

**CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & LEARNING
OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL
10 SEPTEMBER 2014
7.30 - 9.50 PM**



Present:

Councillors Mrs Birch (Chairman), Brossard (Vice-Chairman), Allen, Gbadebo, Ms Hayes, Mrs McCracken, Mrs Temperton and Thompson
Ms C Barrett, Children's Social Care Representative
Ms L Wellsted, Parent Governor Representative

Apologies for absence were received from:

Councillors Heydon and Kensall
Mr R Briscoe, Parent Governor Representative
Miss V Richardson, Teachers' Representative

Executive Member:

Councillor Dr Barnard

Also Present:

Andrea Carr, Policy Officer (Overview and Scrutiny)
Sandra Davies, Head of Performance Management and Governance
Karen Frost, Head of Prevention and Early Intervention
Lorna Hunt, Chief Officer: Children's Social Care
Dr Janette Karklins, Director of Children, Young People & Learning
Christine McInnes, Chief Officer: Learning & Achievement
Kashif Nawaz, Assistant Virtual School Head
Amanda Wilton, Head of Targeted Service

19. Substitute Members

The Panel noted the attendance of the following substitute Member:

Councillor Thompson for Councillor Kensall

20. Minutes and Matters Arising

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Panel held on 11 June 2014 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

21. Declarations of Interest and Party Whip

There were no declarations of interest or any indications that Members would be participating under the party whip.

22. Urgent Items of Business

There were no urgent items of business.

23. Public Participation

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

24. Corporate Parenting Advisory Panel

The Panel received the minutes of the Corporate Parenting Advisory Panel held on 25 June 2014.

In response to a Member's question it was reported that there were no known problems at present with delays in Disclosure and Barring Service checks for foster carers.

25. Performance Monitoring Report

The Panel received the Quarterly Service Report (QSR) for the first quarter of 2014/15 (April to June 2014) together with a series of presentations on aspects of the service.

Janette Karklins, Director of Children, Young People & Learning, gave a presentation detailing the major achievements during the first quarter and the ongoing work to continue development.

Karen Frost, Head of Prevention and Early Intervention, gave a presentation on support for "Troubled Families".

Following questions from the Panel, the meeting was advised that:

- The initiative was still being funded on the basis of outcomes.
- To date 57 out of 115 families (50%) had been turned around and that monitoring would continue to try to ensure that previous problems did not reoccur.
- Mental health was a significant factor in many troubled families and was a focus for the Family Intervention Team.
- The Team comprised approximately 8 full time equivalent staff and had been formed by bringing together officers from different Council services.

The Director gave a presentation on the allocation of school places and reported that the Borough used to operate with approximately 15% surplus school places. This had subsequently reduced to between 5 and 10% and was currently running at 3% despite the significant number of additional places created in recent years.

Following questions from the Panel, the meeting was advised that:

- The number of children moving out of the borough each year did not offset the large numbers moving in.
- Although there were detailed projections of future pupil numbers which took into account, amongst other things, birth rates and new housing developments, it was impossible to predict the number of school age children moving into the borough during the school year.
- Neighbouring boroughs were facing the same pressures on school places.

Christine McInnes, Chief Officer: Learning & Achievement reported that, during the first quarter, two schools had been inspected by Ofsted. New Scotland Hill had been

rated good and Easthampstead Park had been rated as requiring improvement. There had also been an HMI monitoring visit to The Brakenhale School.

Some Members voiced concerns about Ofsted inspecting Easthampstead Park less than two years after the previous inspection and, prior to the publication of examination results which would have demonstrated significant improvement in performance in recent years. The Director reported that the Local Authority shared these concerns and had supported the Headteacher in making a formal complaint. The response was awaited. However it was important to note that, although the school continued to be rated as requiring improvement it was an improving school and its direction of travel was towards a good rating.

The Panel was also informed of the headline data for Early Years and Foundation, Key Stage 1 and 2. The results had not yet been validated and a detailed report would be submitted to a future meeting.

