

BATH AND NORTH EAST SOMERSET COUNCIL

EARLY YEARS, CHILDREN AND YOUTH POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

Monday, 24th November, 2014

Present:- Councillors: Sally Davis (Chair), Sarah Bevan (Vice-Chair), Liz Hardman, David Veale, Loraine Morgan-Brinkhurst MBE, Michael Evans and Nicholas Coombes

Co-opted Non-voting Members:- Chris Batten and Edward Joseph

Also in attendance: Charlie Moat (Service Improvement Manager), Mike Bowden (Deputy Director, Children & Young People, Strategy and Commissioning), Richard Baldwin (Divisional Director CYP Specialist Services) and Margaret Simmons-Bird (Head of Education Improvement)

52 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

53 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

The Chair drew attention to the emergency evacuation procedure.

54 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS

David Williams (Co-opted Panel Member), Councillor Dine Romero (Cabinet Member for Early Years, Children & Youth) and Ashley Ayre (Strategic Director, People & Communities) had sent their apologies to the Panel.

55 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

56 TO ANNOUNCE ANY URGENT BUSINESS AGREED BY THE CHAIRMAN

The Chair wished to take this opportunity to make the Panel aware of the Schools Carol Service that was due to take place at the Abbey on December 8th with services taking place at 10.30am and 2.00pm.

57 ITEMS FROM THE PUBLIC OR COUNCILLORS - TO RECEIVE DEPUTATIONS, STATEMENTS, PETITIONS OR QUESTIONS RELATING TO THE BUSINESS OF THIS MEETING

Councillor Ian Gilchrist announced that Widcombe Junior School had just received an Outstanding rating from Ofsted. He said that in his role as Chair of Governors he was very proud of this achievement by the school.

58 MINUTES - 29TH SEPTEMBER 2014

The Panel confirmed the minutes of the previous meeting as a true record and they were duly signed by the Chair.

59 SCHOOL PERFORMANCE DATA

The Head of Education Improvement introduced this item to the Panel. She highlighted some key points from within the report.

She informed them that pupils in Key Stage 1, 2, and 4 continue to attain well and make good progress compared to other local authorities and national expectations on all measures.

She said that in the Early Years Foundation Stage there had been a significant improvement in the proportion of children who achieve and exceed national expectations. She added that the percentage of children who achieve a Good Level of Development improved significantly from 51% to 63% and this is above the national average of 60%.

Key Stage 1

Level 2b+

Overall pupils' attainment at KS1 at the more secure L2b+ improved in reading by 1% and mathematics by 2% in line with the national average. Attainment in writing dipped by 3% and this goes against the national trend of a 1% increase. Attainment in reading and mathematics is above national and our statistical neighbours. Writing is the same as national and 1% below statistical neighbours.

The performance of pupils eligible for FSM improved in all subject with the biggest improvement of 9% in reading. The gaps narrowed in all subjects but remain high when compared to the national average with the biggest gap (23%) in writing.

Level 3+

The attainment of FSM increased in reading, writing and mathematics. The gap in writing attainment closed the result of a 2% dip in writing for non FSM pupils. The gaps for FSM pupils have narrowed in all core subjects.

BME pupils' attainment improved in all subjects and the gaps narrowed in reading and mathematics and increased in writing.

Key Stage 2

Level 4+

Attainment at L4+ improved in reading, writing and mathematics and for combined reading, writing and mathematics. The proportion of pupils who achieved L4+ in reading, writing and mathematics combined improved by 4% higher than national (2%). Overall attainment for combined L4+ in reading, writing and mathematics

remains above the national average (80% compared to 79) for the third consecutive year.

Level 5+

Attainment at the higher L5+ improved and is above the national average in all subjects and for all groups with the exception of reading for pupils with SEN. Higher attaining (L5+) pupils achieved 58% in reading, 36% in writing and 46% in mathematics. 26% achieved L5+ in combined reading, writing and mathematics. Overall performances at the higher level 5+ has improved and are at least in line with or above the national average.

Progress across Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2

The proportion of pupils exceeding expectations improved in writing and mathematics and dipped in reading. Overall performance is below the national average in all core subjects.

Boys' outperformed the girls in mathematics and reading and the girls performed better in writing.

The proportion of pupils achieving 3 levels of progress improved in writing and mathematics but dipped in reading.

