

SCRUTINY BOARD (CHILDREN'S SERVICES)

THURSDAY, 13TH NOVEMBER, 2008

PRESENT: Councillor W Hyde in the Chair

Councillors B Cleasby, G Driver, J Elliott, 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)
Prof P H J H Gosden	- Church Representative (Church of England)
Mrs S Knights	- Parent Governor Representative (Primary)

CO-OPTED MEMBERS (NON-VOTING):

Ms C Foote	- Teacher Representative
Mrs S Hutchinson	- Early Years Development & Childcare Partnership Representative
Ms J Morris-Boam	- Leeds Voice Children and Young People Services Forum Representative
Ms T Kayani	- Leeds Youth Work Partnership

43 Chair's Opening Remarks

The Chair welcomed all in attendance to the November meeting of the Scrutiny Board (Children's Services).

44 Declaration of Interests

There were no declarations made at this point, however declarations of interest were made at later points in the meeting (Minute Nos. 48 and 49 refer).

45 Apologies for Absence

An apology for absence was submitted by Councillor R D Feldman.

46 Minutes - 16th October 2008

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 16th October, 2008 be confirmed as a correct record.

47 Request for Scrutiny

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report which invited the Board to consider a possible topic for scrutiny in relation to the Multi-Agency Support Team (MAST).

A copy of the letter submitted by Councillor Selby was appended to the report for Members' information.

The Chair welcomed to the meeting, John Maynard, Strategic Leader (Children's Services) and Councillor Selby, who had been invited to present the request to the Board.

Members considered some of the principle concerns in relation to the proposed withdrawal of funding from the **Multi Agency Support Team (MAST) Project**.

In brief summary, the main points highlighted in submitting the request were:-

- It was reported that there was an intention to withdraw some of the funding for the MAST project by April 2009.
- There were concerns that the decision making process was not transparent.
- There were also concerns about the lack of provision, if the proposed reduction in funding was agreed.
- Teaching staff had commented that the MAST Project was an accessible resource that provided good value for money.
- Members considered setting up a small working group to report back to the Board in January 2009. It was agreed that Councillors Hyde and Morgan, Mr Falkingham and Ms Foote would serve on the working group.

RESOLVED – That the Board establish a small working group with the aim of completing a piece of work and reporting back in January 2009.

48 Leeds Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)

The Directors of Adult Social Services, Children's Services and Public Health, submitted a report which invited the Board to consider the progress made in producing the first **Leeds Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)**.

The following information was appended to the report:-

- Public, patient, service user and carer feedback;
- High Level Plan to improve joint planning and commissioning through JSNA; and
- Summary of the JSNA Data Pack.

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

- John Maynard, Strategic Leader (Children's Services); and
- Allison Beal, Department of Health, Programme Manager.

A brief overview of the key points detailed within the report was provided and the main areas of discussion were as follows:-

- Support for the inclusion of reducing **teenage pregnancy** as a high priority area for action.
- The need to maximise the involvement of **voluntary sector representatives** and to include data they can provide, including **national organisations and charities** operating at a local level.
- The effect of the current economic crisis on employment figures and links with the **narrowing the gap agenda**.
- Strong support for the proposal to make data available at a local level, especially in order to support early intervention.
- Making best use of available information and ensuring that work was not duplicated.
- Support for the involvement of **Area Committees** in using local data.
- Acknowledgement of the need to combine data with local intelligence to inform action.
- An ongoing interest from the Scrutiny Board and acknowledgement of the usefulness of the JSNA process and its products in informing the Board's own work programme, both in terms of maintaining an overview, and in relation to prioritising areas of inquiry.

RESOLVED –

- (1) That the progress made with developing the JSNA be noted; and
- (2) That the Board's comments be used to assist with its further development.

(Councillor Cleasby declared a personal interest in this item, due to visiting schools to give healthy heart talks on behalf of Heart Research UK).

49 Scrutiny Inquiry - 14-19 Education Review

Further to Minute No. 16 of the meeting held on 17th July 2008, the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report which introduced the evidence to be considered as part of the first formal session of the Board's inquiry into the review of 14-19 education.

Appended to the report was a copy of the draft terms of reference together with a background to the review for the Board's consideration.

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

- Pat Toner, Education Leeds, Director of Organisational Development;
- Gary Milner, Education Leeds, Head of 14-19 Strategy;
- Mike Firth, Learning and Skills Council;

- Val Snowden, Head of Jobs and Skills; and
- Peter Laurence, Education Leeds, Consultant Headteacher.

The evidence which had been submitted was introduced and presented to the Board by relevant officers. A question and answer session then ensued and the main areas of discussion were as follows:-

- The need to protect and enhance the gifted and talented, especially in terms of transfer to **higher education**.
- Development of **diplomas and apprenticeships** and ensuring that they met the needs of all young people.
- Challenges in meeting **national targets**, particularly in terms of offering all young people an entitlement to an apprenticeship by 2013.
- Provision for young people with **special educational needs**, especially those with severe disabilities.
- Increasing employment opportunities.
- The Council's own recently agreed apprenticeship scheme.
- Establishing links with **employers, schools and colleges** and engaging with **governors and elected members**.
- Individualised learning and the work of **personal advisers and mentors**.
- Local provision and links with the **city region**.
- The need to provide opportunities for young people who had suffered educational or emotional set-backs.

The Chair thanked the officers for their attendance at the meeting.

The Board noted that the next stage of the inquiry would consist of a number of visits and working group sessions. Councillors, Cleasby, Driver, Elliott, Hyde, Lancaster and McKenna, Mr Britten, Mr Falkingham and Professor Gosden all expressed an interest in taking part.

RESOLVED – That the issues raised at the first session of the Inquiry, be noted.

(Mr T Britten declared a personal interest in this item due to being a Governor at Notre Dame Sixth Form College).

(Councillor Townsley left the meeting at 11.25 am, Mrs S Hutchinson at 11.56 am, Councillor Renshaw at 11.58 am, Mrs S Knights at 12.01 pm, Ms T Kayani at 12.08 pm, Ms C Foote at 12.15 pm and Councillor Driver at 12.20 pm, during the consideration of this item).

50 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 November 2008 to 28th February 2009, which related to the Board's remit, together with the minutes from the Executive Board meeting held on 8th October, 2008.

In relation to Recommendation Tracking, recommendation 2 on inclusion (Min No. 40 refers), the Board agreed to set up a small working group to meet with officers from **Education Leeds** to consider the progress made, and report back to the full Board. It was agreed that Mr Britten, Mr Falkingham and Ms Foote and Councillors Elliott, Hyde and Renshaw would serve on the working group.

RESOLVED – That subject to the comments raised at the meeting, the work programme be approved.

51 Date and Time of Next Meeting

Thursday 11th December, 2008 at 9.45 am with a pre-meeting for Board Members at 9.15 am.

(The meeting concluded at 12.32 pm).