

Children & Young People Select Committee

A meeting of Children & Young People Select Committee was held on Wednesday, 13th July, 2016.

Present: Cllr Carol Clark(Chairman), Cllr Tracey Stott(Vice-Chairman), Cllr Elsi Hampton, Cllr Di Hewitt, Cllr Evaline Cunningham (Sub Cllr Barbara Inman), Cllr Lauriane Povey, Cllr Sally Ann Watson, Mr Phil Rigby

Officers: Martin Gray (Assistant Director - Early Help, Partnership and Planning), Julie Nixon (Transformation Team), David Willingham (Youth Services Manager), Diane McConnell (Assistant Director - Schools & SEN), Alison Cartwright (Principal Educational Psychologist & Specialist Support Manager), Judith Trainer (Team Leader - Scrutiny), Jenna McDonald (Governance Officer)

Also in attendance:

Apologies: Cllr Barbara Inman, Cllr Ross Patterson, Cllr Mrs Sylvia Walmsley

CYP 18/16 Evacuation Procedure

The evacuation procedure was noted.

CYP 19/16 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

CYP 20/16 Minutes for signature - 20 April 2016

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 April 2016 were signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

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

CYP 21/16 Draft Minutes-29th June 2016

Consideration was given to the draft minutes of the meeting held on 29 June 2016.

AGREED that the minutes be approved.

CYP 22/16 "Reporting In" Review - Educational Psychology

Members received a report on the Reporting In Review - Educational Psychology.

Key points were highlighted as follows:

- The Educational Psychology Service in Stockton was a small team of staff who provided support for schools. The team fulfilled a role in completing assessments as part of a child's Educational Health and Care Plan.
- The Service supported children with Special Educational Needs (SEN) in the Additionally Resourced Provisions. The service also provided support to schools through training, advice, guidance and expertise.
- The work was funded through the Dedicated Schools Grant and SBC Funding.

- The present Educational Psychology Service in Stockton had struggled to recruit to vacant posts for a considerable amount of time.
- While the service was able to cover its statutory work with assessments of children for Educational and Health Care Plans, it was not able to fully respond to the demand from schools and was unable to contribute as widely as was wished to broader working with early support, health and family services.
- Members noted that the review of SEN provision in Stockton intended to revisit the Additionally Resourced Provision for children with special needs which would be a further driver to reconsider the model of working for the EP service.
- An alternative model was being considered which placed more emphasis on outreach support and early support.
- It was explained that in order to understand how the service could be reshaped to better support outcomes for vulnerable children, Stockton would draw best practice in other local authorities and research projects locally and nationally. Work would also be undertaken to identify how the service could be best funded to enable it to work in a broader way in the Borough than just in statutory assessments.

Members raised the following points/questions:

- It was asked whether children's opinions and feelings were gathered with regard to changes being made. It was noted that although the young person's voice was valued, the service did not always work directly with children so therefore, evaluations were carried out using parent feedback, school feedback and feedback from children where it was clear that there had been a direct connection with the child.
- Members were keen to understand whether other authorities were also experiencing difficulty in recruiting. In response, it was highlighted that recruitment was a problem both nationally and locally. Possible reasons already known for the difficulty in recruitment included increased workload and increased EHD assessments.
- It was asked how many staff were currently in the team and how many posts were vacant. The Committee heard that currently there were 3.1 full time main grade equivalents, 4 Assistant Educational Psychologists, 1 senior Educational Psychologist and 1 Principal Educational Psychologist. It was highlighted that there were currently 3.9 full time equivalent vacancies.
- It was asked whether all Educational Psychology training was carried out at University and whether there were any links which would allow SBC to work and train its own staff. It was noted that in a review which was carried out in 2015, Stockton was able to change its structure and have 4 Educational Psychologists work with SBC staff. It was explained that there were some statutory duties which needed to be carried out by fully qualified professionals.
- With regard to SEN referrals, it was asked whether the local authority was involved in every referral which took place. In response it was noted that the

Local Authority were asked to provide psychological advice to every statutory assessment. It was explained that the service only worked with those schools with partnership agreements in place which amounted to 55 schools in 2016.

