

**CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & LEARNING
OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL
3 OCTOBER 2012
7.30 - 9.30 PM**



Present:

Councillors Mrs Birch (Chairman), Ms Whitbread (Vice-Chairman), Gbadebo, Ms Hayes, Heydon, Kensall and Mrs Temperton

Mrs S Cauchi, Parent Governor Representative
Miss V Richardson, Teachers' Representative

Apologies for absence were received from:

Councillor Mrs McCracken
Ms C Mitchell, Children's Social Care Representative

Executive Member:

Councillors Dr Barnard

Also Present:

Andrea Carr, Policy Officer (Overview and Scrutiny)
Karen Frost, Early Years Childcare & Play Manager
Dr Janette Karklins, Director of Children, Young People & Learning
David Watkins, Chief Officer: Strategy, Resources and Early Intervention
Bob Welch, Chief Adviser: Learning & Achievement

17. Minutes and Matters Arising

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Panel held on 4 July 2012 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman, subject to the following amendment:

Minute 8, Quarterly Service Report, fourth bullet point: delete "Following the closure of two youth centres..." and insert "Following the closure of three youth centres..."

With regard to Minute 10, Presentation – Child Poverty Strategy and "Troubled Families" Initiative, the Panel was informed that the information around the correlation between Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) would not be available until the end of October.

18. Declarations of Interest and Party Whip

There were no declarations of interest nor any indications that members would be participating whilst under the party whip.

19. Public Participation

No submissions from members of the public submitted under the Council's Public Participation Scheme for Overview and Scrutiny had been received.

20. **Corporate Parenting Advisory Panel**

The Panel noted the minutes of the Corporate Parenting Advisory Panel meeting of 26 September 2012.

21. **Quarterly Service Report (QSR)**

The Panel considered the Quarterly Service Report (QSR) and progress against Service Plan actions for the first quarter of 2012/2013 (April to June). Members identified a number of typographical errors and suggested that it would be helpful if Service Plan actions had a completion date, where applicable.

Arising from Members' questions and comments, Officers reported on:

- the recent conference on Family Focus had been successful and the feedback had been very good. Partnership working was developing and the Council was currently working with 18 families with more identified.
- the introduction of computer science into the curriculum.
- the composition of the Community Learning Trust.
- the work being carried out and the range of programmes to encourage NEETs back into education, employment and training.
- travel training and a sleep clinic which, by increasing independence and reducing stress on families, was intended to reduce some of the demand upon Council services and support.
- advice for 13-19 year olds. The Panel was informed that expenditure on this service had reduced significantly in recent years and that there was a range of performance indicators to ensure that value for money was achieved. Responsibility for providing the Information, Advice and Guidance service had transferred to schools.

The Chief Adviser: Learning and Achievement gave a presentation on test and examination performance in the academic year 2011-12 which demonstrated that overall results remained in line with or above national levels of attainment with good performance and improvement in most areas, particularly in the Early Years and at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2.

The Director of Children, Young People and Learning gave a presentation on the budget setting process, changes in the departmental budget since 2010 which had seen savings of approximately £4m, and major service issues.

22. **Bracknell Forest Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) Annual Report 2011/12 Summary**

This item was deferred to the next meeting.

23. **Annual Report on School and Children's Centre Inspections 2011-12**

The Panel considered a report which summarised the outcomes of the inspections of Bracknell Forest schools carried out by OFSTED during the 2011-2012 academic year.

The Panel noted that the percentage of Bracknell Forest schools awarded an Outstanding or Good grade in their most recent inspection was 71% which was in line with national levels. However, following the introduction of a new Framework for

inspection in January 2012 only 57% of schools nationally had been awarded these grades.

The Early Years Manager reported on the one Bracknell Forest Children's Centre, the Alders, inspected in 2011-2012, which had been graded as satisfactory. She outlined the steps which needed to be taken to be judged as good or outstanding.

Arising from Members' questions and comments, the following points were made:

- Health visitors and midwives were often co-located at Children's Centre sites.
- There was a variety of means to strive towards the target of a 90% registration rate. Although families may not be in need of support at the time of registration, it enabled Children's Centres to be aware of them and accessible to them should the need arise.

24. Study Programmes for 16 to 19 Year Olds

The Chief Adviser: Learning and Achievement tabled a briefing paper on the DfE's Study Programmes for 16-19 year olds (and 19-24 year olds with a learning difficulty assessment or education and health care plan who were still in Further Education) which sought to ensure that all 16-19 year olds in full time state-funded provision (on academic or vocational programmes) had the opportunity to study coherent programmes which offered breadth and depth and did not limit options for further study or work.

To support the introduction of the Study Programmes, the DfE was making the following changes:

- Post 16 funding was being changed with institutions funded on a "per student" basis rather than per qualification and per qualification passed.
- 16-18 performance tables would include measures of the achievements and progress of students and retention rates.
- A new inspection framework from September 2012 would continue to be focussed on weaker providers, with greater attention to observing standards of teaching, learning and assessment.
- Minimum performance standards would be introduced, with institutions which failed to meet them facing financial penalties, intervention and ultimately, closure.

The Council was preparing for these changes through meetings of the 11-19 Partnership group and others including heads of school sixth forms and curriculum managers.

Further to a Member's question, the Panel was advised that all 16-19 year olds would benefit from Study Programmes, particularly when the age of participation rose to 18 years, by having a clear study pathway in place from the age of 16.

25. Pupil Places and Admission Appeals

The Chief Officer: Strategy, Resources and Early Intervention reported on pupil places and school admission appeals.

For secondary schools there had been approximately 1100 applications of which 94% had been offered one of their three preferences. 43 transfer appeals had been submitted of which 10 had been allowed. In addition there had been 16 in-year

admissions, where families had moved into the area during the year, of which 8 had been allowed. As at 11 September, 146 secondary school places were available.

For primary schools there had been approximately 1500 applications of which 93% had been offered one of their three preferences. 51 transfer appeals had been submitted of which 5 had been allowed. In addition there had been 24 in-year admissions, of which 4 had been allowed. As at 11 September, 59 primary school places were available.

The Panel was informed of the school admissions process for September 2013 including the key dates. In order that applicants were better informed, a number of information sessions were scheduled and the Council was making greater use of social media.

In response to Members' questions, the Chief Officer: Strategy, Resources and Early Intervention reported that, although there were some demand "hot spots", mainly in north Bracknell, he was confident that there would be sufficient school places next year. He advised that school admission information leaflets were circulated as widely as possible and officers endeavoured to explain the legal admissions process to parents.

He agreed to provide details of how many applicants were awarded their first preference.

26. Working Group Update Report

The Panel considered a report which set out the progress achieved to date by the working group reviewing school governance. Councillor Mrs Temperton, the working group's lead member, reported on its second meeting held after the publication of the report, when the scope and key objectives of the review were agreed and arrangements were made to meet Link and Parent Governors.

27. Overview and Scrutiny Progress Report

The Panel noted the Bi-Annual Progress Report of the Assistant Chief Executive.

28. Executive Key and Non-Key Decisions

The Panel noted the scheduled Executive Key and Non-Key Decisions relating to Children, Young People and Learning.

The Executive Member for Children, Young People and Learning informed the Panel that the decision relating to the North Bracknell School Places Procurement Plan would now be taken by the Executive Member for Transformation and Finance.

CHAIRMAN