

**CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & LEARNING
OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL
11 JANUARY 2016
7.30 - 9.30 PM**



Present:

Councillors Mrs Birch (Chairman), Brossard (Vice-Chairman), Allen, Ms Gaw, Mrs Hamilton, Mrs McCracken, Skinner, Virgo and Mrs Temperton

Mr R Briscoe, Parent Governor Representative
Miss V Richardson, Teachers' Representative

Apologies for absence were received from:

Councillors Ms Hayes
Mrs L Wellsted, Parent Governor Representative

Also Present:

Andrea Carr, Policy Officer (Overview and Scrutiny)
Dr Janette Karklins, Director of Children, Young People & Learning
Christine McInnes, Chief Officer: Learning & Achievement
Rachel Morgan, Senior Adviser

89. Apologies for Absence/Substitute Members

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Ms Hayes and Mrs Wellsted. The Panel noted the presence of the following substitute Member:

Councillor Allen for Councillor Ms Hayes

90. Minutes and Matters Arising

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Panel held on 30 September 2015 be approved as a correct record, and signed by the Chairman.

91. Declarations of Interest and Party Whip

There were no declarations of interest relating to any items on the agenda, nor any indication that Members would be participating whilst under the party whip.

92. Urgent Items of Business

There were no items of urgent business.

93. Public Participation

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

94. **Corporate Parenting Advisory Panel**

The Panel received and noted the minutes of the meetings of the Corporate Parenting Advisory Panel held on 23 September and 9 December, 2015. Reference was made to the Do You Know training which gave an insight into what it was like to be a young person in care. Four Members of the Panel had attended the training to date and the Chairman encouraged the remainder to do so as it was considered to be extremely illuminating. The dates of the next training sessions were included on page 21 of the Panel's agenda.

95. **Annual Report of the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) 2014/15**

The Director of Children, Young People and Learning introduced the 2014/15 Annual Report of the LSCB which reported on the effectiveness of safeguarding and child protection practice in Bracknell Forest. The report summarised the main areas of activity during the past year; highlighted good practice; identified targeted priorities for the new LSCB Business Plan 2014 – 2017; provided a range of key messages aimed at those responsible for key partnerships and strategic planning across all organisations working with children, young people and families; and identified a number of key messages for partners and stakeholders to consider. The key messages focused on safer workforces / recruitment, information sharing, assessment and analysis of risk, and strengthening partnerships.

Although contributions towards the LSCB's budget were received from the Clinical Commissioning Group, Police, Probation Service, Broadmoor, Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service, and Berkshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust, the Council was the main contributor. The LSCB was a key group for the Council and it received a separate Single Inspection Framework grade from Ofsted.

In response to related questions and discussion the following points were made:

- There were 3-4 known children being privately fostered at any given time and they were assessed, closely monitored and the subject of reporting in the LSCB Annual Report. Private foster carers could also be assessed and reported on at the Foster Carers' Panel. Work with parents took place and schools were one source of referral.
- A safeguarding incident involving the sexual assault of a number of children had not met the threshold for a Serious Case Review and a separate review of practice had been carried out by two partner agencies. Further details of the incident would be provided.
- Although the number of children subject to Child Protection Plans owing to sexual abuse had increased from 2 in 2014 to 12 as at 31 March 2015, this represented a small proportion as over 100 Plans were in place and figures could be swayed by one or two large families involved.
- Children receiving education at home were actively monitored and the process had been reviewed and made more robust. Parents made arrangements for home educated offspring to sit examinations with local schools. Members' concerns regarding the safeguarding of children being educated at home would be conveyed to the Independent Chair of the LSCB.

Following a reduction over the last three years there was a slight increase in the number of young people entering the youth justice system this year. However, numbers continued to be relatively low due to the success of focused early intervention work with young people at risk of offending. Youth justice requirements had changed.

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

The Panel considered the latest trends, priorities and pressures in terms of departmental performance as reported in the QSR for the second first quarter of 2015/16 (July to September 2015) relating to Children, Young People and Learning.

