

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

**Minutes of the Meeting held**

Tuesday, 12th January, 2016, 9.30 am

**Bath and North East Somerset Councillors:** Matt Cochrane (Chairman), Lisa Brett (Vice-Chair), Karen Warrington, David Veale (In place of Peter Turner), Sally Davis, Alison Millar and Liz Hardman

**Co-opted Voting Members:** David Williams

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

**Officers :** Ashley Ayre (Strategic Director, People and Communities), Richard Baldwin (Divisional Director, Children & Young People, Specialist Services), Mike Bowden (Director, Children & Young People, Strategy and Commissioning), Charlie Moat (Project Manager for Service Improvement), Kate Murphy (PSHE & Drug Education Coordinator), Judy Allies (Director of Public Health Award Coordinator) and Christopher Wilford (Head of Vulnerable Learners)

**Cabinet Members in attendance:** Councillor Michael Evans, Cabinet Member for Children's Services

**40 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

Councillor Lisa Brett asked Councillor Matt Cochrane to be the Chairman for this meeting. He welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**41 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE**

The Chairman drew attention to the emergency evacuation procedure.

**42 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS**

Councillor Peter Turner had sent his apologies to the Panel, Councillor David Veale was present as his substitute for the duration of the meeting.

Andrew Tarrant had sent his apologies to the Panel.

**43 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Matt Cochrane declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in agenda items 10 & 11 (Special Educational Needs & Disability Reform & SEND Funding) as his wife is a Special Educational Needs Teaching Assistant at Combe Down School.

Councillor Liz Hardman declared an other interest in agenda item 11 (SEND Funding) as she is a governor at The Link (Aspire) School.

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

The Chairman informed the Panel that agenda item 12 (Care Act –Implications for Children) would move to their May meeting.

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

There were none.

**46 MINUTES - 17TH NOVEMBER 2015**

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

**47 CABINET MEMBER UPDATE**

Councillor Michael Evans, Cabinet Member for Children's Services addressed the Panel.

He informed them that the Council has been hit with an unexpected extra cut in government funding in the settlement at the end of December and has to find an extra £3.64m in addition to the anticipated £3.67m in 2016/17 alone. He said that discussions regarding the budget were ongoing and that the Cabinet would announce its recommended budget on February 10<sup>th</sup>. He stated that every effort was being made to protect front-line services, including those within Children's Services.

He explained that following the involvement of the National Union of Teachers, the headteacher of the Academy of Trinity, Pepe Hart resigned at the end of last term. He said that the Department for Education is conducting an investigation into the school's governance and that the Midsomer Norton Schools Partnership had taken over responsibility for the management of the school, with the heads of Clutton and High Littleton stepping into the breach.

He said that this case raises questions about the system's ability to hold Academies to account in good time.

He informed them that the Council has made its recommendations for the sponsors of the new schools scheduled to open in September 2017 at Ensleigh & Somerdale to Sir David Carter, Regional Schools Commissioner for South West England, who will make the final decision.

He said that he had also attended meetings of the Schools Forum, Local Safeguarding Children's Board and the Youth Offending Service.

He wished to thank the Director of Public Health, Bruce Laurence for inviting him to a team meeting and to a further discussion about fitness and obesity in young people.

The Strategic Director for People & Communities commented with regard to the budget that there appears to have been a complete change in funding methodology without consultation.

Councillor Matt Cochrane asked how long the Council had been aware of the situation at the Academy of Trinity.

The Strategic Director for People & Communities reminded the Panel that as with all academies the Council's role is limited and that accountability lies between the Academy Trust and the Secretary of State. He said that the Regional Schools Commission and Ofsted also have roles to play in this process. He added that the Council has an overarching standards role with regard to the safeguarding of pupils and teachers.

He stated that any issues that the Council had been made aware of had been passed to the previous mentioned agencies. He said that he maintains his belief that there is a gap in the law for how a Council can deal with academies and that he had previously contacted the Department for education on the matter in 2013.

He said that the Council had been aware for quite a while that there were problems at the Academy of Trinity and that a governance review will be carried out.

Councillor Liz Hardman said that she did not feel that the Regional Commissioner role was functioning properly.

The Strategic Director for People & Communities replied that the Commissioner has arranged for more Local Boards to meet and that the review was appropriate and that action was taken in good time given the current structure. He added that academies in the main are well run and led.

Councillor Sally Davis commented that locally they had been aware for 2 – 3 years that there were some problems at the school.

