

Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Thursday 14 June 2012

PRESENT:

Councillor Bowie, in the Chair.

Councillor Mrs Beer, Vice Chair.

Councillors Browne, Sam Davey, Jordan, Rennie, Singh, Kate Taylor and Tuohy.

Co-opted Representatives: Alderman Pauline Purnell.

Apologies for absence: Councillors Stark and Sam Leaves and Matthew Currie.

Also in attendance: Councillor Nicky Williams – Cabinet Member for Children and Young People, Dave Simpkins – Acting Assistant Director Children's Social Care, Jayne Gorton – Lead Officer and Amelia Boulter – Democratic Support Officer.

The meeting started at 10.00 am and finished at 10.50 am.

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.

1. TO NOTE THE CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

The panel noted the appointment of Councillor Bowie as Chair and Councillor Sam Leaves as Vice Chair for the municipal year 2012 – 2013. For the purpose of this meeting Councillor Mrs Beer was appointed Vice Chair.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

Name	Minute	Reason	Interest
Councillor Mrs Beer	Minute 8 – Overview of Priorities and Services for Children and Young People	School Governor at Plympton St Maurice, Chair of Plymtree Children Centre and employed by Devon and Cornwall Police.	Personal
Councillor Jordan	Minute 8 – Overview of Priorities and Services for Children and Young People	Governor at Salsbury Road Primary School, Chaddlewood Primary School and Tor Bridge High. Director of Routeways.	Personal

3. **APPOINTMENT OF CO-OPTED REPRESENTATIVES**

The panel discussed the appointment of co-opted representation on the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel and those present commented as follows -

- a. there was a need for tighter recruitment arrangements for co-opted representatives on any meeting;
- b. there could be a conflict of interest if an NSPCC representative sat on this panel because the NSPCC tender contracts on behalf of Plymouth City Council;
- c. further work to be undertaken on sourcing faith and parent governor representation onto the panel.

Agreed that -

1. Alderman Pauline Purnell and Matthew Currie are confirmed as co-opted representatives for the next 12 months;
2. to continue to explore faith representation on the panel and contact to be made with John Mannix, Piety Group and Pete Aley, Head of Safer Communities to source suitable representation onto the panel;
3. parent governor elections to be progressed;
4. further co-opted representatives to be appointed on an ad-hoc basis if required

4. **MINUTES**

Agreed that the minutes of the meeting held on 1 March 2012 were approved as a correct record.

5. **CHAIR'S URGENT BUSINESS**

There were no items of Chair's Urgent Business.

6. **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel terms of reference were agreed subject to the following changes -

- more emphasis to be given on Equality Impact Assessment;
- to ascertain whether the LSP Wise Theme Group still meet;
- membership to be changed following the recent change in administration.

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

The panel considered the tracking resolutions and those present commented as follows –

- regarding minute 57 (2) – Parent governor representative to be added to the next Schools Forum agenda. It was suggested that it should also be highlighted at HAD meetings as a better route in engaging governors to put themselves forward;
- regarding minute 67 (1) - Little Teds Action Plan Report. The report would be sent to all panel members before the next meeting.

8. **OVERVIEW OF PRIORITIES OF SERVICES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

Councillor Williams, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People gave an overview of the priorities for children and young people. It was reported that –

- a. it was important that scrutiny help guide her to make the best decisions and outcomes for young people;
- b. child poverty was a priority and would run through every workstream;
- c. a head start in the educational field in moving the council forward to a co-operative council. Looking at cooperative trust model that would cover the whole of the city and to progress that model for young people get the best possible offer across the board;
- d. early intervention and prevention was important and the troubled families agenda had provided much needed funding to progress work;
- e. safeguarding was key and to be kept at the heart of the work the council undertakes;
- f. scrutiny to look at the youth service as a whole across the city.

Dave Simpkins, Acting Assistant Director for Children's Social Care, was in attendance and gave Carole Burgoyne's, Director for People for her absence due to a clash of meetings. It was reported that –

- g. it was really important to keep a strong focus for children and young people to meet their aspirations;
- h. a campaign to bring down crime and keeping Plymouth safe for young people looking at areas such as bullying and cyber bullying;

- i. emphasis on a co-operative council to focus on wider families and looking at grandparents and relatives to looking after children that could potentially come into care;
- j. the Children and Young People's Plan was currently being refreshed;
- k. there was a strong focus on the troubled families agenda and families had been identified for preventive work to be undertaken;
- l. building relationships with health partners was important and ensuring an appropriate health service was provided post 18 years;
- m. children and adult services were now working more closely together;
- n. that the take up of free passes for children in care had increased with the opening of the new Life Centre.

In response to questions raised, it was reported that -

- o. pre-decision scrutiny was important to address any issues before a final decision was made;
- p. with the arrival of the University Technical College (UTC), it was really important to look strategically at education across the city and to ensure a good variety of educational offer across the city and schools were not impacted;
- q. the take up of leisure passes for children in care had been low, however, since the Life Centre opened this had led to the high numbers in take up;
- r. all social workers were now based at Midland House, the accommodation was completely refurbished with very good facilities;
- s. Councillor Williams would aim to attend all future meetings and would be accompanied by the relevant Director or Assistant Director. Councillor Williams had an open door policy if anyone had any concerns they wished to raise with her.

9. **DRAFT WORK PROGRAMME 2012/13**

The panel noted the draft work programme for 2012/13 and agreed to recommend to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board the following items for inclusion:

- University Technical College (UTC) be kept under regular review;
- Monitoring of sickness levels and vacancies in social care;
- Early Years Interventions;
- Child Poverty.

10. **FUTURE DATES AND TIMES OF MEETINGS**

The panel noted and agreed the dates and times of future meetings as set out in the agenda.

11. **EXEMPT BUSINESS**

There were no items of exempt business.