Key Stage 4

In September 2013, to address the significant increase in early entries, the department announced that only the first result a pupil achieved would count in performance measures from 2013/14. This new rule came into effect immediately with regard to English Baccalaureate subjects and will be expanded to apply to all subjects in 2014/15. This new rule only affects a school's performance measure calculations; pupils will still be accredited with every grade achieved, regardless of the number of entries.

Overall the Local Authority has performed better than the national average on all indicators for GCSE. This is an improvement on previous years despite the changes outlined above.

Expected levels of Progress

Bath & North East Somerset lies 5th of 15 Local Authorities in the South West (excluding the Isles of Scilly) for progress in English at KS4.

Bath & North East Somerset lies 3rd of 15 Local Authorities in the South West (excluding the Isles of Scilly) for making progress in Mathematics at KS4.

Post 16

The points per learner has improved this year by 13.3 points. This is the third successive year of improvement. The points per exam entry has remained the same as in 2013. The average grade achieved by A level students for all Post 16 settings

in the local authority area in 2013 is a C grade. This is against an average grade of C+ for all schools and colleges for England.

There has been an increase in the average points per learner this year and the average points per exam entry has remained the same as in 2013.

Councillor Sarah Bevan asked if the Bath Community Academy, formerly Culverhay School was the most improved in the South West.

The Head of Education Improvement replied that it was, but that its results were still below the national average.

Councillor Liz Hardman wished to congratulate the teachers and students for their hard work this year. She asked what resources were available to attempt to continue to improve results.

The Deputy Director for Children & Young People, Strategy and Commissioning replied that this work would be addressed from within existing budgets.

Councillor Nicholas Coombes asked in terms of A Level results whether the Points per Learner or Points per Exam Entry was the best measure to record an average grade.

The Deputy Director for Children & Young People, Strategy and Commissioning replied that it would be Points per Learner.

Edward Joseph asked if studio schools now provided a better option for students.

The Deputy Director for Children & Young People, Strategy and Commissioning replied that they were in a place to offer a different option for students.

Councillor Michael Evans commented that he believed our education system was in decline and now only in line with developing countries. He suggested that further national comparisons could be made within the report and a focus given to the improvements we can make. He added that he would also like to have seen further information on NEET and Value Added.

He said that while he appreciated that gaps needed to be addressed he maintained his wish to see a focus on achieving excellent results.

The Deputy Director for Children & Young People, Strategy and Commissioning replied that he would take those points on board for when the report was compiled next year.

Councillor David Veale commented how he felt it was important for children to feel happy at school as well as receiving a good education.

The Deputy Director for Children & Young People, Strategy and Commissioning replied that previous SHEU surveys had taken happiness into account.

Councillor Nicholas Coombes commented that he felt that attainment levels were well set out within the report. He said that he would also welcome some work carried out on how we can assist our most able pupils to gain their best results.

Councillor Liz Hardman said that it was important to give pupils the most appropriate support they need.

The Panel **RESOLVED** to:

- i) Note the significant improvements in the Early Years and Foundation Stage compared to national
- ii) Note that pupils in Key Stage 1, 2, and 4 continue to attain well and make good progress compared to other local authorities and national expectations on all measures
- iii) Note the improvements in narrowing the gaps for pupils eligible for pupil premium funding
- iv) Commend schools and the Local Authority staff for their continuing effectiveness in achieving high standards
- v) Agree that raising the achievement of particular underperforming groups of pupils and improving pupil progress remains a priority for the Local Authority in commissioning support and challenging schools and settings.

60 RE-CONSTITUTION OF GOVERNING BODIES

The Head of Education Improvement introduced this item to the Panel. She explained that the Department for Education (DfE) had issued guidance for the reconstitution of governing bodies in all maintained schools including governing bodies of Federations. All governing bodies of maintained schools are required to constitute under the School Governance (Constitution) (England) Regulations 2012 or the School Governance (Federations) (England) Regulations 2012, by 1 September 2015.

She added that the reconstitution of governing bodies may result in a surplus in the number of Local Authority governors on governing bodies. The guidance sets out a process for the removal of surplus governors once governing bodies have reconstituted.

Edward Joseph asked how this would affect the future of our schools.

The Deputy Director for Children & Young People, Strategy and Commissioning replied that the Council would have to look to work more in partnership with governing bodies.

The Head of Education Improvement added that there would be an increasing emphasis on governing bodies to make sure that progress was being made at the school in improving outcomes for all pupils.

Councillor Sarah Bevan asked how we make sure that the governors themselves are scrutinised.

The Head of Education Improvement replied that that would be monitored through the Ofsted inspection process.

