

**CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL**

**Minutes of the Meeting held**

Tuesday, 22nd March, 2016, 10.00 am

**Bath and North East Somerset Councillors:** Lisa Brett (Chair), Matt Cochrane (Vice-Chair), Karen Warrington, Mark Shelford (in place of Peter Turner), Sally Davis, Rob Appleyard (in place of Alison Millar) and Liz Hardman

**Co-opted Voting Members:** Andrew Tarrant (Diocese of Clifton)

**Co-opted Non-voting Members:** Chris Batten

**Officers :** Ashley Ayre (Strategic Director, People and Communities), Richard Baldwin (Divisional Director for Safeguarding & Social Care), Mike Bowden (Director, Children & Young People, Strategy and Commissioning), Sally Churchyard (11-19 Prevention Service Manager), Margaret Simmons-Bird (Head of Education Improvement) and Helen Hoynes (School Organisation Manager)

**Cabinet Member Assistant in attendance:** Councillor Emma Dixon

**56 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**57 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE**

The Chair drew attention to the emergency evacuation procedure.

**58 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS**

Councillor Peter Turner and Councillor Alison Millar had sent their apologies to the Panel. Councillor Mark Shelford and Councillor Rob Appleyard were their respective substitutes for the duration of the meeting.

David Williams, Diocese of Bath & Wells, Co-opted Panel Member had sent his apologies to the Panel.

Councillor Michael Evans, Cabinet Member for Children's Services gave his apologies to the Panel.

**59 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were none.

**60 TO ANNOUNCE ANY URGENT BUSINESS AGREED BY THE CHAIRMAN**

There was none.

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

There were none.

**62 MINUTES - 12TH JANUARY 2016**

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

**63 CABINET MEMBER UPDATE**

Councillor Emma Dixon, Cabinet Assistant for Children's Services gave the Panel an update on behalf of Councillor Michael Evans, Cabinet Member for Children's Services.

Budget: He was very pleased that no additional savings were made in the Children's Services budget, despite the last minute extra savings which had to be found because of the government decision to calculate the support grant in a different way. He said that non-statutory services are always vulnerable when savings are required, but the Cabinet agreed that the Council's Children's Services were beneficial and recognised the savings which had already been made in the last few years in shifting to interventions and services targeted on the families most in need.

He added that on the subject of Early Years he was following the publications of the Early Intervention Foundation carefully. He explained that this is a body seeking to establish evidence for the effectiveness of the many and varied Early Years interventions, and that so far it is proving that targeted interventions are much more effective than universal offers. He said that this is in line with the changes the Council has made. He added that it was also pleasing to report that the reduction of universal services in our children's centres has not resulted in any reduction in referrals to social services as was feared; in fact these have increased.

Schools Forum Budget: He explained that central government had protected schools' funding so that the Direct Schools Grant has increased, but only in line with the increase in basic need on a per pupil basis. Therefore schools will suffer inflationary pressures as a result of the employer's national insurance increase, the employer's superannuation contribution increase to 16.4% of salary from 14.1%, and the anticipated 1% pay rise. He said that for B&NES schools this amounted to £2.472m for 2016-17, and that he was pleased to report that the Schools Forum have decided to use £2m of its reserve to distribute to schools to mitigate this pressure for the year, giving time for adjustments to be made.

School Admissions: He stated that admissions are one of the responsibilities that the local authority retains in relation to all state financed schools. The position with

secondary school admissions is very good, with 94.5% of children achieving their first preference.

**New Schools:** The Regional Schools Commissioner accepted B&NES' recommendation for Weston All Saints Primary School to be the sponsor of the new Ensleigh primary school. However, in the case of the Somerdale primary school, the Commissioner decided on a non-local sponsor, Educate Together. He said that this will potentially introduce a stimulating fresh model into the current primary school mix.

**First Steps Moorlands Children's Centre:** He informed them that he had visited Moorlands Children's Centre with Cllr Tim Warren, the Leader of the Council, and seen first-hand the problems which the building suffers from because of the effect of ground water. He said that there was no doubt that the building needs to be replaced, and he was working to see if the Council could facilitate and perhaps even help with the process, which will require temporary facilities to be available for six months or more.

