

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
CHILDREN & LEARNING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE
Committee Room 2 - Town Hall
30 April 2019 (7.00 - 8.50 pm)**

Present: Councillors Judith Holt (Chairman), Gillian Ford (Vice-Chairman), Tony Durdin, Tele Lawal, Sally Miller, Carol Smith and Christine Vickery

Co-opted Members: Julie Lamb and Kathy Freeman

Church Representatives:
Lynne Bennett and Jack How
Non-voting Member: Ian Rusha

The Chairman advised those present of action to be taken in the event of an emergency evacuation of the building becoming necessary

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Michael Deon Burton and Councillor Reg Whitney.

Also present at the meeting were Councillors Damian White and Robert Benham.

The Chairman reminded Members of the action to be taken in an emergency.

33 DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest.

34 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman of the Sub Committee, Councillor Judith Holt made appropriate announcements in respect of evacuation procedures etc.

Cllr Holt detailed her recent visits to three schools in the Borough, namely,

- Olive Alternative Provision Academy
- Hall Mead School and;
- Gaynes School.

In addition, Cllr Holt had visited Children's Social Services Business Support, Anita Stewart the Assistant Head of Havering's Virtual School and Tendai Dooley, head of care resources. These visits had been very informative and more visits are planned in the summer.

Councillor Holt drew attention to various recent key decisions made in Children's Services which can be viewed on the Council's Forward Plan. All published decisions of the Council can be viewed on the Havering Website.

https://www.havering.gov.uk/info/20007/council_and_democracy

35 CHANGE TO MEMBERSHIP

Mrs Kathy Freeman was introduced by the Chair as a new Co-opted Member representing parent Governors of Primary Schools. Mrs Freeman has three children at Nelmes Primary School and has been a Governor there since 2017. The Sub Committee were delighted to welcome Mrs Freeman to the co-opted membership where she will join other Co-opted Members, Lynne Bennett, Jack How and Julie Lamb.

36 MINUTES

A Member of the sub-committee commented that the recommendations made to Cabinet by the Sub-Committee in respect of the Knife Crime and Children item were not incorporated into the minutes. These were that further consideration should be given to the following:

- Dialogue between young people and the police;
- Safe houses;
- Ethnic minorities;
- Children sitting on Boards/Panels, i.e. giving them a voice.

Questions posed by the Sub-Committee at the last meeting had been included in a letter from the Chairman to the Lead Cabinet Member, Cllr Viddy Persaud and a response had been received and circulated to members of the Sub-Committee.

Other than the above, the minutes of the meeting held on 14th February, 2019 were agreed and signed by the Chair as a true and accurate record of the same.

37 REVIEW OF PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Councillor Judith Holt introduced the Review of Performance Indicators to the Sub-Committee for thought and consideration prior to the next meeting in July, 2019.

Performance indicators (PI's) are the standards by which performance of services are measured within the Council. Full lists of these were circulated to Members as part of the agenda pack. These are compared over four quarters of the municipal year to monitor performance standards. Most are

given a “rag rating” on the basis of Green (on track), Amber (at risk) and red (off track).

There are ratings under two headings relevant to the Sub-Committee: Children’s Social Care and Learning and Achievement. At page 13 of the agenda a list was presented of current PI’s currently provided to the Children and Learning Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Committee. The Chairman requested that Members consider these and recommend four indicators from each category to the next meeting.

A Member indicated that the information was comprehensive but the figures of the last full report would be welcome. The full report of all performance indicators goes to Cabinet each quarter. This would be circulated to Members for consideration ahead of the next meeting.

38 **ADMISSIONS AND INCLUSIONS**

Trevor Cook, Assistant Director for Education Services presented the Admissions and Inclusions report to the Sub-Committee. This detailed an update for Members on the progress being made to improve School Admissions and Inclusions arrangements across Havering’s Schools, Academies and Alternative Provisions.

