

## **SCRUTINY BOARD (CHILDREN AND FAMILIES)**

**WEDNESDAY, 24TH APRIL, 2019**

**PRESENT:** Councillor A Lamb in the Chair

Councillors H Bithell, K Bruce, D Cohen,  
P Drinkwater, C Gruen, J Illingworth and R  
Stephenson

### **CO-OPTED MEMBERS (VOTING)**

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

### **CO-OPTED MEMBERS (NON-VOTING)**

Ms C Foote – Teacher Representative  
Mrs A Kearsley – Early Years Representative

#### **88 Appeals Against Refusal of Inspection of Documents**

There were no appeals.

#### **89 Exempt Information - Possible Exclusion of the Press and Public**

There were no exempt items.

#### **90 Late Items**

There were no formal late items, however there was some supplementary information circulated prior to the meeting in relation to Item 7 – Annual Standards Report 2017-18 (Minute 94 refers).

#### **91 Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests**

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests.

#### **92 Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J Lennox and K Renshaw, with no substitutes in attendance. Apologies were also received from Co-opted Members Helen Bellamy, Debbie Reilly and Claire Hopkins.

#### **93 Minutes of the previous meeting**

**RESOLVED** – That the minutes of the meetings held 6<sup>th</sup> March 2019 and 8<sup>th</sup> April 2019 be approved as a correct record of the meetings.

#### **94 Annual Standards Report 2017-18**

The Head of Governance and Scrutiny Support submitted a report presenting the Annual Standards Report for 2017-18.

Members were informed that the supplementary information distributed prior to the meeting was a corrected version of Key Stage 2 data on page 44 of the report, along with an additional data chart in relation to the percentage of Key Stage 2 pupils reaching the expected standard in Reading, Writing and Maths (RMW).

The following were in attendance:

- Councillor Jonathan Pryor, Executive Member for Learning, Skills and Employment
- Phil Mellen, Deputy Director for Learning
- Sal Tariq, Deputy Director of Children and Families
- Anne Fell, Area Lead Primary Learning Improvement
- Kevin Paynes, Leadership and Management Lead
- Erica Hiorns, School Improvement Adviser

Councillor Jonathon Pryor, Executive Member for Learning, Skills and Employment, introduced the item. In doing so, he apologised for the errors in earlier versions of the report. Councillor Pryor also highlighted some areas where Leeds was improving at a faster rate than nationally. The Deputy Director for Learning added that much of the work to tackle the 15 priorities set out in the report, would be addressed by the new 3 A's Strategy.

Members discussed a number of matters, including:

- *Early years performance.* Members commented that Early Years progress was behind national, despite the increasing number of providers with 'good' or 'outstanding' OfSTED judgements, and sought more information as to why this was the case. The Board were informed that this was largely due to the increase in population, along with an increase in the complexity of needs of early year's children, particularly in relation to SEND and SEMH.
- *Take-up of free early years hours.* Members were informed, in relation to the above point, that around 10% of children eligible for free early years hours were not accessing the provision. This was reported to be due to a number of reasons, including disparity in quality of provision across the city, complexity around mobility, and the need for better engagement with private providers. Members were assured that the new 3 A's Strategy would provide a clear focus for overcoming this issue. The Chair requested more information on this matter to be submitted to a future meeting.

- *Increase in children and young people with SEMH needs and SEND.* Members sought more information in regards to the effectiveness of the current training offer to staff in early years settings, considering the higher threshold for EHCPs. In response, the Board was informed that SENCOs in each school were responsible for supporting other teachers within the school, and that early identification comes as part of the generic training package for early years teachers.
- *Presentation of data within the report.* Members requested that maps be incorporated into the design of the report for 2018/19, to illustrate differences in outcomes across the city. Additionally, there were some comments about misdirection of the data to show a more positive picture.
- *Internal Exclusions.* Members sought clarity about the steps taken to address the prevalence of internal inclusions, despite a decrease in permanent exclusions, and were informed that work ongoing with the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) was informing new strategies to focus on making the best use of teaching assistants, and ensuring that support staff in internal exclusion areas are trained to manage SEMH and behavioural issues.

#### **RESOLVED -**

- a) That the contents of the report be noted.
- b) That arrangements are made for the successor Scrutiny Board to be provided with specific information relating to the take-up of free early years provision across the city, including mapping of providers and families.

*Councillor K Bruce arrived at the meeting at 10:15am during discussion of this item.*

#### **95 Scrutiny Inquiry into Children's Centres - recommendation tracking update**

The Head of Governance and Scrutiny Support and Director of Children and Families submitted a report presenting an update on the implementation of the recommendations arising from the previous Scrutiny inquiry into Children's Centres.