**Ofsted:** An inspection of B&NES' children's services is expected quite soon, although of course the exact date is not known.

**Schools Performance:** He wished to say that results were generally good by national standards, with some highlights, for instance reading in key stage 1 is in the top 5% in the country. He said that early years and foundation stage had improved pleasingly from below national average to above, but girls' primary mathematics is weak, and two deputy heads from Peasedown are researching the use of Shanghai and Singapore models to tackle this, using the Teaching School (Fosseway). He added that the gap between FSM pupils and others is generally down, so there is movement in the right direction, but the performance of the ablest pupils continues to disappoint, with B&NES at the bottom of the South West tables. He called for better A level performance and more A\* GCSEs need to be targeted.

The Chair said that she welcomed the protection given to the Children's Services budget and the Schools Forum decision to use a substantial amount of its reserves this year. She asked what will need to be done in relation to future years.

The Strategic Director for People & Communities replied that this pressure will remain locally and nationally and schools will need to look at options relating to restructuring, the curriculum they deliver and options regarding collaboration. He added that most schools have reasonable balances and that the Local Authority cannot fund a deficit in the Dedicated Schools Grant.

Councillor Liz Hardman commented that in her view the prospect of all schools becoming academies was dreadful. She asked if this occurs will Local Authority still require a Schools Admission Forum / Policy.

The Strategic Director for People & Communities replied that he had not yet fully observed the White Paper, but that academies are allowed to act as their own admission authority.

The Chair asked if the Panel could be of use in terms of discussions with other Local Authorities in relation to amalgamation of services.

The Strategic Director for People & Communities replied that collaborative work does already take place, but it would be useful for the Panel to be involved to some degree on future plans.

Councillor Sally Davis suggested that the Chair meets with the Cabinet Member and the Strategic Director for People & Communities on a regular basis to see where the Panel can be of assistance.

The Chair agreed and said she would take steps to arrange such a meeting.

## **64 PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL ORGANISATION PLAN 2015 - 2019**

Councillor Liz Hardman asked if it was anticipated that the Council would continue to have a statutory duty to ensure there are sufficient school places in the area.

The School Organisation Manager replied that there is no indication at present that this will be changed.

Councillor Liz Hardman asked what information does the Council have about proposals for Free Schools.

The School Organisation Manager replied that we know that one has been proposed – Norton Hill Primary School. She added that the site proposed is south of our border, but would provide places for B&NES children.

Councillor Liz Hardman asked if it would be funded via CIL or Section 106 agreement.

The School Organisation Manager replied that it would be funded by central government.

The Chair asked does the Council have sufficient evidence and capacity to commission new academies to be built.

The School Organisation Manager replied that we forecast pupil numbers expected to be generated from new housing and due to population growth and determine if new school places are required. If so, these could be delivered via expansions to existing schools or by building new schools. She added that if a new school is required this could be built by the developer in some cases and in others by the Council.

Councillor Karen Warrington asked are the Councils spatial strategies sufficiently well documented, clear, appropriate and linked to the School Organisational Plan (SOP).

The School Organisation Manager replied that Planning Policy consult with us to establish the requirement for school infrastructure as a consequence of new housing development and this is referenced in their documents. She said that we also consult with Planning Policy when drafting the SOP. She added that the Infrastructure Delivery Programme which is a part of the Core Strategy is linked to the SOP and will refer to the same school infrastructure projects and the SOP is referred to in the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Regulation 123 List.

Councillor Mark Shelford asked if school playing fields are protected and does the development of new sites include the provision of playing fields.

The School Organisation Manager replied that school sport pitches were protected and that the Council was a consultee of Sport England. She added that new school sites do include plans for recreational and sports space provision.

Councillor Liz Hardman commented that where there are areas of expansion, but schools are at full capacity and without room to expand, some pupils in those areas may need to attend schools that are further away and travelling will incur additional costs to parents. She asked, in that event, what action will be taken to reduce the financial inequality burden placed upon some parents, but not others.

