powers under Section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972, the Chair agreed to accept the following late item, which was not available at the time of agenda despatch:

- Minutes of the meeting held on 27th September 2012 (Minute No. 65 refers)

The document was not available at the time of the agenda despatch, but subsequently made available to the public on the Council's website prior to the meeting.

63 Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary and Other Interests

There were no disclosable pecuniary and other interests.

64 Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes

Apologies for absence were submitted by Councillors B Gettings and A Hussain and Co-opted Member, Ms N Cox.

65 Minutes - 27th September 2012

One Member requested that an additional bullet point be added to Minute No. 56 'Request for Scrutiny by Executive Board (March 2012) – Basic Need 2012: Carr Manor and Roundhay: All Through Schools Revised Costs' to read as follows:

- Clarification sought regarding the additional cost incurred associated with delays at Roundhay. Officers in Children's Services agreed to report back with a response.

RESOLVED – That subject to the amendment above, the minutes of the meeting held on 27th September 2012 be approved as a correct record.

66 Scrutiny Inquiry - Foundation Years - providing the best start in life for Children to succeed - Session 2

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report which presented an overview of the key issues relating to children and their families in the foundation years.

The following information was appended to the report:

- Reducing inequalities in infant mortality in Leeds
- Preparation for Birth and Beyond
- Family Nurse Partnership Report
- Infant Mental Health Service – Draft Service Model.

The Chair welcomed the following Executive Member, officers and representatives of the NHS to the meeting:

- Councillor Blake, Executive Member (Children and Families)
- Nigel Richardson, Director of Children's Services
- Steve Walker, Deputy Director (Safeguarding, Specialist and Targeted Services)
- Andrea Richardson, Head of Early Help Services
- Dr Sharon Yelin, Consultant in Public Health Medicine, NHS Leeds
- Jane Mischenko, Head of Commissioning (Children and Families), NHS Leeds
- Janice Burberry, Senior Commissioning Manager (Public Health and Healthy Child Programme), NHS Airedale, Bradford and Leeds
- Debra Gill, Operational Leeds for Health Visiting, NHS Leeds.

The key areas of discussion were:

- The role of health visitors, midwives and other professionals in supporting families, especially those who were teenage parents and/or had mental health issues.

- Concerns about the impact of changes to the welfare benefit system on child poverty. Members were informed about types of awareness raising by the Child Poverty Group and Children's Centres.
- The role of ALMO's in tackling overcrowding.
- Targeted support to reduce infant mortality. Work being undertaken by Early Start Teams to ensure consistent advice provided.
- Concerns about the impact of changes to the allocation of early intervention funding.
- Clarification provided about the types of partnership arrangements currently in place, particularly support for children at risk of being looked after by the local authority, young parents, young carers and promotion of breastfeeding.
- Support for families and development of a co-ordinated approach.
- The benefits of family group conferencing and other restorative practices.
- Clarification sought about the types of support provided to mothers trying to leave violent relationships. It was agreed to provide the Scrutiny Board with further information about the types of support available.
- Investment in healthy schools programme and the promotion of health and well-being.
- Further information to be provided to the Scrutiny Board about the results and outcomes of the Birth and Beyond programme.
- Complex reasons associated with variances in infant mortality rates across different ethnic groups.
- The role of youth services and schools, particularly in reducing teenage conception.

RESOLVED – That the relevant issues be incorporated in the draft report of the Scrutiny Board's inquiry.

67 Leeds Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report 2011/12

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report which presented the Annual Report of Leeds Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) 2011/12.

The Chair welcomed the following Executive Member, officers and representative of West Yorkshire Police to the meeting:

- Councillor Blake, Executive Member (Children and Families)
- Nigel Richardson, Director of Children's Services
- Steve Walker, Deputy Director (Safeguarding, Specialist and Targeted Services)
- Bryan Gocke, Leeds Safeguarding Children Board Manager
- Richard Jackson, Divisional Commander (North East Leeds).

The main areas of discussion were:

- Concern about delays to the implementation of the electronic social care record system (ESCR). Members were advised that the Children's Social Work Service was scheduled to start using the system from April 2013 and that LSCB had no concerns about the timescales for this project.
- Concern about staff being injured in secure children's homes and the need to ensure suitable and consistent training practices were in place.
- The improvement in proactive safeguarding measures to prevent exploitation of children.

RESOLVED – That the information contained within the LSCB Annual Report be noted.

(Councillor Renshaw withdrew from the meeting at 12 noon during the consideration of this item.)

68 Work Schedule

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report which detailed the Scrutiny Board's work schedule for the current municipal year.

Appended to the report for Members' information was the current version of the Board's work programme and an extract from the Forward Plan of Key Decisions for the period 1st October 2012 to 31 January 2013.

RESOLVED – That the work schedule be approved.

69 Date and Time of Next Meeting

Thursday, 8th November 2012 at 9.45am with a Pre Meeting for Board Members at 9.15am

(The meeting concluded at 12.24pm.)