

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY, 21 NOVEMBER 2012

PRESENT:- Councillors David Wood (Chair), Nick Martin (Vice-Chair), Andrew Bennett, Emma Faramarzi, Fay Howard, Cindy Matthews, Maureen Penny, James Robbins and Nadine Watts.

Co-opted Representatives: - Dick Mattick (National Association of Schoolmasters and Union of Women Teachers), Penny Summers (Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education), Andrew Wild (Church of England Diocese) and Melanie Sancto (Swindon Association of Primary School Headteachers).

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors David Renard, Rex Barnett, Colin Lovell, Rochelle Russell, Peter Crockett (Association of Swindon Special School Headteachers), Rachael Matthey (Swindon Association of Secondary Headteacher) and Sam Cantlon (Swindon Youth Forum).

17. Declarations of Interest

The Chair reminded Members of the need to declare any known interests in any matters to be considered at the meeting. No declarations were made.

18. Public Question Time

No public questions were submitted for this meeting.

19. Minutes

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 19th September 2012 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

Matters Arising:

Minute No 12 – Members noted that the information requested in Minute 12 (Cabinet Member Q&A) would be circulated to Members when received.

20. Co-optee Report

The Committee considered a report of the Director Law and Democratic Services regarding the appointment of a new co-optee to the Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the remainder of the Municipal Year 2012/13.

The Committee noted that Sam Cantlon would be stepping down as representative of the Swindon Youth Forum.

Resolved – (1) That the appointment of Andrew Wild as replacement for Malcolm Barton as Church of England Diocese representative to the Committee be confirmed.

(2) That Malcolm Barton be thanked for his work and contributions to the Committee over the past years.

(3) That Sam Cantlon be thanked for his work as the Swindon Youth Forum representative over the past year.

(4) That the Scrutiny Officer liaise with Paul Dobson, Project Manager, STEP on recruiting a new Co-optee from the Youth Forum.

21. Youth Forum Report

The Committee received a report from Claire Smith (Participation Manger) on progress made by the Children in Care Council, Young Carers, Youth Forum, Chatterbox Group and the Youth Parliament.

• Children in Care Council

Lesley Taylor advised that she co-ordinated the Children in Care Council and informed the Committee that the Councils' task was to influence work undertaken to support Children in Care within Swindon. She stated that the views of Children in Care carried influence with the Council. Work undertaken by the Council included training of new foster carers and liaising with other Local Authorities to discuss best practices. The Committee enquired if young people within rural areas found it hard to participate. Lesley Taylor confirmed that provision was made to ensure every opportunity was offered to young people wishing to participate. The Committee noted that whilst this work was not part of the Outreach Programme, there was flexibility to ensure young people benefited from facilities made available through it.

In response to a query regarding the educational achievement of Children in Care, Sara Tough, Head of Children and Families, advised that a report would be presented to the Parenting Advisory Board in December 2012 regarding the positive progress made in GCSE results by Children in Care.

• Young Carers

Two young carers attended to inform members of their caring responsibilities and the impact it had on their lives. They commented on work being undertaken by the Young Carers Forum and explained the process of how a young person would be assessed, helped and then registered as a young carer. They also explained the type of support available. They informed the Committee that they were issued with an ID card that could be shown to teachers as evidence that they did have additional caring responsibilities that could impact on their schoolwork or attendance. The Committee noted that the Young Carers Standards Award was a tool utilised in raising awareness of this issue and the young carers welcomed any support that could be provided by the Committee.

• Swindon Youth Forum

Grishma Ramesh, the elected Member of Youth Parliament and her deputy, Naheda Miah updated the Committee on work undertaken by the Youth Parliament. They confirmed that:

- They worked in partnership with Locality Teams.
- A film had been created to raise awareness regarding mental health issues affecting young people.
- Chatterbox was fully established and was a platform to allow young people an outlet to express their views and needs.
- A film had been produced to raise awareness on what Chatterboxes were doing and how this affected them.
- An inspection of Great Western Hospital, Central Library and the

Oasis had been undertaken by Chatterboxes.

In response to a query, the Committee noted that Swindon Youth Forum was a group of 11 – 19 year olds who regularly met to discuss issues that affected young people across the Borough of Swindon and that their aim was to work with schools and within the localities to change the negative perceptions of young people.

The Committee were advised that work focused on the five priorities that had been developed by the Youth Forum for the Children and Young People's Plan

Resolved: (1) That a report on the educational achievement of Children in Care be presented at the Committee meeting to be held on 16th January 2013.

(2) That Outcomes from the inspection regime carried out by Chatterboxes be circulated to members of this Committee.

(3) That the updated Youth Forum report on the Big Arts Day be circulated to members of the Committee.

(4) That the Head of Children and Families be requested to liaise through the Young Carers Forum to raise awareness in schools of the young carers situation and inform the Committee of any support required.

(5) That, further to (4) above, the Committee's Scrutiny Officer be requested to write to Councillor Renard regarding the Young Carers situation.

(6) That, further to (4) above, the Committee's Scrutiny Officer be requested constitute a task group to investigate the identification of future actions to support the Young Carers Standards Award.

(7) That this Committee continue to support the work of the Young Carers, Youth Forum, Youth Parliament and Chatterbox Group.

22. Work Programme 2012/13.

The Committee received a report detailing its current work programme for the remainder of the Municipal Year 2012/13. The Council's Scrutiny Officer advised that this would be updated to incorporate topics agreed by Members during the course of the year so far.

The Committee Officer updated members of the Committee on progress made at the Task Group and that a report with the findings would be submitted to this Committee in January 2013.

Resolved – That the work programme be noted and further revised to incorporate changes agreed at this meeting.