The School Organisation Manager replied that support for home to school transport costs exists if the distance is above the statutory level and if certain other criteria apply. She added that the current plans are designed to provide sufficient places in the areas they are needed and therefore do not show that this scenario will occur to any significant extent.

Councillor Liz Hardman asked if the Council were prepared for all eventualities, such as a sudden surge in population.

The School Organisation Manager replied that whilst the SOP is intended to do this and does flag up increasing rolls, there can always be unexpected demand. She added that we retain some capital funding for this eventuality, in the event that we need to provide additional accommodation unexpectedly. She said that we continuously monitor child population data with a view to obtaining an early indication of unexpected demand as soon as possible.

Councillor Liz Hardman asked if the Council has a strategy for dealing with surplus places and falling rolls.

The School Organisation Manager replied that due to higher birth rates and population increases from new housing, this is not expected to be an issue for the foreseeable future.

The Chair asked what will happen if academies choose a different admissions policy, therefore not allocating places on the basis of a straight line distance from school.

The Strategic Director for People & Communities replied that he understood the anxiety expressed, but that it is the ethos of the school that is important and that the majority of schools do behave appropriately. He added that if any concern regarding admissions were raised they would be scrutinised by the Council and reported to the Schools' Adjudicator.

The Chair asked what understanding of the SEN strategy exists within the schools organisation planning process.

The School Organisation Manager replied that Special Educational Needs (SEN) provision is subject to a separate place planning process due to the more complex and demand led nature of the provision. She said that unlike planning mainstream school places, it was not just an issue of numbers of places required but type of

provision required by individual children based on their specific needs, which can change by the day. She added that Local Authorities (LAs) do not include projected SEN pupils and places in the School Places Return submitted to the Department for Education (DfE) which is used to allocate Basic Need capital to LAs to provide school places.

Councillor Rob Appleyard asked if the design of a new school was carried out by an area of the Council other than Children's Services.

The School Organisation Manager replied that it was their role to identify the need for a new school. She added that discussions would then take place between Major Projects, Property Services or an individual developer relating to the design.

Councillor Rob Appleyard asked if the school on the Bath Western Riverside site was due to open in 2022 or 2023.

The School Organisation Manager replied that the current build programme indicated that it was likely to open in 2022.

The Panel **RESOLVED** to approve the following recommendations:

- (i) Note the proposed strategy for the provision of school places within the 2015 – 2019 plan period.
- (ii) Note the proposed strategy for the provision of school places over the longer term within the Core Strategy Plan Period.

## **65 EDUCATION RESULTS 2015**

The Chair commented that a good set of results had been achieved but that she had concerns over the results for disadvantaged children. She asked what aspects of deprivation most influence educational attainment and how are relevant Council services or partners currently working together to address inequality.

The Head of Education Improvement replied that there are 7 components of the Indices of Multiple Deprivation - Income, Employment, Education, Health, Crime, Housing and Environment. She added that within these areas there are sub-factors, such as the 'income deprivation affecting children index' (IDACI – published at the school level in RAISE online for schools and OfSTED). She said that previous research had established a link between this and the educational performance of children although such a relationship is affected by the interaction of a large range of other factors that are not all measured through the indices detailed above. However, this is an imperfect measure, and for ease of administration the proxy indicator of deprivation that is used to allocate funding is whether a child has been in receipt of free school meals in the last six years.

She stated that the 'Disadvantaged' group had now been widened to include these pupils as well as children in care and those who have been adopted from care.

She said that they work with officers within Health, Social Care, the Virtual School and other agencies to address this matter.

Councillor Liz Hardman asked for further information on how they hoped to achieve their identified priorities.

The Head of Education Improvement replied that schools with the biggest gaps prior to Year 2 and Year 6 are targeted and would receive three visits across the academic year. She added that all Academies had been written to asking for their predictions and what work they plan to do.

