

SCRUTINY BOARD (CHILDREN AND FAMILIES)

THURSDAY, 19TH SEPTEMBER, 2013

PRESENT: Councillor J Chapman in the Chair

Councillors J Akhtar, J Elliott, C Gruen,
A Lamb, P Latty, K Mitchell, 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)

Mrs J Ward – Parent Governor Representative (Secondary)

29 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 information:

- Agenda item 10 – Scrutiny Inquiry into Raising Attainment in Maths and English (Minute No. 36 refers)

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

30 Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests.

31 Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes

Apologies for absence were submitted by Co-opted Members, Ms C Foote, Ms S Hutchinson, Ms J Morris-Boam and Ms T Kayani.

32 Minutes - 25 July and 7 August 2013

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meetings held on 25 July 2013 and 7 August 2013 be approved as a correct record.

33 Learning Places for Leeds Overview

The Director of Children's Services submitted a report outlining the work undertaken to ensure sufficiency of learning places for children and young people in Leeds. The Board also received a presentation which provided current and projected challenges in greater detail.

The following information was appended to the report:

- Executive Board Report, 17 July 2013 – Learning for Leeds City
- Projected Pressure for Reception Places by Primary Planning Area 2014/15 and 2016/17
- Number of statutory primary school age children by Secondary School Polygon
- Basic Need update for Area Committee.

The following representatives were in attendance and responded to Members' queries and comments:

- Nigel Richardson, Director of Children's Services
- Sarah Sinclair, Chief Officer (Strategy, Commissioning and Performance)
- Councillor Judith Blake, Executive Member, Children's Services.

The key areas of discussion were:

- The national challenge to ensure enough school places.
- Information presented identified demand based on known information such as birth rates and does not take into account housing provision.
- Research and analysis into the educational benefits of large and small school sites.
- The co-ordinated approach to the meeting basic need between Children's Services and City Development.
- Concern that all new schools had to be Academies or Free Schools – Members considered whether Children's Services should investigate the potential for the Council to operate an arm's length management organisation as a free school provider.
- Dialogue with schools regarding expansion and admission limits.
- Funding of free schools which had a significant number of places available.
- Educational funding for remodelling or site expansion.

RESOLVED –

The Scrutiny Board (Children and Families):

- (a) Noted the information contained within the report
- (b) Supported the emerging strategy and key principles required to ensure sufficient, good quality learning places for children and young people in Leeds, as agreed by Executive Board in July 2013.

(Cllr Urry left the meeting at 10.15am during the consideration of this item)

34 Response of the Children's Trust Board to the Strategic Partnership report of the Children and Families Scrutiny Board

The Children's Trust Board submitted a report in response to the Strategic Partnership Inquiry conducted by the Scrutiny Board in March 2013.

The following representatives were in attendance and responded to Members' queries and comments:

- Nigel Richardson, Director of Children's Services
- Sue Rumbold, Chief Officer (Partnership, Development and Business)
- Councillor Judith Blake, Executive Member, Children's Services.

The key areas of discussion were:

- The Scrutiny Board report was welcomed.
- An Early Years Forum has been established that will recommend a representative for the Children's Trust Board.
- A Business representative had joined the Children's Trust Board.
- A review of the Sub Groups of the Children's Trust Board will be on-going.
- Framework for holding Clusters to account.

RESOLVED – The Scrutiny Board (Children and Families) considered and noted the responses as outlined in the report.

35 Terms of Reference - Inquiry into School Transport

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted the draft terms of reference for the School Transport Inquiry for consideration.

The following representatives were in attendance and responded to Members' queries and comments:

- Nigel Richardson, Director of Children's Services
- Sarah Sinclair, Chief Officer (Strategy, Commissioning and Performance)
- Councillor Judith Blake, Executive Member, Children's Services
- Sandra Pentelow – Principal Scrutiny Advisor, Democratic Services.

Members briefly discussed the background information leading to the drafting of the terms of reference.

RESOLVED –

The Scrutiny Board (Children and Families):

- (a) Noted the information contained within the report and agreed the terms of reference for the inquiry.

- (b) Noted that the terms of reference may incorporate additional information during the inquiry should the Children and Families Scrutiny Board identify any further scope for inquiry or request further witness or evidence.

36 Scrutiny Board (Children and Families) Inquiry Report into Raising Attainment in Maths and English

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted the draft inquiry report into Raising Attainment in Maths and English. The report summarises the recommendations of the Scrutiny Board in response to evidence received and considered between December 2012 and May 2013.

The following representatives were in attendance and responded to Members' queries and comments:

- Nigel Richardson, Director of Children's Services
- Paul Brennan, Deputy Director of Children's Services
- Cllr Judith Blake, Executive Member, Children's Services
- Sandra Pentelow, Principal Scrutiny Advisor, Democratic Services.

The key areas of discussion were:

- Sharing good practice in the City and the engagement of schools in this process.
- Responsibility of the Local Authority for quality assurance for all children in all institutions including Academies.
- The benefits of one to one intervention and tutoring.
- The importance of the successful transition of children from primary to secondary school and the view that this needs to be considered throughout the year and not just before they are due to move.

RESOLVED – The Scrutiny Board (Children and Families) considered and agreed the Board's report following its inquiry into Raising Attainment in Maths and English.

37 Work Schedule

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

The draft Scrutiny Board (Children and Families) work schedule for 2013/2014 was appended to the report.

Sandra Pentelow, Principal Scrutiny Adviser, presented the report and responded to Members' queries and comments.

RESOLVED – That the contents of the report and appendices be noted.

38 Date and Time of Next Meeting

Thursday, 10th October 2013 at 9.45am in the Civic Hall, Leeds
(Pre meeting for Board Members at 9.15am)

(The meeting concluded at 12.00 noon)