

SCRUTINY BOARD (CHILDREN AND FAMILIES)

WEDNESDAY, 27TH NOVEMBER, 2019

PRESENT: Councillor A Lamb in the Chair

Councillors H Bithell, P Drinkwater,
B Flynn, A Forsaith, M Harland, C Howley,
A Hussain, J Illingworth, P Latty, J Lennox,
D Ragan and K Renshaw

CO-OPTED MEMBERS (VOTING)

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

CO-OPTED MEMBERS (NON-VOTING)

Ms C Foote – Teacher Representative
Ms D Reilly – Looked After Children / Care Leavers Representative

49 Appeals Against Refusal of Inspection of Documents

There were no appeals against refusal of inspection of documents.

50 Exempt Information - Possible Exclusion of the Press and Public

There were no exempt items.

51 Late Items

There were no late items. However, there was supplementary information in relation to agenda item 9 – Scrutiny Inquiry into Exclusions, Elective Home Education and Off-rolling draft terms of reference.

52 Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

No declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests were made. However, it was noted that Debbie Reilly, a co-opted member representing Looked After Children and Care Leavers, made a declaration that in relation to item 8 – Future in Mind: Leeds Strategy and Local Transformation Plan for Children and Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing, she was directly employed by Leeds Community Healthcare NHS Trust.

53 Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors C Gruen, A Marshall-Katung, W Kidger and R Stephenson.

The following Councillors were in attendance at the meeting as substitutes:

- Cllr M Harland for Cllr C Gruen
- Cllr D Ragan for Cllr A Marshall–Katung
- Cllr P Latty for Cllr R Stephenson

Apologies were also received from the following co-opted members; Helen Bellamy, Anne Kearsley, Kate Blacker and Emma Holmes.

54 Minutes - 23rd October 2019

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 23rd October 2019 be approved as a correct record.

55 Scrutiny Inquiry 'Is Leeds a Child Friendly City?' - Formal response to scrutiny recommendations

The report of the Head of Democratic Services presented a formal response to the recommendations arising from the recent Scrutiny Inquiry 'Is Leeds a Child Friendly City?'

The Inquiry concluded in April 2019 with the Scrutiny Board's conclusions and recommendations published in August 2019. Appendix 1 of the submitted report provided the formal response from the relevant Directorates for Members' consideration.

In attendance at the meeting were:

- Councillor Jonathan Pryor – Executive Member for Learning, Skills and Employment
- Councillor Fiona Venner – Executive Member for Children and Families
- Steve Walker – Director of Children and Families
- James Rogers – Director of Communities and Environment
- Sharon Yellin – Chief Officer/ Consultant in Public Health
- Phil Mellen – Deputy Director for Learning
- Sue Rumbold – Chief Officer for Partnerships and Health
- David Feeney – Chief Planning Officer

The Chair expressed his view that this had been a good piece of work by the Scrutiny Board and in general had welcomed the positive responses to the recommendations.

The Board went through each of the recommendations as set out at Appendix 1 of the submitted report with the following key points highlighted:

Recommendation 1:

- The Board welcomed the ongoing commitment towards exploring engagement opportunities between children and young people and the Scrutiny function in general, which would involve the Youth Voice Summit events where appropriate;

- It was noted that the Youth Voice Summits during 2020 would be focused on climate change.

Recommendation 2:

- In welcoming this recommendation, it was acknowledged that a number of reviews were now being undertaken to identify and strengthen engagement links with particular groups of children and young people.

Recommendation 3:

- Both the Chair and the Director of Children and Families spoke on behalf of the Chief Executive to relay his acceptance and support for this recommendation;
- As set out within the report, the Board noted the series of actions now being taken that were also linked to the ongoing Corporate Reporting Review.

Recommendation 4:

- The Chief Planning Officer welcomed this recommendation and confirmed that young people were being fully involved in revising the Council's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI), which is a statutory document that sets out how the Council consults on planning applications and planning policy documents;
- It was noted that the new SCI would be open to consultation next year.

