

CITY OF PLYMOUTH

Subject: Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel Quarterly Report

Committee: Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Date: 9 November 2009

CMT Member: Bronwen Lacey, Director for Children and Young People

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Ref:

Part: Part I

Executive Summary:

This report sets out a review of the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel for the second quarter of 2009/10.

Corporate Plan 2009-2012:

The Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel provides strategic scrutiny of the following Corporate Improvement Priorities and key areas:

- CIP7 - Keeping children safe
 - CIP8 - Improving skills and educational achievement
 - CIP9 - Developing high quality places to learn in
 - CIP 13 - Supporting staff to perform better
 - CIP 14 - Proving better value for money
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Implications for Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications: Including finance, human, IT and land

None

Other Implications: e.g. Section 17 Community Safety, Health and Safety, Risk Management, Equalities Impact Assessment, etc.

None

Recommendations & Reasons for recommended action:

That the report is noted

Alternative options considered and reasons for recommended action:

N/A

Background papers:

Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny minutes and forward plan

Sign off: N/A

CITY OF PLYMOUTH

Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel Quarterly Report

1. Introduction

1.1 This report sets out a review of the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel for the second quarter of 2009/10, incorporating the meetings of 24 September and 22 October 2009 respectively.

2. Scope of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel

2.1 The Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel is primarily concerned with the strategic scrutiny of the following Corporate Improvement Priorities and key areas:

- CIP7 - Keeping children safe
- CIP 8 - Improving skills and educational achievement
- CIP 9 - Developing high quality places to learn in

2.2 The detailed terms of reference for the panel are contained in Appendix 1.

2.3 The panel consists of the following members and officers

Title	Name	Attendances (4 meetings)
Councillor (Chair)	Purnell	4
Councillor (Vice Chair)	Stephens	3
Councillor	Mrs Beer	2
Councillor	Bowie	2
Councillor	Mrs Bragg	4
Councillor	Delbridge	3
Councillor	Reynolds	1
Councillor	Roberts	4
Councillor	Vincent	2
Statutory Co-opted rep	C Bruce-Spencer	-
Statutory Co-opted rep	T Lyddon	1
Statutory Co-opted rep	K Willis	2
Statutory Co-opted rep	M Gee (resigned 19.11.09)	-
Co-opted rep	A Kearnes	2
Co-opted rep	J Paget	3
Co-opted rep	K Taylor	2
Co-opted rep	Prof M Totterdell	-
Lead Officer	Richenda Broad/Claire Cordory-Oatway	4
Democratic Support	Cathy McCabe/Amelia Boulter/Rachel Watson	4

2.4 The Panel, through effective strategic and operational scrutiny, supports the following cabinet member and CMT officer

Title	Name
Cabinet Member (Children and Young People)	Grant Monahan

Director of Services for Children and Young People	Bronwen Lacey
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2.5 The panel has a budget of £2,000 to support the scrutiny work.

2.8 The panel has requested practical training in respect of finance.

3. Key achievements to date

The panel has now met on two occasions. Meetings have been well structured, managed efficiently and well attended by panel members. A positive contribution has been made to support an effective strategic and operational overview; in particular, the following achievements have already been made:

3.1 Co-opted representatives

The panel has sustained a diverse group of co-opted representatives, including young people, and celebrates the wider perspective these representatives bring.

3.2 Integrated Services – Localities

In order to inform an effective overview of locality service provision, the panel has visited a number of venues/service providers within the South West and Plympton localities to hear about their work and role in the locality agenda, including:

- Green Ark Children's Centre, Devonport
- Hamoaze House (Voluntary & Community Sector)
- Stoke Damerel Community College (& chair of SW locality Commissioning Group)
- Excellence Cluster Coordinators & Locality Manager
- Plum Tree Children's Centre, Plympton (& member of Plympton Locality Commissioning Group)
- Plympton St Maurice School
- Yealmpstone Farm Primary School

The Panel has successfully joined with other panels to achieve effective scrutiny of the 'localities working'. This group has had a targeted approach and the panel would like to emphasise that it values site visits.

