

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
CHILDREN & LEARNING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
Committee Room 2 - Town Hall
15 July 2014 (7.30 pm – 9.05 pm)**

Present: Councillors Gillian Ford (Chairman), Jason Frost (Vice-Chair), Nic Dodin, Reg Whitney, Philippa Crowder and Carol Smith

Co-opted Members: Phillip Grundy, Jack How, Julie Lamb, Anne Ling and Garry Dennis (Secondary Schools) and Ian Rush (NUT)

Officer Attendance: Kathy Bundred (LBH), Phillipa Brent-Usherwood (LBH) and Lorraine Hunter-Brown (LBH)

Apologies: Councillors Joshua Chapman, John Glanville and Julie Wilkes. Margaret Cameron (NAHT) and Keith Passingford (NASWUT). Mary Pattinson (LBH)

+Councillor Phil Martin was substitute for Councillor John Glanville and +Councillor Roger Westwood was substitute for Councillor Joshua Chapman

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND ANNOUNCEMENT OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

Apologies for absence were received and noted. The Chairman welcomed Councillors Phil Martin and Roger Westwood as substitutes for Councillors John Glanville and Joshua Chapman respectively.

2 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

None declared.

3 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman announced details of the arrangements in case of fire or other events that might require the meeting room or building's evacuation.

4 MINUTES

The Committee considered and agreed the minutes of the meeting held on 4 March 2014 and authorised the Chairman to sign them.

The Committee considered and agreed the minutes of the special meeting held on 24 June 2014 and authorised the Chairman to sign them.

5 CHILDREN AND LEARNING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

The membership of the Committee was noted and the Chairman advised that she would be attending a meeting to discuss future Co-optee membership.

6 WORK PLAN FOR 2014/2015

The Committee discussed the draft work plan for the coming year. It was considered vital that the Committee were kept informed of the legislative changes contained in the Children and Families Bill (SEN) and the item is discussed at a future meeting. The Chairman requested that the Local Authority SEN website link is circulated to all Committee members. Stage 3 Primary/Secondary reviews would require further monitoring by the Committee and it was agreed that this would be an agenda item for the September 2014 meeting.

The Committee agreed that the following items would be included in the work plan for 2014/2015.

- Self-Evaluation Form
- School Performance (To look at a good performing school)
- LSCB Annual Report (Available October 2014)
- School Attendance
- Primary/Secondary Reviews
- Annual Review of Corporate Parenting Panel
- Pupil Premium
- Ofsted Inspection
- Probation and Youth Offending
- Adult Learning/Higher Education
- SEN
- Early Years
- Personal Budgets
- Recruitment and Retention
- Traded Services

It was agreed that the reports pack would be a regular agenda item with 1 side A4 briefings on the following:

- LSCB Minutes
- Corporate Parenting Panel
- Fostering Panel
- Adoption Panel
- MASH
- Children's Health
- Governor's Panel
- Probation & Youth Offending

- Budgets/pressures
- Early Years committees
- Notification of schools in special measures
- NEETS – Training and Employment aspects

The Committee agreed the work plan for 2014/2015 and to alternate agendas of future meetings between Children's Services and Learning and Achievement.

The Chairman confirmed that all Committee members would be forwarded Ofsted school inspection reports for their information.

7 FUTURE SHAPE OF EDUCATION SERVICES

The Committee noted the Cabinet Report from the Council's Continuous Improvement Model on the Future Shape of Education Services. It was agreed to await the new report which would include any legislative and budgetary changes.

8 REVIEW OF CHILDREN'S CENTRES

The Committee reviewed the Cabinet Report from the Council's Continuous Improvement Model on Children's Centres. It was agreed that officers provide the Committee with more specific information on Health Visitors in relation to "Prevention and Intervention" due to the transfer of commissioning Health Visitors and School Nurses to the Local Authority.

9 OFSTED ACTION PLAN

The Committee noted the RAG rated Ofsted Action Plan for Children and Young People's Services tabled at the meeting. The first Ofsted inspection took place in April 2013 although a different Ofsted framework was now in operation, however, the Committee wished to note progress and to ensure Ofsted recommendations had been implemented.

It was noted that there were no Red ratings, however, 53% recommendations remained Amber and 47% were rated Green. Officers advised that the Amber ratings were due to either time target slippage or fluctuating performances. The Committee requested an update on the Amber rated actions and were advised as follows:

Consideration giving to child or young person's ethnicity

Following the inspection finding by Ofsted that there was insufficient analysis of the impact of ethnicity, officers advised that the situation was improving however it was sometimes difficult to obtain all the relevant information particularly when Children's Services were only involved with families for a short time. The Committee were further advised that data

quality was improving and that data quality reports and case audits would in future highlight any omissions.

Ensure the timely completion and review of assessments

The inspectors had found that the time taken to complete assessments remained below that of statistical neighbours. Officers advised that management processes had been tightened up so as to ensure that assessments were completed before transfer or closure. Performance against this indicator was 51% for 2013/14 and had peaked to 82% in May 2014. Management prioritisation would continue to ensure good progress was made to achieve the target of 90% timeliness.