The Admissions and Inclusions Team was restructured in March 2019 and is divided into three areas, Early Years, Admissions and Inclusions.

- **Early Years**

Coordinates the admissions of children ages 0-5 into early year’s provisions and schools/academies across Havering, and provides support for families accessing the early education entitlement and 30 hours.

- **Admissions**

Coordinates the admissions of children ages 5-16 into schools/academies across Havering and provides support for parents during the application process and is responsible for administering and presenting school appeals and school transport for pupils without an Educational, Health and Care Plan.

- **Inclusions**

Coordinates the Inclusions of children aged 5-16 into school/academies and alternative provisions to prevent exclusions where possible and offers alternative pathways to support pupils and set them back on track to achieve the best possible outcome from their education.

Central data bases are used to ensure children are tracked into a school place. Reference to **Cohort** refers to those pupils entering Reception, Junior School or Secondary in September; these applications are part of a co-ordinated admissions round and are administered by the School Admissions & Inclusions Team. Applicant information is co-ordinated amongst all London Admission Authorities prior to the start of September. The law states this is compulsory for all Schools/Academies to participate in.

Outside of Cohort admissions the team also deal with **In-Year** applications. These are usually made by parents who have moved into Havering and require a school place for their child and who wish their child to transfer between schools/academies. The team will discourage unnecessary moves but parents do have the right to apply.

Schools cannot refuse to admit a child on the basis of previous attendance, behaviour or attitude towards learning, amongst other reasons. Any Havering child who is out of school where there are no vacancies at any of the schools / academies applied for, will be offered an alternative place at the school closest to the child's home with a vacancy.

The Local Authority has a statutory duty to provide pupils who have been Permanently Excluded (PEX) an education from day 6 of the PEX. The Team work with schools/academies to avoid PEX where possible and offer other alternative pathways to support pupils and set them back on track to achieve.

In addition, the Local Authority has a Statutory Duty to provide a Fair Access Protocol. This is managed by the Team who will assess the needs of the child in question to ensure the most appropriate available placement is secured as soon as possible. The Team will always seek to find an alternative placement and support to a child who is in danger of PEX and will fairly share the admission of vulnerable students across all schools. Such admissions are allocated openly through a process which has the trust and confidence of all concerned. The progress of children subject to this procedure is monitored and successes are celebrated. There is partnership working with Alternative Provision (AP) providers, most notably the Olive AP Trust.

The Team operates a cross-borough Inclusion Gateway process that has been developed in collaboration with schools to incorporate a multi-disciplinary approach. This provides a single point of contact for all referrals where pupil's needs are assessed to ensure the correct pathway is identified at the point of need.

The Team identifies Elective Home Education (EHE) and monitors EHE children. It supports families by identifying schools and enabling parents to re-engage their children back into the education system if parents wish. Preparations for Positive Pathways for post 16 are supported. There are currently around 200 EHE children in the Borough.

A Teacher is available to provide education to pupils who are in hospital, or who are leaving hospital and are not able to attend mainstream school. This is through the Hospital Education Support Service. This is provided on a part time basis in Queens Hospital on the Tropical Lagoon Ward,

The Admissions & Inclusions Team also operates a traded service where "buy back" from schools/academies contributes towards the Team's

functions and provides alternative provision and services for pupils who are unable to engage or maintain their mainstream education.

