



CHILDREN & LEARNING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AGENDA

7.30 pm

Tuesday
7 June 2011

Committee Room 3A -
Town Hall

Members 14: Quorum 6

COUNCILLORS:

Sandra Binion (Chairman)
Gillian Ford (Vice-Chair)
(To be Confirmed)

Nic Dodin
Pat Murray
(To be Confirmed)

(To be Confirmed)
(To be Confirmed)
(To be Confirmed)

CO-OPTED MEMBERS:

**Statutory Members
representing the Churches**

Phillip Grundy, Church of
England
Jack How, Roman Catholic
Church

**Statutory Members
representing parent
governors**

Julie Lamb, Special Schools
Anne Ling, Primary Schools
Garry Dennis, Secondary
Schools

Non-voting members representing local teacher unions and professional associations:
Margaret Cameron (NAHT), Sue Kortlandt (NUT) and Keith Passingham (NASUWT)

For information about the meeting please contact:

**Sean Cable 01708 432436
sean.cable@haverling.gov.uk**

What is Overview & Scrutiny?

Each local authority is required by law to establish an overview and scrutiny function to support and scrutinise the Council's executive arrangements. Each overview and scrutiny committee has its own remit as set out in the terms of reference but they each meet to consider issues of local importance.

They have a number of key roles:

1. Providing a critical friend challenge to policy and decision makers.
2. Driving improvement in public services.
3. Holding key local partners to account.
4. Enabling the voice and concerns of the public.

The committees consider issues by receiving information from, and questioning, Cabinet Members, officers and external partners to develop an understanding of proposals, policy and practices. They can then develop recommendations that they believe will improve performance, or as a response to public consultations.

Committees will often establish Topic Groups to examine specific areas in much greater detail. These groups consist of a number of Members and the review period can last for anything from a few weeks to a year or more to allow the Members to comprehensively examine an issue through interviewing expert witnesses, conducting research and site visits. Once the topic group has finished its work it will send a report to the Committee that created it and it will often suggest recommendations to the executive.

Terms of Reference

The areas scrutinised by the Committee are:

- School Improvement (BSF)
- Pupil and Student Services (including the Youth Service)
- Children's Social Services
- Safeguarding
- Adult Education
- 14-19 Diploma
- Scrutiny of relevant aspects of the LAA
- Councillor Calls for Action
- Social Inclusion

AGENDA ITEMS

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND ANNOUNCEMENT OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

(if any) – receive.

2 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Members are invited to declare any interests in any of the items on the agenda at this point of the meeting. Members may still declare an interest in an item at any time prior to the consideration of the matter.

3 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

4 MINUTES (Pages 1 - 12)

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meetings of the Committee hold on 16 February 2011 and 14 March 2011 (Special) and authorise the Chairman to sign them.

5 CHILDREN'S CENTRES (Pages 13 - 18)

6 SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (Pages 19 - 32)

7 ANNUAL REPORT 2010/11 (Pages 33 - 42)

8 CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL ANNUAL REPORT 2010/11 (Pages 43 - 46)

9 FUTURE AGENDAS

Committee Members are invited to indicate to the Chairman, items within this Committee's terms of reference they would like to see discussed at a future meeting. Note: it is not considered appropriate for issues relating to individuals to be discussed under this provision.

10 URGENT BUSINESS

To consider any other item in respect of which the Chairman is of the opinion, by reason of special circumstances which shall be specified in the Minutes, that the item should be considered at the meeting as a matter of urgency.

**Ian Buckmaster
Committee Administration &
Member Support Manager**

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**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CHILDREN AND LEARNING
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
Wednesday 16 February 2011 (7.30pm – 9.30pm)
Havering Town Hall, Romford**

Present: Councillors Sandra Binion (Chairman), Dennis Bull, Wendy Brice Thompson (substitute for Billy Taylor) Gillian Ford (Vice-Chairman), Robby Misir, Pat Murray, Garry Pain, Frederick Thompson and John Wood.

Co-opted Members: Phillip Grundy, Jack How and Anne Ling.

Non-voting Member: Margaret Cameron and Sue Kortlandt.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Billy Taylor, co-opted member Julie Lamb and non-voting member Keith Passingham.

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

20. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 November 2010 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman. The Minutes of the special joint OSC held on 20 January 2011 were agreed as a correct record subject to the following amendments:

- That co-opted member Anne Ling be included in the list of those present.
- That on the second line of the second paragraph on page 3M, under Section 6 “Other key matters”, the words “Adult Social Care” be altered to “Children’s Social Care”.

21. EDUCATION COMPLAINTS

The Committee considered a report providing information regarding the numbers and types of complaints handled by the Learning and Achievement Department and Schools for the Future during 2010 and how they were dealt with to minimise the impact of justifiable concerns and to reduce the likelihood of future complaints.

Members noted that the information gathered was a non-statutory requirement and that the complaints listed were pre-stage 1 complaints.

The report excluded data on school admission and exclusion appeals as well as maintained schools. Maintained schools sat outside of the Corporate Complaints mechanism, owing to the status of governing bodies, however the LA did have a role in influencing and persuading schools as well as having a conciliatory function where necessary. Governing bodies had their own complaints mechanism and where these escalated then resolution came from the Secretary of State.

The key issues arising from 2010 were as follows:

- All corporate complaints are captured on the Customer Relations Management System (CRM)
- Matters raised through councillor or MP routes were now being monitored through new processes
- The Pre-Stage 1 was a process used within Children & Young People's Services and Adults Social Care who have been using a Pre Stage 1 enquiries system since 2005 and continues to be very successful. The process was being used to capture education enquiries.
- 1 complaint had been submitted to the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) and this was an on-going investigation.
- The majority of complaints related to the quality of service.
- A number of future actions had been identified as a result of producing the report.

The Committee noted that the Council currently had a corporate complaints model that captured non-social care complaints, principally education, Children's services activity. Attached to that are separate regulated processes, for the Children's Social Care and Adult Social Care (including health aspects) Service. These complaints systems are statutory and have separate defined and differing regulated processes. A review was currently assessing how the current arrangements could be more effectively structured and managed for the future within the Social Care and Learning Directorate. There was an intention to explore the possibility of a more comprehensive single reporting process for the directorate.