The following were in attendance:

- Councillor Lisa Mulherin, Executive Member for Children and Families
- Sal Tariq, Deputy Director of Children and Families
- Phil Mellen, Deputy Director for Learning
- Andrea Richardson, Head of Service, Learning for Life
- Amanda Ashe, Children's Centre & Early Start Lead

The status of recommendations were agreed as follows:

- Recommendation 1 – Not fully implemented (Progress made acceptable. Continue monitoring.)
- Recommendation 2 – Not fully implemented (obstacle). Scrutiny Board to determine appropriate action.
- Recommendation 3 – Not fully implemented (Progress made acceptable. Continue monitoring.)
- Recommendation 4 – Not fully implemented (Progress made acceptable. Continue monitoring.)
- Recommendation 5 – Not fully implemented (Progress made acceptable. Continue monitoring.)
- Recommendation 6 – Not fully implemented (Progress made acceptable. Continue monitoring.)
- Recommendation 7 – Not fully implemented (Progress made acceptable. Continue monitoring.)
- Recommendation 8 – Not fully implemented (Progress made acceptable. Continue monitoring.)
- Recommendation 9 – Not fully implemented (Progress made acceptable. Continue monitoring.)

The following key points were also raised during consideration of this item:

- *Cluster Partnership Support to Children's Centres.* Members expressed some concerns about the consistency of the relationships between the Clusters and the Children's Centres, particularly in relation to the Children's Centres participation in formal governance. The Chair noted that there was a lack of representation from the Children's Centres at the JCC in his ward, and queried whether this was an isolated incident. Members were assured that this would be investigated.
- *Buildings and Facilities.* Members were informed that a few Children's Centres within the city were currently being refurbished, including Burley Park Children's Centre that the Board visited as part of the original inquiry. Members requested a visit to be arranged to the Children's Centre once the refurbishment was complete and prior to the next inquiry tracking session.
- *Financial Sustainability.* The Chair requested evidence of benefits from current funding, and comment from the Director of Resources and Housing regarding the financial sustainability of the budget.
- *GP Services.* Members were advised that various attempts had been made in relation to forming relationships between children's centres and their local GP practices, however there was still not a consistent approach to working in partnership. GPs had reported that they find it difficult to obtain current information about local communities as they do not have the time to conduct the research, and in response officers acknowledged that a way of sharing data needed to be established. The Board noted that there was a clear obstacle to progress, and that a further meeting would be facilitated to endeavour to understand the challenges associated with establishing partnership working between local GP services and Children's Centres. The Chair noted that the Executive Member for Health and Wellbeing, the Director of Public

Health and the relevant lead from the Leeds CCG would be invited to contribute to the discussion.

**RESOLVED –**

- a) That the contents of the report be noted.
- b) That the additional discussion around local GP services, and visit to Burley Park Children's Centre, be incorporated into the work programme for the 2019/20 municipal year.
- c) That the above status of recommendations be approved.

**96 Scrutiny Inquiry - Is Leeds a child friendly city?**

The Head of Governance and Scrutiny Support submitted a report presenting additional information in response to requests made by the Board during the course of its inquiry this year.

The following was appended to the report:

- Leeds Youth Council Open Spaces Questionnaire Results
- Regional Youth Voice & Bus18 Meeting, Notes and Summary of Actions
- Youth Voice Summit Event Report, March 2019

The following were in attendance:

- Councillor Lisa Mulherin, Executive Member for Children and Families
- Sal Tariq, Deputy Director of Children and Families
- Phil Mellen, Deputy Director for Learning
- Sue Rumbold, Chief Officer, Partnerships and Health
- Jane Walne, Head of Programmes and Projects, City Development
- Hannah Lamplugh, Voice and Influence Lead
- Kathryn Holloway, Team Leader, City Development
- Jenny Fisher, Principal Officer, Planning and Sustainable Development, City Development
- Richard Cracknell, Voice and Influence Coordinator
- Vicki Marsden, Play Strategy Officer

**Parental engagement and influence on educational outcomes**

- Members were informed that most schools in the city are now keen to engage with parents around strategic plans, but further progress was needed. Members queried how this could be achieved, and were informed that there was an opportunity to share best practice. Members were also advised that the Voice, Influence and Change (VIC) Team had developed a model and guidance for Parent Councils across primary schools in the city.
- Members commented on the likelihood for more engagement in primary schools, but challenges within secondary schools. Members

queried whether there were varied approaches taken by Multi Academy Trusts (MATs) depending on whether they were local or national bodies. In response, the Board was informed that despite the type of MAT, all parental engagement activities tend to be devised and delivered locally.