There followed a discussion and Members were able to place questions. In response the Sub-Committee elicited the following:

- The admissions process operates through the London Inter Authority Admissions which operates Pan-London. Most schools operate a distance criterion which enables Havering children to attend their nearest school if they wish even if that school is outside the Borough e.g. Barking and Dagenham. The admissions criteria for each school will be applied fairly and impartially in each case. There is no similar coordination with Essex Schools.
- The Team work hard to identify fraudulent applications to ensure the process is lawful and fair. Havering were the first Borough to initiate a prosecution against a parent for a fraudulent application.
- The In-year Fair Access Protocol works to ensure schools with vacancies are protected so they do not become a “sink school” accommodating a disproportionate amount of children with difficult and challenging issues. The Team can require a school to go over the Published Admissions Number (PAN) to ensure a school admits a fair share of vulnerable pupils. Sometimes placements are made deliberately to facilitate a complete fresh start if in the best interests of the child. The needs of the child are always at the forefront of any placement.
- School exclusions, particularly PEX are topical in the media at present. The number is published annually but the data is currently available for 2016-17. SEN pupils are particularly vulnerable. Havering is above average with PEX. In the current academic year there have been 23 PEXs. Schools identified as having a disproportionate number will be held to account and challenged. There has been one School in the Borough that has PEX 5 children/young people. Wherever possible, the Team will work hard to facilitate a managed move. There are groups of schools that have become known for being very inclusive and these are celebrated. There is an Inclusion Quality Mark in operation.
- Recently the Team were placed on notice that a school was finding it hard to meet the needs of a particular child. As a result, a Head Teacher with skills and expertise to help in this was identified to support the school in question. The Team look to Head Teachers to put peer pressure on others to be more inclusive, working hard with children to address challenges and bring out their full potential. There is a full range of support that can be offered including practice classrooms and other interventions that helps to share good practice.
- It is hard to access successes in this area but there is some national research that can be brought to a future meeting for discussion. The Sub-Committee indicated that looking at the most successful and effective processes would be helpful.

- Success rates in Home Schooled children are monitored. Parents that EHE are registered. Olive AP Academy work hard to reintegrate children back into mainstream school but success rates can be varied. Sensitive transitions will be made on a gradual basis making sure the time is right for the child involved and ensuring full support throughout.
- Looked After Children (LAC) are a priority for admissions and the Virtual School assists with these. LAC are included in the Fair Access Protocol as a priority group.
- Alternative Provision providers work in partnership with the Police and Safeguarding Teams. Vulnerable children will not be placed into a more vulnerable position. AP providers are inspected by Ofsted.
- Havering deal with post 16 education. Young people in vulnerable circumstances will be a focus for the safeguarding team and a new partnership process of adolescent safeguarding will be launched in the autumn.
- In the transition between Primary and Secondary Schools it is a challenge to do things well. Sometimes this can be difficult in out of Borough placements for Havering children. The Team are trying to build relationships with neighbouring boroughs. They do have a duty to Havering residents. Geographically things can differ including admission criteria. Standard transition forms are currently being piloted and will be evaluated.

The Children and Learning Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Committee noted the report and agreed to follow up on issues raised in the Work Plan for the next municipal year.

39 ADULT EDUCATION - DEVOLUTION AND OUTCOMES

The Chairman welcomed Darren Purdie, Head of Education Provision and Inclusion to the meeting who presented the report to the Sub-Committee for consideration.

Presently, the London Borough of Havering delivers adult and community learning (ACL) through its Havering Adult College, The College receives a direct grant from the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) that enables the service to deliver a range of courses aimed at learners aged 19+ who can be resident in the Borough, or attend from outside. In the academic year 2017-18, Havering Adult College delivered learning opportunities to 4612 learners. The achievement rate for learners overall was 97.82%, based on the Management Information System data returned to the ESFA for that year. The last three Ofsted inspections have found the provision to be Good, and with some excellent features.

The College offers a broad curriculum covering key areas of learning; specifically, Digital & Computer Skills, Languages (including BSL), Creative & Performing Arts, GCSEs (English, Maths, Science, Psychology), English

for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), Floristry & Horticulture, Personal Wellbeing and Fitness, Counselling, Food & Drink, Teacher Training, History & Modern Culture, and Teaching Assistants. In addition, Family Learning, Employability provision and Skills for Life (functional English and maths), are also offered and are free at point of delivery to support groups and individuals with challenges and needs. The College also has a constantly developing 'Education for Independence' department, providing around the year learning for learners with learning disabilities and difficulties.