Recommendation 5:

- Acknowledging the close links with recommendation 4, the Chief Planning Officer explained that the revised SCI will have a section dedicated to the engagement of children and young people. While it was noted that the Council is unable to set out requirements in this regard, the revised SCI is to set out why engagement and consultation with children and young people is important as well as showing how this can be done effectively and will include examples of good practice to inspire.
- The Board welcomed that the new SCI would also include greater emphasis around early engagement.

Recommendation 6:

- Reference was made to the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) Your Views annual survey as a potential source of data to identify performance indicators and capture the views of young people in terms of feeling safe from harm. While it was noted that further work is being undertaken by the OPCC to attract more responses from young people, an offer was made by the Director of Children and Families to share good practice advice with the OPCC;
- Linked to this, particular reference was made to the success of the local My Health, My School (MHMS) survey that is undertaken within schools and the potential to utilise this already embedded approach to help capture any additional information from young people.

Recommendation 7:

- In welcoming this recommendation, it was highlighted that many of the communication channels already in place to communicate advice and information to parents will be maximised once the mapping of parenting advice and skills has been completed, as set out in recommendation 8.

Recommendation 8:

- As set out within the report, it was noted that a number of examples of good practices linked to parental engagement have been captured and will be disseminated to help achieve a consistent approach across the city. This will also help inform the development of a parental engagement strategy for the city.

Recommendation 9:

- Particular reference was made to the development of an Effective School Council Toolkit based on the annual training provided by the Health and Wellbeing Service, which will be made available (at cost) to Leeds schools.

Recommendation 10:

- As set out within the report, the Board welcomed the ongoing commitment of the Council linked to the 'You, Me, PSHE' scheme of work which has been mapped against the new statutory guidance for relationships education and health education.

Recommendation 11:

- In noting the availability of the findings arising from the recent evaluation of the MindMate Champion programme and MindMate lessons, it was agreed that the Scrutiny Board would be kept updated surrounding the review of the lessons arising from this evaluation.

Recommendation 12:

- The Board was pleased to note that an event was taking place in the Civic Hall that evening to enable young people to raise relevant issues and concerns directly with local bus providers, including issues on affordable fares, accessibility of buses in Leeds, appropriate conduct of drivers towards young people whilst using public transport and also climate change. It was highlighted that any recommendations arising from this event would be shared with Scrutiny.
- The Board's co-opted representative for Looked After Children and Care Leavers shared a particular suggestion put forward by care leavers which aimed to make travelling to employment and training opportunities across the city more accessible for care leavers. This involved care leavers utilising any free bus passes that older people would ordinarily be eligible to access but have chosen not to. The Chief Officer for Partnerships and Health agreed to raise this during the event.

Recommendation 13:

- It was noted that initial ‘Partners in Play’ meetings have now taken place to help shape the action plan linked to the Play Partnership and that this action plan will be shared with the Scrutiny Board once available.

The Board requested that a further recommendation tracking report be brought to the first meeting of the Children and Families Scrutiny Board in the new municipal year.

RESOLVED –

- To note the content of the report and the formal responses to the recommendations.
- That a further tracking report is scheduled for June 2020 as part of the first meeting of the Children and Families Scrutiny Board in the new municipal year.

56 Future in Mind: Leeds Strategy and Local Transformation Plan for Children and Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing

The report of the Head of Democratic Services presented information around the Future in Mind: Leeds Strategy and Local Transformation Plan 2015-2020. It sets the city’s vision, progress and next steps to improve the social, emotional and mental health and wellbeing of children and young people aged 0-25.