In response to questions on the QSR, the meeting was informed that:

- The Local Authority would continue to prosecute in respect of pupils' non-attendance at schools as results will not improve if pupils do not attend. Whilst the fine might be less than the savings made by taking a family holiday in term time, the amount of each fine was a matter for the magistrate.
- The Council had a multi-agency operations group which monitored any suspicion of CSE. The Executive had already been briefed, post Rotherham, on the action being taken to raise awareness of CSE and an all Members briefing was being arranged.

26. Independent Reviewing Officer Service: Annual Report 2013/14

The Panel considered the 2013/14 Annual Report of the Independent Reviewing Officer Service which performs a key role in assuring the quality of the local authority's care planning for Looked After Children.

Following questions from the Panel, the meeting was advised that:

- A report would be submitted to the next meeting of the Health and Well-being Board regarding the level of Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services support for Looked After Children.
- The number of children who chose not to participate in a review was very small.

The Panel noted the report.

27. Bullying

Mandy Wilton, Head of Targeted Services, gave a presentation on the anti-bullying work programme which included numerous anti-bullying themed school assemblies and workshops.

Following questions from the Panel, the meeting was advised that:

- Schools had good relationships with bus companies and would be made aware of any significant bullying on bus journeys. However no particular issues had been reported.
- A DVD of pupils' artwork produced for anti-bullying work had been distributed to all schools in the borough.

The Panel congratulated the team on the the amount of work undertaken to combat bullying.

28. **Common Assessment Framework (CAF) Annual Report 2013/14**

The Panel considered the 2013/14 Annual Report of the Common Assessment Framework together with a presentation from Sandra Davies, Head of Performance Management and Governance, highlighting progress made over the year by the Framework and the Early Intervention Hub.

The Overview and Scrutiny review previously undertaken in respect of the Common Assessment Framework had proved useful and all recommendations from the review had been implemented.

The Panel requested that copies of a Child's View Sheet, the Neglect Guide for Practitioners and the revised threshold document be circulated.

In response to a Member's question, it was reported that, although the situation had improved, there were still sometimes problems regarding the identification of a lead professional and further work would be done on this matter.

The Panel noted the report.

29. **Pupil Premium Grant for Looked-After Children - Effective Use**

The Panel considered a report on the support provided to schools from the Virtual School to enhance the impact of the Pupil Premium Grant for Looked After Children. The Panel welcomed the pupil case studies which summarised some of the opportunities for the creative use of the grant.

The Panel was informed that:

- The Virtual School used the pupil premium to provide opportunities for tailored and targeted support to meet the individual needs of the child.
- It was too early to see the full impact of the pupil premium. Further updates would be submitted to the Panel during the year.

The Panel noted the report.

30. **School Places Overview & Scrutiny Working Group Report - Executive Response**

The Panel welcomed the positive response of the Executive to the report of the Overview and Scrutiny review of school places which accepted all of the recommendations in the report. All those involved in the review were thanked for their contribution..

31. **Executive Key and Non-Key Decisions**

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

32. **Development Plan for Community Learning 2014-17**

The Panel noted the Development Plan for Community Learning and Skills 2014-17 which would be considered by Full Council on 17 September.

33. **Exclusion of Public and Press**

RESOLVED that pursuant to Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, and having regard to the public interest, members of the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the consideration of the following item which involves the likely disclosure of exempt information under the following category of Schedule 12A of that Act:

- (3) Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority).

34. **Pan-Berkshire Shared Adoption Service**

The Panel received a report proposing the establishment of a Pan-Berkshire Shared Adoption Service.

Following questions from the Panel, the meeting was advised that:

- In the event of a breakdown in the adoption process the authority in which the child was living would be responsible for his/her welfare. However Bracknell Forest has not had any breakdown for many years.
- Under a shared service, any employment of agency staff would be funded from the host Authority.

The Panel noted the report and supported the proposal.

35. **Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Children, Young People and Learning Overview and Scrutiny Panel was to be held on 12 January 2015 at 7.30pm. A pre-meeting was to be held at 7 pm.

CHAIRMAN

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