She stated that advisers have funded and promoted Achievement for All in both primary and secondary schools, and this is beginning to have a positive impact in narrowing the gaps. She added that a number of headteachers and a member of the School Improvement and Achievement Service are training as Achievement for All coaches to make this more accessible to reduce costs.

Councillor Liz Hardman said that she was worried that Academies were failing disadvantaged pupils.

The Head of Education Improvement replied that Secondary Academies do engage well on the whole with the Council and that the Council's role remains to champion on behalf of all children. She added that the Council would contact Ofsted or the Regional Schools Commissioner if required.

Andrew Tarrant commented that it was quite a scary time for school leaders as they were being guided in a direction (i.e. academisation) with no choice in the matter. He added that he had always appreciated the work of the Local Authority.

Councillor Matt Cochrane asked how are disadvantaged children supported to continue in further and higher education.

The Head of Education Improvement replied that this information is not currently available. The destinations data for pupils who have finished year 11 is published in a school's RAISE online report broken down for disadvantaged pupils and so this information could be analysed by school for a future meeting. She added that post 16 schools and colleges also receive a reduced amount of pupil premium to support these young people, and will use similar strategies as schools to raise aspiration.

The Chair asked if all B&NES schools are compliant with their statutory duty to publish information on the use of and outcomes from the pupil premium.

The Head of Education Improvement replied that as part of our core visits the Senior School Improvement Adviser (SSIA) will check the school's website for compliance. If a school's website is non-compliant this is followed up by the Teaching and Learning consultant and support offered at no cost to the school. She said that the quality of the reports, and of the range of interventions and support for such children, is variable and this is not currently collated centrally. She stated that there is insufficient capacity in the team to carry out this non statutory work.

She said that Ofsted also check whether schools or academies have published the required information on their website and also consider whether this spending has been effective.

The Chair commented that it was encouraging that SEND children with a statement or EHC perform better than their peers nationally. She asked if all disadvantaged children have a PEP, and are these audited for quality.

The Head of Education Improvement replied that it is not a requirement that all disadvantaged children have a PEP, although schools might use some of the individual elements of the PEP form in their tracking of disadvantaged pupils. She said that they recognise the need to audit what provision schools do make for other vulnerable pupils who do not meet the threshold for statements/EHC plans.

She asked the Panel to note that although some children with SEND may have a statement or EHC plan there is no such requirement for 'SEN Support' children. Schools will have their own arrangements for recording the support for such children and this may be published in their SEN Local Offer report on their website.

She added that all looked after children have a PEP and that these would be looked at and audited by the Head of the Virtual School.

Councillor Liz Hardman asked what plans the Council has to raise the educational attainment of BME pupils.

The Head of Education Improvement replied that it has a three year contract with Kick Start to focus on ethnic minority achievement and that they are currently working with a number of primary and secondary schools to support BME pupils. She said that a significant proportion of this work is focused on EAL pupils who arrive with early language development.

She added that attainment for BME pupils across the primary phase is at least in line with other pupils and for some BME groups performance is above local and national averages.

Chris Batten said that a previous Panel meeting had received a presentation from children in care and suggested they receive something similar to a future meeting.

The Divisional Director for Safeguarding & Social Care replied that the Senior In Care Council would be the best group to address the Panel. He said that he would discuss the proposal with them.

Councillor Matt Cochrane asked if disadvantaged children are able to participate in after-school activities and enjoy learning and achievement in all its forms and if not, what the barriers are.

The Head of Education Improvement replied that this information is not collected but would expect schools to support pupils on this matter and possibly use Pupil Premium funding.

The Chair asked is there a training and development programme in place for BCA.

The Head of Education Improvement replied that the Local Authority has no statutory authority for academies, this is the responsibility of the Regional Schools Commissioner. However, she stated that the Council has written to the school, RSC and the DfE of its concerns about standards and attendance and exclusions levels and that these concerns have also been shared with the Regional Ofsted Director.



The Chair suggested that the Panel writes a letter to all governors highlighting the need to support disadvantaged pupils. The Panel agreed with this proposal.

