

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE  
CHILDREN & LEARNING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE  
Town Hall  
27 February 2018 (7.00 - 9.15 pm)**

**Present:** Councillors Gillian Ford (Chairman), John Glanville, Viddy Persaud, Carol Smith, Jody Ganly and Ray Morgon

Co-opted Members:

Church Representatives:

Lynne Bennett

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 Philippa Crowder, co-opted member and

**53 DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS**

There was no disclosure of interest.

**54 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 28 November 2017 were agreed as correct records and signed by the Chairman.

**55 THE OLIVE AP ACADEMY**

The Sub-Committee received a presentation from Chief Executive and Chief Operating Officer for Olive Academies.

Members were informed that Olive Academies was a multi-academy trust, approved by the Department for Education, it was one of the first academy sponsors specialising in alternative provision in England.

The Olive Alternative Provision (AP) Academy Havering provides full-time provision for 64 Key Stage 3 and 4 pupils, many of whom have been permanently excluded from mainstream school in Havering. It was stated that the academy conversion had also provided a unique opportunity to

shape the new provision in line with current education thinking so that Havering schools received the support they required.

The Sub-Committee noted that Olive AP Academy had formed a partnership with the council which would be pivotal to the success of the project.

The principles of Olive AP Academy - Havering vision was driven by a fundamental belief that young people with Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) should succeed in line with their peers.

The key aim for KS4 was to prepare students to be successful in the 21st century world. It was the ambition of the Academy that a student should not need to be permanently excluded to be in receipt of a curriculum offer appropriate to meet their needs. The aim was to agree a pathway with the student, their family and their home school.

It was stated that at Key Stage 3, the aim was to work with students in preventative and proactive ways, which maintain them in their home school as it was an objective of the Academy to also work with mainstream schools to prevent permanent exclusions.

The Sub-Committee was informed that the Trust was working to improve the quality of provision for all pupils. This was being achieved through the high expectations of the all staff at the academy to provide the very best learning opportunities at all times. The Sub-Committee also noted that safeguarding of pupils was high on the Trust's priority. Since its opening in September 2016, the Academy had been audited on five occasions by the local authority, trust safeguarding lead and trust board safeguarding lead to ensure that all areas of the academy's practice met the high expectation of the Trust.

The analysis of 2017 performance indicated that the Academy was starting to address the historical underperformance of Manor Green College. On performance against national benchmarks, the Sub-Committee was informed that students at Olive AP Academy Havering were performing significantly better than AP Centres in the local area and nationwide. The progress of the students was noted as significantly higher and attainment was also very significantly higher.

The Sub-Committee was informed that as part of the governance at the Academy, the Trust promotes a link between its academies and the local mainstream schools and was committed to securing their representation on each advisory board. In Havering a monitoring group that comprised an independent Chair, three Havering schools representatives from (Drapers Academy, Abbs Cross Academy and the Albany School) supports the work of the academy on a half-termly basis.

The Academy Trust monitors the work of each of its academies through its two subcommittees ('Education Performance and Standards' and 'Finance and Audit') who meet quarterly to review progress.

The Trust was working to develop strong partnerships with each of the three local authorities it works with as the work of the Academy was commissioned through a service level agreement and was monitored through two annual reviews, which were carried out by a current school inspector. A representative of the local authority had been invited to join these reviews. The next review of the Havering Academy with was scheduled for 12 and 13 March 2018.

The Sub-Committee was informed that the Trust was grateful for the support of the Council in funding the new building project to improve the quality of the site. It was indicated that improving the quality of the building represented an opportunity to embed our ambitious vision for the academy.

The Sub-Committee thanked the Chief Executive and Chief Operating Officer for Olive Academies for making the time to attend and update Members on the progress at the Academy.

The Sub-Committee noted the report.

## **56 IN YEAR ACCESS PROTOCOL**

The Assistant Director for Education Services briefed the Sub-Committee on the Fair Access Protocol.

It was stated that the School Admissions Code requires each local authority to have in place a Fair Access Protocol which all local schools/academies must adhere to.

The Sub-Committee noted that section 3.11 of the School Admission Code stated “All admission authorities must participate in the Fair Access Protocol in order to ensure that unplaced children were allocated a school place quickly. There was no duty for local authorities or admission authorities to comply with parental preference when allocating places through the Fair Access Protocol”.

