

SCRUTINY BOARD (CHILDREN'S SERVICES)

THURSDAY, 18TH SEPTEMBER, 2008

PRESENT: Councillor W Hyde in the Chair

Councillors G Driver, J Elliott, R D Feldman,
B Lancaster, J McKenna, V Morgan, K Renshaw,
E Taylor and C Townsley

CO-OPTED MEMBERS (VOTING):

Mr E A Britten	- Church Representative (Catholic)
Mr I Falkingham	- Parent Governor Representative (Special)
Mrs S Knights	- Parent Governor Representative (Primary)

CO-OPTED MEMBERS (NON-VOTING):

Ms C Foote	- Teacher Representative
Mr T Hales	- Teacher Representative
Mrs S Hutchinson	- Early Years Development & Childcare Partnership Representative
Ms T Kayani	- Leeds Youth Work Partnership

18 Chair's Opening Remarks

The Chair welcomed all in attendance to the September meeting of the Scrutiny Board (Children's Services). In particular, the Chair welcomed Councillor Townsley to his first meeting of the Board.

19 Late Items

In accordance with his powers under Section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972, the Chair admitted to the agenda, additional information in relation to Extended Services and Summer Activities 2008. The information was unavailable at the time of agenda despatch, and needed to be considered as part of agenda item 8 (Minute No. 24 refers).

The Chair also admitted to the agenda, draft terms of reference in relation to entering the education system and 14-19 education. The draft terms of reference were unavailable at the time of agenda despatch, and needed to be considered as part of agenda item 9 (Minute No. 25 refers).

20 Declaration of Interests

Mr I Falkingham declared a personal interest in relation to agenda item 11, Update on Ofsted Inspections and Schools Causing Concern – Primary, on

the basis that two of his children attended a school referred to in the report (Minute No. 27 refers).

Further declarations of interest were made at later points in the meeting (Minute Nos. 24, 27 and 28 refer).

21 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted by Councillor B Cleasby, Professor P Gosden and Ms J Morris-Boam.

22 Minutes - 17th July 2008

One Member highlighted that the previous meeting had taken place on the same day as industrial action. The Chair advised that the meeting had already been re-arranged and it was important that it took place given the timescales involved.

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 17th July, 2008 be confirmed as a correct record.

23 Children Leeds Current Commissioning Arrangements

The Director of Children's Services submitted a report, which outlined the current arrangements for the commissioning of services in Children Leeds.

The following officers attended the meeting and responded to Members' questions and comments:-

- Rosemary Archer, Director of Children's Services; and
- Sarah Sinclair, Director of Commissioning and Planning.

Councillor Golton, Executive Member (Children's Services) was also in attendance.

The Board received a presentation, which provided an introduction to Commissioning and Integrated Strategic Commissioning.

In brief summary, the main areas of discussion were:-

- Development of the **Common Assessment Framework**.
- Improvements to cross agency working.
- Priorities for commissioning of services.
- **Locality commissioning** and how it related to local people.
- Engaging with local Elected Members on the Children and Young People's Plan.
- The importance of **narrowing the gap** and raising the standards of failing schools.

The Chair thanked the officers for their attendance.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

(Councillor B Lancaster arrived at 10.17 am during the consideration of this item).

24 Formal Response to Scrutiny Recommendations - Services for 8-13 year olds

Further to Minute No. 136 of the meeting held on 24th April, 2008, the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report, which requested Members to consider the formal responses received in relation to the Board's inquiry on services for 8-13 year olds. A copy of the formal response was appended to the report together with the Strategic Play Officer Work Plan, Play Pathfinder Briefing (September, 2008) and the Participation Strategy Implementation Plan.

The Chair welcomed the following officers to the meeting:-

- Rosemary Archer, Director of Children's Services;
- Barbara Newton, Strategic Leader: Partnership and Participation;
- Mark Hopkins, Team Leader, Extended Services; and
- Vicky Hunt, Play Co-ordinator.

Councillor Golton, Executive Member (Children's Services) was also in attendance.