For 2018-19, the total Adult Education Budget allocated to Havering Adult College is £1,211,100, which is comprised of:

£612,012 – Adult Skills allocation
£599,088 – Community Learning allocation

In addition, £30,000 is nominally safeguarded as Additional Learner Support funding to provide those on accredited provision with essential support (such as learning support assistants, digital equipment, etc.) to allow them fair access and equality

As of 1st August, 2019, funding will come from the GLA which should make it easier to ensure money goes directly in to Education. The GLA have been very supportive to the College and it is hoped that there will be opportunity to make application for Growth Bids which may allow for expansion and an improved offer. The Mayors strategy focuses on outcomes for Learners. It is anticipated that there will be no negative implications.

A key objective of the Skills for Londoners Strategy is to increase the number and diversity of adult learners in London gaining skills to participate in society, and also progress into further/higher or additional education. City Hall has published eight areas to be reformed under the devolution of the Adult Education Budget in London. They are:

1. Eligibility for full-funding for people in low-paid work
2. Basic English and maths skills
3. English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)
4. Basic digital skills
5. Adult & Community Learning (ACL)
6. Support for disadvantaged learners
7. Support for learners with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)
8. Addressing London's sectoral and occupational skills needs

There followed discussion and Members were able to place questions. The following responses were noted:

- Havering Adult College currently rents all of its office and delivery premises which places an additional demand on the grant that use of

traditional council facilities would help to minimise. In 2017-18, the cost of hiring venues was £61,890.

- Use is made of educational establishments. Historically the College shared premises with secondary schools. Academisation has meant that this provision now needs to be paid for.
- The devolution of funding is not just in London but in other areas.
- Subcontractors are now more localised. Havering, Barking & Dagenham, Redbridge and Newham are treated as a cluster.
- There will be a series of consultations and thus far the GLA have been very receptive to the change, offering support and guidance.
- There is a top slice on the budget of 0.5%. There is a risk that this could increase.
- The College are developing relationships with the business sector and a job broker is present. There is employability provision and a College representative attends at the local Job Centre twice a week.
- In addition there is also a focus on “Leisure and Pleasure” to help encourage a work life balance. There is an holistic approach. Family learning is delivered, often in Children’s Centres.
- Partnerships are being developed and the College is very proud of the Education for independence provision. This is underutilised and work is continuing to expand uptake.
- Work is being undertaken to develop relationships with Schools and other Adult Learning providers and there is an aspiration to fully connect educational provision with the local economy.
- Ofsted recognised that the College needs to be fully utilised and accommodate varied needs including learners with special and complex needs. It is hoped to make full use of funding including Direct Payments to provide support.
- The ethos of lifelong learning is paramount and the College offers a meaningful programme. The College is not a day centre or drop off point but an effective learning environment to deliver learning for life.
- The College would like to look into making provision for ex-offenders
- Men are historically under represented but now the learners are 51% male.
- Engagement with Asylum seekers and ESOL learners has been successful.
- Localised funding is favourable in that it appears that it is bringing locality back to the College. There is a very active lobby group to secure increased funding.
- The majority of the client base favour face to face contact. There is a limited appetite for distance learning though it has not been ruled out.
- There is a broad digital curriculum with the majority of learners attending to gain elementary skills.
- There is a major role for the College in sign posting Learners to appropriate provision ensuring that any needs the College cannot meet are accessed and supported.
- There is a strong emphasis on aligning skill shortages.
- It was noted that this is the beginning of a journey for the College and updates in the future will be welcomed.

The Children and Learning Overview and Scrutiny Committee noted the report.

40 FUTURE AGENDAS

As the municipal year draws to an end, the Sub-Committee decided that discussion regarding the Work Programme would commence at the next meeting with the new membership as appointed at the Council AGM in May.

Chairman