The Committee noted and welcomed the intention to in future receive a joint-complaint report from both education and social care.

Members noted the number of enquiries received from MPs and councillors and officers explained that a large proportion of these related to letters responding to refused school places. Often parents would go to elected members seeking support for their application/appeal for a school place. Members wished to see a briefing take place for all members on the school admissions process to assist them in supporting constituents.

In response to questions officers explained that vexatious or repeated complaints were dealt with through Legal Services, whereby the complainant in question would be written to and the issue would be dealt with centrally.

The Committee congratulated the service on the relatively low number of complaints, but sought to see the figures broken down by locality.

The Committee **noted** the report.

22. CHILDCARE SUFFICIENCY ASSESSMENT

The Committee received a report, presented by the Service Manager of the Foundation Years & Independent Advice Service, regarding the borough's second Childcare Sufficiency Assessment, which is required to be completed and published by April 2011.

The Committee noted that under Section 6 (1) of the Childcare Act 2006, local authorities have a duty to ensure that there is sufficient childcare in their areas. The findings from the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (CSA) will enable the Local Authority to draw up an Action Plan aiming to narrow the gaps in childcare provision as highlighted. The LA, in line with good practice has produced annual reviews of its first CSA and made these available to the public to clearly show that priorities are being met. Havering's reviews were published in April 2009 and in April 2010.

The Committee was informed that the CSA was a statutory duty which analyses childcare needs for children and young people aged up to 14 years old or 18 years old if the child is disabled. The report sought to clarify:

- how many childcare places are available;
- how many childcare places are needed for the future;
- where in the borough childcare places are needed, and;
- the potential backgrounds of children in the borough and their specific needs.

The key findings from the report were summarised as follows:

- Havering's Childcare Sufficiency Review 2011 reports that on the whole the LA is maintaining its commitment to high quality services and its local vision of "Havering: a place where every child and young person matters".
- The quality of childcare provision available in the Borough continues to be higher than the national average in relation to Ofsted inspection outcomes. An increasing number, of

providers have successfully achieved Basic Skills Quality Assurance status. This allowed for childminders to offer Early Education Entitlement (EEE) creating additional flexibility for families accessing childcare.

- The LA is meeting its sufficiency duty as; the availability of childcare on a Borough wide basis continues to outstrip the number of 3 and 4 year olds in Havering.
- In terms of inclusive access to childcare, the LA has made available a variety of funding opportunities to provisions to ensure that children can access suitable childcare. By April 2011 the LA will have supported a number of settings to become Disability Access Champions and will have completed works to ensure these settings are able to be accessed by disabled children and their parents/carers.
- The re-accredited Family Information Service provides an impartial and consistent quality service to local families and childcare providers and promotes and reports an increase in the take-up local families accessing Working Tax Credit to help with their childcare needs.

The Committee discussed some of the issues arising from the CSA, noting that there was an identified 8% gap in the provision, with gaps in specific localities such as Cranham, Hylands and Mawney. Members noted that the biggest issue for provision was the rise in birth-rates, there had been a 6.8% increase in 0-5 cohort since 2006.

Members discussed the importance of reaching hard to reach groups; Members felt that Children's Centres offered the ideal solution to fill the gap in provision, especially in key areas such as Upminster and Cranham, where the service operation had been reduced to just 1 day per week.

The Committee requested a report on Children's Centres and their future in the borough.

The Committee **noted** the CSA.

23. LEARNING VILLAGE TOPIC GROUP FINAL REPORT

The Committee received the final report of the Learning Village Topic Group, which had been formed by the Committee's predecessor, the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee, in 2008.

The Topic Group had been formed to examine the process by which the then Kingswood School in Harold Hill was to become an Academy, sponsored by the Drapers Company and Queen Mary's University.

The Group sought to undertake the following:

- To review and monitor the progress of the Drapers Academy building project;
- To scrutinise and analyse the educational vision of the Academy, and;
- To scrutinise the process of securing future prospects for Kingswood staff.

The group's report summarised its work and site visits and listed the recommendations, for the consideration of the Drapers Academy Governing Body.

Members thanked officers involved for their work and members asked what prospect there was for the learning village concept. Officers explained that no funding for the other projects was to commence.

Members noted that a visit was to be arranged for the entire Committee to visit the Academy both before and after the building work had taken place.

The Committee **agreed** the recommendations in the report.

24. FUTURE AGENDAS

The Committee **agreed** to move its next meeting from 5 April 2011 to 10 May 2011.

The Committee requested the following for its future agendas:

- Special Educational Needs Review
- Corporate Parenting Panel update
- Surestart Children's Centres Across the Borough

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**MINUTES OF A SPECIAL MEETING OF THE CHILDREN AND LEARNING
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**Monday 14 March 2011 (7.30pm – 9.20pm)
Havering Town Hall, Romford**

Present:

Councillors Sandra Binion (Chairman), Dennis Bull, Jeff Brace (substitute for Garry Pain), Gillian Ford (Vice-Chairman), Keith Darvill (substitute for Pat Murray), Robby Misir, Frederick Thompson, Lynden Thorpe (substitute for Billy Taylor) and John Wood.

Co-opted Members: Garry Dennis, Jack How and Anne Ling.

Also present were Councillors Paul McGeary and Paul Rochford.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Pat Murray, Garry Pain and Billy Taylor, co-opted members Phillip Grundy and Julie Lamb and non-voting members Margaret Cameron, Sue Kortlandt and Keith Passingham.

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

**25. INTEGRATED YOUTH SERVICES – CLOSURE OF SCHOOL BASED
YOUTH FACILITIES**

The Committee considered a requisition of Executive Decision 11/28, which had been made by the Cabinet Member for Children & Learning regarding the closure of Integrated Youth Services' school based youth facilities.

The decision had been called-in in accordance with paragraph 17 of the Overview and Scrutiny rules by Councillors Keith Darvill and Gillian Ford.

The decision was part of the Council's overall response to budgetary reductions as a consequence of the Comprehensive Spending Review, which had seen reductions of 7.1% in all council budgets. The Integrated Youth Service's commitment to Havering's reduction was £500,000 over the next four years.