The Panel **RESOLVED** to agree the following recommendations:

- (i) The EYFS team continues to use local data from early years settings to target their support in those schools where disadvantaged children (eligible for pupil premium funding) and boys are underperforming to accelerate closing the achievement gaps in the foundation stage.
- (ii) The local authority in exercising its statutory duty to “promote high standards and fulfilment of potential in schools and other education and training providers so that all children and young people benefit from at least good education” should challenge Headteachers and other senior leaders effectiveness in the use of pupil premium funding to narrow the attainment gap for disadvantaged pupils.
- (iii) Elected members support two local initiatives to raise standards in mathematics:
  - A joint mathematics project with the Bath and Mendip Partnership Teaching School to champion girls and more able mathematicians particularly across KS2.
  - Encourage all governors to promote “Top marks for Maths” as agenda item for all their meetings.
- (iv) Officers continue to explore with secondary schools strategies to improve A level outcomes and to share successful practice.

## **66 VIRTUAL SCHOOL ANNUAL REPORT**

The Chair asked if looked-after children are disproportionately represented at BCA.

The Director for Children & Young People, Strategy & Commissioning replied that there are four B&NES looked after children on roll at BCA – one came into care in January and another two weeks ago. The other two have been in care and at BCA for over two years. He said that the Virtual School is aware of the concerns around BCA and have taken the following steps to support these young people:

- Assessed whether each young person in care should move to a better performing school – this includes taking the young person’s views into account. In each case we have decided that they should stay at BCA with support from the Virtual School. Moving schools means moving young people away from friends, siblings and supportive teachers at times of other big changes in their lives, and young people in Years 10 and 11 (three of the four young people) will have their GCSE studies disrupted if they move. Research published by Oxford University last November shows that young people in care who change school in Years 10 or 11 score over five GCSE grades less than those who did not.

- Provided additional Pupil Premium Plus for extra one to one tuition and teaching assistant support where needed
- Monitored attendance, progress and planning with extra diligence. The two looked after children who have been in care and at BCA for over two years have 100% attendance and are making good progress in their learning.
- Welcomed BCA onto our Attachment Aware Schools training programme this year

He added that in the experience of Virtual School staff, there is good pastoral and special needs support for pupils at BCA and on balance we believe that these looked after children are more likely to achieve better educational outcomes and stay in stable foster placements by staying at BCA with support.

Councillor Liz Hardman commented that she was concerned that 34% of the 35 care leavers aged 16-18 in 2014-15 were not in education, employment or training by the end of the academic year. She asked if these young people were tracked in anyway and what attempts are made to get them back on board.

The Director for Children & Young People, Strategy & Commissioning replied that attempts are made to keep in contact with those young people.

Councillor Liz Hardman asked for the Panel to receive a follow up report at a future meeting to identify the current status. She also asked what plans do the Virtual School have to raise the educational attainment of BME children in care.

The Director for Children & Young People, Strategy & Commissioning replied that it depends on individual cases of course but additional support provided for BME looked after children include:

- Mentoring e.g. in one school one Year 8 looked after child is being mentored by a sixth former who is BME
- B&NES Black Families Support Group Voice Minority Supplementary School
- Additional teaching assistant support
- Moving schools where the view of the team around the child is that this will benefit the child

The Chair asked how school admission policies across B&NES treat looked-after children.

The Director for Children & Young People, Strategy & Commissioning replied that the Bath and North East Somerset School Admissions booklets for primary and secondary schools shows that all Bath and North East Somerset schools and academies comply with the Department for Education School Admissions Code and give looked after children and children who were previously looked after the highest priority. He added that school admission of looked after children to B&NES schools and academies is very rarely a problem. He said that Local Authorities can direct schools to admit looked after children if necessary and they have to seek a direction from the Secretary of State for academies but we have not had to do this to date.

Councillor Matt Cochrane asked if looked after children are generally able to attend the same school as other children in their foster family.

The Director for Children & Young People, Strategy & Commissioning replied they were. He added that it can sometimes depend on where they are living but we support looked after siblings attending the same school if it was believed this was in their best interests.