3.3 Safeguarding – Child Protection Plans

The panel received an update on performance indicators related to children with a child protection plan. The panel heard that for some professions (e.g. GPs, Health Visitors), attendance at initial case conferences, reviews and core group meetings was slightly below target, reflecting a national picture. However, in many cases the relevant professionals had submitted written reports for consideration at those meetings. The panel resolved that future performance updates would reflect whether the necessary information had been received from the relevant professionals, not just whether they had attended the meetings.

3.4 Corporate Parenting

The panel received a report on the role of the Corporate Parenting Group, which provides a leadership role by championing the specific needs of children and young

people in care, and ensuring a corporate approach is taken by a range of council departments and agencies. The group was formed in recognition of the particular disadvantages that children and young people in care can face; they can do less well socially, economically and emotionally compared to other children. The Plymouth Pledge has been developed which outlines Plymouth's commitment to all children and young people in care, aiming to 'narrow the gap' between them and their peers. The panel made the following resolutions:

- the panel 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;
- 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;
- the Corporate Management Team 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;
- all appraisals and staff supervision to specifically address progress against the Pledge;
- all Elected Members attend induction training on Corporate Parenting;
- all departments consider providing work placements for young people in care.

3.5 Teenage conception rates

A joint task and finish group has commenced and work is progressing effectively.

4. On the Horizon

The panel has set out the following topic areas on the work programme for the remainder of 2009/10:

Overview:

- Placement Services (Adoption; Fostering)
- Integrated services for children with disabilities
- Provision and support for young carers
- Employment for young people (not in education, employment or training)
- Common Assessment Framework

In addition, a task and finish group has been set up with a focus on reducing teenage conception rates in the city. The group will review the Improving Young People's Sexual Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2009 – 2012 and accompanying Implementation Plan, and will produce a report with recommendations for improvement to support the implementation plan.

Policy Development/Review:

- Recruitment and retention for Foster Carers
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services
- Preventing and managing obesity in the young people of Plymouth

Performance:

- Performance review, including budget
- Complaints and compliments (annual report)
- Quality Assurance Framework
- School attainment results, including those for Looked After Children

Strategic Policy Documents:

- Strategy for Change – Building schools for the future
- Youth Justice Plan

5. Recommendation

- 5.1 That the progress of the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny panel is noted by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board

Richenda Broad

Lead Officer Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel
9 November 2009

Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel Terms of Reference

Responsibilities

- On-going monitoring of post-inspection action plans (relating to its policy areas);
- To review new and existing policies and consider how they may be improved and developed;
- To monitor the budget and performance of the Cabinet Member, Department and partners to ensure that the priorities for the area are being delivered upon;
- To monitor performance against the relevant Corporate Improvement Priorities;
- To review Policies within the Budget and Policy Framework;
- To consider Equality Impact Assessments against new and existing policies;
- To investigate local issues to find out how the council and its partners can improve to meet the needs of local people;
- To make recommendations about service delivery to the Cabinet (via the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board);
- To review and scrutinise the performance of partner organisations;
- To set up ad hoc Working Groups as and when required;
- To produce quarterly progress reports to go to the management board;
- Any work delegated to the panel by the Board.

Policy Areas include:

- Children's Services
- Lifelong Learning
- Learning and Family Support
- Education
- Social Care relating to Children and Young People
- Children and Young People's Trust
- Children and Young People's Partnership
- Teenage Pregnancy
- Child Healthcare

Policy Framework Plans and Strategies relating to Policy Areas

- Children and Young People's Plan
- Ideas for Change
- Youth Justice Plan

Membership

The Chair of the Panel shall serve on the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board. The Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel will be chaired by a Member of the opposition political group with the vice-chair from the majority political group. All Members of the panel will adhere to the general rules of Overview and Scrutiny. There are 9 members of the panel including the Chair and the vice-chair. The vice-chair is from the opposite political group to the Chair.

The Panel also includes 4 statutory members for education matters –

- 2 Parent Governors
- 1 Catholic Church representative
- 1 Church of England representative

All Members of the panel will adhere to the general rules of Overview and Scrutiny.

Cabinet Member

Children and Young People

Directorate

Services for Children and Young People

Lead Officer

Assistant Director, Children's Services

Corporate Improvement Priorities (CIPs)

- Safe Children (CIP 7)
- Skills and Education (CIP 8)
- High quality places to learn (CIP 9)
- Supporting council staff to perform better (CIP 13)
- Providing better value for money (CIP 14)

LSP Link

- Wise