

Children & Young People Select Committee

A meeting of Children & Young People Select Committee was held on Wednesday, 18th September, 2013.

Present: Cllr Carol Clark(Chairman), Cllr Norma Stephenson O.B.E, Cllr Michael Clark(Vice Cllr Barbara Inman) Cllr Elliot Kennedy, Cllr Terry Laing(Vice Cllr Ken Lupton), Cllr Mrs Sylvia Walmsley and Phil Rigby.

Officers: Lynda Brown, Janet Marriott, Shaun McLurg, Wendy Starks, Dave Willingham, Simon Willson, Jane Wright(CESC), Louise McDonald, Mark Rowell(DNS), Judith Trainer and Kirsty Wannop(LDS).

Also in attendance:

Apologies: Cllr Barbara Inman, Cllr Ken Lupton, Cllr Ross Patterson and Cllr Tracey Stott.

1 Committee Briefing

Members agreed their approach to the meeting.

2 Evacuation Procedure

The evacuation procedure was noted.

3 Declarations of Interest

There were no interests declared.

4 Minutes from the meeting which was held on the 24th July 2013.

The Chair signed the minutes of the meeting.

5 Quarter 1 - Performance Report

Members received the Quarter 1 performance report in relation to the agreed framework for Children Services.

The Committee received the following:-

- Quarter 1 performance overview for Children & Young People Services that included a summary of some performance indicators linked to priorities in the Council Plan, along with commentary on other performance issues arising during the quarter.

- Adoption performance update; this was based on the last available year end data for which comparative national data was provided, along with some updated local information for the 2012/13 and Q1 2013/14 periods.

Members highlighted concerns over adoption figures and questioned whether potential adopters were being too selective.

It was also queried why there was a need for foster carers who wished to adopt needed to go through the full adoption process. Officers explained that this was a legal requirement as once they had adopted they would have full parental rights and the child would no longer be Looked After.

AGREED the information be noted.

6 OFSTED Action Plan

Members were provided with an update on the progress made in implementing the action plan that was drawn up following Ofsted's inspection, in January 2013, of local authority arrangements for the protection of children.

Members queried why the peer review of the Referral & Assessment Team had been moved back to March 2014. It was reported that this was because, following the recent review of the Referral & Assessment Team, new staffing arrangements were in the process of being established but will not be completed until November 2013. Accordingly, to allow time for the new staffing arrangements to bed in, it was agreed that the Peer Review would be better taking place in March 2014.

AGREED the information be noted.

7 Scrutiny Review of Employment and Education

The Committee received a presentation from the Economic Strategy Manager regarding strand one of the scrutiny review in relation to:-

- Priority and growth sectors.
- Business start-ups and self employment.
- Percentage of people claiming Job Seekers Allowance.
- Employer/Business perspectives
- Young people's perspective.

Members discussed the following points:-

- How to attract young people into growth sectors
- More needed to be done to ensure that young people were work ready
- It was important that colleges were running that were relevant for the job market.

AGREED that the information be noted.

8 Quality and Sufficiency of Childcare - Initial Progress Report

Consideration was given to the assessments of progress on the implementation of the recommendations from the Review of Quality and Sufficiency of Childcare.

AGREED that the Progress Update be noted and the assessments for progress be confirmed.

9 Work Programme

Members were informed that the next meeting on the Committee was 16th October and would be held at Stockton Riverside College and would include a tour of the college at 4pm prior to the Committee commencing at 5pm.