The Chair explained that she had proposed the following three additional recommendations to the Headteacher of B&NES Virtual School for Children in Care in relation to the priorities for the academic year 2015/16 and that he had agreed with them.

- (i) Divide the priorities and actions into two distinct items, one being concerned with raising the aspirations of all those who work with looked after children, the other raising the aspirations of the child
- (ii) Ensure all primary carers are expected and equipped to provide educational support for learning and are regularly monitored for progress in this area.
- (iii) The Letterbox Club scheme should be extended to the small number of looked after children in Yrs. 1 & 2.

The Chair asked what looked-after children themselves say about their education and aspirations.

The Director for Children & Young People, Strategy & Commissioning replied that all looked after children are asked for their views by their teachers before meetings and these are recorded in their Personal Education Plans. He added that the Virtual School facilitated a project for the Senior In Care Council last summer where they produced two podcasts about being in care. He said the young people made positive references to the Virtual School in the recordings which can be heard here:

<http://www.offtherecord-banes.co.uk/news-event/news/listen-to-our-senior-in-care-council-podcasts/>

He said that he would ensure that the voice of looked after children is reflected in the 2016 annual report.

The Chair asked if looked-after children are able to participate in after-school activities and enjoy learning and achievement in all its forms - if not, what the barriers are.

The Director for Children & Young People, Strategy & Commissioning replied yes, absolutely. He said the vast majority are involved in activities in and out of school and the Virtual School promotes this for example by funding school trips and promoting schemes such as the National Citizen Service. He added that barriers to participation are rare but participation may necessitate changes to pick up times by carers or taxis for example.

The Panel **RESOLVED** to approve the following officer recommendations as well as those proposed by the Chair earlier in the debate:

- (i) For elected members to ask about the progress of children in care when they visit schools in their wards.

- (ii) For elected members to approach the Virtual School Headteacher, Michael Gorman for information on the performance of schools in their wards for looked after children.
- (iii) For elected members to consider joining the Corporate Parenting Members' Group if they do not already belong.

The Chair said that a letter should be sent to all Councillors regarding these recommendations.

## **67 CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION**

The Chair asked what is the extent and profile of CSE in our local area.

The Divisional Director for Safeguarding & Social Care replied in July 2015 B&NES agreed to support and contribute funds to a regional CSE project hosted by Avon and Somerset Police and with support from the Barnardo's Against Sexual Exploitation (BASE) project. He explained that part of the remit of the project was to develop a regional "Problem Profile" of key adults of concern, geographical hot-spots and to be able to link the relationships, activity and locations across the region. He stated that the lead for the project wrote to each of the Council's involved in early February requesting details of adults and locations that had been identified as being of concern. He said that it was increasingly clear that those adults who are identified as posing a risk of CSE operate across the whole of the South West region and in the case of B&NES, the majority of concerns for our young people relate to their links with the Bristol area. He added that the majority of adults we have identified that live in the B&NES area also have links with adults and locations in other council areas. He informed the Panel that the Avon CSE Project plans to have the first version of the Regional Problem profile available to agencies in May.

The Chair asked where the CSE and Missing referrals were coming from.

The Divisional Director for Safeguarding & Social Care replied that our referrals for CSE concerns continue to come from a variety of sources and that the total number of CSE referrals in February was 6. He said that the sources of these referrals broke down as follows; 2 from schools, 1 from a voluntary organisation (Mentoring Plus), 1 from Barnardo's and 2 from the Police. He added that this was broadly in line with the pattern from previous months. He stated that with regard to referrals for Missing, the majority of notifications came from either the Police if the young person was not previously known, or otherwise the young people that go missing tend to already be known to Social Care as open cases either as Children in Need or children who are 'Looked After'.

Councillor Mark Shelford asked if the Willow Project were able to offer support regarding sexting.

The Divisional Director for Safeguarding & Social Care replied that it would more likely be the LSCB that would provide support on that matter.

The Strategic Director for People & Communities added that PSHE work within schools would address relationships and the effects of cyber bullying.

