

SCRUTINY BOARD (CHILDREN AND FAMILIES)

WEDNESDAY, 18TH JULY, 2018

PRESENT: Councillor A Lamb in the Chair

Councillors H Bithell, K Bruce, D Cohen,
C Gruen, J Illingworth, W Kidger, J Lennox,
D Ragan, K Renshaw and R. Stephenson

CO-OPTED MEMBERS (VOTING)

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

CO-OPTED MEMBERS (NON-VOTING)

Ms C Foote – Teacher Representative
Mrs A Kearsley – Early Years Representative
Ms C Hopkins – Young Lives Leeds

13 Appeals Against Refusal of Inspection of Documents

There were no appeals against the refusal of inspection of documents.

14 Exempt Information - Possible Exclusion of the Press and Public

There were no exempt items.

15 Late Items

There were no late items.

16 Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests.

17 Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Drinkwater. Notification had been received that Councillor Ragan was substituting for Councillor Drinkwater. Apologies were also received from co-opted members Ms J Hazelgrave and Mr A Graham.

18 Minutes - 13th June 2018

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 13th June 2018 be approved as a correct record.

Draft minutes to be approved at the meeting
to be held on Wednesday, 26th September, 2018

19 Matters Arising

Minute 7 - The Chair informed Members that Ms J Hazelgrave was now reaching the end of her 4 year term with the Scrutiny Board as a Parent Governor representing special educational needs. In acknowledging that Ms Hazelgrave was no longer continuing as a parent governor, the Chair took the opportunity to formally thank her for her contribution to the Scrutiny Board for the last 4 years and agreed to write to Ms Hazelgrave to thank her personally.

Minute 10 - The Chair noted that the Hate Incident Reporting in Schools (HIRS) scheme from 2016 had been received. However, the Chair had been informed that the scheme was currently undergoing a process of review, and that the revised version would be provided to the Board for consideration in due course.

20 Directors response to Scrutiny Inquiry - The Impact of Child Poverty on Achievement, Attainment and Attendance

The report of the Director of Children and Families set out the formal response to the recommendations from the Scrutiny Board (Children and Families) inquiry into 'The Impact of Child Poverty on Achievement, Attainment and Attendance'.

The following were in attendance:

- Councillor Lisa Mulherin, Executive Member for Children and Families
- Councillor Jonathan Pryor, Executive Member for Learning, Skills and Employment
- Steve Walker, Director of Children and Families
- Sue Rumbold, Chief Officer for Partnerships and Health, Children and Families

The Director of Children and Families introduced the report, and thanked the Board for their report and recommendations, all of which had been accepted. Members were informed of a range of work currently being progressed in relation to the recommendations, with particular reference to the establishment of the Child Poverty Impact Board (CPIB). Members were informed that the CPIB was intended to be a multi-agency response to child poverty, involving Council officers, external partners and third sector representation.

Members discussed a number of matters, including:

- *Recruitment for each of the six impact work streams of the CPIB.* Members were informed that each work stream will involve relevant professionals, along with officers and elected members. Currently, only Councillor Venner and Councillor Mulherin were members of the CPIB, however members were informed that membership was considered to

be on an evolving basis. Members requested a list of current membership to be circulated.

- *Voice and Influence project with the University of Leeds.* Members were keen to understand how young people were being engaged in this area of work. Officers present assured Members that the University was working closely with the Voice, Influence and Change (VIC) team, to handle matters sensitively and ensure all young people involved had a fun and positive experience.
- *School based measures of deprivation.* The Board discussed the use of school based measures of deprivation, with particular reference to Pupil Premium figures, and how such measures are being used to also track progress in terms of educational attainment.
- *The accountability of the CPIB.* Members were informed that the CPIB was a Council-wide effort, with links to the Priority Neighbourhoods, but sat firmly within the Children's Trust Board arrangements. The Board requested to routinely receive minutes from the CPIB meetings.

RESOLVED –

- a) That the Scrutiny Board notes the responses to the recommendations based on their findings, and endorses the approach being taken.
- b) That the Board be provided with the information requested.
- c) That a further update report surrounding the implementation of the Scrutiny Board's recommendations be provided at the Board's meeting on 23rd January 2019.

(Councillor D Ragan joined the meeting at 10:35am, and Councillor Illingworth at 10:45am, during discussion of this item.)

21 Financial Performance - Children and Families

The Head of Governance and Scrutiny Support submitted a report that presented financial performance information relevant to the remit of the Scrutiny Board.