The Strategic Director for People & Communities said that the school had seen a 100% turnover of staff each year for the past three years.

The Director for Children & Young People, Strategy & Commissioning added that the service was offering support to the new management team at Trinity and also seeking to support others that had been affected – eg schools nearby receiving a significant number of pupils transferring from Trinity.

The Chairman thanked the Cabinet Member for his update.

## **48 CHILDREN'S SENSE OF SAFETY / SHEU**

The Director of Public Health Award Coordinator and the PSHE & Drug Education Coordinator gave a presentation to the Panel regarding this item. A copy of the presentation will be available on the Panel's Minute Book and online as an appendix to these minutes, a brief summary is set out below.

The Director of Public Health Award Coordinator explained that all schools are invited to take part in the survey and that in 2015 29 Primary Schools and 12 Secondary Schools did. She said that any trend data would only concern those schools that had completed previous surveys in 2011, 2013 and this current one for 2015.

### **Smoking – Year 6 only:**

Have you ever smoked a cigarette?

Never: 98% (2015), 97% (2013), 98% (2011)

### **E-Safety – Year 6 only:**

Have you ever seen images online or videos that were for adults only?

No: 76% (2015), 73% (2013), 65% (2011)

Yes: 24% (2015), 27% (2013), 35% (2011)

### **Bullying:**

Have you ever felt afraid to go to school because of bullying?

No: 70% (2015), 64% (2013), 65% (2011)

Yes: 30% (2015), 36% (2013), 35% (2011)

### **Alcohol (2015) – Year 6 only:**

Have you had a proper alcoholic drink, not just a sip?

No: 90% (Boys), 92% (Girls)

Yes: 10% (Boys), 8% (Girls)

### **Feeling Safe (2015)**

How many feel quite or very safe:

At school: 92% (Boys), 93% (Girls)

Going to and from school: 91% (Boys), 90% (Girls)

Going out during the day: 94% (Boys), 91% (Girls)

Going out after dark: 40% (Boys), 31% (Girls)

Using the internet online: 82% (Boys), 77% (Girls)

### **Self-esteem (2015):**

High self-esteem scores:

Boys: 40% (Year 4), 52% (Year 6)

Girls: 32% (Year 4), 45% (Year 6)

Medium – Low self-esteem scores:

Boys: 16% (Year 4), 13% (Year 6)

Girls: 27% (Year 4), 17% (Year 6)

### **What do Year 8 & 10 Girls worry about?**

Exams and tests (70%)

The way they look (57%)

Family (49%)

### **What do Year 8 & 10 Boys worry about?**

Exams and tests (52%)

Career (45%)

Family (43%)

### **Areas for development – Primary 2015**

Body image

Sun safety

Peer pressure

Information on body changes as they grow up

E-Safety

### **Areas for development – Secondary 2015**

Having lunch

Sun safety

Viewing upsetting images online

Body image

Self-harm (Girls)

Councillor Liz Hardman wished to congratulate the officers present for winning a Stonewall award. She asked if pupils should receive further E-Safety information from their parents.

The PSHE & Drug Education Coordinator replied that they were working with two particular schools, 1 Primary 1 Secondary, to address this issue and were generally asking parents to be more vigilant. She added that officers were very proud that the Council had been awarded first place in the Stonewall index in 2015 for its work around LGBT / Celebrating difference following a submission of evidence (out of 47 Local Authorities who had submitted evidence).

Councillor Matt Cochrane asked if there was a strategy that parents could refer to.

The Divisional Director for Safeguarding & Social Care replied that there was an E-Safety Strategy in place.

The Strategic Director for People & Communities added that schools can gain access to a wide range of materials to help them regarding this issue. He added that work on children being able to view or access 18 certificate games should be highlighted.

Councillor Alison Millar said that she was worried about the figures concerning the self-esteem of girls.

The PSHE & Drug Education Coordinator replied that this was not an easy thing to fix and that a working group had been set up to discuss the matter further. She added that messages from the media need to be tackled.

The Strategic Director for People & Communities added that the Council should be realistic of what it can achieve regarding this matter as a national input is required. He added that schools could do some work on boys perception of girls.

Councillor Liz Hardman asked what schools are doing once they have received the results of the survey.

The Director of Public Health Award Coordinator replied that if schools are working towards their DPH award they will use the survey results to show what work they will undertake and then measure the impact of their actions.

Councillor Alison Millar asked why schools would not take part in the survey.

