

Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Thursday 24 March 2011

PRESENT:

Councillor Wildy, in the Chair.

Councillor Stark, Vice Chair.

Councillors Browne, Mrs Foster, Haydon, Mrs Nicholson, Roberts and Tuohy.

Co-opted Representatives: Alderman Purnell, Jenny Evans and Kerry Whittlesea.

Apologies for absence: Councillor Delbridge and Mr Kevin Willis.

Also in attendance: Giles Perritt - Head of Policy, Performance and Partnerships, Colin Moore – Assistant Director for Lifelong Learning, Gareth Simmons – Programme Director for Learning Environments, Karl Sweeney – Adviser for Citizenship, PSHEE and Healthy Schools, Andy Turnock – Project Leader (Routeways), Camille Clearie – Project Development Officer (Routeways), Fiona Fleming – Commissioning Manager, Maggie Carter – Assistant Director for Learner and Family Support, Jayne Gorton – School Organisation and Pupil Access Manager, Dave Simpkins – Head of Service Children and Young People in Care, Jim Gould – Chair of the Local Safeguarding Children Board, Simon White – Safeguarding Business Manager.

The meeting started at 10.00 am and finished at 12.15 pm.

Note: At a future meeting, the committee will consider the accuracy of these draft minutes, so they may be subject to change. Please check the minutes of that meeting to confirm whether these minutes have been amended.

87. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR

Agreed that Councillor Stark is appointed as Vice Chair of the Panel for this meeting.

Welcome was given to Councillor Browne who replaced Councillor Mrs Stephens and to Giles Perritt who was acting as Lead Officer on behalf of Claire Oatway for the purpose of the meeting.

88. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

In accordance with the Code of Conduct, the following declarations of interest were made, as follows –

Name	Minute	Reason	Interest
Councillor Stark	Legislative Update	Member of the Fostering Panel. Governor at All Saints and Stoke Damerel.	Personal

Name	Minute	Reason	Interest
Jenny Evans	Legislative Update	Pupil at Eggbuckland Community College and her mother is the headteacher at Hyde Park Junior school.	Personal
Councillor Wildy	Report on Commissioned Services from the Voluntary and Community Sector	Director of Keyham Community Partnership.	Personal

89. **MEETING NOTES**

Agreed that –

1. Alderman Purnell's apologies are noted on the meeting held on 24 February 2011;
2. the notes of the meeting held on 24 February 2011 were confirmed as a correct record. The notes were formalised by Councillor Stark and seconded by Councillor Roberts.

90. **CHAIR'S URGENT BUSINESS**

The Chair raised the need to address the co-opted representation on the Panel. The Chair also shared with the Panel the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Quarterly report.

Agreed that –

1. the Assistant Director for Lifelong Learning will make contact with the Diocese to nominate a Diocesan representative onto the Panel;
2. further work is undertaken by the Lead Officer and Democratic Support Officer on parent governor representatives and to clarify the rights of co-opted representatives;
3. the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Quarterly Report is distributed to the Panel for comments prior to submission to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board.

91. **TRACKING RESOLUTIONS AND FEEDBACK FROM THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD**

The Panel considered the tracking resolutions; Panel members present commented as follows –

- regarding minute 79, Gala Event, those present were not happy that the event would still be taking place. The Panel had raised its concerns and the matter had been taken seriously. The Gala Event is now taking place in May;
- regarding minute 80, Cost and Volume Fostering Framework, this briefing paper was to be referred to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board for consideration;
- regarding minute 81 (2), Child Poverty, a briefing paper was provided to the Panel on the technical definition. A child living in a family in receipt of out of work benefit or in receipt of tax credits where the reported income is less than 60 percent of the median income was classed as living in poverty.

Agreed that –

1. information is provided to the Panel around the governance arrangements for the child poverty working group to include timescales around tackling poverty via the child poverty strategy;
2. a response is provided to the Panel on the median income for Plymouth families living in poverty.

The Chair gave feedback from the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board (OSMB) to the Panel. It was reported that –

- a. the OSMB were happy with the following task and finish groups proposed:
 - Apprenticeships
 - Children's Mental Health
 - Children and Young People's Plan
- b. the Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Young People in Care task and finish report was well received and the recommendations were accepted.

92. **LEGISLATIVE CHANGES**

Gareth Simmons, Programme Director for Learning Environment gave a presentation to the Panel. It was reported that –

- a. schools move to academy status for greater independence and would receive funding and grants directly from central government;

- b. there were financial incentives for a Plymouth school to move to an academy;
- c. the local authority would cease to maintain the school when they move to academy status. The school would then have a direct relationship with central government;
- d. land, property and staff associated with a school would transfer over when a school moved to academy status;
- e. the local authority would become the commissioner of services and not the provider of services;
- f. the local authority would consider putting in certain protections into a lease for community provision.

In response to questions, it was reported that –

- g. the academy would become responsible for the maintenance of the school building. The directors of the academy would have the responsibility in law for health and safety;
- h. if there was a situation with a school that needed to be inspected it would be the local authority's duty to inform central government of the circumstances;
- i. where there was a good relationship with a school the local authority needed to ensure that it continued. The schools transferring were expected to promote community use whilst ensuring that safeguarding issues were not being compromised;
- j. where schools shared land and one school transferred to academy status this would become a complex issue. The local authority would have to look very carefully at the arrangements in place and would need lawyers to deal with all the issues.