As a result, the Cabinet Member had made the decision to make savings by discontinuing the following services:

- Petitts Youth Facility – £4880 of savings
- Weald Youth Facility - £9,039 (staff) and £554 (other)

- Jean Reed Youth Centre - £4,206 (staff) and £250 (other)

The reasons for the requisition were outlined in the report submitted to the Committee, but in general terms the reasons focused on concerns that the closure of the facilities would see a rise in youth crime and anti-social behaviour, as well as the negative impact upon young people and voluntary services.

Councillors were asked to consider whether the decision had carefully considered, and garnered the opinion of schools and voluntary services regarding the pros and cons of moving away from school based provision as well as carefully considering locality based provision. Members were asked to consider whether the decision had been taken with the appropriate level of consultation and debate.

The Committee began by clarifying the situation with regards the three facilities affected. Officers confirmed that Petitts Youth Centre was attached to Marshalls Park School and the facility would possibly continue running a service from the site. The centre was currently a part-time centre that the school used during the day.

It was confirmed that the Weald Youth Facility was currently closed as its centre formed part of the site of the old Kingswood School (now the Drapers Academy) that was being demolished. Talks were underway with the Headteacher of Drapers Academy about the possibility of re-provisioning the facility.

Members expressed concern that the expression “closure” with regards youth facilities was misleading, as it suggested a removal of a service. The detail of the decision (which was not available prior to the call-in) demonstrated that there were other ways of provisioning the service. However, there was still a wider concern that significant parts of the borough still had inadequate provision.

It was explained that the new services offered would appease members’ concerns; the move was towards targeted and detached street-based model, which was flexible and able to meet fluctuating needs. The service itself was not being reduced, merely the way in which it was being offered.

There were concerns that street-based provision *would* lead to a loss in provision, particularly in Romford and anecdotal evidence of street-based service in the Cranham ward had led to many young people having to discuss sensitive issues on the street. Officers explained that the street-based move was a starting point and that in the future the team could and would use fixed bases as appropriate.

In response to queries about why money provided through the MyPlace scheme had been used to build one, albeit impressive, facility and not on numerous facilities to increase access, it was explained that the

grant had specifically stipulated a requirement for one state-of-the-art facility.

Members explained that the requisition had been primarily about reassurance and the opportunity to debate youth services and the closure of the facilities. The main concern was around numbers; Romford had the greater risk and the key question was whether the mobile provision would be able to ensure a good service for Romford, given the large numbers.

In conclusion, it was explained that buildings would not cease to be used, simply the three sites listed in the decision; there was a need to be more nuanced in the way in which school sites were utilised, both to cut costs and respond to different levels of need.

The Chairman asked the Committee to vote on whether to uphold the requisition.

The Committee voted not to uphold the requisition by 9 votes to 1 with 2 abstentions.

The voting was as follows:

For: Councillor Darvill

Against: Councillors Binion, Brace, Bull, Misir, Thorpe and Thompson. Co-opted Members Garry Dennis, Jack How and Anne Ling

Abstain: Councillors Ford and Wood.

26. INTEGRATED YOUTH SERVICES - WITHDRAWAL FROM PREMISES AND CLOSURES OF YOUTH FACILITIES

The Committee considered a requisition of Executive Decision 11/29, which had been made by the Cabinet Member for Children & Learning regarding the withdrawal from premises and closure of youth facilities.

The decision had been called-in in accordance with paragraph 17 of the Overview and Scrutiny rules by Councillors Keith Darvill and Gillian Ford.

The decision was part of the Council's overall response to budgetary reductions as a consequence of the Comprehensive Spending Review, which had seen reductions of 7.1% in all council budgets. The Integrated Youth Service's commitment to Havering's reduction was £500,000 over the next four years.

As a result, the Cabinet Member had made the decision to withdraw from the intended Angel Way Youth Facility for Romford and close Century Youth House currently under Integrated Youth Services.

In detail, the decision meant that the service at Century Youth House, which had been intended to be re-provisioned at Angel Way, would be withdrawn, saving £123,420. Century Youth House would cease its activity as a daytime youth house provision.

The reasons for the requisition were outlined in the report submitted to the Committee, but in general terms the reasons focused on concerns that the closure of the facilities would see a rise in youth crime and anti-social behaviour, as well as the negative impact upon young people and voluntary services.

Councillors were asked to consider if other options had been robustly examined and to debate the merits of the strategic move towards targeted services rather than universal services.

The Committee clarified that youth services were withdrawing from Century Youth House, which was being occupied by the Pupil Referral Unit (PRU).

Members sought information as to what alternatives had been considered upon the grant funding for the re-provisioning of Angel Way having been withdrawn. There was concern that the withdrawal of this funding had meant that the idea of any fixed base for the service had been abandoned, when other affordable and viable options might exist, the temporary facility that had housed Central Library during its re-build was cited by way of example. It was explained that the decision not to re-provision in a fixed base had been carefully considered, the flexible, street-based service was both cost-effective and able to meet the needs of the service users. Whilst the library site mentioned may have been viable, there was a concern that the added cost of examining numerous sites for viability would render any savings impotent and would delay the re-provisioning.

Members were intrigued and reassured that there would be a pot of money made available by the Council, for use by the voluntary sector, aimed to assist them to start and run youth services. Members were keen to know the exact amount of funding, but it was explained that a specific allocation had not been put aside.

In response to concerns about the possible rise in anti-social behaviour, particularly in Romford, it was explained that street-based provision would be better placed to de-escalate anti-social behaviour by acting flexibly and meeting young people in their own environments. There would also be close cooperation with the voluntary sector and with organisations such as Connexions, which would encourage young people into productive activity.

Officers explained that the Angel Way development was no longer an option as the capital funding for the project no longer existed, though

the key was to focus upon services and not facilities, though members still expressed the importance of thoroughly searching for alternative sites.

The Chairman asked the Committee to vote on whether to uphold the requisition.

The Committee voted not to uphold the requisition by 7 votes to 3 with 2 abstentions.

The voting was as follows:

For: Councillors Darvill and Ford. Co-opted Member Garry Pain.
Against: Councillors Binion, Brace, Bull, Misir, Thorpe and Thompson. Co-opted Member Anne Ling.
Abstain: Councillor Wood. Co-opted Member Jack How.