The Director of Public Health Award Coordinator replied that they may have already taken part in a similar survey or may feel they did not have enough time to take part.

Councillor Lisa Brett commented that she would like to have seen data relating to whether children have been affected by crime and data relating to Looked After Children.

The Director of Public Health Award Coordinator replied that a previous survey had contained questions relating to the perception of crime.

The Director for Children & Young People, Strategy & Commissioning added that the Local Safeguarding Children's Board receives some of this data.

The PSHE & Drug Education Coordinator added that data is available for Children in Care, but said that this is a small sample size.

The Director of Public Health Award Coordinator said that information relating to Young Carers was also available. She added that she would take the matters raised to the steering group.

The Chairman thanked them both for the presentation.

## **49 SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS & DISABILITY REFORM**

The Project Manager for Service Improvement introduced this item to the Panel. He said that the Council had made a good start to their work on the reforms and the transfer of data from statements of SEN to Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plans. He added that parents, carers and practitioners have welcomed the changes as the plans are more person centred.

He explained that significant work is underway through the Employment is Everyone's Business project (supported by National development Team for Inclusion) to improve pathways to employment for young people with SEND.

He added that a pre-apprenticeship scheme for young people with ASD is being piloted by Bath College and the Employment Inclusion Service using one-off funding provided by the DfE through B&NES Council.

Councillor Liz Hardman asked if the rise in numbers were due to awareness of the reforms or the extension of the age range from 0 – 25 years old.

The Project Manager for Service Improvement replied that he felt that the reforms extending eligibility to ages 0-25 is a factor but that there is also an increase in the identification of significant needs in early years.

The Head of Vulnerable Learners added that we are seeking a better understanding of the needs of our young people.

Councillor Liz Hardman asked if there were plans to improve the numbers of survey responses.

The Project Manager for Service Improvement replied that work was underway to improve feedback. He said they would look to use shorter surveys, target surveys to be issued following assessments and the use of online surveys as oppose to paper ones.

The Head of Vulnerable Learners added that they were seeking to gain regular feedback and to enable the public to see their plans online whenever they want.

Councillor Lisa Brett asked if all schools were publishing a Local Offer.

The Project Manager for Service Improvement replied that they all had done so as of last September and that they should be updating them on a regular basis.

Councillor Lisa Brett asked how confident of the changes proposed with regard to cultural shift they were.

The Project Manager for Service Improvement replied that he was confident of being able to make a change, but was aware that it could take some time. He added that the aspirations have been agreed in principle.

Councillor Lisa Brett asked if there were any incentives for employers to appoint young people with SEND.

The Project Manager for Service Improvement replied that Access to Work funding is available. He highlighted Project Search which is being carried out by the RUH and the Council and the increasing Government support apprenticeships.

The Divisional Director for Safeguarding & Social Care added that staff work with colleagues in Economic Development regarding apprenticeships and worklessness and that there is a strategic board in place for SEND.

Councillor Lisa Brett proposed the following recommendations to the Panel.

- i) Support the proposal to further develop the SEND Strategy Group to provide strategic leadership and introduce an Operational Group to replace the virtual leadership group.
- ii) Suggest SEND Strategy Group meetings should be held no less than once every two months during the second year.
- iii) Suggest that it might be advisable if the SEND Strategy Group Chair were from health or social care, rather than education to ensure inclusivity is embedded in the culture from the top.
- iv) Point 4.3, page 38 beside 'what else?' they could add an in depth review by the Children and Young People Policy Development & Scrutiny Panel.
- v) If the Head of Vulnerable Learners is to Chair the Operational Group, then the Vice Chair should be from either health or social care.

The Panel **REOLVED** to approve the recommendations proposed by Councillor Brett and note the progress made to date.

## 50 SEND FUNDING

The Director of Children & Young People, Strategy & Commissioning introduced this item to the Panel. He stated that there are a range of capacity and funding pressures facing schools and local authorities which may result from a combination of demographic and social change (more disabled children with more complex needs surviving for longer; parental expectations for specialist provision) and policy change (SEND Reforms).

He said that these pressures can be broadly broken down into 3 categories:-

- Pressure on Special School places;
- Pressure within mainstream schools and related services funded through the Direct Schools Grant;
- Pressure within local authority funded services.

He said that the Schools Forum had been briefed on the pressures in the schools system and would be considering proposals for additional investment during its January budget-setting meeting.

He added that the government has to some extent recognised the implications for local authorities through a specific one-off grant for SEND reform and through some 'new burdens' grant (only allocated on a one-year basis to date).