The Board considered the formal response to scrutiny recommendations in relation to services for 8-13 year olds.

Recommendation 2 – Mark Hopkins, Team Leader, Extended Services, reported on further work that was being undertaken to develop extended services, including:-

- Identifying and supporting clusters at various levels;
- Developing a self-evaluation programme and sharing good practice;
- Consulting Cluster Chairs as part of developing the new Children and Young People's Plan;
- An increasing focus in school Ofsted inspections on extended services.

The following points were also discussed:-

- It was agreed that a report on the first pilot self-evaluations undertaken by 10 clusters would be provided to the Board.
- There was concern about access to extended services activities for children with special educational needs.
- In addition, there was also concern that some children were unable to access activities, due to the lack of available transport provision. The Director of Children Services advised that a **school and travel policy** was being developed, which would be submitted to the **Executive**

Board for consideration in due course. Transport would also be picked up in developing the new Children and Young People's Plan.

Recommendation 5 – The Board expressed their congratulations for the range of summer holiday activities provided. However, some concern was expressed about funding for publicity.

Recommendation 6 – The Play Co-ordinator reported that the **Play Partnership** held its first meeting in mid-September and a further meeting was taking place in November. The Board was informed that the first stage application for **Play Pathfinder funding** had been submitted.

The Chair thanked the officers for their attendance.

RESOLVED –

- (1) That the report and information appended to the report be noted; and
- (2) That the Board notes the responses provided;

(Mrs S Hutchinson declared a personal interest in this item as a Member of the Alwoodley cluster).

(Councillor C Townsley left the meeting at approximately 11.30 am during the consideration of this item).

25 Draft Terms of Reference

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report, which invited the Board to agree terms of reference for the Board's inquiries in relation to entering the education system and 14-19 education. The draft terms of reference were submitted for Members' consideration.

The Board was advised that the Scrutiny Board Procedure Rules Guidance Notes required that before embarking on an inquiry, the Board considered the views of the relevant Director and Executive Member. Members were asked to consider agreeing the terms of reference for the inquiries, subject to any comments received from the Executive Member.

RESOLVED –

- (1) That the report and information appended to the report be noted; and
- (2) That the Board agrees the terms of reference for the inquiries, subject to any comments received from the Executive Member (Learning).

26 Exempt Information - Possible Exclusion of the Press and Public

The Board discussed the reasons for the submission of exempt information. Mary O'Shea, Legal Services (Section Head) and Dirk Gilleard, Education Leeds – Deputy Chief Executive, advised the Board on the reasons for maintaining the exemption.

RESOLVED – That the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following parts of the agenda designated exempt on the grounds that it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the public were present there would be disclosure to them of exempt information so designated as follows:

- (a) Annex 2 to the report referred to in minute 27 under the terms of Access to Information Procedure Rule 10.4 (1) and (2), and on the grounds that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information because Education Leeds has a duty to secure improvement and increased confidence in the schools concerned, which would be adversely affected by the disclosure of this information.
- (b) Annex 2 to the report referred to in minute 28 under the terms of Access to Information Procedure Rule 10.4 (1) and (2), and on the grounds that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information because Education Leeds has a duty to secure improvement and increased confidence in the schools concerned, which would be adversely affected by the disclosure of this information.

27 Update on Ofsted Inspections and Schools Causing Concern - Primary

The Chief Executive of Education Leeds submitted a report, which outlined the performance of primary schools from January 2008 to June 2008.

Appended to the report was the following information:-

- Biannual Update on Ofsted Inspections and Schools Causing Concern – Primary;
- Annex 1: Attainment and Progress;
- Annex 2: Primary schools in extended partnerships;
- Annex 3: Ofsted inspection summaries; and
- Annex 4: Differentiated levels of Engagement with the Improving Schools Programme.

The following officers attended the meeting and responded to Members' questions and comments:-

- Dorothy Smith, Strategic Manager - School Improvement;
- Brian Tuffin, School Improvement – Principal Adviser (Secondary and Special); and
- Dirk Gilleard, Education Leeds – Deputy Chief Executive.