The meeting was concluded.

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CHILDREN & LEARNING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Subject Heading:	Children's Centres
CMT Lead:	Andrew Ireland
Report Author and contact details:	Carol Carruthers 01708 433363 Carol.carruthers@havering.gov.uk
Policy context:	Children's Centres

SUMMARY

This report is intended to report the progress on the recommendations of Children's Overview and Scrutiny Committee Topic Group. The topic group reported to Children's Overview and Scrutiny committee on the 21.04.09. The recommendations of the Topic Group were considered by Cabinet on the 24.06 09 and many of the recommendations were agreed. This report will report progress on the recommendations agreed by the Councils Cabinet.

RECOMMENDATIONS

This is a progress report so no recommendations are sought at this time.

I would ask the committee to note the positive work being undertaken while recognising the development and improvement in Children's Centres since the Topic Group reported.

REPORT DETAIL

Since the Topic Group reported in 2009 the following Children's Centres have been opened and/or gained full core offer status with the Department of Education.

- Airfield
- Thistledene (Pinewood School Collier Row)
- South Hornchurch Library
- Upminster Library
- Hilldene
- Pyrgo
- Rainham Village
- St Kilda's
- Elm Park
- Harold Court

The Apprenticeship, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 gave Children's Centres a statutory status in terms of requiring Local Authorities to provide a sufficient number of Children's Centres to meet local need. The 2009 Act also required Ofsted to inspect Children's Centres against a self evaluation framework for judging the standard full core offer status. The London Borough of Havering had two Ofsted inspections; one of Harold Court Children's Centre in January 2011, and one of Collier Row Children's Centre in April 2011.

Children's Centres are managed and provide a service in a hub and spoke/cluster model with staff, working across a number of Children's Centres.

Improvements and progress in terms of services and governance arrangements have been ongoing; Children's Centres have linked with and embedded Think Family programmes working with the most vulnerable families.

Recommendations of the Topic Group.

That, in light of anticipated legislation concerning the granting of statutory status to Children's Centres, greater emphasis be given to the embedding of partnership working between the Council and NHS.

Children's Centres now have a statutory status. There has been an increased emphasis on improving partnership working by the Council with NHS Havering. We now have 4 Health hubs across the Borough, which are at:

- Collier Row
- St Kilda's
- Ingrebourne
- Elm Park

Midwives are based at these centres and provide community services such as antenatal care and parent craft classes. At these hubs, there are also health visiting services providing a range of clinics covering child's development, healthy eating; weaning and breastfeeding cafes. These services are provided in conjunction with third sector organisations such as NCT and Lifeline who provide parent craft classes such as breast feeding, peer mentoring, and separate parent craft classes for young parents, in particular young men.

The centres continue to provide breast feeding support and intensive family support for vulnerable young parents (Baby FIP). There are also early speech and language programmes; and early support for children with additional needs including support groups for parents, baby massage programmes, and sensory rooms.

We hope to provide sleep clinics for parents experiencing problems particularly those with children with a disability such as autism. Currently staff are training jointly with NHS Havering.

That a standard form of occupation agreement for nurseries on Children's Centre premises be drawn up as a matter of urgency and that it be a compulsory requirement for nurseries to sign this before moving into the premises.

There are two Children's Centres which have private nursery provision. There is now a standard form of occupation agreement with Ingrebourne Nursery based at Ingrebourne Children's Centre, with regular reviews built in.

The nursery at Collier Row Children's Centre (Abbs Cross), still have not signed an agreement and this matter is before the Court for resolution. There have been no further rentals to private providers since 2008.

Ingrebourne Nursery allows the Local Authority access to data. We manage and assess vulnerable families for the 2 year pilot which enables 2-3 year olds to access free pre-school provision. We work alongside a number of pre-school carers and nurseries to provide services to vulnerable families.

That where possible, self contained buildings are used for Children's Centre accommodation.

The majority of Children's Centres are in self contained buildings. South Hornchurch Library Children's Centre has recently moved to the converted portacabin on the library site.

Currently we share premises with Upminster Library. We also use isolated classrooms at Pinewood School next to the nursery and use classrooms at Rainham Village School as a temporary site, until the new building is ready.

That the commitment to establish a parents forum for each Children's Centre be progressed as quickly as possible.

There are parents forums at each Children's Centre. The governance arrangements were agreed by the Children's Trust and are in place. Currently, there are discussions with the School Governor Service of the Local Authority for that service to manage children centre governance. Beside parents forums, there are also Local Advisory Boards across hubs at which parent representatives attend and participate.

That transport arrangements to Children's Centres be kept under review and that good corporate signage be installed at each centre.

There has been a review of signage and consistency of approach adopted. There are new signs that clearly mark the buildings and signs on the main highways indicating the location from major junctions. We continue to review transport links and signage.

That, if funds are available, facilities allowing N3 connectivity are installed in all existing and future Havering Children's Centres.

NHS Havering has supplied their staff with mobile working 3g solutions or at some hubs; health staff have direct access to their database. This matter is no longer an issue.

That the provision of sexual health services at Children's Services Centres continues and is developed.

Children's Centres have continued to provide some sexual health services. We have also developed services for teenage parents with an emphasis on preventing a second pregnancy.

That the council institutes a high level of promotion of Children's Centres including improved use of Living in Havering, development of the councils website, a clearer corporate image and review of the use of exterior of Centre buildings.

There continues to be a communication strategy to promote Children's Centres.

Health Services give advice/information about Children's Centres before and post birth. Staff regularly leaflet parents in local schools and visit antenatal and neonatal wards at Queens and King George Hospital to locate the vulnerable parents.

We have had articles in Living and also invite the local papers to key events. We have worked closely with local radio stations to provide joint Christmas and Easter activities with donations from local residents.

We do have a website and are training staff to update this as regularly as they are able.

We have reviewed the exterior of the buildings and where possible and funds allow have made improvements to signage and appearance. Our biggest advocates are the parents and we have recorded parents speaking about their experiences of Children's Centres. Parents, particularly parent volunteers, recommend our services to others. We are about to launch a more formal volunteering scheme.

