

CHILDREN'S HEALTH, SOCIAL CARE AND EDUCATION OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY, 3 FEBRUARY 2016

PRESENT:- Councillors Gemma McCracken (Chair), Maureen Penny, Caryl Sydney-Smith, John Haines, Cathy Martyn, Teresa Page, Eric Shaw, Carol Shelley, Nadine Watts, Steve Weisinger and Julie Wright, Paul Sunners (Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education), Alison Paul (Swindon Association of Special Schools Headteachers), Liz Townend (Bristol Diocese), Steve Henderson (Equalities Advisory Forum), Claire Smith (Participation Manager), Paul Dobson (Project Manager, Swindon Ten to Eighteen Project), Wilf Steenbergen (Members of the Youth Parliament),

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Michael Bray and James Robbins, David Dawson (Catholic Diocese), Kevin McNamara (Great Western Hospital), Dr Wendy Wodhouse (Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust), Jo Garton (Swindon Association of Primary Headteachers), Jo Osario (Healthwatch), Kim West (Governor), Valerie Johnstone (Governor), Ellie James (Members of the Youth Parliament), Jo Garton (Swindon Association of Primary Headteachers).

Also Present: Councillor Fionuala Foley, Cabinet Member for Children's Services.

24. Declarations of Interest

The Chair reminded Members of the need to declare any known interests in any matters to be considered at the meeting.

Councillors Gemma McCracken, Maureen Penny, Julie Wright, Caryl Sidney-Smith, Nadine Watts, Carol Shelley and Mr Paul Sunners declared personal and non-prejudicial interests as they were school governors.

25. Public Question Time

No public questions were asked or submitted for this meeting.

26. Minutes

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held on 2nd December 2015 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

27. Member of Youth Parliament - Report on Achievements and Performance 2014 - 2016

The Chair welcomed Mr Paul Dobson, Project Manager, STEP (Swindon Ten to Eighteen Project), and Mr Wilf Steenbergen, elected Member of the Youth Parliament to the Committee meeting.

Mr Dobson referred to the contents of the report submitted by the Interim Head, Children's Services and Interim Director, Adult Social Care updating the

Committee on work undertaken by the Youth Parliament. He explained that present elected members had come to the end of their two year term of office and elections would be taking place later in the year.

The representatives responded at the meeting to the following issues:

- The success of the anti-bullying campaign and how work undertaken would be cascaded to primary schools.
- How the “Education and Achievement” video clip would be available for schools to use during Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) lessons.
- The work of the Education Strategy Board in improving educational outcomes and standards.
- Importance of student motivation to help them achieve educational outcomes and how this was reflected within the Education Strategy Board work.
- School’s participation in Youth Parliament work.
- Confirmation that the next Youth Parliament election was to be held on 23rd February 2016.

Resolved: (1) That the Committee expresses its continued support for the work of the Youth Parliament

(2) That it be noted that the new Members of Youth Parliament would be announced at a results evening to be held 5.00pm, 23rd February 2016 at the Civic Offices.

(3) That Miss Ellie James, the elected Member of the Youth Parliament and her deputy, Mr Wilf Steenbergen, be thanked for their contributions.

(4) That the report be noted.

28. Children's Safeguarding Update

The Interim Director of Children’s Services and the Interim Director of Children’s Services submitted a joint report providing an update on work being undertaken regarding Child Sexual Exploitation, Female Genital Mutilation, Honour Based Violence, Domestic Abuse and the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub.

Mr Michael Ash, Head of Housing and Community Safety introduced Mrs Fiona Francis, Quality Assurance and Review Service Manager and explained that the report set out progress and challenges for the various areas. Members noted the commissioning of a new Domestic Abuse Strategy and the creation of the Local Safeguarding Children’s Board Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Action plan enabling better targeting of resources. Mr Michael Ash expressed his concerns regarding the increase in domestic abuse due to better recording of incidents and referred to the work being undertaken by the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH). Mrs Fiona Francis referred to the creation of a new Child Sexual Exploitation Team and to the multi-agency guidance and procedures organised by Local Safeguarding Board to raise awareness on Female Genitalia Mutilation.

Following the presentation of their report, Mr Michael Ash and Mrs Fiona Francis, responded to questions and comments on the following:

- Gender breakdown of domestic abuse cases.
- Frequency of the Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC) and on the availability of on-line information.

- Reasons for the reduction of domestic abuse cases reported by schools. Members noted that the recording mechanisms had changed and cases were still being recorded.
- Clarity on whether there were enough safe locations for victims of domestic abuse to meet demand.
- Clarity on provision made for transgender and gay victims of domestic abuse. Members noted that an Outreach Service commissioned from the Refuge Centre provided emotional support for all victims of domestic abuse.
- Ensuring that Health Schools Co-Ordinators and teaching staff were trained to discuss the topics presented in the report during PSHE lessons.
- Ways of engaging young people seeking assistance from the Child and Adolescent MENTAL Health Services.
- The collation of feedback from victims and how this shaped future work.

Resolved – (1) That the Head of Housing and Community Safety be requested to set up a training session for Committee Members regarding the Domestic Abuse Strategy.

(2) That the Interim Director of Children's Services be requested to liaise with Alison Paul (Swindon Association of Special Schools Headteachers) regarding the number of domestic abuse cases reported by schools.

