

BATH AND NORTH EAST SOMERSET COUNCIL

EARLY YEARS, CHILDREN AND YOUTH POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

Monday, 23rd September, 2013

Present:- Councillors: Sally Davis (Chair), Sarah Bevan (Vice-Chair), Liz Hardman and David Veale

Co-opted Voting Members:- David Williams

Co-opted Non-voting Members:- Chris Batten

Also in attendance: Ashley Ayre (Strategic Director for People and Communities), Mike Bowden (Divisional Director for CYP Strategy and Commissioning), Richard Baldwin (Divisional Director for CYP Specialist Services), Kevin Amos (Parent Support Services Manager), Lynda Deane (Operations Manager, Sport and Active Lifestyles Team), Linda Todd, (Project Manager, Special Olympics), Jen Southall (School Development Adviser), Lin Bartlett (Senior Secondary Adviser), Sara Willis (Service Manager for 0-11 Outcomes) and Sharon Lympo (Children Missing Education Service Manager)

29 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

30 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

The Chair drew attention to the emergency evacuation procedure.

31 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS

The Chair announced at this point that Tess Daly had retired from her post as a Co-optee of the Panel and that Tony Parker was due to leave the Council at the end of October. On behalf of the Panel she wished to thank them both for all the work they had done.

32 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

33 TO ANNOUNCE ANY URGENT BUSINESS AGREED BY THE CHAIRMAN

The Chair announced that she had received a letter from a member of the public thanking the Council for the 'outstanding & exemplary personal care support' they had provided for their son during his lifetime. She asked for the letter to also be passed to Councillor Simon Allen, Cabinet Member for Wellbeing and Councillor Vic Pritchard, Chair of the Wellbeing Scrutiny Panel.

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

There were none.

35 MINUTES - 8TH JULY 2013

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

36 SPECIAL OLYMPICS GB

The Panel received a presentation on this item from the Council's Operations Manager and the Project Manager for the Special Olympics GB.

The Operations Manager informed the Panel that the Council was host to 1,700 athletes involved in 12 sports over 5 days. She added that the event was supported by 500 volunteers, many of whom were local to the Bath & North East Somerset area.

She spoke of how the Council supported the Opening Ceremony in Royal Victoria Park, provided Games Transport for the duration of the event and organised the Families' Social Evening at the Parade Gardens.

She stated that a one-off sum of £20,000 was approved by the Cabinet in July 2012 and assigned to the Council's Sport and Active Lifestyles Team to support Special Olympics GB in bringing the Games and Opening Ceremony to Bath. The majority of budget (£14,000) was used for Transport Services with the remainder providing infrastructure, event licence, land hire, waste services and cleansing.

She said that it was vital that the Council appointed a Project Manager to become a single point of contact to assist Special Olympics GB in dealing with the many departments involved. This link ensured that Special Olympics GB and B&NES were aligned and worked effectively together and promoted the One Council approach.

The Project Manager said that B&NES provided advice and support throughout the planning stage to ensure a high standard of delivery and safety. She stated that numerous departments were involved in the event, including Sport and Active Lifestyles, Corporate Health and Safety, Communications and Marketing, Transport, Highways, Parking, Business Continuity and Emergency Planning.

She also gave mention to the number of businesses that gave their support, such as Bath Bus Company, Milsom Place, Bath Tourism Plus, Southgate, BMW Wellsway, University of Bath, Bath Golf Club, The House, Minute Man Press, The Royal Crescent Hotel and Curo.

The Operations Manager spoke of the intention now to meet with Special Olympics GB to discuss legacy work, which would include an inclusive Multi-sport Hub Club highlighting the Paralympic / Special Olympic events in B&NES.

Councillor Liz Hardman commented that she wished to praise the work of all those involved in the event.

Councillor Sarah Bevan said that she would be interested in hearing further information following the full de-brief by Special Olympics GB.

The Chair congratulated them on running a very smooth event and agreed that it was important for them to have a central contact point.

Councillor David Dixon, Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods commented that he was very proud of the whole team involved in the event and thanked staff from all across the Council for their support.

37 SCHOOL ADMISSIONS

The Parent Support Services Manager introduced this item to the Panel. He informed them that a total of 1649 children were offered their 1st preference Primary School [93.4%]. The number of children refused their 1st preference school was 113 [6.6%]. He added that in September 2012 these figures were 92.1% and 7.9% respectively. Only 26 children [1.45%] did not get a place at one of their preferred schools.

A total of 2019 children were offered their 1st preference Secondary School [94.9%]. The number of children refused their 1st preference school was 109 [5.1%]. In September 2012 these figures were 93.79% and 6.39%. Only 3 children [0.14%] did not get a place at one of their preferred schools.