That the existing strong working relationships between the Council and its partners continue in the establishment of further Children centres.

The existing strong working relationship with our partners in Health, Job Centre Plus and with the third sector has continued. There have been a number of centres opened as detailed in the beginning of this report. All of the old and new centres are linked to partner agencies.

That work continues as soon as possible to finalise locations of new Children's Centres covering Central Romford and Rainham Village.

Work has continued with a centre developed in Pinewood School and Rainham Village School. Both have a Children's Centre offer in place. The plans are well advanced for the self contained Children Centre at Rainham Village.

The plans for Wykeham and Mawney School received strong local opposition and therefore we withdrew these plans. Instead, we have adapted St Kilda's to increase its capacity and are offering parenting groups to local schools in the Romford area. Health Services are moving their staff from Romford Clinic to St Kilda's.

That the establishment of outreach services from Children's Centres be continued and the use of mobile solution be considered for more isolated area if appropriate.

We have an outreach service operating across the Borough. The outreach service works with the most vulnerable; providing parenting classes and one to one parenting programmes to parents whose parenting requires support. We utilise local halls and school premises if needed.

That the existing good relationships with schools that have Children's Centres on their premises continue as further centres on school sites are developed.

We have excellent relationships with a large number of schools, particularly schools which have a Children Centre on site. During school breaks and in the evening we are able to offer family activities such as play opportunities and parenting classes using school buildings and grounds.

That communications with will families on Children’s Centres waiting lists be reviewed to ensure equality of opportunity and of information received.

We have reviewed our waiting lists and how they function. We prioritise families in greatest need in accessing groups. The E-Start computer system has been extended into all centres and has been cleaned in terms of its data quality. We are now able to run meaningful reports which assist with the management of waiting lists.

CONCLUSION

Children’s Centre’s are a major part of the service delivery for Early Intervention and Prevention.

The centres have gained national recognition and staff have been to meet with the Minister and her Policy Advisors about the future of centres. Staff have also submitted case studies to Professor Eileen Munro about working with the most vulnerable parents, preventing abuse and neglect, and ensuring school readiness.

The centres will become a major part in delivery of the priorities of the Preventative Strategy within localities.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

*There is a **statutory** obligation to list papers relied on in the preparation of the report, unless:*

- 1 It is an exempt report*
- 2 Papers relied upon are already in the public domain as “published papers”. This can include: books, magazines and newspapers; Government publications; Council publications (including previous reports and minutes of meetings)*
 - 1. Apprenticeship skills children and leaning 2009*
 - 2. Sure Start Children’s Centres statutory guidance 2008.*

CHILDREN & LEARNING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Subject Heading:

Children and Young People with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities

CMT Lead:

Andrew Ireland

Report Author and contact details:

Trevor Sim
01708 433955
trevor.sim@havering.gov.uk
Special Educational Needs

Policy context:

SUMMARY

This report details the legislation and guidance underpinning services for Children with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities (LDD).

It also outlines key areas of service and support being provided with particular focus on early years, school and post-16 education.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Committee note the contents of the Report.

REPORT DETAIL

1. Introduction

- The Government wants all children to have the best start in life and the ongoing support that they and their families need to fulfil their potential. Disabled children are less likely to achieve as much in a range of areas as their non-disabled peers. Improving outcomes for them will also allow communities to benefit from the contribution that disabled children and their families can make, harnessing their talent and fostering tolerance and understanding of diversity.
- The Government wants all children with disabilities to have a coordinated response and the Common Assessment Framework and Early Support are two of the ways that children with disabilities benefit from a co-ordinated programme of support, given that they often need access to a wide range of services.

2. Background

- 2.1 Havering has a long history of commitment to inclusion, which is reflected in its policy and arrangements for special educational needs. As a consequence of this the large majority of children and young people with LDD are catered for within mainstream settings and support services have developed to assist schools, early years settings, families and the young people themselves to participate as fully as possible alongside their peers. However for those who require more specialist provision Havering has a range of specially resourced schools and separate special schools.
- 2.2 This overview of support arrangements is structured to show how these services are continuing to develop to improve the co-ordination of support
- In the early years
 - At school
 - Through Statements
 - Post 16

3. Legislation and Guidance

- 3.1 Working with children and young people with disabilities is supported and underpinned by legislative and policy actions taken by Government in recent years including:-
- The Children Act 1989, under which disabled children are defined as “children in need”. Under the Act, Local Authorities have a general duty to “Safeguard and promote the welfare of children in their areas who are in need to promote the upbringing of such children by their families, by providing a wide range and level of services appropriate to those children in need”.

- The Carers (Recognition and Services) Act 1995 gives carers a right to an assessment by the local authority under certain circumstances. Young Carers are also covered by the Act.
- The Carers and Disabled Children Act 2000 supplements the Carers Recognition Act by enabling local authorities to provide carers' services in response to an assessment of need and also enables carers to receive direct payments in lieu of services.
- The Carers (Equal Opportunities Act) 2004 which extended the rights of carers to have their employment, education, training and leisure wishes considered.
- The Education Act 1996, which outlines the responsibilities and procedures for assessing and meeting the needs of children and young people with special educational needs (statementing).
- The Disability Equality Duty introduced into legislation in 2005, requires organisations across the public sector (including schools and hospitals, local and central government) to be proactive in ensuring that disabled people are treated fairly and included in all aspects of policy development from the outset.
- The Child Care Act 2006, which requires local authorities to have particular regard to the needs of disabled children as part of their new duties to assess the childcare needs of families and to secure sufficient childcare for children up to and including age 14 (18 for disabled children); and
- The Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 places a duty on the LA to provide education to learners with learning difficulties to age 25.
- The Equality Act 2010, which places a general Equality Duty from 5 April 2011 on most public bodies with further specific regulations, being enacted in due course, setting out how they will meet their responsibility to promote disability equality.
- The SEN Green Paper. This was released in March 2011 with an extended consultation period to the 30 June 2011 as it was lacking a significant amount of detail. Any legislative changes will not be able to begin until May 2012 at the earliest and it is likely only minor changes to the current system will come into effect before 2013/14.