The Director of Children, Young People and Learning presented a number of headlines from quarter three from which the Panel noted:

- The domestic abuse consultation concluded in November 2015 and a report was scheduled to go to the Executive in February 2016.
- Applications and processing for the new school providers had demonstrated a strong field for both Binfield Learning Village and Amen Corner.
- The Duke of Edinburgh Awards ceremony hosted by Sandhurst School saw 144 Bronze, 22 Silver and 11 Gold certificates awarded.
- The outstanding grade for Larchwood, a short break unit providing respite care for children and young people with learning disabilities and difficulties, was confirmed by Ofsted. Improved effectiveness since the last inspection was recorded.
- The focus on child sexual exploitation (CSE) and missing children continued with briefings to 150 community representatives and the production of an information guide. The successful Nine Signs campaign was extended to focus on internet safety.
- Six more schools achieved a rating of 'Good' in their Ofsted inspection in 2015, including Kennel Lane School which achieved Good with Outstanding features.

The Director advised that Ofsted were introducing two new Inspection Frameworks in 2016, namely, Joint Targeted Area Inspection (JTAI) and Special Educational Needs and Disability Inspection. The JTAI would focus on CSE and missing children. The Working Group of the Panel reviewing CSE was thanked for its work. The Single Inspection Framework Ofsted Inspection was expected in 2016 and a Safeguarding Practice Diagnostic would take place from 19-21 January 2016.

The Panel received school Ofsted inspection outcomes from reports published to the end of December 2015 and the following points arose from related questions and discussion:

- Whilst Bracknell Forest schools were generally performing well in national comparisons, the performance of one school which had previously improved from an unsatisfactory position had slipped to the requiring improvement grading. Although performance was the responsibility of the governing body, the Council supported schools to improve through measures such as advice, training and capacity building.
- A Member explained the difficulties faced by governing bodies and expressed the view that governors were trained, strived to improve schools and were aware of their responsibilities.

- There was a new data system and all schools were now providing performance data although this was complicated by changes to Standard Assessment Tests (SATs) grading and a consistent data transfer method was sought.
- Robust risk management was undertaken and targeted support offered to schools prior to Ofsted inspections to maintain school standards.
- The Ofsted monitoring visit to Jennett's Park School had a favourable outcome and it was hoped that the school would progress to a higher grade in future.

The Panel was provided with an attainment data pack consisting of school summaries covering Key Stage (KS) 1 and 2 at Levels 4+ and 5+; value added scores; phonics; progress measures value added; expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics; closing the gaps at KS 1 and 2; and a local authority summary addressing its context, primary phase, secondary phase and destinations of KS 4 and 5 students. Following an explanation of the data and subsequent questions, the Panel noted the following points:

- 17 of the 28 primary / junior schools in Bracknell Forest were at or above the national attainment level at Level 4+ at the end of KS 2. Progress measures had brought some schools above the 'floor' minimum level, however, Harmans Water Primary School remained below the floor. Although Cranbourne Primary School's levels had declined owing to a change in its cohort, it remained above the national attainment level. A number of schools were also at or above the national attainment level at Level 5+ at the end of KS 2.
- In the case of Harmans Water Primary School, intensive measures had already been taken and Ofsted was satisfied with the rate of improvement. A new headteacher had been appointed to the school and was expected to escalate its improvement.
- In terms of value added scores, Great Hollands Primary School was in the top quartile nationally.
- The percentage of pupils achieving the expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics from KS 1 to 2 was good.
- Although progress had been made in narrowing the gap between disadvantaged pupils and others in attainment in reading, writing and mathematics at KS2 since 2013, the gap in attainment in KS 1 phonics had increased between 2013 and 2015. It was felt that narrowing the gap and gifted pupils were priority areas for further work.

The Panel found the data very useful and welcomed receiving it on an annual basis. Members were invited to submit any further questions after the meeting.

A graph indicating the number of Looked After Children, children with Child Protection Plans and Children in Need on a quarterly basis since March 2014 was circulated. When children were determined to no longer be in need of Child Protection Plans they were re-designated to the lower risk status of Children in Need and monitored on a monthly basis.

The Director gave an update in respect of headteacher recruitment advising that only one vacancy currently remained, at Winkfield St Mary CoE Primary School.

