

# Children & Young People Select Committee

A meeting of Children & Young People Select Committee was held on Wednesday, 30th November, 2016.

**Present:** Cllr Carol Clark (Chairman), Cllr Elsi Hampton, Cllr Di Hewitt, Cllr Barbara Inman, Cllr Ross Patterson, Cllr Lauriane Povey, Cllr Sally Ann Watson

**Officers:** J.Humphreys, R.Bollands, M.Gray, D.McConnell, S.McLurg (DCS); S.Bowman-Abouna (DAH); N.Hart, J.Trainer (DCE).

**Also in attendance:** Cllr Mrs McCoy (Cabinet Member for Children & Young People).

**Apologies:** submitted on behalf of Councillors Stott and Mrs Walmsley.

## 1 Evacuation Procedure

The evacuation procedure was noted.

## 2 Declarations of Interest

There were no Declarations of Interest declared

## 3 Minutes for signature - 21st September 2016 & 12th October 2016

The minutes of the meetings held on 21st September and 12th October 2016 were signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

AGREED that the minutes of the meetings held on 21st September and 12th October 2016 be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

## 4 Overview Report - Public Health

The Committee considered the annual overview report in relation to Public Health services.

Included within the report was possible areas for further in depth scrutiny review as follows:-

-The developing plan regarding the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of diabetes through physical activity may highlight some areas where review would be valuable;

-Mental and emotional wellbeing in children and young people.

Members raised the following points/questions:-

-The Stockton Youth Assembly had provided some really useful feedback regarding how young people would prefer to see sex education delivered within schools, which was suggested should be referred on to the contractor responsible for this service in order to make the most positive difference;

-Domestic Abuse should be a high priority for the CCG and there should be clarity regarding the available funding to support the strategy supporting this;

-Efforts should be made via schools, community groups etc to promote the availability of facilities and activities within the Borough that can assist in tackling obesity. It was suggested that Catalyst, as the Council's main VCS partner, be approached with a view to their taking a lead in promoting the availability of both traditional activities such as gym, sports facilities etc as well as non-traditional activities such as dance, yoga and other social based activities.

AGREED that:-

1. The Overview report be noted.
2. Members comments in relation to the delivery of sex education in schools and the importance of domestic abuse being a high priority for the CCG, be referred on to the appropriate responsible bodies.
3. Catalyst be approached and asked to take the lead in promoting the availability of both traditional/non-traditional activities and facilities within the Borough that can be accessed and contribute towards tackling obesity.

## **5 Overview Report - Children's Services**

The Committee considered the annual overview report in respect of Children's Services.

It was noted that the Committee would receive two further detailed reports regarding Educational Attainment at their next meeting in December, along with the proposed Improvement and Development Action Plan arising from the Ofsted Inspection of Children's Services.

Included within the report was possible areas for further in depth scrutiny review as follows:-

a. Special Educational Needs and Disabilities– as there will be an inspection of the way in which the Council and its partners perform before 2020 this would provide the opportunity to explore a number of areas related to the Ofsted process including:

- i. Our understanding and intelligence;
- ii. How we meet the needs of children and young people – meeting the needs against the Ofsted framework
- iii. Outcomes

b. 14-19 strategy, planning, offer and ways of working. This would assist in the development of new approaches and potentially new provision. It would also provide an opportunity to ensure that the Council and partners are well placed to exploit the opportunities of the Tees Valley Combined Authority and devolution. Areas of focus might include:

- iv. NEETs
- v. Apprenticeships
- vi. Careers guidance in schools
- vii. Alternative provision

c. The educational role of the Council in the context of the Government's policy agenda, and a focus on the three roles:

- viii. School places

- ix. An effective school led improvement system
- x. Championing the needs of the most vulnerable

The Director of Children's Services suggested that of the above, the greatest need for review was the proposed work around Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

In conclusion, as it was the last meeting of this Committee that the current Director of Children's Services would be in attendance at, the Director wished to place on record her appreciation for the valuable work this Committee had undertaken, and the support it had offered both her and her team. This recognition had also been endorsed by the recent Ofsted inspection.

Further to the presentation, Members raised the following points/questions:-

- It was questioned whether the increasing numbers of children coming into care was as a direct consequence of the welfare reform agenda;
- There were positive signs to note, namely that our Early Help strategy was beginning to work and that our Secondary Schools were demonstrating improvement. Schools would continue to be supported and challenged to improve and engage further;
- There was positive engagement with the Signs of Safety campaign;
- There was support for looking at ways in which our processes for adoption could be made more efficient, provided it was not to the detriment of the children and our adopters;
- Schools were positively engaged with Operation Encompass;
- There was disappointment at the Ofsted rating for our Looked After Children given the extent of commitment given by both officers and members in supporting LAC;
- The strategy of offering support from transition from primary to secondary had proven to be extremely beneficial and the work of this Committee with this particular scrutiny review had been very worthwhile. The Committee were invited to receive a presentation from young people and practitioners that had been actively involved with this work at a future meeting. The presentation itself was currently being highlighted at a Tees Best Practice Conference this week.

AGREED that:-

1. The Overview report be noted.
2. The referred School Performance reports, along with the Action Plan arising from the Ofsted Inspection for Childrens Services, be considered at the December meeting of this Committee.
3. SEND be identified as the priority area for review by this Committee and it be proposed as such for consideration by those involved within the process for setting the Scrutiny Work Programme for 2017/18.
4. A presentation from the young people and practitioners that had been actively involved with the transitional work from primary to secondary be presented to a future meeting of this Committee.

## **6 Work Programme**

AGREED that the Work Programme be noted.

**7 Chair's Update**

The Chair had no additional update to provide.