4. Early Years

- 4.1 The importance of early identification and support for parents of children with significant LDD was recognised 30 years ago when Havering's Portage Service was created. The original Senior Portage worker was a founder member of First Step, a charitable provision for the families of young children with disabilities, and the close working relationship between the Council service and this parents' organisation has continued to the present. They have moved into shared accommodation.

- 4.2 More recently the original Portage Service has been renamed Home Learning Support and is now part of an expanded Under Fives Inclusion Service which includes family workers with a particular focus upon Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) children, support and training for parents and Area SENCOs who provide support to early years settings. The regular feedback from parents and from surveys of service users has been overwhelmingly positive.
- 4.3 This incremental development of services has ensured a consistent approach across early years settings, a good understanding of local arrangements by the many participating agencies as well as good advice and support from First Step, which also provides some outstanding pre-school provision.
- 4.4 Additional funding has been directed to the most needy preschoolers in Private Voluntary and Independent (PVI) settings through the Foundation Stage Funding Panel. The panel consists of representatives from a number of sectors and meets regularly to consider funding requests from PVI settings. In exceptional cases funding can be agreed before a child starts attending a setting to facilitate a smooth transition into the setting. The work of the Panel is currently being reviewed and consideration is being given to implementing new processes which will allow settings a flexible approach to how they use funding to more effectively include the child.
- 4.5 The Under Fives Inclusion Service(UFIS) is one of a group of services which are line managed by the Principal Educational Psychologist; the others being as follows:
- Learning Support Service (LSS) – which focuses in the main on children of school age. It includes specialist teachers in hearing, visual and physical impairment, language and transition. Where appropriate these teachers collaborate with UFIS family workers in delivering support.
 - Social Communication Service (SCS) – which provides support for schools and parents of ASD children and collaborates closely with UFIS with regard to the early years. The SCS is co-located with a small specialist nursery, Bridge, which caters for up to 8 pre-schoolers with Autistic Spectrum Disorder both morning and afternoon. They both occupy part of Airfield Children’s Centre so promoting opportunities for joint working.
 - Child and Community Psychology Service (CCPS) – which includes a 0.9 fte Senior Educational Psychologist (EP) for early years who provides supervision for some UFIS staff. All EPs provide assessment and advice in respect of children with LDD in the locality they serve and have additional specialisms so that there is an extensive knowledge and skills base.
 - The SEN Section which administers the formal assessment process
- 4.6 While the Under Fives Inclusion Service is particularly aligned to the above services, there is close collaboration with paediatric, medical nursing, and therapy services in addressing the needs of children and

their families. UFIS promote Early Support as a method of coordinating services for the more complex pre-schoolers who have input from multiple agencies. Havering's Children's Centres provide targeted centre based and outreach support as appropriate. The PCT's Child Development Team arrange regular case discussions concerning children with complex needs and these are routinely attended by Children's Services staff from the services described above.

- 4.7 The much larger population of children with less pronounced LDD are supported in Havering's many early years' settings which are all committed to equalities and inclusion through membership of the Early Years Partnership. These are in turn supported by Area SENCOs from the Under Fives Inclusion Service and, where necessary, by Educational Psychologists or specialist teachers from the LSS. A major focus for all concerned is to ensure a smooth transition to school by providing advice and training where needed to ensure that the necessary support is in place.
- 4.8 Each year the Under Fives Inclusion Service co-ordinate the production of a comprehensive list of vulnerable youngsters transferring from early years provision to reception classes in schools so that their needs can be planned for before arrival at the school.

5. Children and Young People Attending School

- 5.1 There are clear arrangements for the identification and assessment of children with LDD which have been developed over many years, in consultation with SENCOs and partner agencies. OFSTED inspection reports indicate that the large majority of schools ensure that children and young people with LDD achieve well. Progress is being made on improving practice in monitoring the achievement of pupils with LDD in special schools through an ICT system, CASPA, and on the use of provision management and mapping to assist in ensuring special educational needs are effectively met within mainstream schools. In June 2010 guidance was issued to all schools in Havering on appropriate identification of young people with SEN who may go on to be placed at School Action of the Code of Practice.
- 5.2 The services listed above provide regular advice and support to schools and have the common aim of strengthening the capacity of schools to provide for diverse needs. Both informal and survey feedback indicate that these services are generally highly regarded by schools and parents. They provide consultation and training in addition to casework where required. The LSS for example took a lead in ensuring that all Havering's schools had Disability Equality Schemes in place and that these are reviewed and updated to meet new requirements. The CCPS has prioritised preparation for transfer between phases and is promoting the use of regular multi-agency solution focused consultation meetings to address general concerns and individual case issues more efficiently. There has also for the first time been a comprehensive collation of information on the most vulnerable youngsters transferring to secondary school in September 2011, paralleling the process in Early Years, so that the receiving secondary school can be alert to the needs of their new intake.

- 5.3 All services have identified the development of more effective multi-agency working as being a priority in recent years and this is part of Havering's Strategy for Implementation of the Children Act 2004 and the co-location of Children's Services. There are some excellent examples whereby provision has been greatly strengthened and improved through joint working and some are set out below.
- 5.4 For many years the lack of adequate Speech and Language Therapy (SALT) provision has been the subject of repeated complaints from parents and schools. This meant that the many children experiencing moderate delay in language development were unable to access any service apart from a limited amount of assessment. In order to begin addressing this issue in schools, the LSS appointed a specialist advisory teacher for language development and head teachers agreed to fund support assistants to work with this teacher to provide training and support on the use of a language development programme in schools. A successful conference on Language and Literacy was organised in April 2008 for Havering schools by the LSS Team.
- 5.5 Health and Education jointly commissioned an independent report into the provision of Speech and Language Therapy in Havering. This supported the development of an enhanced service in which Health and Education worked collaboratively. Health agreed to increase funding for Speech and Language Therapists by £255,000 and the Schools' Forum agreed to provide an additional £88,000 to expand the Language Team within the LSS and provide extra resources. This became fully established in January 2011.
- 5.6 Another example is the enhanced provision for children on the autistic spectrum, which includes the Good Beginnings Home Visiting Service, SCS, The Bridge special nursery and a specially resourced secondary school, the appointment of a 0.2 fte specialist senior EP to work in this area and the development of a multi-agency forum to co-ordinate support, which has produced a draft Autism Strategy.
- 5.7 In all such developments, the aim is to strengthen the capacity of those who work with the young people in question to address their needs on a daily basis, and Havering's Children with Disabilities and Special Educational Needs Group provides an appropriate context for discussing priorities for development.
- 5.8 For those with more complex needs all assessments are completed to Proposed Statement within 18 weeks however the new target is completion to final Statement within 26 weeks and for 2010-11 we completed 98.4% within this timescale. The Parents in Partnership Service is at the heart of the process and only 4 appeals have been fully heard at the First Tier Tribunal for SEN(SENDIST) since 2001, of which 2 were won by the LA. The support services also work closely with special schools, which can themselves provide some support to colleagues in the mainstream. Corbets Tey has achieved specialist status in language and this includes a specific commitment to outreach in this area. Officers of the LA meet regularly with the head teachers of the special schools to monitor progress and development.
- 5.9 Havering offers a range of special provision for those whose needs require it.

