

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SELECT COMMITTEE

A meeting of Children and Young People Select Committee was held on Wednesday 17 July 2024.

Present: Cllr Carol Clark (Chair), Cllr Barbara Inman (Vice-Chair), Cllr Stephen Richardson, Cllr Tony Riordan (sub for Cllr Sally Ann Watson), Cllr Emily Tate and Cllr Katie Weston.

Officers: Majella McCarthy, David Willingham, Nicole Wilson, Mandie Rowlands (ChS) and Judy Trainer (CS).

Also in attendance: None.

Apologies: Cllr Ray Godwin, Cllr David Reynard, Cllr Paul Rowling and Cllr Sally Ann Watson.

CYP/6/24 Evacuation Procedure

The evacuation procedure was noted.

CYP/7/24 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

CYP/8/24 Minutes

AGREED that the minutes of the meeting held on 17 April 2024 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

CYP/9/24 Scrutiny Review of Care Leavers EET - Progress Update

The Select Committee received a progress update in relation to its previous scrutiny review of care leavers EET. There was one outstanding recommendation relating to establishing a Borough Wide commitment to increase work experience and job opportunities with local employers and partner agencies.

A corporate group had been established at senior level and with local businesses focussing on EET and a report was to be presented to Cabinet in July with a recommendation to endorse additional employability support for care experienced young people aged 16 – 25 including prioritising access to apprenticeships and job vacancies and guaranteed interviews for those meeting essential criteria. The success of this would form the basis for how the Council approached external partners and local employers to progress beyond the Council.

As at 9 July 2024, the Council had:

- 6 young people on work placements within the Council
 - 4 of those have secured apprenticeships to start September 2024
 - 1 young person is doing work placement alongside policing degree.
 - 1 young person accepted on degree to start in September and using work placement as work experience

- 3 young people were currently midway through their apprenticeship that started September 2023
- 1 young person had completed the apprenticeship, secured a full-time post and was now working in the edge of care team supporting other young people who were at risk of becoming care experienced

A care experienced young person also attended the meeting to share his experiences of being part of the No Limits programme and progressing through to a successful apprenticeship. His experience demonstrated the importance of receiving support from the Council as a corporate parent.

AGREED that the progress update be noted, and the assessment of progress be confirmed with all actions for this review being signed off as fully complete.

CYP/10/24 Scrutiny Review of Contextual Safeguarding and Youth Relationships - Progress Update

The Select Committee received a first progress update in respect of its previous scrutiny review of Contextual Safeguarding and Young Relationships. An interactive video as part of the Night Crime Initiative was also shown to Members.

Work was progressing in respect of the actions, most of which were on track. Key issues highlighted were as follows

- Work had been undertaken with Cleveland Police and other partners through the YOT board and the SSP to develop a strategic partnership approach to Risk Outside the Home and particularly youth violence
- The Risk Outside the Home Policy and Guidance was currently under review. Since the scrutiny review the terminology had reverted back to “exploitation” as this was more consistently used amongst partners
- Improvements in case management and planning and support packages had improved significantly since the implementation of this scrutiny action plan
- More work was still needed to develop an understanding of contextual safeguarding and signs and indicators of CE/CSE across the workforce and with elected Members
- Visits were to be arranged to other local authorities where they had Guardians in place to see if this could be replicated or developed in Stockton
- A dedicated team and a Head of Service had been established through the recent review within Children’s Services. This area included, YOT, MACE, a dedicated social work team and adolescence team

AGREED that the progress update be noted, the assessments of progress be confirmed and a further update be provided in due course.

CYP/11/24 Healthwatch Update - Youth Health

This item was deferred to the next meeting.

CYP/12/24 Youth Justice Plan

The Select Committee received a copy of the Youth Justice Plan for 2024/25. The Plan set out the priorities for the forthcoming year and how the Council would work with others to realise the vision and deliver services that promoted positive child outcomes, reduce crime and make communities safer.

The Plan had been developed and agreed by the Youth Justice Partnership Management Board in April. As well as refreshing its vision and strategy, the membership and terms of reference for the Board had been recently reviewed to ensure its continued effectiveness.

In answer to a query from a Member, it was confirmed that the Police and Criminal Evidence (PACE) Act 1984 placed a duty on the police to transfer children who had been refused bail to local authority accommodation rather than keeping them in the police station overnight. These were often referred to as PACE beds. These beds were only used occasionally and the onus was on the local authority to find safe and secure accommodation. There was a recognised pressure on provision and the Council was looking at options to expand this.

AGREED that the Youth Justice Plan 2024/25 be noted.

CYP/13/24 Scrutiny Review of Narrowing the Gap in Educational Attainment

The Select Committee considered next steps in respect of its current review. As agreed at the last Select Committee meeting, a further stakeholder session had been arranged with one key representative invited from each sector/ group to refine draft recommendations / actions from the review.

The session had been arranged for Friday 6 September and as a result the September meeting of the Committee had been put back later in the month to allow drafting of the Committee's final report following this session.

AGREED that the update be noted.

CYP/14/24 Chair's Update and Work Programme

AGREED that the work programme be noted.

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