The Sub-Committee was informed that the IYFAP protocol reflected the Local Authorities responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people as well as attempting to ensure an educational attainment and achievement. All Havering Head teachers and governing bodies have agreed to the aims, principals and procedures of the IYFAP.

The report informed Members that part of the aims of the In Year Fair Access Protocol included:

- Acknowledging the real needs of vulnerable young people who were not on the roll of a school and to ensure that an appropriate placement was identified and pupils/young people are on roll within 10 school days of the panel;

- Seeking to find an alternative placement or support for those on roll of a school where it could be demonstrated that they were at risk of permanent exclusion;
- Recording the progress and successes of the young people placed through the Panel.

It was mentioned that the Pre Panel met on a monthly basis to discuss each of the pupils in detail taking into consideration the number of vacancies at each school/academy in each year group and the total number of pupils/young people that have been admitted to each school/academy in each year group through the IYFAP process in the last academic year.

The Pre-panel also takes into account the School Admissions Code, the number of pupils/young people admitted through the IYFAP process in the current academic year, the number of pupils/young people admitted through the SEND process in the current year and the needs of the pupil/young person, where the information was known.

The Sub-Committee noted that a pupil/young person would not be referred to a school/academy that was placed in an Ofsted Category, unless under exceptional circumstances.

The report indicated that the number of referrals had risen steadily since the introduction of IYFAP in 2014:

2014/2015	287
2015/2016	351
2016/2017	401
2017/2018	294 (to January 2018)

The Sub-Committee was informed that Social Inclusion Funding was in place in order that schools and academies could apply for “top up” funding towards the costs of approved learning support/pastoral support, and/or alternative provision, for students who were at risk of permanent exclusion.

The Sub-Committee noted that the service would continue to monitor the admissions arrangements of all schools on a regular basis. The monitoring would include evaluation of referral data and a greater use of the powers available to the authority where schools were a cause for concern.

The Sub-Committee noted the report.

## **57 PERFORMANCE UPDATE REPORT - QUARTER THREE**

The Sub-Committee received the quarter three performance report. The presentation detailed that fifteen of the seventeen corporate performance indicators that fell under the remit of the sub-committee.

The Sub-Committee was informed that the three indicators that were reported to the Overview & Scrutiny Board were rated at red:

- Total number of in-house foster carers
- Percentage of looked after children placed in in-house foster care
- Percentage of young people leaving care who are in education, employment or training at ages 18-21

The Sub-Committee noted the following highlights

- That 24 children had ceased to be looked after due to the granting of an adoption order or Special Guardianship Order. It was noted that it gave a year to date outturn of 26.7%, an improvement on 2016/17 outturn of 14.7% and also above the target for 2017/18. The numbers of family and friends placements have also increased from 24 to 31 since April 2017.
- The percentage of looked after children who leave care at 18 and “Stay Put” with their foster carers had improved and was above target.
- The percentage of Looked After Children (LAC) placed in Havering Foster Care had reached the highest for the year and was above target at the end of Q3. The In-Care strand of the Face-to-Face Pathways Programme was focusing on enhancing the in-house resources to ensure that in-house options were available for all LAC, whatever their needs are.
- There was a steady reduction in the proportion of children becoming the subject of a Child Protection Plan for a second or subsequent time within 2 years
- The proportion of families showing continued overall progress after their initial assessment was significantly better than the target set for the year.

The Sub-Committee noted that the following areas that required improvements:

- As at the end of December, there were 80/139 (57.6%) of care leavers aged 18-21 years old in education, employment or training. Whilst the figure was lower than the set target, Havering was surpassing the national average and many other London boroughs. The Council had been awarded funding from the DWP to set up a Work Club at The Cocoon. An application had also been made to the DWP Community Budget to enable the service to deliver a programme aimed at supporting young people to attain employment or embark on further education.
- It was stated that even though a positive increase in the number of new foster carers and the percentage of LAC placed with in-house carers, the total number of in-house carers in the service cohort had not changed significantly.
- The proportion of Care Proceedings completed in under 26 weeks remains significantly below target, it was noted that

Havering had four long-running case which have gone beyond 50 weeks. These cases would significantly skew the council's average case duration for the whole year 2017-2018. The Sub-Committee was assured that cases were been tracked from the pre-proceeding stage where a child was assessed as being at risk of significant harm. It was also stated that updated legal planning and pre-proceedings review procedures would be circulated to all social care staff.

