

# Children & Young People Select Committee

A meeting of Children & Young People Select Committee was held on Wednesday, 20th April, 2016.

**Present:** Cllr Carol Clark(Chairman), Cllr Tracey Stott(Vice-Chairman), Cllr Elsi Hampton, Cllr Paul Rowling (Vice Cllr Lauriane Povey), Cllr Mrs Sylvia Walmsley, Cllr Sally Ann Watson, Mr Phil Rigby

**Officers:** Lynda Brown (Transformation Team), Julie Nixon (Transformation Team), Dave Willingham (Programme Manager), Martin Gray (Assistant Director of Early Help and Partnership and Planning) Carolyn Chubb(DCE), Cheryl Lindsay(DHR,L&C), Judith Trainer (Scrutiny Officer), Jenna McDonald (Governance Officer).

**Also in attendance:** Leon Mexter (Chief Executive - Youth Focus North East)

**Apologies:** Cllr Di Hewitt, Cllr Barbara Inman, Cllr Ross Patterson, Cllr Lauriane Povey

## **1 Evacuation Procedure**

The evacuation procedure was noted.

## **2 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

## **3 Minutes for signature - 17 February 2016**

The minutes of the meeting held on 17 February 2016 were signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

AGREED that the minutes were signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

## **4 Draft Minutes - 30 March 2016**

The Draft Minutes of the meeting held on 30 March 2016 were deferred to the next Committee meeting.

AGREED that the minutes be deferred to the next meeting.

## **5 Scrutiny Review of Youth Services**

- **To receive introductory presentations**
- **To approve the scope and project plan for the review**

Members were provided with the Scope and Project Plan for the Scrutiny Review of Youth Services.

It was noted that the overall aim of the review was to consider how to remodel the service in order to focus on early help and prevention. It was important to consider how significantly reduced resources could be best utilised to provide effective interventions to support those children and young people most in need.

The Committee received a presentation on how services for young people fit with early help. Key points were highlighted as follows:

- Members were informed of an emerging model for delivery which was

discussed at Corporate Management Team in April 2016 on the integrated approach around early help.

- It was noted that early help was an approach which was based on early identification of issues. It was an all age approach and was not only related to early years however evidence suggested that intervention in early years was critical.
- It was highlighted that it was important to understand what was going on in families and what a targeted joint approach could achieve in comparison to an individual service tackling an issue alone.
- A strong focus was placed on prevention and proactively targeting those most at risk. Members heard that it was important to put in place interventions which had the most impact longer term.
- The Committee was informed of the continuum or need approach which was actively used across children's services. This approach focused on universal services through to specialist services.
- It was noted that many early help related activities were on-going in Stockton-On-Tees which included projects such as; Early Help Panels, an Emerging Early Help Hub and a Family Information Service.
- With regard to the Emerging Model, it was heard that there were three different approaches within the model; Targeted, Secondary Prevention and Universal and Primary Prevention. It was noted that a focus remained on universal and primary prevention which involved a range of services which focused on identifying early signs, working across the population.
- The Committee was informed of all key issues relating to early help , some of which included;  
The balance between universal, preventative and targeted  
The value of universal work around public health outcomes  
The role of the Council as commissioner/provider

The Committee received a presentation on the Youth Offending Team. Key points were highlighted as follows:

- The local authority was impacted by the statutory guidance on the Participation of Young People in Education, Employment or Training which was introduced in 2013 and amended in 2015. Members were informed of the local authority duties relating to Raising the Participation Age (RPA).
- It was highlighted that it was important to build relationships with the young people in order to identify those who were not participating or who were at risk of not doing so. Building trusting relationships with young people also helped with encouraging them to accept the support which was available.
- In relation to support in schools, members were made aware of the Risk of NEET indicator (RONI) which was used to collate information on young people focusing on areas such as education attainment and free school meals.