Councillor Nicholas Coombes commented that he was generally in agreement with these changes as there were many routes to becoming a governor.

Councillor Liz Hardman said that a lot of Councillors may be disappointed with the outcome of this process, but asked if a list of unsuccessful applicants will be kept.

The Head of Education Improvement replied that when vacancies arise they would be shared with Councillors in advance of advertising.

The Chair said that she recognised the need for schools to focus on the areas that they need support in. She also wished to commend the work done by officers within Governors Support.

The Panel **RESOLVED** to note the changes in the appointment and the reduction in the number of local authority governors on the governing body of maintained and federated schools.

61 SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS & DISABILITY REFORM UPDATE

The Service Improvement Manager introduced this item to the Panel. He explained that this new legal framework for children and young people with Special Educational Needs & Disability (SEND) came into force from 1st September 2014. He said that the reform aims to improve life outcomes for young people with SEND.

He stated that 750 - 800 children and young people at school age at any one time require specialist SEN support through statements of SEN. These will be replaced by education, health and care (EHC) plans through an ambitious transfer plan. We anticipate completing 80 - 100 EHC needs assessments and up to 300 transfer reviews between Sept 2014 and July 2015.

He said that the scale of this task, combined with the requirement to embed person centred approaches, thinking and planning in our EHC planning has required a significant increase in capacity in the SEN team and he wished to praise their work so far.

He explained that the Parent Partnership Service (PPS) has been successful in attracting government funding to develop independent support with SEND for both parents and young people. He added that the Family Information Service will maintain and develop the published local offer including the rainbow Resource database.

He said that parents of children with EHC plans and young people aged 16 and over with a plan are now entitled to request a personal budget. He added that this will bring together any SEN, health or care funding linked to the plan into one 'pot' and give parents and young people more choice and control over how support is provided.

He stated that a training programme will continue into 2015 to introduce the SEND reform and support the development of EHC planning in practice. He said that training in person centred thinking will continue and this will be embedded in the children's workforce training strategy when the SEND reform implementation project is complete. He added that SEND reform training will continue to include parents as both trainers and participants.

Councillor Liz Hardman commented that creating the EHC Plans will be a lot of work and therefore asked who would be doing it.

The Service Improvement Manager replied that SEND Lead Practitioners will meet all concerned parties and lead upon making the EHC Plans.

Councillor Liz Hardman asked what the resource implications were for schools.

The Service Improvement Manager replied that it will be a challenge to some schools especially if they are a small Primary. He added that he expected SEND Lead Practitioners to help on this matter as he would not want any shortcuts to be taken.

Councillor Nicholas Coombes asked what Quality Assurance measures were in place.

The Service Improvement Manager replied that a very draft framework was in place and would look to ask 'Is the plan ambitious enough?', 'Have the targets / standards within the Plan been achieved?'

He added that the Personal Outcomes Evaluation Tool (POET) would be used to record the responses of both young people and their parents.

The Panel **RESOLVED** to note the progress made to date.

62 SERVICE PERFORMANCE REPORTING & INSPECTION FRAMEWORK

The Divisional Director for Children & Young People Specialist Services introduced this item to the Panel. He said that Ofsted openly acknowledges that its new inspection framework has "raised the bar" in terms of its expectations of what is deemed as "good" practice from Local Authorities in relation to Children's Social Care.

He explained that our response to the March 2013 inspection was to form a Service Improvement Board with the remit to oversee the drawing-up and implementation of a service improvement plan. He added that it was agreed that from July 2014 we would form a more long-standing "Service Development Board" based on similar principles of the "Improvement" board to maintain a consistent vigilance, sense of development and position of healthy challenge on certain areas.

He informed the Panel that the numbers of young people subject to Child Protection Plans had remained stable for the past 18 months. These remain between 120 - 130 and are below the national average and slightly below the average for our comparator group of Local Authorities.

He explained that our performance in relation to reducing cases that “bounce-back” following closure had also improved. Currently only 21.5% of referrals were open to the LA 12 months ago. The target figure is to keep this below 22% and last year’s performance was 24%.

Councillor Liz Hardman commented that she was pleased to see that steps were being taken to improve historical information contained within assessments.

The Divisional Director for Children & Young People Specialist Services replied that it was recognised that chronologies were not currently where we want them to be and that a focus was required to improve these.

Councillor Nicholas Coombes commented on how rigorous the appendix to the report was and appreciated the honesty of the ratings provided.