In brief summary, the main areas of discussion were:-

- Monitoring arrangements and the types of support offered to schools.

- The importance of effective leadership. In response to concern about the reduction in head-teacher applications, the Board was told about actions being taken to sustain school leadership.
- The need to raise standards for under-privileged children and share good practice.

Following consideration of Annex 2 of the report designated as exempt under Access to Information Procedure Rule 10.4(1) and 10.4(2), which was considered in private, it was

RESOLVED – That the report and information appended to the report be noted.

(Councillor J McKenna declared a personal interest in this item due to being a Governor at Christ the King Catholic Primary School).

(Councillor K Renshaw left the meeting at 11.55 am and Mrs S Knights at 12.25 pm during the consideration of this item).

28 Update on Ofsted Inspections and Schools Causing Concern - Secondary

The Chief Executive of Education Leeds submitted a report, which summarised recent Ofsted inspection results for secondary schools and outlined the overall pattern of judgements under the current Ofsted framework. The report also provided an update on the progress of schools causing concern and highlighted the implications of the government's new 'National Challenge' for schools.

Appended to the report was the following information:-

- Biannual Update on Ofsted Inspections and Schools Causing Concern – Secondary;
- Annex 1: Ofsted summaries; and
- Annex 2: Secondary schools in extended partnerships.

The following officers attended the meeting and responded to Members' questions and comments:-

- Dorothy Smith, Strategic Manager - School Improvement;
- Brian Tuffin, School Improvement – Principal Adviser (Secondary and Special); and
- Dirk Gilleard, Education Leeds – Deputy Chief Executive.

In brief summary, the main areas of discussion were:-

- The government's commitment to ensure that all schools achieved at least 30% 5 GCSE's A*-C including English and Maths.
- The proposal to close South Leeds High School and establish an academy in its place. In response to a specific query, the Board was

advised that the academy would be required to establish its own governance arrangements.

- The current partnership arrangements between South Leeds High School and Garforth Trust.

The Chair thanked the officers for their attendance.

Following consideration of Annex 2 of the report designated as exempt under Access to Information Procedure Rule 10.4(1) and 10.4(2), which was considered in private, it was

RESOLVED – That the report and information appended to the report be noted.

(Councillor G Driver declared a personal interest in this item as a Governor at South Leeds High School).

(Councillor J McKenna declared a personal interest in this item due to his daughter attending one of the schools referred to in the report).

(Councillor R Feldman left the meeting at 12.28 pm, Ms T Kayani at 12.50 pm and Mrs S Hutchinson at 12.55 pm during the consideration of this item).

29 Work Programme

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

Appended to the report for Members' information was the current version of the Board's work programme, an extract from the Forward Plan of Key Decisions for the period 1st September, 2008 to 31st December, 2008, which related to the Board's remit, together with the minutes from the Executive Board meetings held on 16th July, 2008 and 2nd September, 2008.

The Principal Scrutiny Adviser reported on a suggestion to establish a small working group to meet with members of the Youth Council to discuss options for closer working. It was agreed that the Principal Scrutiny Adviser would e-mail Members to determine which Members were interested in serving on the working group.

One Member requested further information on the key decision - **National Challenge and Secondary Provision in Central and East Leeds**. It was agreed that further information would be provided when available.

One Member referred to recent contact with the First Floor Project at the West Yorkshire Playhouse, and requested that the Principal Scrutiny Adviser explore the potential for the project to contribute to the Board's current inquiry programme.

RESOLVED – That the work programme be agreed.

30 Date and Time of Next Meeting

Thursday 16th October, 2008 at 9.45 am with a pre-meeting for Board Members at 9.15 am.

31 Tim Hales

Tim Hales informed the Board that it was likely to be his last meeting of the Scrutiny Board (Children's Services). The Chair thanked Tim for his valuable contribution to the Board's work over a number of years.

(The meeting concluded at 1.05 pm).