The Divisional Director for Safeguarding & Social Care commented that at the LSCB Stakeholder Day a drama depicting sexting and grooming had been shown and that five schools had subsequently asked to see it.

Councillor Karen Warrington asked if he felt the Council were doing enough to safeguard its children.

The Divisional Director for Safeguarding & Social Care replied that he was as confident as he could be in where the current resources have been placed. He added that the members of the CSE Sub-Group were very committed people.

The Chair asked if referrals were falling slightly.

The Divisional Director for Safeguarding & Social Care replied that they were consistently receiving 5 – 7 referrals a month.

The Chair asked is in-house CSE training available for a wider cohort than just those professionals working directly with children and young people, such as licensing officers, environmental health officers or elected members.

The Divisional Director for Safeguarding & Social Care replied that the CSE training is provided through the LSCB and is available to all member agencies. He added that this would include Council employees in the licencing team, environmental health officers and elected members. He said that if elected members wished to undertake this training he would be happy to co-ordinate it.

The Chair asked do all partners attend multi-agency training sessions.

The Divisional Director for Safeguarding & Social Care replied that they do.

## **68 YOUTH JUSTICE PLAN**

The Chair commented that she was concerned that the report didn't cover the risks presented to the agreed local plans by proposed in-year cuts to the funding for youth offending teams in England and Wales. She said that the LGA has warned that the number of children in custody risks increasing if plans to reduce in-year funding for Youth Offending Teams (YOTs) by an additional £9 million go ahead. She stated that YOTs have already had to find efficiency savings, through staffing and support costs, to cope with 40 per cent less money to run services in recent years. She asked how much scope was there for further efficiencies.

The 11-19 Prevention Service Manager replied that the in-year cuts have already been implemented, having been confirmed in November. They were managed without any reduction in staffing but, several development initiatives were halted, as indicated in the progress report on the annual work plan. She was concerned over the prospect of further reductions as the Youth Offending Service is funded by a number of statutory partners, some of whom are reviewing their contributions. The National Probation Service will be reducing its contribution to Youth Offending Services from April. We have been advised that the level of Ministry of Justice (YJB) funding for the year ahead will not be confirmed until mid-April.

The Divisional Director for Safeguarding & Social Care added that information relating to any merger of services or reconfiguration of the Youth Offending Team could be brought back to the Panel.

Councillor Liz Hardman asked if the financial contribution from the Council to the Youth Offending Team remained the same.

The Strategic Director for People & Communities replied that the contribution was as expected and reported within the current round of budget proposals.

Councillor Liz Hardman commented that it was good to see that there were currently no young people from Bath and North East Somerset serving custodial sentences and that no such sentences had been passed for 2 ½ years.

The 11-19 Prevention Service Manager replied that there is a strong Custody Review Panel in place to review all uses of detention for young people and that the work with this multi-agency group and the quality of report-writing in the Youth Offending Service has been particularly significant, as a number of cases could have resulted in a custodial sentence. She added that the local custodial rate is currently zero, one of only a handful of Services in England and Wales with this level of performance. However, the Service is not complacent about this and is working with a small cohort of concerning young people.

The Chair commented she was pleased to see the number of first time entrants into the youth justice system was falling steadily, but disappointed to find out it might only be due to a different approach to the reporting of the possession of cannabis and therefore may not reflect any real reduction in criminal activity. She asked if it was possible to measure what progress had been made to the number of first time entrants if the new approach to reporting possession of cannabis hadn't been introduced.

The 11-19 Prevention Service Manager replied that having looked at the local data she was confident there had been a reduction despite the new approach to the reporting of cannabis possession. The current improvement and rate are better than all comparators and also reflect the value of early help work with young people at risk of offending (Compass and Mentoring Plus). The Cannabis diversion initiative means that young people who would previously have had an immediate Police Caution with no intervention, now have the opportunity of assessment and intervention with Project 28, a substance misuse service for young people. The Police and Crime Commissioner has expressed an interest in seeing this sort of approach introduced in other Authorities.