Agreed that -

- 1. the Panel supports the Cabinet in seeking protection for the local authority from long term liabilities associated with land and property related leases, freehold transfers and other transfer agreements relating to the Academy Act 2010;
- 2. the Panel recommends to Cabinet that the case be made to the Secretary of State for Education to ensure continued public access to Academy assets;
- 3. a review of schools transferring to academy status in 2011/12 is added to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board's work programme including Corporate Support's timescales on the TUPE transfer of staff.

93. **YOUNG PERSONS ENGAGEMENT WITH SCRUTINY**

Karl Sweeney, Adviser for Citizenship, PSHEE and Healthy Schools, Andy Turnock, Project Leader (Routeways) and Camille Clearie, Project Development Officer (Routeways) reported back to the Panel on the final stage of an early recommendation on young persons engagement with scrutiny. It was reported that -

- a. this piece of work demonstrated how children and young people's participation had grown and developed over the last 3 -4 years;
- b. views of children and young people were gathered from participation activities undertaken with Plymouth City Council Youth Service, Routeways, Police and the wider voluntary and community sector;
- c. there had been an increase in the number of young people engaged in activities year on year.

In response to questions raised, it was reported that –

- d. the budgeting event that took place in Devonport was not included in this piece of work as they did not come forward with the information. The views gathered were from the organisations that were willing to provide the information;
- e. there were a core group of 12 young representatives that engaged in consultation activities with other individuals. Routeways dealt with 3,000 young people each year;
- f. the Chair thanked the officers for their report and was pleased with the number of children and young people engaged with the range of activities on offer. Consideration needed to be given on the way information was presented and would prefer that information was presented at a neighbourhood level rather than at locality level.

Agreed that –

1. Routeways provide a breakdown of participation activities undertaken by children and young people at neighbourhood level;
2. officers provide a wider overview of all participation activities undertaken by children and young people.

94. **REPORT ON COMMISSIONED SERVICES FROM THE VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR**

Fiona Fleming, Commissioning Manager presented her report to the Panel.

In response to questions raised, it was reported that –

- a. the Contract Award report was going to Cabinet on 29 March 2011 to award contracts to successful Children Centres for a three-year period commencing 1 July 2011 – 30 June 2014;
- b. the tender process in awarding a contract to a children centre takes six months from start to finish;
- c. if a contract was extended at a Children Centre, the provider would continue to run the same level of service.

95. **ISSUES AROUND THE ALLOCATION OF SCHOOL PLACES REPORT**

Maggie Carter, Assistant Director for Learner and Family Support and Jayne Gorton, School Organisation and Pupil Access Manager updated the Panel on the recent issues on the allocation of secondary school places. It was reported that -

- a. school place allocations are carried out using a purchased computer package called ONE;
- b. a recent update to the ONE system was not acted upon which resulted in the error of notifying parents of preference allocation;
- c. the error was rectified as soon as it was identified and all queries from parents were dealt with promptly;
- d. assurances were given that this incident would not happen again;
- e. a review of the process by which the local authority receives and handles ONE system updates would be undertaken.

96. **PREVALENCE OF CHLAMYDIA**

The Panel noted the report.

Agreed that –

1. a recommendation is made to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board to refer the prevalence of Chlamydia to the new Health and Wellbeing Board and the Children's Trust;

2. a written response to be given to the following questions raised on Chlamydia by the Young Person Representative:
 - the National Chlamydia Screening Programme (NCSP) target is to screen 35% of 15 - 24 year olds in 2010/11. Question - why was this target put in place and why was there a need for concern?
 - in 2008/09 the NCSP recognised that 5.3% of the target population were tested, in 2009/10 the NCSP recognised 11.6% of the population, in 2010/11 the NCSP has recognised 12.7% of the population screened to date (activity covering qtr's 1-3). Question - is this for Plymouth or nationally and do we know the Plymouth results?
3. Chlamydia is highlighted in schools to encourage take-up of Chlamydia screening.

97. **WRITTEN REPORTS**

- a. Employment for Young People (NEETS)

The Panel noted the report.

- b. Adult and Community Learning

The Panel noted the report.

98. **UNACCOMPANIED ASYLUM SEEKING YOUNG PEOPLE IN CARE**

The Chair informed the Panel that the Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Young People in Care task and finish report had been to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board and the recommendations were accepted.

Agreed that the Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Young People in Care Task and Finish report is monitored by the Corporate Parenting Group.

99. **UPDATES FROM PARTNER ORGANISATIONS**

- a. Corporate Parenting Group

The Panel welcomed the new Head of Service for Children and Young People in Care, David Simpkins to the Panel.

b. Local Safeguarding Children's Board

Jim Gould, Independent Chair and Simon White, Safeguarding Business Manager presented their update to the Panel. It was reported that -

- two interim reports had been published from the Munro Report into Child Protection which was commission by the Government;
- key changes were taking place to Vetting and Barring Scheme;
- the number of children on a child protection plan had peaked but this figure had now reduced;
- Partner's were experiencing changes within their own organisations with cost cutting measures and safeguarding would continue to be kept high on the agenda.

c. LSP Wise Theme Group

The Panel noted the update.

d. The Children and Young People's Trust

The Panel noted the update.

100. **WORK PROGRAMME**

The Panel noted the work programme for 2010/11.

101. **EXEMPT BUSINESS**

There were no items of exempt business.