In attendance at the meeting were:

- Councillor Jonathan Pryor – Executive Member for Learning, Skills and Employment
- Councillor Fiona Venner – Executive Member for Children and Families
- Steve Walker – Director of Children and Families
- Sue Rumbold – Chief Officer for Partnerships and Health
- Saira Mumtaz Jones – Health and Wellbeing Lead
- Michelle Kane – Health Improvement Principal, Public Health
- Dr Jane Mischenko – Lead Strategic Commissioner: Children and Maternity Care, NHS Leeds CCG
- Hannah Beal – CAMHS, Leeds Community Healthcare NHS Trust

The Board was shown a presentation by Dr Jane Mischenko which provided Members with an overview of the progress that has been made against the 11 priorities set out within the Strategy and Plan. It was highlighted that all the work achieved could not have been undertaken without the assistance of all partners from across the city.

In consideration of the report and presentation, the following key points were raised:

- *The impacts of social media* - it was acknowledged that social media was a complex area as increased accessibility to a digital world will have positive benefits in terms of learning and communication opportunities as well as the potential to be harmful, particularly to

vulnerable young people. While recognising the need for social media providers to be made more accountable for the content of sites, particular importance was placed upon educating children and parents in the use of social media and making sure children have the resilience, information and power they need to make safe and informed choices about their digital lives.

- *Planned local event involving the Children's Commissioner* – linked to the above, it was noted that the Children's Commissioner had produced a number of reports regarding children's exposure to the digital world and that an invitation has been extended to the Commissioner to attend a planned local event themed on this issue in February 2020.
- *Effective transition from child to adult service provision* – this was recognised as a challenging area with a need for significant review and transformation, as set out in the NHS Long Term Plan. While acknowledging that this is a key priority within the current Transformation Plan, reference was also made to the developing all-age Leeds Mental Health Strategy and the expressed interest of the Adults, Health and Active Lifestyles Scrutiny Board to continue monitoring progress with the delivery of this new Strategy.
- *CAMHS support* - Members were advised that the waiting list for CAMHS had reduced and was now 13.5 weeks. The Board was also informed about the ongoing work aimed at continuing to reduce this waiting time further and to also intervene early to identify other appropriate alternative support provision.
- *Roll out of the Young People's Resilience Programme across schools* – The Board was particularly pleased to note that the Young People's Resilience Programme will continue to be rolled out in educational settings to secondary age young people at risk of poor mental health and wellbeing. In recognising some of the pressures faced by schools, particular emphasis was placed on schools sharing advice and good practice with each other too.
- *The role of MindMate* – The Board welcomed that the MindMate Champion Programme will be further embedded into the Healthy Schools programme and particularly recognised the valuable role of the MindMate Ambassadors.
- *MindMate Single Point of Access (SPA)* – Through the MindMate SPA team, it was noted that each referral is carefully considered and the team liaises with a range of local health, education, social care services and third sector agencies to ensure that the most appropriate service is identified.
- *Self-referral approach* - Since the MindMate SPA introduced self-referrals in October 2018, a total of 511 self-referrals had been received. Whilst taking a self-referral, it was highlighted that the clinician will explain the process and indicate potential time frame for triage. The parent/carer or young person are also offered advice and sign posted to other support i.e. Market Place, Kooth, Teen Connect. This process is well received and often receives positive feedback and comments.

- *Assessments for Autism and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)* - Members were advised of the new Neurodevelopmental (ND) Pathway that will group children with both a query around Autism and/or ADHD, in addition to other complex ND needs, into one ND pathway to help shorten waiting times. However, in light of increased service demand and dual running of 'old and new' pathways, it was reported that additional funding has been allocated to the service to provide additional capacity for assessments to be undertaken within the ND pathway, notably Autism assessments.
- *Forthcoming SEMH Conferences* – The Executive Board Member for Children and Families highlighted that a number of local SEMH conferences were being planned and would welcome Scrutiny Board representation too.

The Chair welcomed the level of work that has been undertaken, as well as the ongoing commitment of all partners, in delivering the key priorities set out within the Future in Mind: Leeds Strategy and Local Transformation Plan. It was agreed that the Board would maintain a watching brief of progress, with particular interest surrounding crisis support provision and the transitions programme of work.

In the meantime, it was felt that there would be added value for the Scrutiny Board to further explore how the Council and partners can help children and parents/carers to have the resilience, information and power they need to make safe and informed choices within the existing digital world. The Chair agreed to work with the Principal Scrutiny Adviser and other relevant officers to consider how best to undertake this piece of work during this municipal year.