The Divisional Director for Children & Young People Specialist Services replied that he recognises the work that we need to do and to keep the levels of focus.

Councillor Nicholas Coombes asked when the next Ofsted visit was likely.

The Divisional Director for Children & Young People Specialist Services replied that it was likely to take place in 2015.

63 LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN

The Divisional Director for Children & Young People Specialist Services introduced this item to the Panel. He informed them that at the end of Quarter two there were 141 young people in the care of Bath and North-East Somerset. He said that this was a reduction of 14 young people who were in care at the end of the previous quarter and again broadly in line with the numbers of young people that have been in our care over the past two years.

He said that this figure puts us significantly below the national average figure and also slightly below the figure for our comparator cohort of Local Authorities. He added that these figures are calculated by a “per 10,000” calculation, which show that B&NES is currently at 41.4 children in care per 10,000 of the population, compared to the national figure of 60 and the statistical neighbor comparator figure of 42.6 per 10,000 of population.

He stated that we have also made good progress in ensuring that when young people have to come into care we are able to provide a good level of stability for them.

He explained that we have continued to develop the ‘In Care Council’ following the re-tendering of the contracts to deliver these. He said that the contract is currently undertaken by “Off The Record” who work with both the “Junior In Care Council” (7-11yrs) and the Senior group (11-18yrs). Both of these groups have increased their membership and offer a range of activities and opportunities for the young people that attend.

He informed the Panel that in line with the Government's move to extend the upper age limit that young people can remain in foster-care we have continued to develop the scope of our "Staying Put" programme for young people that which to remain with their foster-carers up until the age of 21 years.

He said that one of the key measures of the quality of work and support to Care Leavers is the measure of former Care Leavers who are in employment, education and training (EET). At the end of 13/14 we had a figure of 78% former care-leavers in EET, compared with our statistical neighbours average of 59.6%, and the national figure of 58%.

Councillor Loraine Morgan-Brinkhurst asked how many children had moved out of B&NES.

The Divisional Director for Children & Young People Specialist Services replied that around 50% had moved out of B&NES, but that 80 – 90% were within a 20 mile radius.

Councillor Loraine Morgan-Brinkhurst asked if siblings were kept together.

The Divisional Director for Children & Young People Specialist Services replied that it was very rare to need to separate siblings.

Councillor Liz Hardman commented that she was pleased to see the work of the In Care Council recognised. She asked if there were any plans to increase the parameters of Staying Put to 25 years old.

The Divisional Director for Children & Young People Specialist Services replied that the Council has a duty to provide support whilst the young person / adult were in education.

Edward Joseph commented that the young people he had met through the In Care Council were always happy, but that he was concerned as to whether enough children and young people were using the services available through the In Care Council. He asked if the Cabinet Member for Early Years, Children & Youth would visit the In Care Council.

Councillor Liz Hardman commented that she felt that the In Care Council representatives did visit and represent other Looked After Children. She added that she believed that many of them were involved in activities.

Councillor Loraine Morgan-Brinkhurst asked if transport was available to those young people outside of B&NES to attend the In Care Council.

The Divisional Director for Children & Young People Specialist Services replied that a taxi service was available.

Councillor Loraine Morgan-Brinkhurst commented that she was very proud of the Council for their work on this matter.

The Chair commented on the need to raise the profile of Corporate Parenting into the next Council following the local elections.

64 CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

The Divisional Director for Children & Young People Specialist Services introduced this item to the Panel. He said that it was a very positive step for them to address this matter.

He explained that two different types and patterns of exploitation appear to be emerging. Firstly, there is considerable concern in regard to the organised exploitation of very vulnerable young people by sophisticated gangs, often linked to criminal behaviour and involving the illegal supply of and distribution of drugs, alcohol and prostitution. He added that the investigations in Rochdale, Rotherham and Oxford were characterised by clear links to these types of criminal activity.

He said that the second type of concern is linked much more to peer-to peer exploitation and is often (although not exclusively) characterised by issues of e-safety, bullying and peer pressure and levels of intimidation for (mostly, but not exclusively) young women to engage in sexual acts by young men or groups of young men.

He informed them that the B&NES LSCB Child Sexual Exploitation Strategy was agreed in September 2014. He added that the strategy was launched earlier this month with an awareness raising event and was well attended by a large number of agencies. He said that as well as raising the awareness of the strategy with partners the event was utilised to recruit volunteers for the "Virtual" CSE team - the creation of a virtual team of specially trained staff from a variety of professions was a key element of how we wish to reduce the risks to young people and is a key element of the strategy document.