97. **2016/17 Draft Budget Proposals**

The Panel considered key themes and priorities for Children, Young People and Learning as outlined in the Council's draft budget proposals for 2016/17.

The Executive agreed the Council's draft budget proposals for 2016/17 at its meeting on 15 December 2015 as the basis for consultation with the Overview and Scrutiny Commission, Overview and Scrutiny Panels and other interested parties. The consultation period would expire on 31 January 2016, after which the Executive would consider the representations made at its meeting on 9 February 2016, before recommending the budget to Council.

Attached to the report were relevant extracts from the 2016/17 Revenue Budget and Capital Programme. The extracts were comprised of Revenue Budget Report, Commitment Budget, Draft Revenue Budget Pressures, Draft Revenue Budget Savings Proposals, Proposed Fees and Charges, Capital Programme Report and Summary, and Proposed Capital Schemes.

The Panel was advised that notification of the Government grant had been received subsequent to the draft budget proposals being agreed as the basis for consultation and as the settlement was lower than expected it would be necessary for further savings to be identified.

Members focused their attention on the draft revenue budget savings and pressures. Attention was drawn to savings arising from additional income streams, reduced placement costs for Looked After Children and efficiencies resulting from revised delivery of services and support totalling £714,000. Budget pressures, which related to the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), Post 16 Education Transport and Special Educational Needs (SEN), amounted to £246,000.

In response to related questions and discussion the following points were made:

- There had been an underspend in the Emergency Duty Team budget for several years and the proposed budget reduction constituted a saving without a service reduction.
- The proposed reduction in Youth Justice support to parenting services would be partially compensated by work in other areas such as the Early Help Offer and Children's Centres and by signposting to other forms of support.
- As there had been low take up of some aspects of the Information, Advice and Guidance to young people service, the related contract had been reduced to achieve a saving and some services brought in-house to improve service provision and value for money.
- Efficiencies and cost reductions in the commissioning of the Joint Legal Team that provided a Berkshire-wide service hosted by Reading Borough Council had been sought.
- As part of the on-going process to improve efficiency, a review of the youth offer had resulted in a saving of £58,000. The service would continue to provide targeted work. Other measures to support emotional health and wellbeing included bids to NHS England and the Clinical Commissioning Group's Innovations Fund, focused work in schools stemming from the Autism Strategy and training of professionals and volunteers through the Parents' Project.

- The streamlining of the management structure of the Children's Centres would increase consistency and efficiency.
- There was a budget pressure associated with the MASH which facilitated improved and more rapid decision making and information sharing consistently across Berkshire.
- The mandatory conversion of SEN Statements into Education Health Care Plans was a significant task requiring additional staff and posed a budget pressure.

The Capital Programme included Phase 1 of the expansion of The Brakenhale School which had qualified for a grant associated with the condition survey.

98. School Places Plan 2015-2020

The Panel received and noted the School Places Plan 2015-2020, and covering report to the Executive, which was produced as a result of an annual review of future housing plans, numbers on roll and demographic data. It included forecasts of school intake and total numbers on roll and calculated the impact on places.

99. Working Group Update Report

The Lead Member of the Working Group reviewing child sexual exploitation (CSE) introduced the Working Group Update Report and advised that the Working Group had met the Children's Specialist Support Team's appointed social worker for CSE at its previous meeting and would be meeting relevant representatives of the NHS at its next meeting. Future work would include discussing CSE related training for taxi drivers.

100. Work Programme 2016/17

The Panel was invited to suggest topics for inclusion in its 2016/17 work programme which would be developed over the coming months. Having regard to the future possible reviews listed in its existing Work Programme for 2015/16, namely, Early Intervention Services and Supporting Disadvantaged Children and Families, the Panel indicated its support for reviewing these topics in the future. It was noted that funding had been secured for the second phase of the Family Focus project. The next review topic would be selected at a future Panel meeting.

101. Overview and Scrutiny Progress Report

The Panel noted the progress report of the Assistant Chief Executive which highlighted Overview and Scrutiny activity during the period from June to November 2015.

102. Executive Key and Non-key Decisions

Executive key and non-decisions relating to Children, Young People and Learning scheduled to be taken from January to March 2016 were noted by the Panel.

CHAIRMAN