RESOLVED –

- (a) To note the content and recommendations in the submitted report, including the content of the recently refreshed Future in Mind: Leeds Strategy and Local Transformation Plan (2015-2020)
- (b) That the Chair works with the Principal Scrutiny Adviser and other relevant officers to consider how best to undertake a piece of work this year aimed at helping children and parents/carers to have the resilience, information and power they need to make safe and informed choices within the existing digital world.

57 Scrutiny Inquiry into Exclusions, Elective Home Education and Off-rolling - draft terms of reference

The report of the Head of Democratic Services set out the draft terms of reference relating to the Scrutiny Board's forthcoming Inquiry into Exclusions, Elective Home Education and Off-rolling.

In attendance at the meeting were:

- Councillor Jonathan Pryor – Executive Member for Learning, Skills and Employment
- Steve Walker – Director of Children and Families

- Phil Mellen – Deputy Director for Learning

At the Board's meeting in October 2019, the Director of Children and Families had presented a report setting out national concerns regarding the rising level of exclusions and elective home education as well as reflecting the position in Leeds linked to school based data. The Board agreed to undertake further scrutiny surrounding the issues linked to exclusions, elective home education and also off-rolling.

The draft terms of reference had been circulated and published in advance of the meeting as part of a supplementary information pack.

The Chair explained that following a request made by the Executive Member for Learning, Skills and Employment, the Board was happy to incorporate the following amendments to the draft terms of reference:

- That 'fixed term exclusions' be used throughout paragraph 1.11 rather than just 'exclusions';
- That the scope of the inquiry includes specific reference to addressing the practice of off-rolling;
- That the words 'or off-rolled' be added after 'number of children excluded...' in paragraph 3.2;
- Linked to the witnesses list, the reference to Head Teacher representation from local primary and secondary schools includes local authority and academy schools.

In consideration of the draft terms of reference, the Board also discussed the potential impacts surrounding excessive use of internal isolation, which could also lead to exclusions, and therefore requested that this be captured within the scope of the Inquiry too.

RESOLVED – That, subject to the above amendments being incorporated, the Board agrees the terms of reference relating to the forthcoming Inquiry into Exclusions, Elective Home Education and Off-rolling.

58 Work Schedule

The report of the Head of Democratic Services was presented by the Principal Scrutiny Adviser, and set out the Scrutiny Board's work schedule for the remainder of the current municipal year.

The work schedule was appended to the submitted report for Members consideration and agreement.

Further to item 9 of the agenda, the work schedule would be updated to include the Inquiry into Exclusions, Elective Home Education and Off-rolling. Linked to this, the Chair had requested an additional meeting in February to assist in completing this piece of Scrutiny work before the end of the municipal year. It was agreed that this would be held on 5th February 2020 at 10.00 am.

With regard to the Board's next meeting in January 2020, the Principal Scrutiny Adviser gave an overview of the expected agenda items. Linked to the item surrounding the Leeds Offer for Post 16 education, including vulnerable learners, the Board was informed that it had been proposed that a small number of Board Members undertake a visit in early January to the Post 16 Meadows Park Partnership hosted at Benton Park School. However, this visit still remained subject to confirmation. The Principal Scrutiny Adviser therefore advised that further details on this would be shared with Board Member in due course.

RESOLVED –

- (a) To note the content of the report and agree the work schedule for the remainder of the municipal year.
- (b) To hold an additional meeting of the Scrutiny Board on Wednesday 5th February 2020 at 10:00 am (pre-meeting at 9.45 am).

59 Date and Time of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Children and Families Scrutiny Board will be on 22nd January 2020 at 10:00 am, with all Members invited to a pre-meeting at 9:45 am.

CHAIRS COMMENT

The Chair wished the Members of the Board a Merry Christmas and best wishes for the New Year.

(The meeting concluded at 11.45 am)