- The proportion of children attending Good or Outstanding schools was currently slightly below target, but figures were expected to improve over the coming months once school resumed and inspection of more schools were undertaken.

The Sub-Committee noted the contents of the report and presentation.

## **58 REGIONALISATION OF ADOPTION SERVICES IN LONDON & THE ADOPTION SUPPORT FUND**

The Sub-Committee received a report that outlined Havering's involvement in the regionalisation of adoption services in London and an overview of the Adoption Support Fund that was available for all local authorities with adoption support services.

The report outlined that the number of children adopted have fallen in London, and economies of scale were needed, as well as an improvement in the consistency of adoption support services across London. Adoption performance across London was variable and adoption costs could vary from £34,000 to as much as £75,000 per adoption.

Havering was part of the East London Regional Adoption Agency (RAA) which includes Barking and Dagenham; Newham; Waltham Forest and Tower Hamlets. As a local authority, Havering had expressed an intention to host the East London RAA.

The Sub-Committee noted that the Government had set the deadline for local authorities joining a RAA by 2020. In principle Havering had agreed to lead the East London RAA. The decision to take the lead would enable the services explore the business case and allow timely request for the final decision to proceed to be made without compromising Havering's ability to discharge statutory duties in relation to adoption and deliver better outcomes for children.

The Sub-Committee noted the following benefits of moving to the RAA

- Speed up matching
- Improve adopter recruitment and adoption support
- Access to more potential adopters

- Reduce costs / increase efficiencies around savings
- Improve the life chances of vulnerable children.
- Reduce risk of post code lottery
- Offer more resilience to service from the scale or volume

The Head of service outlined the following local improvements to the service

- Havering can improve performance and practice inconsistencies
  - Improve the strategic management of the service
  - Improve the strategic development of adoption services
  - Create a powerful regional voice for adoption
  - Ensure a culture of excellence in adoption practice

Havering would be working in cooperation with other local authorities within the East London region. It was stated that part of the benefit would include less competition and more collaboration, which would provide greater scope for financial efficiencies and significantly improve outcomes for children and young people.

The Sub-Committee was informed that within the court proceedings, a RAA should be in a position to promote a more coherent and joined up working with the court services.

The Sub-Committee **noted** that in principle that Havering would participate in and lead the East London RAA.

That a further report would be produced outlining progress, risk and seek formal permission for Havering to lead and participate in the East London RAA.

## 59 **HAVERING LOCAL SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD- ANNUAL REPORT 2016-17**

The Chairman of the Havering Safeguard Children Board presented the 2016/17 annual report of the board to the Sub-Committee.

The Sub-Committee noted that the purpose of the report was to fulfil the statutory requirement which stated that all Local Safeguarding Children Boards must publish an annual report on the effectiveness of safeguarding in their local area.

The report provided an overview of the Ofsted Inspection in October 2016. It provided the board with an external review of the effectiveness of Children Social Care and the HSCB. The Sub-Committee noted that whilst the Ofsted recommendation was 'requires improvement' for both Children Social Care

and the HSCB, the report fully acknowledged that Children Social Care had made and were making exciting changes in approach and structure 'Face to Face' that would help to support children and families in Havering. The approach had been fully supported by the board.

The report detailed an overview of the 2016-17 safeguarding strategic aims and a summary of the HSCB board sub group working and governance 2016-17.

The Chairman of the Havering Safeguard Children Board outlined that the past year had seen a major change in the structure of the Metropolitan Police. Havering had been one of the pathfinder areas and the board had involved in consultation around the structure, focusing on the need to ensure safeguarding structures such as the CAIT remain strong.

The Sub-Committee was informed that the coming year would see some continued challenges with the impact of budgetary restraints which must be a focus of the board during the next financial year.

The Children Social Care Act which came into force in 2017. The Act had major implications for agencies and specifically Children's Social Care. A new 'Working Together Guidance' would be introduced to support the new act and would continue to work with the Chief Executives and officers of the three statutory agencies, to ensure that Havering was in the best position to implement the new legislation.

The Sub-Committee thanked the Chairman of the board for attending and noted the annual report.

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**Chairman**