The first level of addressing this would be as an enhanced special resource within a mainstream school. This exists for:

Language difficulties (KS1/2)	Mead Primary
Language difficulties (KS3/4)	Redden Court
Partial hearing (Foundation/KS1/2)	Hacton Primary
Partial hearing (KS3/4)	Sanders Draper
BESD/ASD (KS1/2)	Primary Learning Support Group
ASD (KS3/4)	Hall Mead

Separate units exist for:

ASD(FKS)	Bridge Nursery
BESD(KS1/2)	Oglethorpe PRU
BESD(KS3)	Birnam Wood PRU
Emotional and medical difficulties	Tutorial Centre PRU
BESD(KS4)	ARC PRU

Separate all age special schools exist for:

Complex and moderate learning difficulties	Dycorts/Corbets Tey
Severe and PMLD	Ravensbourne

All three of the special schools have been judged outstanding in certain areas or across the board in their most recent OFSTED inspection.

A range of out of borough provision is also used where circumstances demand. We buy 44 day places at out of borough special schools for:

Moderate learning difficulties	St John's/Endeavour/Hatton/ Little Heath/ Treetops/William Morris/Cedar Hall/Woodcroft
PMLD/Autistic	Trinity/Doucecroft
PMLD	Newbridge
BESD	Caldecott School/ISP/Hopewell/New Rush Hall
Visually impaired	Joseph Clarke/ Dorton House
Severe learning difficulties	Beacon Hill

We buy 21 places at residential special schools for:

Severe epilepsy	St Elizabeth's
Physical Impairment	Ingfield Manor/St Margarets/ Bladen House

Profoundly Deaf	RSDM/ Mary Hare
Aspergers	Pottersbury Lodge
Visually impaired	Worcester College/Dorton House
PMLD	Sheiling/MacIntyre
BESD	Ryes/Apple Orchard/Hythe House/ Broadlands/Ferndearle/Coxlease
Autistic	Doucecroft/Eagle House
Language	Moore House

- 5.10 Any children requiring additional resources for addressing health issues, in addition to those provided by Children's Services, are discussed at a Joint Panel which was established some years ago to address cross agency issues and which includes representation from Children's Services, and the PCT.
- 5.11 In addition to the range of cultural and leisure opportunities available to young people in their schools, the Youth Support Service provides further opportunities through their 'Revellers' projects and the U project summer programme. There are specific key workers for young people who have intensive support needs from 11 years up to 25.

6. Statements

- 6.1 The table below shows the number and proportion of children aged 0 to 19 holding statements, updated to January 2011. The highest number of Statements was in 1996. Since then careful management often through intensive case work and a range of initiatives has reduced the number steadily.

	Total number of children with statements	Children with statements as proportion of Havering resident population aged 0-19
Jan 1997	1159	2.07%
Jan 1998	1150	2.06%
Jan 1999	1110	2.01%
Jan 2000	1130	2.05%
Jan 2001	1090	1.98%
Jan 2002	1050	1.91%
Jan 2003	1010	1.83%
Jan 2004	967	1.77%
Jan 2005	960	1.74%
Jan 2006	896	1.62%
Jan 2007	848	1.53%
Jan 2008	772	1.40%
Jan 2009	701	1.26%
Jan 2010	648	1.14%
Jan 2011	635	

- 6.2 The reduction in the number of Statements was not associated with a rise in the number of appeals to the Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal though there is recent evidence that parents are now more likely to lodge appeals. The outcomes for the last 11 years are as follows:

Calendar year	Number of appeals lodged	Number of appeals held	Number of appeals upheld against LA
2000	2	2	1
2001	2	2	1
2002	1	0	0
2003	2	0	0
2004	0	0	0
2005	0	0	0
2006	1	0	0
2007	4	1	0
2008	0	0	0
2009	0	0	0
2010	7	1	1

- 6.3 The work of the Parents in Partnership Service is particularly important in ensuring that the parents of children with LDD/SEN can obtain independent timely advice and assistance with all matters relating to their children's progress, placements and support. In the period from 1 April 10 to 31 March 11 the service received 197 referrals for whom case work support was provided. The two most common areas in which support was sought were requests for extra help for non-statemented pupils and assistance with change of school at phased transfer. A number of potential tribunal cases were resolved before they reached that stage by the timely involvement of the Parents in Partnership Coordinator.
- 6.4 Though Havering successfully administers the formal SEN procedure in accordance with its statutory duties it has long believed it is an expensive and time consuming bureaucratic process. For a number of years we have planned and extensively consulted on the introduction of a needs led formula which could delegate direct to schools the money otherwise distributed through statements. This was successfully implemented in April 2008. The Green Paper is proposing changes that the Government hope will reduce bureaucracy and is also reviewing funding for schools in general, including that for special needs and we will need to review our funding formula in the light of the developments that flow from these processes.

7. Post -16 Provision

- 7.1 Transition arrangements for Year 9 pupils with LDD are robust and ensure that young people are full involved in the process of planning for KS4 and their eventual move into further education, employment or training. Havering's Parents in Partnership Service hold an annual

meeting with parents to explain the transition planning arrangements in collaboration with colleagues from Learning Support and Connexions. A focus group of young people advises on expectations for the future and the transition process. The Connexions Service is key to monitoring plans and regularly tracks young people with personal advisers supporting them to ensure progress into education, employment and training.