- The Committee sought clarification on the cost of sponsoring a member of staff through the doctorate programme. It was heard that the current bursary was £16,000 which would increase in 2017 to £16,800 per year. It was noted that the DFE was looking into three options which included:

1. Whether trainees could be attached to local authorities
2. Whether it would be possible to increase the number of places available for trainees by one person which would then give every LA the opportunity to have a minimum of one trainee.
3. The opportunity to train and return to a Local Authority that was experiencing recruitment difficulties once qualified.

- It was asked whether there was a private sector model which was available for individuals to purchase. In response it was noted that there were a number of private providers working within the borough however, due to the high level of need, the private sector providers and the Local Authority did not come into direct competition.

AGREED that:

1. The information be noted.
2. Research and examples of other models be presented to Committee with the Baseline Report in November.

CYP 23/16 **Scrutiny Review of Youth Services**

Following on from the last meeting, the Committee received a presentation on the Scrutiny Review of Youth Services which focussed on youth offending.

Members were presented with diagrams which detailed the referrals process which included the following areas:

- Youth Offending Team
- Preventions
- Participation CEIAG Targeted
- Targeted Youth Work
- ESF Targeted
- Universal Careers
- Universal Youth Clubs

It was noted that the new restorative approach included; targeted, prevention and open access work.

With regard to Youth Offending and the Taylor Review, the Committee heard that it was essential to preserve the best, most successful elements - namely strong local leadership coupled with holistic and multi-agency partnership working and use them as the foundations for a reformed model that had the

following key principles:

- A fully devolved model of youth justice delivery, offering autonomy to meet nationally set standards.
- Devolved youth justice budgets giving local areas responsibility and accountability.
- A central, expert body which set and upheld practice and workforce standards, drove efficient and targeted delivery and had powers to intervene where there was poor performance.

Members raised the following points/questions:

- With regard to criminalising young people, it was asked whether the desired model focussed on reparation. In response, it was noted that the new model focussed on a more holistic approach and considered factors such as education, backgrounds etc.
- It was noted that for the purposes of the Local Authority it was important to focus on preventing individuals from entering the criminal justice system. It was also important to understand how a multi-agency approach could be taken to ensure that early prevention was in place to prevent a young person from entering the criminal justice system.
- It was asked whether work would take place around peer groups as well as work which took place with the individual. In response, it was heard that a range of interventions existed which focused on peer groups including the Prison Me No Way programme and interventions which took place with the Fire Brigade.
- Members raised concern around those communities subject to problems caused in the community by young people. It was noted that it was important to set boundaries for the benefit of the community.
- It was asked how Youth Services worked with families in order to ensure that they cooperated with the service and the child to prevent any further problems and to provide support where necessary. In response it was noted that in some circumstances the Youth Worker would visit the young persons home along with a Housing Officer to inform the family and the young person of the risk involved should problems persist.
- Members were keen to understand whether the new model would allow Ward Councillors to refer into the service. Members were assured that a Joint Action Group (JAG) was in place which included Police representatives and the Local Authority therefore there was opportunity for Members to feedback to the JAG.
- In relation to the funding of Youth Clubs, concerns were raised around those young people who were denied access to Youth Clubs due to inappropriate behaviour. It was asked whether the Youth Service would be looking at the provision of youth clubs and providing an alternative for those groups who were currently denied access to the service. It was explained that further consideration was required as to what alternatives could be offered in addition to events such as Beat the Boredom.

- It was noted that Ward Councillors were partly responsible for understanding the themes across each of their wards in order to gain an understanding of the problems and the reasons behind the problems.

AGREED that the information be noted.

**CYP
24/16** **Member Site Visits to Frontline Services**

The Scrutiny Officer advised that she was in the process of arranging the next programme of frontline visits up to December 2016.

The Committee was invited to make suggestions for future visits to frontline services including follow up visits.

AGREED that the information be noted.

**CYP
25/16** **Work Programme**

Consideration was given to the work programme 2016/17.

AGREED that the Work Programme be noted.

**CYP
26/16** **Chairs Update**

It was noted that the Chairman of the Committee attended an Effective Challenge for Safeguarding Children and Young People in Sunderland. The Chairman recommended the event to the Committee.

AGREED that:

1. The information be noted.
2. The information pack from the event be circulated to the Committee.