

SCRUTINY BOARD (CHILDREN AND FAMILIES)

THURSDAY, 15TH JUNE, 2017

PRESENT: Councillor S Bentley in the Chair

Councillors J Akhtar, D Cohen, N Dawson,
C Dobson, B Flynn, C Gruen, T Leadley
and B Selby

CO-OPTED MEMBERS (VOTING)

Mr E A Britten – Church Representative (Catholic)

Mrs J Ward – Parent Governor Representative (Secondary)

Ms J Hazelgrave – Parent Governor Representative (Special)

CO-OPTED MEMBERS (NON-VOTING)

Ms C Foote – Teacher Representative

Mrs S Hutchinson – Early Years Representative

Ms C Bewsher – Looked After Children and Care Leavers

1 Late Items

In relation to agenda item 10, the following late information was submitted to the Board:

- Financial Health Children's Services 2016 – Outturn Report – Full narrative provided to Executive Board and extracts of appendices relevant to Children and Families Scrutiny Board
- Financial Health Monitoring 2017/18, Period 2
- Children and Families Financial Dashboard, Month 1.

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

2 Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

There were no disclosable pecuniary interests declared to the meeting.

3 Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes

Apologies for absence were submitted by Councillors J Elliott, M Iqbal, P Latty and K Renshaw and Co-opted Members, Mr A Graham and Ms C Hopkins.

Notification had been received that Councillor T Leadley was substituting for Councillor J Elliott and Councillor B Flynn for Councillor P Latty.

4 Minutes - 27 April 2017

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the Scrutiny Board (Children's Services) meeting held on 27 April 2017 be approved as a correct record.

Minutes approved as a correct record
at the meeting held on Thursday, 20th July, 2017

5 Co-Opted Membership

The Head of Governance and Scrutiny Support submitted a report which sought the Board's formal consideration for the appointment of co-opted Members.

The following nominations for statutory voting co-opted members had been received:

- One Church of England diocese representative – Mr A Graham
- One Roman Catholic diocese representative – Mr E A Britten.

Parent governor representatives were as follows:

- Parent Governor (Primary) representative – Vacancy
- Parent Governor (Secondary) representative – Ms J Ward (23/04/15 – 22/04/2019)
- Parent Governor (Special Educational Needs) representative – Ms J Hazelgrave (12/09/14 – 11/09/18).

RESOLVED – That in addition to the above statutory voting co-opted members, the following be appointed as non-voting co-opted members to the Scrutiny Board for 2017/18:

- Teacher Representative – Ms M Owen
- Teacher Representative – Ms C Foote
- Looked After Children and Care Leavers – Ms C Bewsher
- Young Lives Leeds – Ms C Hopkins
- Early Years Representative – Mrs S Hutchinson.

6 Scrutiny Board Terms of Reference

The Head of Governance and Scrutiny Support submitted a report which presented the Board's terms of reference for information.

RESOLVED – That the Board's terms of reference be noted.

7 Financial Health - Children's Services

The Head of Governance and Scrutiny Support submitted a report which presented financial information relevant to Scrutiny Board (Children and Families) considered at the Executive Board meeting held on 21 June 2017.

The following were in attendance:

- Sal Tariq, Deputy Director, Children and Families
- Sue Rumbold, Chief Officer, Partnership Development and Business Support

- Andrew Eastwood, Head of Service, Learning Improvement
- Simon Criddle, Head of Finance, Children and Families Finance.

The key areas of discussion were:

- Clarification regarding the outturn position, which included the carry forward to 2017/18 of all the £7.3m new Department of Education Innovations and Partners in Practice funding received in March 2017. This included the carry forward of innovation funding and the first time DSC deficit of £3.6m.
- Concern about an increased trend by schools to utilise reserves to fund day to day school activities. In addition, the difference regarding the treatment of excess reserves for both maintained schools and academies.
- Confirmation that a review of high needs block funding was underway and that the initial outcome was anticipated late summer. This included a review of funding for inclusion formulas and area inclusion partnerships. It was requested that an update be provided to the Board once the initial outcome was known.
- An update on financial pressures for schools, including academies and children's services. Also, the need to ensure that the budget for children and families reflected the significant financial challenges faced.
- Looked after children budget pressures particularly in relation to the 'staying put' initiative. The Board asked whether the figure regarding looked after children numbers was realistic and it was advised that in previous years the estimated reductions in CLA numbers had been overly optimistic, however efforts had been made to address that in the current year's budget.
- The focus of preventative and early intervention work.
- The increase in the child population of Leeds and the resulting financial pressures.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the Board notes the financial report for Children and Families for the financial year 2017/18 and the outturn summary for the financial year 2016/17.
- (b) That the Board be provided with an update on the review of high needs block, FFI and AIP funding.

