

CITY OF PLYMOUTH

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

Committee: Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Date: 15 December 2010

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

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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 2010/11.

Corporate Plan 2010-2013:

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

- Raising Aspiration
 - Reducing Inequalities
-

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

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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 first quarter of 2010/11 incorporating the meetings of 9 September and 11 November 2010 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 priorities and key areas:

- CIP7 Keeping Children Safe
- CIP 8 Improving skills and educational achievement
- CIP 9 Developing high quality places to learn in
- Partnerships including Plymouth Children and Young People's Trust, Wise Theme Group, Plymouth Safeguarding Children Board, Corporate Parenting Group
- Children and Young People's Plan inc. related performance in Health, Children's Social Care, Education, and Youth.

2.2 The detailed terms of reference for the panel were updated earlier this year and are contained in Appendix 1.

2.3 At meetings this year, the panel has consisted of the following members and officers

Title	Name	Attendances	Workshop	Task and Finish Group
Councillor (Chair)	Wildy	4/4	1	1
Councillor (Vice Chair)	Mrs Stephens	3/4	1	1
Councillor	Delbridge	4/4	1	-
Councillor	Foster	3/4	1	-
Councillor	Haydon	4/4	1	-
Councillor	Mrs Nicholson	3/4	1	1
Councillor	Roberts	4/4	1	-
Councillor	Stark	2/4	-	-
Councillor	Tuohy	4/4	1	-
Statutory Co-opted rep (Parent Governor)	K Willis	3/4	-	-
Statutory Co-opted rep (Diocese rep)	M Gee (long term sick)	-	-	-
Co-opted rep	Jenny Evans	1/1	1	-
Co-opted rep	Kerry Whittlesea	1/1	1	-
Lead Officer	Claire Oatway	2/2	1	1
Democratic Support	Amelia Boulter	3/4	1	1

2.4 Co-opted representatives

The panel have now appointed 3 co-opted representatives to the panel:

- Jenny Evans
- Kerry Whittlesea

Miss Evans and Miss Whittlesea represent children and young people in the City and regularly feedback to youth forums on progress

- Pauline Purnell

Mrs Purnell has been asked to support the panel because of her longstanding knowledge and understanding of issues affecting children's safeguarding and development.



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

Title	Name
Cabinet Member (Children and Young People)	Cllr Mrs Joan Watkins
Director of Services for Children and Young People	Bronwen Lacey

2.6 The panel has a budget of £2,000 to support the scrutiny work.

3. **Key achievements to date**

3.1 Since the last performance report the panel has met on 2 occasions. Meetings have been well structured, managed efficiently and well attended by panel members. A positive contribution had been made to support an effective strategic and operational overview; in particular, the following achievements have been made:

- The panel engaged in a Development Workshop on the 7 October 2010. The workshop was well attended and a good opportunity for panel members, including new members, to meet in a less formal setting. The panel received a presentation on the Carefirst system, Research in Practice and Children Service's Performance Overview. As a result of the day, the Panel has sharpened its focus on key performance areas including emotional health, attainment and bullying.

- A task and finish group examining Young Carers in Plymouth took place over two days this Autumn. The group interviewed a variety of witnesses from the council and the voluntary and community sector and received a range of evidence, including DVDs. A draft report has been produced, summarising
 - Difficulties in identifying young carers
 - The experience of young carers including educational disadvantage
 - The need to improve support to young carers
 Recommendations are being finalised and the report will go to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board in January 2011.

- The panel received an update on the Comprehensive Spending Review and changing national policy. The panel were advised that
 - the Council are eligible to apply for a Capitalisation Direction grant to help pay for redundancy fees and pension contributions
 - the Educational Maintenance Allowance (EMA) would be closed to new applicants in 2011 and it was not known what would replace the EMA.
 - the population in Plymouth was increasing and it was expected that 500 extra children would be going into the schooling system in 2011.
 - Five schools in the BSF project that had been affected by the Comprehensive Spending Review now face uncertainty about funding –
 - Marine Academy – to be rebuilt
 - All Saints – to be refurbished
 - Sir John Hunt and Lipson – to have new ICT facilities
 - Stoke Damerel – to be completely rebuilt

- The panel considered Locality Working, which has been adopted across the city through the Children and Young People’s Trust and more recently Plymouth2020. In each locality, a commissioning group used local ward intelligence to gain a better understanding of different wards in the city. Some residents were more forthcoming in providing their views than others. The panel recommended that a written update on Locality Working, including a paper regarding current restructuring work, proposed delivery and structural models for integrated locality teams to be submitted to the next meeting.

- The panel have been challenging budget pressures within Services for Children and Young People. It was reported to the panel that the volume of children with complex needs requiring transport had attributed to the rising costs for school transport and a review of the transport plan was underway. This will continue to be tracked.

- The panel received an update on the Ofsted Unannounced Inspection action plan. The panel were advised that there is a shortage of social workers nationally. Newly qualified social workers take part in a longer induction programme and would not undertake more complex cases until after a year in post. Social work is a stressful profession and the recruitment process has to be robust. This was not currently a major issue in Plymouth due to recruitment targets having been met.

- The panel were given an update on the Carefirst system. The panel heard that the carefirst team had been recruited and that a further upgrade of the Carefirst software would deliver benefits to the end user and social worker on the front line for case recording. A pilot looking at remote working to take place in the near future. The panel agreed that a demonstration on Carefirst would take place at the developmental workshop in light of the importance of this to the service.
- The panel were given an update on the Hospital School. There were proposals for Plymouth Hospital and Outreach School to be discontinued and be replaced with a support service managed as part of the new Alternative Complementary Education (ACE) Service. The aim of the new service was to provide short stay provision for pupils to complement existing maintained provision for challenging and vulnerable children. Resolutions made by the panel –
 - support the proposal to transform the Plymouth Hospital and Outreach School to an Alternative Complementary Education (ACE) Services;
 - a report on the ACE provision, including the new support service proposed to replace the Plymouth Hospital and Outreach School, is provided to the Panel in six months time;
- The panel also received updates from the Children’s Trust, Corporate Parenting Group, Wise Theme Group and Local Safeguarding Children Board.

4. On the Horizon

4.1 The panel has set out the following topic areas on the work programme for 2010/11:

Overview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stability of Placements; • Prevalence of Chlamydia in under 25 year olds; • Employment for young people (not in education, employment or training); • Adult and community learning; • CAMHS Strategy; • Regular updates from Corporate Parenting Group, Local Safeguarding Children’s Board, Children’s Trust and LSP Wise Theme Group • Locality Working • School Transport
Task and Finish	<p>A further task and finish group has been set up looking at unaccompanied asylum seeking young people in care. The task and finish group will examine access to education, review accommodation and look at the age assessment process. The group will produce a report with recommendations.</p>
Performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance review, including budget • Complaints and compliments (annual report)
Strategic Policy Documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth Justice Plan • Children and Young People’s Plan

5. Could do better

5.1 The following areas of improvement were identified by the panel:

- better linkage between strands of work needed e.g. schools forum, ESAG, Early Years Forum;
- more scrutiny of health-related services for children and young people needed;
- relationships in the panel are improving and most readily engaged in cross party working. However a motion to remove the Chair was formally tabled in September and subsequently withdrawn at the meeting;
- need to scrutinise effectively all aspects of services for children in the city and especially those delivered through PCC and the Children's Trust. This necessitates the development of clear protocols and stream of accountability including holding the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People more regularly.

6. Recommendation

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

Claire Oatway
Lead Officer Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel
6 January 2011