

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
CHILDREN & LEARNING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE
Council Chamber - Town Hall
29 April 2015 (7.30 - 9.20 pm)**

Present: Councillors Jason Frost (Vice-Chair) (in the Chair),
Joshua Chapman, Philippa Crowder, Nic Dodin,
John Glanville, Carol Smith and John Wood.

Co-opted Members: Emma Adams, Julie Lamb and
Lynda Rice.

Non-voting Member: Ian Rusha.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Gillian Ford.

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

78 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Sub-Committee held on 17 March 2015 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

79 ANNUAL REVIEW OF CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL

Consideration of this item was deferred until the next meeting on 1 July 2015.

80 TRADED SERVICES

Officers had submitted a report on the work of Havering Education Services, a unified brand representing the London Borough of Havering's traded services for schools. This was a full cost recovery non-profit making team. The current portfolio comprised 25 individual in-house teams which sat within different directorates. The majority of service providers enjoyed very good customer ratings and repeat purchases and they had a long history of supporting schools to bring about continuous and sustained improvements.

Officers explained that the future plan was to develop models of trading for additional non statutory provisions across the council, including targeting the Early Years and PVI sector comprising of 200+ Early Years settings. There was also additional growth potential to be realised in the academy, free school, independent and sixth form college sectors both in Havering and out-of-borough.

A hidden bonus of the service was that it enabled the Local Authority to maintain a presence, in the form of members of staff in schools.

The Sub-Committee was advised that a Marketing Strategy was being developed.

The Sub-Committee noted the report.

81 **SEND UPDATE INCLUDING PERSONAL BUDGETS**

Officers informed the Sub-Committee that back in 2011 the Government had published a Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Green Paper 'Support and Aspiration'. This Green Paper represented the most radical reform to special educational needs and disability for thirty years. In that autumn the Departments of Health and Education had launched a significant Pathfinder programme to test proposed reforms to the services and systems which underpinned support for children and young people with SEND.

The Green Paper had now become part of the Children and Families Act 2014 which had come into effect, with the support of all parties, in September 2014. A Code of Practice accompanied the legislation and outlined requirements for Local Authorities and CCGs when bringing in the reforms.

Local Authorities were required to publish in one place a clear and easy to understand 'Local Offer' of education, health and social care services to support children and young people with SEND and their families. A test website had been developed in 2013 in close collaboration with parent representatives to ensure that the information was presented in an easy-to-use and appealing format.

A detailed policy had been drafted setting out how requests for inclusion on the Local Offer would be dealt with, as well as identifying where on-going responsibilities (such as responding to feedback) would lie. Havering had made greater progress than other local authorities. The challenge for Havering was tackling the 18-24 year age group.

Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans, would replace Statements of Special Educational Need (SEN) and Learning Difficulty Assessments (LDA). No new SEN or LDA's had been offered since 1 September 2014. The statutory assessment process needed to be co-ordinated across education, health and care. It was vital that the EHC plans reflected the views, interests and aspirations of children, young people and their parents.

Officers had noted an increased demand for EHC plans across all age groups.

The Sub-Committee was assured that parents and young people would still be able to state their preferred school when agreeing an EHC plan.

Officers advised the Sub-Committee that there were approximately 1,400 SEN to be converted to an EHC plan. This would happen over three years with priority being given to those young people at key year stages, i.e. 5, 7, 11 and 16. Work had been progressing well and the authority was more or less on track.

Under the new arrangements parents and young people would be able to request a personal budget when the local authority had agreed a statutory EHC assessment and confirmed that it would prepare an EHC plan. The aim was to enable parents and young people to have more choice and control over the services they need for themselves or their child.

A Personal Budgets policy had been drafted and reviewed during a bespoke support session offered to Havering as part of the Pathfinder Champion programme.

Officers were working closely with colleagues to ensure there would be a smooth transition from EHC plan to Adult Care Plan when a person ceases their education.

The Sub-Committee noted the progress being made to ensure a smooth implementation of the SEND proposals in the Children and Families Act 2014.

The Sub-Committee was advised that Dr Ahmad Ramjhum had been asked to undertake a review of the council's Home to School/College Transport. The report set out the process to be used for the review and indicated that the review would commence this term.

The Sub-Committee expressed some concerns. The previous review had caused many parents angst. The review would also look at how personal budget might offer parents a better solution.

For some time the Sub-Committee had been seeking information on how the current provision was working. Specific issues raised were the length of time young people were required to travel and how often they were late to school because of problems. The Sub-Committee **agreed** that the Director of Asset Management Services be requested to attend the next meeting and answer all questions.

Officers explained they were unable to give any firm commitments as to the outcome of the review. The service was under pressure through increased demand and facing a budget overspend, however, the authority did have a statutory duty to provide transport for those eligible.

The Sub-Committee stated that the council should not underestimate the importance of smooth transport arrangements for those with difficulties. This

was a significant issue for children. Officers assured the Sub-Committee that any final Cabinet Report on the review would be supported by an Equality Impact Assessment.

Officers would ensure the Sub-Committee would receive updates on progress with the review.

The Sub-Committee noted the report.

82 **PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

The Sub-Committee received a full list of the current performance indicators for Children and Learning, and were invited to review the list and suggest any new indicators which they felt would add value.

The Sub-Committee had several suggestions. Unfortunately the majority were indicators which the authority was unable to capture.

The Sub-Committee asked officers to explore the possibility of including a Performance Indicator to capture the number of children using school transport who were late for school. Officers were also asked to write to the Secondary Academies to see if they were prepared to share with the authority the number of pupils progressing to higher education.

Chairman