(Councillor J Akhtar left the meeting at 10.15am during the consideration of this item.)

8 Children's Services Performance Report

The Director of Children and Families submitted a report which provided a summary of performance information relating to outcomes for Leeds children and young people.

The following information was appended to the report:

- A commentary summary of the Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) indicators (appendix one)
- CYPP indicators at city and cluster level (appendices two (a) and (b))
- An extract from the March 2017 specialist safeguarding and targeted services report (appendix three)
- The children and families settings inspections dashboard (appendix four)
- Ward level data (by home postcode) from the spring 2017 community committee dataset (appendix five).

The following were in attendance:

- Sal Tariq, Deputy Director, Children and Families
- Sue Rumbold, Chief Officer, Partnership Development and Business Support
- Andrew Eastwood, Head of Service, Learning Improvement
- Peter Storrie, Head of Service, Performance Management and Improvement
- Chris Hudson, Policy, Planning and Procedures Leader.

The key areas of discussion were:

- Confirmation that statistical neighbours were set by the Department of Education, and comprised local authorities that were expected to deliver similar outcomes to Leeds.
- A request that future reporting included greater emphasis on local data and information to identify issues.
- An update on progress at Wellspring Academy. The Board was advised that 200 children attended and good progress had been made. There had also been a significant increase in attendance rates. The Board undertook to monitor progress in this area.
- Concern about individuals that were not attaining Maths and English GCSE's and how they were supported.
- The importance of early intervention and targeted support for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities.
- The focus of children's services on attendance, attainment and achievement and the detailed work being undertaken to identify and support vulnerable learners, particularly the 250 worst attendees.
- Mass screening for dyslexia which was not provided in Leeds.
- The importance of out of school activities to build confidence and improve results.
- The limited influence of local authorities regarding academy schools.

RESOLVED – That the report and appendices be noted.

9 Sources of Work for the Scrutiny Board

The Head of Governance and Scrutiny Support submitted a report on potential sources of work and areas of priority within the Board's terms of reference.

The following information was appended to the report:

- Best Council Plan 2017-18
- Leeds Children and Young People's Plan 2015-19 (from Good to Great)
- Draft Scrutiny Board (Children and Families) Work Schedule for 2017/18 municipal year
- Table of Scrutiny Key Pieces of Work Relating to Children and Families.

The following were in attendance:

- Sal Tariq, Deputy Director, Children and Families
- Sue Rumbold, Chief Officer, Partnership Development and Business Support
- Andrew Eastwood, Head of Service, Learning Improvement.

The following sources of work were put forward for consideration:

- Child poverty and how it impacted on outcomes in attainment and achievement, particularly for vulnerable learners, including a focus on areas of the city where poverty was high and attendance, attainment and achievement was low;
- Early identification of dyslexia and dyspraxia and the link to behaviour and attainment;
- Behaviour management, the types of alternative provision, the effectiveness of short-term exclusions and the links to mental health;
- Health education in schools, particularly child obesity;
- Education provision in Leeds and the quality of partnerships with non-maintained schools. Also, the risk of isolation of existing maintained local authority schools in areas of Leeds;
- The impact of funding cuts on schools;
- The impact of the reduction in youth services;
- Racism and hate crime, raised on behalf of the Youth Council;
- Transition at various stages in a child's education.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That a number of the above issues be incorporated into the Board's work schedule for the 2017/18 municipal year.
- (b) That authority be given to the Chair of the Scrutiny Board (Children and Families), in conjunction with officers, to draw up inquiry terms of reference for subsequent approval by the Scrutiny Board.

10 Date and Time of Next Meeting

Thursday, 20 July 2017 at 9.45am (pre-meeting for all Board Members at 9.15am)

(The meeting concluded at 12 noon)