Councillor Liz Hardman asked if there was any need to be concerned over the admission numbers involving rural Primary Schools.

The Parent Support Services Manager replied that they were keeping a watchful eye on the figures, but had no reason to be overly concerned at this stage.

Councillor Liz Hardman asked if he knew why the schools of Broadlands and St. Marks were not filling many places.

The Parent Support Services Manager replied that it appeared that fewer children from South Bristol were attending Broadlands.

The Deputy Director for Children & Young People, Strategy & Commissioning replied that he was not unduly worried as St. Marks was viewed as a long term plan.

The Chair wished to thank the officers involved in the admissions process and said that the Panel would receive a report at some point in the future on Primary School Place Planning.

38 SCHOOL EXCLUSIONS

The Service Manager for 0-11 Outcomes introduced this item. She explained that the Panel had asked officers to consider whether there was any correlation between schools becoming academies and the rising number of children being permanently excluded from school (PEX) or fixed term excluded (FTE).

The Children Missing Education Service Manager said that they had analysed secondary school exclusion data from 2009 to 2013; looking both at permanent and fixed term exclusions. In considering the PEX data it showed that in the academic year 2009-2010 there were 4 PEX; whilst at the end of the 2012-13 there were 20. At one level this could appear to be the correlation of secondary schools becoming academies over the last 3 years, however on further analysis the number of maintained schools permanently excluding is not that different to academies.

She added that what appears to have potentially made the difference is that in 2010-2011 academies began to refuse to accept the £6,000 levy implemented in the past for children who were permanently excluded. This was a financial penalty to deter schools and to encourage them to manage pupil behaviour differently. The data indicates the levy may have influenced the numbers of permanent exclusion. She stated that the Local Authority has no legal powers to impose this levy and once one academy refused to pay (in 2010) there was a domino effect.

It could therefore be concluded that a lack of financial consequence when permanently excluding a child led to a rise in permanent exclusions, rather than the conversion to academy status.

David Williams asked if the schools had a moral imperative to acknowledge the impact on learning that illegal exclusions have.

The Deputy Director for CYP Strategy and Commissioning replied that the study had raised a number of questions that need following up.

Councillor Liz Hardman asked if internal exclusions were monitored.

The Children Missing Education Service Manager replied that some schools use this as a way of managing pupil behaviour. She added that no notification of this action was required.

Councillor Liz Hardman asked if all excluded pupils attended The Link.

The Children Missing Education Service Manager replied that the Local Authority has a duty to provide education after the 6th day of exclusion and that The Link was used for this service until a new school was allocated.

The Strategic Director for People and Communities added that Behaviour & Attendance Panels for both Primary & Secondary schools were in place across the Council. He said that the Primary Panels worked well, but with regard to the Secondary ones it did take some time for placements to be found in Bath.

The Chair thanked the officers for their work on the report and said she looked forward to receiving further reports in the future.

39 EXAM RESULTS

The Deputy Director for CYP Strategy and Commissioning introduced this item to the Panel. He explained that the results were provisional and as in previous years the Panel would receive a written report in November.

The Senior Secondary Adviser explained the first set of data to the Panel.

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE (EYFS)

She informed them that in 2012-13 a new EYFS Profile assessment was introduced by the DFE with a revised measure of a 'Good Level of Development' (GLD). The GLD is achieved when a child meets or exceeds the Early Learning Goals (ELG) in all the areas of Communication and Language, Personal Social and Emotional Development, Physical Development, Literacy and Mathematics.

- The majority of children (51%) achieve a good level of development within the Early Learning Goals and 66% achieve a good level in the Prime Areas of learning and development which are key to lifelong learning.
- The first year of a new assessment often brings more cautious assessment, and analysis would indicate that this is the case in some schools, so we would expect to see an increase in outcomes in 2013.
- The widest gap in outcomes remains for children in receipt of Free School Meals but the impact of a focus on this group is difficult to assess given the change in assessment format.

The School Development Adviser introduced the next set of data to the Panel.

