

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CHILDREN & LEARNING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE

**Committee Room 1, Town Hall
9 September 2015 (7.00 - 8.40 pm)**

Councillors Present: Gillian Ford (Chairman), Philippa Crowder, Nic Dodin, Jason Frost, John Glanville, Carol Smith, Joshua Chapman, Keith Roberts and John Wood

Co-opted Members: Jack How (Roman Catholic Church)
Lynda Rice (Secondary Schools)

Non-voting Members: Ian Rusha (NUT)

Apologies Received: Councillor Jason Frost, Emma Adams (Primary Schools), Keith Passingham (NASUWT) and Healthwatch Havering

The Chairman announced details of the arrangements in case of fire or other events that might require the meeting room or building's evacuation. The Chairman also reminded all attendees to put their mobile phones and all portable devices to 'silent'.

91. DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY INTERESTS

There were no disclosures of pecuniary interests.

92. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Sub-Committee held on 1 July 2015 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

93. MATTERS ARISING

Mark Butler had provided an update regarding the 2 outstanding issues:

- The vehicle with faulty air conditioning had been repaired the following day.
- Asset Management are not party to data on missed registrations. Have asked our software supplier to generate a standard report on number of routes where the bus arrives late at the final (school) destination. Just to briefly outline, one potential complication on this arises where we have several routes running to the same school

(e.g. Ravensbourne) whilst the final bus has arrived on time at its destination, the children may not exit the bus immediately due to arrangements with the school for disembarking children and the time taken to clear the buses ahead. We have accordingly asked the report to adopt the time that the bus arrives at the school rather than the time the children are finally disembarked.

The work plan of future agenda items will be circulated to members.

There were no other matter arising.

94. UPDATED STAFF STRUCTURE CHART

Final stages of updating will be circulated to Sub-Committee shortly.

95. CHILDREN, ADULTS & HOUSING: LEARNING & ACHIEVEMENT

The Committee discussed the Annual Complaints Report 2014/15 as concerns were raised about the inability of the software to record outcomes. The Committee agreed that outcomes need to be included and recorded as there is a cost implication which needs to be addressed. Although it appears that the number of complaints has increased, once an explained has been provided the complaint was easily resolved. The Sub-Committee was informed that the response timeframes have increased from ten to fifteen days.

ACTION: Recording of outcomes to be referred to Adjudications Review.

96. CHILDREN, ADULTS & HOUSING: CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES

The Sub-Committee discussed the Annual Complaints Report 2014/15 and agreed that benchmarking on feeding back on communication or the lack of communication would be useful and requested an update (Item 3.2/page 5 of the report). The Sub-Committee also discussed the need to encourage staff and officers to report compliments as these need to be recorded centrally as they can often increase confidence in the service.

The Sub-Committee was informed that the new Special Guardianship leaflet was now available, which explained the 2 year agreement with a family member, assessment requirements and the financial package.

Section 20 - this can often be a complex process as the legislation can be distressing for parents. The best way forward would be to provide links and explanations when/where ever possible. Officers will look at individual cases and add to the audit plan.

Section 47 – a leaflet explaining the process is currently being updated and will be available shortly.

Social Workers – a number of concerns around using agency Social Workers. Suggestions were discussed as the need to target, retain and train good Social Workers is paramount.

ACTIONS: Section 20, Section 47 and Special Guardianship leaflets to be circulated. Update on outcomes and retaining Social Workers to be provided.

97. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

MP informed the Committee that Abbs Cross Academy had gone into special measure last summer due to safeguarding issues. The Chair of the Governors met with LA officers in July to discuss safeguarding and the OFSTED report which confirmed that no child/children were at risk. Further meetings have since taken place between the Chair of Governors, the new Head Teacher and senior officers to resolve any outstanding issues.

Senior officers will have discussions with other Academies in the future regarding any safeguarding concerns before they become an issue. The Committee was informed that the LA can ask to visit Academies, but the Academies can decline these requests, only the Regional School Commissioner can visit Academies at will, but this role covers a large geographical area, potentially restricting the RS Commissioner's relationship with each Academy.

ACTION: MP to provide the revised Whistle Blowing Policy which will be an agenda item at the next meeting.

98. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

8 October 2015 – joint meeting with Health OSSC
14 January 2016
15 March 2015
27 April 2016

Chairman

Date