

Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Thursday 22 October 2009

PRESENT:

Councillor Purnell, in the Chair.
Councillor Mrs Stephens, Vice Chair.
Councillors Bowie, Mrs Bragg, Delbridge, Mrs Nicholson, Roberts and Vincent.

Co-opted Representatives: Mr T Lyddon and Jake Paget

Apologies for absence: Councillors Beer and Reynolds and Mrs Carolyn Bruce-Spencer, Mrs Maggie Gee and Mr Kevin Willis

The meeting started at 10.05 am and finished at 12.30 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.

21. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made by members.

22. CHAIR'S URGENT BUSINESS

There were no items of Chair's urgent business.

23. FEEDBACK FROM MANAGEMENT BOARD

The Chair gave an update on actions received from the recent Management Overview and Scrutiny Panel Meeting.

It was reported –

- (i) that Corporate Improvement Priorities (CIPs) were to be considered by all Panels at a forthcoming meeting, to achieve earlier scrutiny input into the Corporate Plan.

Resolved that the Panel to report on CIPs to Management Board on 6 January 2010.

24. APPOINTMENT OF SUBSTITUTE TO THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD

The panel was advised of the need to appoint a substitute member to attend meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board, as per the Management Board's terms of reference. The rationale behind this was to ensure that each scrutiny panel was represented at every meeting of the Management Board. The substitute member must have received the required finance training and be from the same political party as the member for whom they were substituting.

Resolved that Councillors Bowie and Delbridge be appointed as a nominated substitutes for the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board.

25. **PLYMOUTH SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD REPORT**

The Chair of the Plymouth Safeguarding Children Board gave an update to members on the work, developments and scrutiny undertaken by the Plymouth Safeguarding Children Board (PSCB)

It was reported that –

- (i) an independent Chair was appointed in May 2009;
- (ii) the Peninsula Safeguarding Board has now signed off the contract for NHS Plymouth to manage the Child Death Overview Process;
- (iii) Senior Officers attend both the Children's Trust and PSCB to ensure a close link between both organisations;
- (iv) the PSCB has ratified the Safer Employment Quality Standard;
- (v) the PSCB Annual Conference will be held on 25 February 2010.

Resolved that the Panel members would receive a copy of the PSCB 3-year Training Plan 2007 – 10 and the e-Safety Implementation Plan.

26. **CHILD PROTECTION PLANS**

The Safeguarding Manager gave an update on child protection plans (CPP).

It was reported that –

- (i) the number of children currently with a child protection plan (CPP) reflects the national picture, following high profile cases such as 'baby P';
- (ii) the percentage of re-registrations of children with a CPP peaked in May/June 2009; there was an audit of cases which demonstrated that all re-registrations were appropriate (i.e. there were changed circumstances); this number is now reducing;
- (iii) all child protection review cases were reviewed within the required timescales, with the exception of one case where the child transferred to another authority who arranged a conference which was then cancelled and rearranged;
- (iv) the numbers of children with a CPP lasting 2 years or more was steadily reducing, and there was a need to continue focusing on reducing the numbers further;
- (v) all Plymouth GPs had now received child protection training; children's centres respond rapidly to child protection concerns.

Resolved that future updates on child protection plans would reflect whether agencies had provided the relevant reports or information, not just whether they had attended conferences or reviews.

27. **THE ROLE OF CORPORATE PARENTING GROUP**

The Head of Service (Looked After Children) gave an update on the role of the Corporate Parenting Group.

It was reported that –

- (i) the Corporate Parenting Group has a leadership role to champion the needs of looked after children with council services and partner agencies;
- (ii) the Corporate Parenting Panel scrutinises and monitors outcomes for children and young people in care, adopted children and young people leaving care;
- (iii) the Plymouth Pledge has been developed which outlines Plymouth's commitment to all children and young people in care;
- (iv) a Virtual School Headteacher has been appointed to provide a support and challenge role in relation to educational attainment for children and young people in care.

Resolved that –

- (1) Cabinet receive an annual report of the work of the Corporate Parenting Group;
- (2) the children's overview and scrutiny committee regularly review the work of the Corporate Parenting Group and identify issues that require further work and arrange for Corporate Parenting to become incorporated into the work programme on an annual basis;
- (3) Cabinet consider the commitments outlined in the Pledge for children and young people in care and that Corporate Parenting and the involvement of children and young people in care is incorporated into the committee's work programme on an annual basis;
- (4) the Corporate Management Team (CMT) identify departmental 'champions' in each council area so that the needs of children and young people in care can be incorporated into strategy and policy formation with accountability to the Corporate Parenting Group;
- (5) all appraisals and staff supervision to specifically address progress against the Pledge;
- (6) all Elected Members attend induction training on Corporate Parenting;
- (7) all departments consider providing work placements for young people in care.

28. **14 - 19 INSPECTION REPORT AND ACTION PLAN**

The Assistant Director for Lifelong Learning and Senior Advisor – Secondary Education gave an update on the areas of development in relation to the 14 – 19 Reforms – January 2009 Ofsted Inspection Survey.

It was reported that –

- (i) the number of young people, not in education, employment, or training (NEET) is growing due to the lack of job opportunities due to the current economic situation;
- (ii) the vision of the Plymouth 14 – 19 Strategy Group is to provide an outstanding city-wide learning campus for young people aged 14 – 19. Plymouth has gone further than most other local authorities in changing the mix of qualifications available, and is regarded as currently leading the way in diploma developments.

29. **REFRESH OF THE PLYMOUTH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S TRUST PLAN 2008 - 2011**

The Acting Assistant Director for Commissioning, Policy and Performance gave an update on Plymouth Children and Young People's Trust Plan 2008 – 2011 Refresh 2009.

It was reported that –

- (i) the priorities in the Plan were reviewed and are still relevant;
- (ii) the priorities are grouped in accordance with the Every Child Matters outcomes;
- (iii) there was an emphasis on involving and consulting with children and young people;
- (iv) important issues for 2009 – 2011 include child poverty, speech and language development, raising aspirations, value for money services, tackling bullying, personalised learning; safeguarding continues to be the highest priority.

30. **DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will be held at 10.00 am on Thursday 19 November 2009 at the Council House.

31. **EXEMPT BUSINESS**

There were no items of exempt business.