KEY STAGE 1 – (Provisional data August 2013)

- Local Authority results in all subjects are above those of last year.
- The proportion achieving national expectation of Level 2+ has increased by 1 percentage point (ppt) in writing (88%), 2ppt in reading (91%) and 1ppt in Maths (94%).
- At the more secure Level of 2b+ there has been an increase in ppt in all subjects, writing has increased by 4 ppt (73%), both reading and maths have increased by 2ppt (83%)
- High attainers (Level 3) have overall performed well:
Maths 29% up 1ppt
Reading 37% remained the same
Writing 21% up 4ppt

Groups

- **Gender** – Girls at higher levels outperform boys in all subjects except for maths
- **FSM** - The gap between FSM and all pupils remains a priority for the LA as there is still a significant gap in all subjects
- **BME** – There is a gap between BME and all pupils but not as great as FSM and within 4ppts within each subject. The narrowest gap is in maths

KEY STAGE 2 (Provisional LA data - August 2013)

Reporting KS2 English results in 2013 have been amended. There is no overall level awarded for English, reading and writing are have been reported separately for 2013.

- **Reading**
 - 88% Level 4+ and remain the same as 2012 but above national (86%)
 - Higher attainers 52% Level 5+, a decrease of 3ppts from 2012
 - 0.4% achieved Level 6
- **Writing**
 - **This is the second year that writing is based on Teacher Assessment and above national (83%)**
 - 84% Level 4+ and remain the same as 2012.
 - 35% Level 5+, an increase of 3ppts from 2012
 - 3% achieved Level 6, this is the first year the LA have reported on Level 6 so there is no comparison to be made
- **Mathematics**
 - 86% Level 4+, a decrease of 1ppts from 2012 but above national at 85%
 - 42% Level 5+, remains the same as 2012
 - 7% achieved Level 6, as with reading and writing this is the first year the LA have reported on Level 6 so there is no comparison to be made
- **Reading, Writing & Maths Combined (From LA Data team, provisional)**
 - L4+ 78%. This result cannot be compared as this is the first year that no overall English level has been reported.
 - It is above national by 2% (76%)

PROGRESS

This year progress is reported in reading, writing and maths, previously English and maths

Two levels progress:

- Reading: LA 87% National 88%
- Writing: LA 92% National 91%
- Maths: LA 87% National 88%

Progress remains a priority for the LA. Furthermore we will begin to look at pupils making three levels progress, though nationally only two levels are reported.

Groups

- **Gender** - Girls continue attaining higher than boys except in level 5 Maths and making more progress.
- **FSM** – The gap between FSM and all pupils remains a priority for the LA as there is still a significant gap in all subjects writing being the greatest
- **BME** – The gap between BME and all pupils is within 4ppt
- **CIC – via virtual school** – 75% pupils achieved L4+ in English and Maths, 100% 2 levels progress

GCSE Results

- 5 A*- C grades including English and Maths – 64.8%

A Level Results

- 3 A* - E grades – 74.4%

The Chair praised the work of the pupils, teachers, parents and officers in achieving such good results.

40 ADOPTION REFORMS

The Divisional Director for CYP Specialist Services introduced this item to the Panel. He explained that the background for the report takes into account the current Adoption Reform Agenda proposed by the Government in March 2012 and the Family Justice Review undertaken by the Government and published last year. The review sets out the need to significantly reduce the length of time the Courts take in hearing Care Proceedings, allowing decisions on the permanent placement of young children to be made in less than 26 weeks.

He then informed them of the national and local context.

The National Context; In March 2012 Government findings highlighted that 4,600 young people across the country had the potential to be adopted. These findings also highlighted the under recruitment of Adopters, and an overall pattern which underlined that a small shortfall of adopters in the majority of Local Authorities contributed to the overall significant shortfall in the country as a whole.

Local Context; Bath and North-East Somerset Council have already taken a number of positive steps towards meeting the challenges posed this agenda. We have met with a number of regional Local Authorities to form a regional Adoption consortium called "Adoption West". The authorities comprising "Adoption West" are; Bristol,

South Gloucestershire, Swindon, Wiltshire, Gloucestershire, North Somerset and ourselves. The aim of the Adoption West consortium is to develop a larger, more uniform response to both prospective adopters, to speed-up the process of placing children for adoption and crucially, the matching our cohort of children that for a variety of reasons are “hard to place”.

He added that there are also a number of local events planned which will develop the strategic aims outlined in the report. In September we will be meeting with a number of other Local Authorities to begin planning a regional “Adoption Activity Day” which will involve all prospective adopters in the region being invited to a large event where they can access details and information on children that are awaiting placement and can also talk with foster-carers and Social Workers directly about the children who await placement with adoptive families. This is new approach to matching children and we hope that this contributes to the overall reduction in delay for young people for whom adoption is appropriate.

David Williams asked if there were figures available the number of children eligible for adoption and the number of potential adoptees.

The Divisional Director for CYP Specialist Services replied that the data was currently being analysed and hoped for the figures to be finalised within the next month.