He stated that all CSE cases where there is a need to allocate a virtual team member will come to the Risk Management Panel so that the case can be matched with a virtual team member. He added that other training will also be continued to be delivered through the LSCB to all partners in terms of raising awareness across all professions and settings, as well as with the Council Licencing Team who monitor taxi cab firms and fast food outlets. He explained that both of these types of business were central to the recruitment of, and movement of vulnerable young women in the Rochdale, Oxford and Rotherham investigations.

Councillor Liz Hardman asked if he was confident that all children at risk had been identified.

The Divisional Director for Children & Young People Specialist Services replied that he was not and that he expected the current figure to rise as the service is developed.

Councillor Liz Hardman asked if peer-to peer exploitation would be addressed through schools.

The Divisional Director for Children & Young People Specialist Services replied that the LSCB training will be provided to schools.

The Deputy Director for Children & Young People, Strategy and Commissioning added that regular safeguarding meetings are held with all schools and academies.

Edward Joseph asked if 27 young people were currently deemed to be at risk, what the figures were for previous years.

The Divisional Director for Children & Young People Specialist Services replied that there 13 identified in 2013 and 9 identified in 2012.

Councillor Loraine Morgan-Brinkhurst when are the parents or carers informed.

The Divisional Director for Children & Young People Specialist Services replied that the emphasis on this work is engaging with the young person.

Councillor Nicholas Coombes asked how involved are the Police.

The Divisional Director for Children & Young People Specialist Services replied that their involvement is vital as it is such a large issue. He added that they sit on the Risk Management Panel.

The Chair thanked him on behalf of the Panel for producing this report.

65 MEDIUM TERM PLAN AND 2015/16 BUDGET UPDATE

The Deputy Director for Children & Young People, Strategy and Commissioning introduced this item to the Panel. He highlighted some of the key policy context changes for Children's Services.

- Ongoing implementation of the Children & Families Act 2014 and the Care Act 2014, setting out wide-ranging changes including for social care and in respect of children with special educational needs and disability;
- Ongoing changes in the education landscape with a limited increase in the number of schools becoming academies and the creation of new entities such as Teaching Schools and Studio Schools;
- Publication of the Council's Health & Wellbeing Strategy and also the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment that supports it;
- Population changes creating localised pressures on primary school places;
- Changing statutory inspection frameworks

Councillor Liz Hardman commented that it was sad to see the level of cuts imposed on the service especially involving Children's Centres where specialist services such as breastfeeding, speech and language, infant mental health and post-natal parent/child attachment may cease.

The Deputy Director for Children & Young People, Strategy and Commissioning replied that discussions were on-going with the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) to replicate these.

Councillor Liz Hardman asked his thoughts on the current Staff Mutual proposals.

The Deputy Director for Children & Young People, Strategy and Commissioning replied that he saw some positive opportunities within it.

The Divisional Director for Children & Young People Specialist Services added that a will exists to help staff with this process and that he was optimistic.

Edward Joseph asked if four Divisional Directors was enough for the People & Communities Department.

The Chair replied that she had confidence in the officers undertaking those roles.

66 CABINET MEMBER UPDATE

In her absence the Cabinet Member for Early Years, Children & Youth, Councillor Dine Romero had issued a written update and this was circulated at the meeting. A copy will be appended online to these minutes and a hard copy will be placed on the Panel's Minute Book.

67 PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES STRATEGIC DIRECTOR'S BRIEFING

The People and Communities Strategic Director had given his apologies and was unable to attend the meeting.

68 PANEL WORKPLAN

The Chair introduced this item to the Panel. She explained that she had been contacted by the Council's Policy Development & Scrutiny (PDS) Project Officer to ask for items to be included in the next annual report for PDS.

The Panel chose the following items:

- Children's Centres
- Early Years Funding
- Narrowing the Gap
- Pupil Premium
- Child Sexual Exploitation
- SEND Reform

Councillor Liz Hardman requested an update report on Child Sexual Exploitation in March.

Councillor Loraine Morgan-Brinkhurst informed the Panel that the NSPCC presentation of their Primary Schools Programme would take place in January.

The Chair commented that although this Panel only has two meetings left a list will be kept of topics that need to be addressed following the local elections.

The meeting ended at 7.10 pm

Chair(person)

Date Confirmed and Signed

Prepared by Democratic Services