Councillor Liz Hardman asked as the Special Schools are all full are there any short term plans and can mainstream schools be enforced to take pupils.

The Director of Children & Young People, Strategy & Commissioning replied that decisions are based on the EHC Plans which will identify the most appropriate school and then travel needs would be assessed.

The Head of Vulnerable Learners added that Special Schools are flexible in terms of finding solutions and that the use of independent schools may be required in some cases. He said that planning for the future is required.

Chris Batten said that he was concerned over the changing landscape of our schools and the pressure that is being put on the curriculum. He asked if mainstream schools were taking their share of pupils with SEND.

The Director of Children & Young People, Strategy & Commissioning replied that there is a range of pressures on schools these days and wondered if the way that they are currently assessed by Ofsted could tend to incentivise them to be less inclusive in their decisions. He added that in the main most schools were inclusive and cooperative.

Councillor Lisa Brett asked how the Council were addressing the £200,000 shortfall in 'new burdens' funding.

The Director of Children & Young People, Strategy & Commissioning replied that this was being considered as part of the budget setting process.

The Panel **RESOLVED** to note the range of pressures and the work underway to address these.

## **51 CARE ACT - IMPLICATIONS FOR CHILDREN**

This report was deferred until the Panel's meeting in May 2016.

## **52 SCHOOL ATTENDANCE / EXCLUSIONS**

The Chairman asked that the Panel note this report and include any questions they may have as part of the next agenda item.

## **53 BEHAVIOUR STRATEGY**

The Director for Children & Young People, Strategy & Commissioning introduced this report to the Panel. He explained that in May 2015, an independent review of behaviour and alternative education provision was commissioned by the local authority. He said that the review acknowledged the good practice for behaviour and alternative education provision that exists within the local authority and schools, and highlights areas where provision can be developed further to strengthen and extend learning for children and young people in schools and other education settings.

He drew the Panel's attention to the eight recommendations within the strategy.

Councillor Liz Hardman asked how well the pupils missing education are monitored.

The Head of Vulnerable Learners replied that attendance is monitored very closely.

Councillor Liz Hardman asked how many days of education are lost following a permanent exclusion and is there a link between children who have been excluded and our current NEET figures.

The Divisional Director for Safeguarding & Social Care replied that there had been a software problem over past year with recording this information. He added that the current figure was at 3.2% and would be able to report on this matter further at a future meeting if required.

The Director for Children & Young People, Strategy & Commissioning added that alternative provision is normally provided within six days.

The Head of Vulnerable Learners added that officers meet every two weeks to discuss pupil cases.

Councillor Lisa Brett asked if foster care placement as oppose to parenting orders had been considered to gain better outcomes for young people.

The Divisional Director for Safeguarding & Social Care replied that debate such as this would be entering into a moral maze. He said that the Council would always seek to work with parents on their skills and attending appropriate courses.

Councillor Alison Millar asked who has the role on this work area within schools.

The Head of Vulnerable Learners replied that it can be a number of people within school that lead on particular areas.

Councillor Alison Millar asked are all schools supported for these roles.

The Director for Children & Young People, Strategy & Commissioning replied that all schools receive our briefings on this issue.

Councillor Lisa Brett asked how the strategy will address the perceived lack of readily accessed information and advice about services that can support children with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties.

The Director for Children & Young People, Strategy & Commissioning replied that it will enable us to flesh out our current recommendations and to promote our early help services.

Councillor Lisa Brett asked how the strategy will promote tools like the Attachment Awareness programme.

The Head of Vulnerable Learners replied that termly meetings of the Behaviour Attendance Panels are held to raise and define local issues and share information.

Councillor Liz Hardman asked if the Panel could receive feedback in 12 months' time on how successful the recommendations have been.

The Panel **RESOLVED** to note the work undertaken to date to prepare and draft a Behaviour Strategy – ‘Promoting Positive Behaviour’.

**54 PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES STRATEGIC DIRECTOR'S BRIEFING**

The People and Communities Strategic Director informed the Panel in regard to incidents at Medway Secure Training Centre in Kent that no G4S staff were employed within facilities within the Council.

He said that no call had been received from Ofsted regarding an inspection of Children’s Services.

**55 PANEL WORKPLAN**

The Panel approved their current workplan as printed.

The meeting ended at 12.10 pm

Chair(person) .....

Date Confirmed and Signed .....

**Prepared by Democratic Services**