Councillor Liz Hardman asked how many children were adopted in the past year within B&NES.

The Divisional Director for CYP Specialist Services replied that it was 8. The Strategic Director for People and Communities added that the Council had seen no breakdowns in their placements in the last 10 years and said this should be seen as an opportunity for the service to excel.

41 CONNEXIONS BRIEFING

The Strategic Director for People and Communities introduced this report to the Panel. He explained that Connexions was the name for specific services provided by Learning Partnership West (LPW) on behalf of Bath and North East Somerset.

The primary function of LPW is to provide services to young people for four West of England local authorities: Bath and North East Somerset, Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire Councils. In 2008, responsibility for the Connexions Services was transferred from central government to local authorities. This meant that the four West of England local authorities could now commission services directly. In response to this transfer of statutory commissioning powers, LPW converted to a local authority controlled company. The four local authorities became the sole members of LPW and so gained control of the company.

In August 2011, LPW was converted to a Community Interest Company (“CIC”). CICs are companies dedicated to serving their communities, as such; CICs are prevented from using any of their profits or assets to benefit their shareholders / members. LPW operates on a not-for-profit basis and the conversion to CIC status formalised the company’s altruistic business model. The conversion to a CIC did not

affect the existing membership structure and the four local authorities are still the controlling members of LPW.

Bath and North East Somerset receives an annual funding allocation from central government through the Early Intervention Grant Programme to deliver the functions provided by Connexions. In recent years this grant and the Bath and North East Somerset direct funding to Learning Partnership West has been significantly reduced. For 2012/13 the funding to LPW was £884,043. For 2014/15 the budget for Connexions work will be reduced to £400,000.

- LPW have been formally told that their contract will cease from 1/4/14 as the service is to return to within the Local Authority.
- All Connexions staff working in B&NES have been briefed
- Informal consultation paper on restructure of Youth Service and Connexions to create a single integrated service has been drafted and will be issued to affected staff in September 2013.
- Once staff have been transferred to B&NES (1/4/14), formal consultation will begin on the Youth Service / Connexions restructure.
- Work is underway with LPW to transfer data on all 16-19 year olds prior to 1/4/14.

The Chair, on behalf of the Panel wished good luck to all those involved in the project.

42 CABINET MEMBER UPDATE

The Cabinet Member for Early Years, Children & Youth addressed the Panel.

She wished to praise the work that the Connecting Families project had achieved so far.

She said that following a representation from Councillor Michael Evans to the Cabinet in July plans were now being put in place to give awards to pupils who excel in Maths & Science.

She informed them that work in tackling obesity in young people and those who smoke were on-going.

She said she had visited several Children's Centres recently and was looking forward to the Panel's report on this issue in October.

On the matter of the recent proposal for all pupils at infant schools in England to get free school lunches from next September she said that she felt that our schools were in a good position to provide this service.

She said she had visited the Youth Clubs at South Stoke and Batheaston and was pleased to see the varied service that they offer their respective communities.

Councillor Liz Hardman commented that she was pleased the Cabinet Member had been able to attend recent events and said it would be interesting to see the roll out of the infant school meals proposal.

The Chair thanked the Cabinet Member for her update on behalf of the Panel.

43 PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES STRATEGIC DIRECTOR'S BRIEFING

The Strategic Director for People & Communities addressed the Panel. He informed them that as part of the Family Justice Review it had been identified that B&NES has one of the slowest court circuits in England and that a barrister had been assigned to look at case management.

He reported that the Council would be embarking on some joint work with North Somerset Council on Social Care.

He explained that Jim Gould had retired from his post as Chair of the Local Safeguarding Children's Board and that the recruitment process was on-going to find a successor.

He announced that Tony Parker would be leaving the Council on October 31st 2013 and wished to acknowledge the vast amount of work that he undertaken during his time within the authority.

The Chair thanked him for his update on behalf of the Panel.

44 PANEL WORKPLAN

The Chair introduced this item to the Panel. She explained that the Exam Results report due in November would highlight any exceptions to the verbal report given earlier in the meeting.

She also wished to highlight to those present the additional meeting of the Panel on October 14th that would be addressing the Re-structuring of the Early Years, Children's Centre and Early Help (0 - 11 years) Services.

Councillor Liz Hardman asked for the subject of School Meals Services to be placed on the list of future items.

The Strategic Director for People and Communities commented that the infrastructure exists for the provision of additional meals and Primary Schools are committed to the service.

The Panel agreed with the proposal of Councillor Hardman.

The meeting ended at 6.20 pm

Chair(person)

Date Confirmed and Signed

Prepared by Democratic Services