Ensure chronologies are clear, recorded and fit for purpose

Officers advised that this action would be rated green by the end of July.

Common Assessment Framework (CAF)

Inspectors found that the embedding of CAF remained an area for development and that progress had been slow. Officers advised this was a consistency issue and that it had been raised at the Local Children's Safeguarding Board. Havering had replaced CAF with the Early Help Assessment (EHA) and extensive training had also been undertaken with key agencies in the use of the new assessment. An increasing proportion of contacts to children's social care now resulted in the completion of an EHA. The Committee were advised that the action would be rated Green by December 2014.

Performance Management Data Analysis

Ofsted had found that the arrangements to collate and analyse performance management data were not sufficiently robust. The Committee were advised that the framework, performance indicators and other measures had been refined in line with Ofsted requirements and that pod-level performance reporting had commenced. Officers were confident that the action would be rated Green very soon.

Performance Management Framework

Ofsted commented on the absence of a comprehensive management framework that facilitated understanding and robust challenge of the quality of child protection arrangements. Officers advised the Committee that it was not the level of performance but how it was managed and that a new framework had been developed. The new framework would be finalised and that delays due to data quality issues had now been resolved. The target date for Green rated was July 2014.

Workforce Strategy

The workforce strategy was not translated into a coherent action plan in line with the transformation of services. Members were advised that a draft Workforce Development Strategy was in the process of being finalised. There had been a recent Social Worker recruitment campaign where a large number of applications had been received. A new Social Worker Career Progression Scheme would be introduced. Officers advised that the action had been delayed by the need to recruit additional capacity.

Quality of Supervision

The inspection found that the quality of supervision was variable and was not providing consistent evidence of reflective practice. The Committee were advised that this action was dependent on the finalisation of the Workforce Development Strategy and would not therefore be completed yet.

Quality Assurance

Ofsted noted that plans were not consistently coherent and all too often focused on tasks that needed to be completed and services provided rather than what needs to change for the child. The Committee were informed that continued managerial and IRO oversight had been put in place to monitor the quality and progression of plans which focused on outcomes. It was noted that progress had been hampered by staff turnover issues.

Children & Families Views

The inspectors found that feedback from children and families to improve service delivery was not fully embedded. Officers advised that there had been improvements since the inspection at all levels including the introduction of Viewpoint and the involvement of Members in Total Respect training although there was not yet consistent evidence that feedback was informing service delivery. A LAC survey was planned for 2014 together with the recruitment of two participation officers as part of the Early Help structure.

The Chairman suggested that perhaps targeted publicity could increase children and family participation in providing their views.

There followed a discussion about target setting and timescales with particular reference to actions noted as “on-going”. It was agreed to replace the descriptive with a target timetable that the Local Authority was comfortable with.

10 CHILDREN'S IMPROVEMENT BOARD (SINGLE INSPECTION FRAMEWORK)

Officers advised that unfortunately no report was yet available for this agenda item. It was therefore agreed that a briefing note (A4 one side) be presented at the next meeting that would provide a summary of the challenges and successes and that a full report be provided annually.

11 SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT SEF

The Committee agreed to defer this item to the September meeting.

12 EARLY HELP AND TROUBLED FAMILIES

The Committee received a verbal update from the Head of Children's Services who advised that a report had recently been presented to the Local Safeguarding Children's Board. Havering remained the top performing borough in London with 435 families registered on the project. Progress was being made with Troubled Families doing well on employment. A good relationship had been established with the DWPS which had made a difference.

13 ANNUAL REVIEW OF CHILDREN'S CENTRES

It was noted that this item had been discussed under item 8.

14 CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE'S PLAN

Officers advised that the plan was in the process of being presented to the Children's Trust. The Committee were advised that the Trust is a statutory body in partnership with the Local Authority in championing the vision, commitments and principles for children and young people in Havering.

The Chairman requested that officers provide the Committee with a brief report on the plan at a future meeting.

15 SEN TRANSPORT REPORT

It was noted that the SEN Transport report was not available for the meeting.

The member for Special Schools advised the Committee of an email received from a parent who had complained that the regular transport staff had been replaced with temporary staff. The temporary staff were unfamiliar with the routes and that this was causing delays in journey times and that they had no knowledge in how to operate the special equipment, for example, tail lifts etc. The parent also complained that there had been no request for feedback on the quality of the service for some considerable time.

The Chairman requested that the Committee member forward the email to the Clerk for forwarding to the relevant officer.

The Committee agreed that officers present an update at a future meeting on how the service was being monitored which would include a gathering of parent views.

16 FUTURE AGENDAS

The Chairman advised the Committee that the Havering Youth Parliament would present to the Committee at the next meeting. It was therefore agreed that the next Committee meeting on 10 September 2014 would take place in the Council Chamber so as to accommodate all the attendees.

Committee members were reminded that they could forward their suggestions for future agenda items to the Chairman or the Committee Clerk.

17 URGENT BUSINESS

No urgent matters were raised.

Chairman