The following information was appended to the report:

- Financial Outturn report
- Financial Health – Month 2 report

The following were in attendance:

- Councillor Lisa Mulherin, Executive Member for Children and Families
- Councillor Jonathan Pryor, Executive Member for Learning, Skills and Employment
- Steve Walker, Director of Children and Families
- Sue Rumbold, Chief Officer for Partnerships and Health, Children and Families
- Simon Criddle, Head of Finance (Children and Families), Resources and Housing

Members discussed a number of matters, including:

- *School Reserves*. Members sought clarification regarding the access to school reserves, when schools become an academy. It was confirmed that when schools become an academy voluntarily, they remain in control of their surplus funds (or deficits). However, Members heard that when a school is forced to convert to an academy, the Council is given more discretion to retain any surplus funds associated with that school. However, if that particular school is in deficit at the point of conversion, then that associated debt automatically transfers to the Council. Members requested a list of all Leeds schools' current surplus or deficit positions.
- *Children's Centres shortfall*. Members queried the shortfall in income for Children's Centres, and were informed that this was largely due to the impact on nursery income following the introduction of 15 hours free childcare.
- *External Residential (ER) placements*. The Director offered context to the cost of ER placements, to provide members with a better understanding of the expense to the service. Members heard that £1m would generally only pay for 3 / 4 placements, and therefore only a small number of cases can have a significant impact on the budget.

RESOLVED –

- a) That the contents of the report and appendices, be noted.
- b) That the Board be provided with the information requested.

22 Learning in Leeds Annual Standards Report 2016-17

The Head of Governance and Scrutiny Support submitted a report that presented the Learning in Leeds Annual Standards Report for 2016-17.

The 2016/17 Learning Outcome Dashboards were appended to the report.

The following were in attendance:

- Councillor Lisa Mulherin, Executive Member for Children and Families
- Councillor Jonathan Pryor, Executive Member for Learning, Skills and Employment
- Steve Walker, Director of Children and Families
- Val Waite, Head of Learning Inclusion, Children and Families
- Kim Porter, Joint Interim Head of Learning, Children and Families
- Anne Fell, Joint Interim Head of Learning, Children and Families
- Erica Hiorns, Secondary School Improvement Advisor, Children and Families

Members discussed a number of matters, including:

- *Academies and Multi-Academy Trusts (MATs)*. Members queried whether the report was shared with academies to illustrate the challenges, and to MATs who may have schools within various local

authority boundaries. Officers informed members that the document was made publically available, but that key messages from the report are communicated to all schools regularly.

- *Attainment levels of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) children.* Members raised concerns regarding the attainment of BAME children in Leeds compared to all children nationally, and wished to be provided with more information on the action being taken to address this gap.
- *English as an Additional Language (EAL).* Members suggested that future Annual Standards Reports should also reflect EAL comparator data with other relevant local authorities.
- *The attainment gap between disadvantaged children and their peers.* Members questioned the confidence of Officers in their current strategies designed to improve the learning outcomes of all children to close the attainment gap. Officers assured Members that the evidence shows that they are making steady incremental gains, which they viewed to be sustainable. Members were also informed of the establishment of the 'Advantaging the disadvantaged' working party, which has now been running for 18 months.
- *The link between Social and Emotional Mental Health (SEMH) provision and exclusion rates.* Members were pleased to hear that permanent exclusions in the city had been reduced to 11 in 2016/17 from 33 in 2015/16, which Officers informed Members has largely been due to the increase in SEMH support for those at risk of exclusion. However, Members were concerned to hear of a rise in fixed term exclusions and requested a breakdown of exclusions per school to understand which areas were in need of targeted support.
- *Narrowing of the curriculum.* Members expressed concerns around the narrowing of the curriculum, particularly for subjects such as Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE). Members were assured that narrowing of the curriculum was a significant focus nationally, and forms a significant role in the support and challenge to schools in Leeds. For PSHE, Officers informed Members that there has been a large subscription to the Health and Wellbeing support offered through Learning Improvement, and that feedback has been good from both schools and the officers.

The Chair explained that the key issues raised by the Board can also be explored further as part of the Board's themed discussions at future meetings.

(Councillors K Renshaw and W Kidger left the meeting at 11.55 am during discussion of this item.)

(Ms C Foote left the meeting at 12:15pm during discussion of this item.)

RESOLVED –

- a) That the contents of the Leeds Annual Standards Report and appended dashboards, be noted.
- b) That the Board be provided with the information requested.

23 Work Schedule

Draft minutes to be approved at the meeting
to be held on Wednesday, 26th September, 2018

The Head of Governance and Scrutiny submitted a report which invited Members to consider the Board's Work Schedule for the remainder of the current municipal year.

RESOLVED – That the work programme be agreed.

24 Date and Time of Next Meeting

Wednesday, 26th September 2018 at 10.00 am (pre-meeting for all Board Members at 9.45 am).

The meeting concluded at 12:30pm.