- The need for engagement with parents who do not take-up free pre-school hours that they are entitled to, to understand the barriers to access and how to encourage enrolment.

### **The voice and influence of young people surrounding the development of child friendly spaces through planning and City Development processes**

- There was some discussion surrounding the extent to which young people had been consulted during the recent Core Strategy and Site Allocation Plan examinations. Linked to this, Members were informed that consultation workshops in relation to the initial development stages of the Core Strategy had taken place back in 2006 with the Leeds Youth Council.
- Whilst acknowledging that there are clear legislative and external considerations linked to the way in which formal public hearings are undertaken, Members felt that more consideration was needed to enable young people's voices to be heard, such as use of video links and holding meetings at more convenient times. Whilst it was suggested that the Scrutiny Board may wish to raise such matters directly with the Planning Inspectorate, it was noted that the scope of opportunity to bring in the voice of young people could also be linked to the Council's own forthcoming review of the Core Strategy, including a refresh of the Council's Statement of Community Involvement.
- In relation to significant planning and development decisions that are more localised, Members were informed that as the Youth Council is not currently recognised as a statutory consultee for planning applications, the choice to carry out any specific consultation with children and young people remained at the discretion of individual planning officers. Whilst it was noted that children and young people would still be able to submit their views in the same way as any other member of the public, the Voice and Influence Lead Officer highlighted that local youth groups and schools in specific areas of planned development would be particularly receptive to greater engagement opportunities and that the VIC Team would be happy to work in partnership to explore this further.
- Recent examples of active engagement work with young people by City Development was provided to the Board. Particular reference was made to a successful workshop with housing developers looking at barriers and opportunities when developing environments, which took place in February 2019 involving young ambassadors and could be replicated.
- Members requested that children and young people be included in the recruitment process for the new Chief Planning Officer, and that a

question be included seeking the candidates ideas and ambitions to embed a child friendly agenda in the planning process.

### **The voice and influence of young people in identifying and addressing local transport needs**

- Members were informed that work with the Youth Council and the West Yorkshire Combined Authority was ongoing and progressing well.

### **Engaging young people in the Scrutiny Board's Inquiry**

- The Chair thanked the VIC Team for their support with all of the visits to youth groups, and for the Youth Summit Event.
- Members provided feedback on the individual visits and identified some common themes. There was clear evidence of feelings and experiences which threatened safety, specifically prevalence of anti-social behaviour and lack of police presence. There were also reports from female groups of feeling intimidated around groups of boys, and around adult men under the influence of alcohol in the city centre. Cost of travel also emerged as a theme, which children and young people felt acted as a barrier to their access to the city centre and other activities outside of their area. Some of the older groups reported that some activities felt 'too young', whereas they were unable to be involved in more adult activities and still felt that they required an element of support. There were concerns raised about mental health, and understanding amongst young people of what constitutes as a mental health problem in contrast to a wellbeing issue. There were a number of requests from young people for more low cost / no cost events across the City

**RESOLVED** – That the contents of the report, along with Members comments, be noted.

*Co-opted Member Andrew Graham left the meeting at 12:00pm during discussion of this item. Councillors Gruen and Bruce left the meeting at 12:20pm and 12:45pm respectively during discussion of this item.*

## **97 Work Schedule**

The Head of Governance and Scrutiny Support submitted a report regarding the Scrutiny Board's work schedule for the 2018/19 municipal year and outline proposals for the 2019/20 municipal year.

The Principal Scrutiny Adviser introduced the report and outlined the areas within the report and associated work schedule. In relation to the Scrutiny Board's Inquiry this year, Members were informed that the Board's draft Inquiry report would be circulated for approval during May, and then presented formally to the successor Board at the first meeting of the 2019/20 municipal year in June 2019. Whilst acknowledging that the Inquiry report will be used as a key reference document to help shape the work programme of

the successor Board, the Chair highlighted that the proposed work schedule set out in Appendix 3 will be amended to also reflect the suggested areas of work raised during this meeting. Linked to this, a Board Member put forward a further suggestion that internal exclusions also be added to the proposed work schedule for 2019/20.

The Chair thanked all Board Members and the officers for their contributions and support throughout the year.

**RESOLVED –**

- a) That the overall work schedule as presented at Appendix 1 be agreed.
- b) That the draft work schedule as presented at Appendix 3 be agreed, subject to the amendments set out above.

**98 Date and Time of Next Meeting**

The precise time and date of the June 2019 meeting was to be confirmed at a later date.

(The meeting concluded at 1.20 pm)