- The Committee heard that at any one time, the Youth Direction team worked with around 300 young people from years 9 to 11 across all schools. It was noted that the purpose of the work carried out in schools, was to support young people to attain their education and encourage them to get qualifications.
- It was noted that Youth Direction had a dedicated Schools Team and a post 16 NEET team and had developed a Participation Assessment Tool (PAT) to help determine the needs of young people who were NEET.
- In relation to participation with vulnerable groups, it was heard that Youth Direction provided information, advice and support to young people pre and post 16 including; Looked After Children and Leaving Care, Young Offenders, Young People with Learning Disabilities and/or Difficulties, Young Carers and Teen Pregnancy/Teen Parents.
- The Committee noted that youth work helped young people to learn about themselves, others and society through informal educational activities which combined enjoyment with challenge and learning.
- Effective targeted youth support was carried out which addressed the risk factors that may result in poor outcomes and helped build vulnerable young people's resilience.
- It was noted that the Youth Direction Team carried out one to one work with young people stepping up/down from statutory services in addition to providing targeted clubs in various areas, providing holiday activities and events and hosting young people's VIP event for SIRF. Outreach patrols were also in place which involved addressing ASB hot spot areas, working with the police, providing group work and leading on joint patrols.
- With regard to the preventions team, it was noted that the aim of the team was to prevent young people entering statutory services through effective youth support and intervene where possible during the early signs of difficulty.

Members raised the following points/questions relating to the Youth Direction Service:

- It was highlighted that there was a perception of a lack of youth services available in the Borough. As this was not the case, Members agreed that work was required in order to promote what was on offer.
- It was noted that the method of communication varied when speaking to adults and speaking to young people. Members were assured that Facebook and Twitter pages were in place in order to communicate with those young people using social media.

The Committee received a presentation on Services to Young People, A National and Regional Perspective from Leon Mextor, Chief Executive of Youth Focus North East.

- It was noted that in January 2013, the Secretary of State for Education announced to the Education Select Committee that youth policy was not a government priority. As a result of the announcement, Members heard that

since 2010-11, the value of the early intervention allocation to local authorities had fallen by 55%. Since 2010-11 services for young people had also been subjected to similar cuts on funding resulting in more than 2,000 youth workers being made redundant and the closure of 350 youth centres.

- Members noted that in response to the cuts, new models of delivery were developed by youth services including to working more closely with the voluntary sector.
- The Committee was informed of the emergence of various new models including models such as Creating Community Interest Companies (CICs) and commissioning youth services to the voluntary sector. Members also noted the emergence of new models internally.
- It was explained that management and leadership was essential to the successful transformation of services, Members heard that it was also important to have the ability to engage political support.
- It was noted that the youth voice was extremely important and valued, the Committee heard that the voices of young people were often encouraged through programmes such as Young Inspectors and Young Commissioners.
- In relation to youth work in the North East, it was highlighted that all youth services had seen a reduction in funding and several areas had lost all youth service provision. It was explained that Stockton had a highly regarded youth service, with strong evidence underpinning its contribution across the authority.

Members thanked officers for their contribution to the review.

AGREED that the scope and project plan for the review be approved and that the information be noted.

## **6 Action Plan - Scrutiny Review of School Organisation and Admission Arrangements (Phase 2)**

The Committee was presented with an Action Plan on the Scrutiny Review of School Organisation and Admission Arrangements.

Key points were highlighted as follows:

- With regard to planning for the increasing pressure on secondary places, workshops were due to take place between April - September 2016 to look at options for additional capacity.
- Further work was due to take place to examine the particular socio and demographic trends in Ingleby Barwick. It was noted that the task and finish work would involve governors, head teachers, SBC officers, ward members and statisticians from Tees Valley Unlimited.
- Members noted that the report and consultation document on determination of admissions for 2018 would be presented to CYP in October/November 2016.
- A feasibility exercise was due to be undertaken to conclude whether any small

adjustments could be made in relation to zone arrangements.

- It was highlighted that informal working arrangements would continue between families of schools together with implementation of the transition guarantee.

- Further consultation would take place with secondary schools and academies regarding the priority of the sibling link over-subscription criteria for secondary admissions. It was proposed that discussions took place with Secondary Head Teachers and Principals and Chairs of Governing Bodies.

The Committee thanked the officers for their contribution to the review.

AGREED that the action plan be endorsed.

## **7 Feedback from Member Visits to Frontline Services**

Members shared experiences of visits to frontline services.

AGREED that the information be noted.

## **8 Work Programme**

Members gave consideration to the work programme 2016/17.

AGREED that the work programme be noted.