The Chair asked for the Panel to be provided with a copy of the AssetPlus framework.

The 11-19 Prevention Service Manager replied that the framework document was quite substantial in size and offered to send them rationale document instead.

The Panel **RESOLVED** to:

- (i) Note the progress made in the partnership's statutory work of preventing youth offending.

- (ii) Support the identification of priority areas for the Youth Justice Plan 2016-2017.

## **69 PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES STRATEGIC DIRECTOR'S BRIEFING**

The Strategic Director for People & Communities addressed the Panel. He said from what he had seen of the new White Paper there was good content within it relating to teaching and standards, but that this had been overshadowed by the announcement relating to academies. He proposed that at a future meeting the Panel receives and discusses a summary report on this matter.

Councillor Liz Hardman asked which education services are the Council continuing to provide to schools and how are these services being funded.

The Strategic Director for People & Communities provided the Panel with the following list:

Admissions (Local Authority)  
Home to School Transport (Local Authority)  
Schools Planning and Sufficiency (Local Authority)  
Early Years Planning and Sufficiency (Dedicated Schools Grant / Local Authority)  
Schools Improvement and Achievement (Local Authority)  
Foundation Stage (Local Authority / Dedicated Schools Grant)  
Integrated Working (Local Authority)  
Educational Psychology (Local Authority)  
Special Educational Needs and Disability (Dedicated Schools Grant / Local Authority)  
Virtual School (Local Authority / Dedicated Schools Grant)  
Hospital Education and Reintegration Service (Dedicated Schools Grant)  
Children Missing Education Service (Education Welfare / Local Authority)  
Music Service (Local Authority / Department for Education Grant)

The Chair asked how these services relate to the priorities for children and young people in the area, in particular disadvantaged students.

The Strategic Director for People & Communities replied that the services are a mix of those that are universal i.e. to enable all children to access education (Admissions) and targeted i.e. to enable specific support due to a specific need, situation or condition (Virtual School, EPS, CMES, etc).

The Chair asked how the Council is ensuring that it will still be able to deliver its statutory duties in the current climate of austerity.

The Strategic Director for People & Communities replied that no reductions to statutory services in education were contained within the MTSRP for 2016-20.

The Chair asked how the Council is ensuring that safeguarding remains the top priority.

The Strategic Director for People & Communities replied that school representatives are on the LSCB, there are regular Child Protection Fora for schools, the LSCB oversees Section 11 Audits of all schools regarding compliance, the duty data shows

that schools remain in the top two referrers into Children's Social Care and that there is a focus on Integrated Working and "Step Up / Step Down".

The Chair asked does the Council have an agreement with academies regarding access to information.

The Strategic Director for People & Communities replied that Council has an Information Sharing Protocol with all academies. He added that it was currently being revised to enable better sharing across schools of achievement data.

The Chair asked which education services has the Council stopped providing to schools.

The Strategic Director for People & Communities replied that services of Specialist Teaching, Preventative Educational Psychology and the majority of school improvement and curriculum development services were no longer provided by the Council.

The Chair asked how outcomes for young people will be affected if external service providers cannot fill the gap.

The Strategic Director for People & Communities replied that to date this situation has not arisen as a range of alternative providers are available and a range of collaborative arrangements are in place with schools pooling resource and expertise.

The Chair asked does the Council have a role in school-based partnerships.

The Strategic Director for People & Communities replied that it does and that it had brokered a number of these and was encouraging schools to try different forms of collaboration. He added that the Council is a member of the Teaching School Partnership which provides school to school support.

## **70 PANEL WORKPLAN**

The Chair announced that a proposed joint meeting with the Heath & Wellbeing Select Committee regarding Children's Health would not now take place and that the reports requested would now be divided and presented separately to each meeting appropriately. She added that it was anticipated that this would be in July 2016.

She requested that the earlier proposed White Paper report be brought to the May 2016 Panel meeting.

The meeting ended at 1.15 pm

Chair(person) .....

Date Confirmed and Signed .....

**Prepared by Democratic Services**