(3) That the Interim Director of Children's Services be requested to circulate the Council's Child Sexual Exploitation Action Plan before the next meeting of this Committee.

(4) That future reports contain a list of acronyms used.

(5) That the report be noted.

29. Restorative Youth Services Work Programme 2015/16

The Interim Director of Children's Services and the Interim Director of Children's Services submitted a joint report on the Restorative Youth Service Work Programme for 2015/16 for information and approval.

Mr Matt Bywater, Service Manager, Restorative Youth Services (RYS), referred to the submission and approval of the Plan by the Youth Justice Board (YJB), the Youth Offending Team Management Board and the Health and Wellbeing Board. He referred to the appendices in the report reflecting the post inspection action plan following a full joint inspection undertaken by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation. Mr Bywater explained that the inspection comprised of a number of stakeholders including the Police, Probation Services, Ofsted, Care Quality Commission, Children Services and Health Services. He commented on the value of using the Red / Amber / Green system to record service performance and target achievement to easily identify issues.

The Committee welcomed the report and Mr Bywater, Mr Michael Ash, Head of Housing and Community Safety and Mrs Karen Reeve, Interim Director of Children's Services responded to questions put by members regarding the following points:

- Clarity on the level of attendance and on the type of activities undertaken by the Youth Offending Team Management Board.
- The level of training undertaken by the Youth Offending Team Management Board.
- Further to 3.7 of the report, how funding had been utilised by the youth counselling service 'On Trak'.

- Confirmation that actions on the plan were not part of a tick box exercise and the “so what” factor had been considered.
- Confirmation that performance reports were presented to the Youth Offending Team Management Board quarterly.
- Challenges faced by Restorative Youth Services.
- Update on the restorative justice practices and protocols.
- Clarity on the definition of “unpaid work”.

Resolved – (1) That the Service Manager, Restorative Youth Services be requested to circulate a sample of the performance report submitted to the Youth Offending Team Management Board before the next meeting of the Committee.

(2) That the Service Manager, Restorative Youth Services be requested to submit an update on the Restorative Youth Service Work Programme for 2015/16 at a future meeting of this Committee.

(3) Further to (2) above, the report to include challenges and achievements of the Restorative Youth Services.

(4) That further to (2) above, the Service Manager, Restorative Youth Services be requested present a DVD relating to restorative justice at a future meeting of this Committee.

(5) That the report be noted.

30. Children's Services Performance Report

The Interim Director of Children’s Services and the Interim Director of Children’s Services submitted a joint report on the outturn performance position for Quarter 2, 2015/16 (July to September 2015) of Children’s Services.

Mrs Sue Wald, Interim Director, Adult Social Care, introduced the report and explained that the first part referred to the challenges faced by the department, including the continued increase in referrals. Mrs Wald commented on service achievements, particularly the continual placement of the majority of children locally, enabling them to maintain contact with their families.

Mrs Sue Wald and Mrs Karen Reeve, Interim Director of Children’s Services responded to the Committee’s questions and comments in respect of the following points:

- Clarification regarding the process of fixed term and permanent exclusions of pupils by academy schools.
- Reasons for the increase in referrals and actions being undertaken to address this.
- Reasons for the increase in early help records and actions being undertaken to address this.
- Actions being undertaken to address the increase in number of young people Not in Education, Employment or training (NEET).
- The time taken to undertake assessments of 15 to 17 year old young people.
- Update on the recruitment of social workers.
- Reason for the increase in fixed term exclusions in primary schools.
- Bed blocking - Confirmation that children were not affected by his process.
- Explanation that the increase in the population of Swindon did not impact on data presented.

Resolved: (1) That, the Committee extends an invitation to representatives

from Academy Headteachers to attend a future meeting of this Committee with an update on work being undertaken to ensure that young people in the borough were provided with the best schooling and education.

(2) That the Interim Director of Children's Services be requested to include information regarding fixed term exclusions in primary schools in a report to be submitted at a future meeting of this Committee.

(3) That the Interim Director of Children's Services be requested to submit an update on work undertaken regarding Female Genital Mutilation at a future meeting of this Committee.

(4) That the Children's Services performance report, be noted.

31. Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Reform Task Group Update

Mr Paul Sunners, the Chair of the SEND Reform Task Group, reported on the progress of the Task Group to date. He referred to the importance of member's attendance and collaboration, and to the discussions held at the meetings. He thanked officers for the work being undertaken. The Chair thanked Mr Sunners and the task group for their work and requested members contacted Paul Sunners if they would like to be part of the Task Group.

Resolved – That progress made by the SEND Task group, be noted.

32. Work Programme 2015/16

The Director of Law and Democratic Services submitted a report concerning a work programme detailing the activities that the Committee would be undertaking during the forthcoming Municipal Year, with the aim of producing evidence based recommendations intended to provide service improvements for Cabinet and external agencies/bodies to consider.

Resolved – (1) That, at a future meeting of this Committee, the Head of Education be requested to submit a report regarding working being undertaken by the Education Strategy Board and how this work impacted on young people in Swindon.

(2) That the Head of Education be requested to submit an education and performance report at a future meeting of this Committee.

(3) That the Interim Director of Children's Services be requested to circulate the Department For Education link regarding Swindon School's Performance.

(4) That the report be noted.