- 7.2 Havering College of Further and Higher Education provides some Post-16 provision, principally at Quarles Campus and deals with some complex learners with learning difficulties although the majority of its LLDD have moderate to mild learning difficulties. Barking and Dagenham College also host a significant population of Havering post -16 LLDD. Both FE Colleges' provision is delivered in mainstream settings, which are currently considered unsuitable for a proportion of vulnerable youngsters with high support needs.
- 7.3 Of the 3 special schools in Havering only Ravensbourne has a sixth form and this caters for up to 18 young people with severe or profound and multiple learning difficulties. It predominately caters for its own students but occasionally takes students from Corbets Tey and Dycorts. This has meant that other students from Corbets Tey and Dycorts whose parents want them to continue in a school sixth form have had to go to out of borough schools. Though there was relatively low demand for this provision up to the 2009-10 academic year it was recognised as desirable that Havering develop its own provision and the proposals for developing the Learning Village in Harold Hill contained the addition of a 20 place sixth form in the rebuild of Dycorts School. The proposed development was to be funded through the Building Schools for the Future Funding.
- 7.4 In 2009-10 there was an unprecedented rise in the number of requests for sixth form places in special schools mainly from parents of pupils at Corbets Tey. This was associated with requests that Corbets Tey develop a sixth form, concern expressed by parents that they would prefer local provision and that the proposed developments at Dycorts would not come on stream until 2014.
- 7.5 The Local Authority commissioned an independent review of Post -16 Special Education in Havering, which reported in July 2010. It recommended development of special sixth forms at both Corbets Tey and Dycorts as a matter of urgency. However the report contained no detail as to funding and its completion coincided with the Government's withdrawal of funding for Havering's Building Schools for the Future Programme and the arrival of the current period of financial constraint.
- 7.6 In the absence of significant capital or revenue funding any local development would have to tap into external funding sourced through the Young People's Learning Agency (YPLA). Currently there are three main routes for funding learners aged 16 to 25 with LDD:
- The SEN block grant, which Local Authorities receive to discharge their statutory duties towards those with SEN in special schools.

- Additional Learning Support (ALS) funding allocated to colleges and independent providers for learners aged 16 to 25 in local provision.
- Provision funded for individual learners with LDD aged 16 to 25 as part of the specialist placement budget, which includes provision at independent specialist providers where their needs cannot be met locally. This budget is managed by the YPLA.

While it is anticipated that these three funding streams will pass to Local Authority control in 2013-14 this does not help with the immediate pressure of securing Post-16 provision especially as much of this funding is only accessible through further education providers and not special school sixth forms i.e. students benefiting from YPLA funding in FE colleges cannot have Statements. The 14 to 19 Strategy Manager has worked with the Havering College of Further and Higher Education and Havering Sixth Form College to establish pilot schemes proposed to run from September 2011 in which students are on the roll of the colleges and so able to access participation funding and Additional Learner Support funding through the YPLA but receive their education through provision at Corbets Tey and Hall Mead respectively. The provision at Corbets Tey is for those students from Corbets Tey and Dycorts who might otherwise have gone to out of borough day special schools' sixth forms and that at Hall Mead is for higher functioning students, who may have some problems engaging in an unsupported fashion at the Sixth Form College without a supported transition.

- 7.7 The pilot programmes described in 7.6 above are only able to cater for small numbers of pupils so further work is proposed to develop local provision to cater for future cohorts of students. A key feature of the developments proposed is that they utilise provision across the borough so linking students in with their local communities and so offering better opportunities to prepare them for adulthood. The inclusion of adult social care services within the Directorate of Social Care and Learning will encourage the further development of the progressively closer working relationship between adults' and children's services. This is reflected in the production of a single comprehensive list of vulnerable young people from 14 on to assist the agencies in planning better to meet their needs and the establishment of a transition protocol to facilitate smoother transitions to adult services.

8. Conclusion

- 8.1 There is a wide range of services for children and young people with LDD in Havering and these have been developed over time to meet needs. Action has been taken to improve and enhance services where gaps have been identified, such as speech and language therapy, Post-16 Education and ASD. These are complemented by specialist settings, such as Special Schools so that choice and opportunities are not compromised. The commitment to working in partnership with children and young people and families is long-standing and is evidenced by the low numbers of appeals to the SENDIST which has been maintained over many years.

- 8.2 The creation of Children’s Services and the Children’s Trust provide scope for reshaping services so that the positive experiences for families demonstrated through the Early Support Pilot are extended. Havering’s Children’s Trust provides an effective structure for improving services and outcomes for children and young people with LDD as it brings together the key agencies and services.

IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

9. Financial Implications and risks:

- 9.1 Children with disabilities and their families often require a variety of early support; coordinated intervention and on occasions residential placements. There can be significant cost implications as the cost of 1 52 week residential special school placement can be over £250,000 a year.
- 9.2 The Academies Programme initially caused the diversion of funds derived from the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) for SEN to the Academies in proportion to the number of pupils on their roll and the level of special needs. This potentially would reduce the capacity of the Learning Support Service to meet the needs of young people with low incidence needs as they are funded through the DSG. However, for the 2011-12 financial year the Government have withdrawn this element of academy funding and they will receive the same service as other schools for that financial year, while the Government reviews the entire funding arrangements for schools, including for SEN.
- 9.3 The overall budget for 2011-12 for children with special educational needs is £18.4 million broken down as below:

Area	Budget £m
SEN mainstream	11.82
Special Schools	4.97
Out of Borough Independent Schools	1.35
Total	18.14

- 9.4 Budgets may need to be adjusted accordingly in line with the council’s virement procedures. No payments will be authorised unless there is sufficient funding available from within existing budgets. The Council has to make significant financial savings over the coming years due to the economic climate. There may therefore be the need to review budgets in line with available funding.

10. Legal Implications and risks:

- 10.1 There are clear statutory duties underpinning services for children with learning difficulties and disabilities, which are referred to in the body of

the report. As this Report is for noting there are no direct legal implications or risks arising.

11. Human Resources Implications and risks:

- 11.1 There are a variety of highly skilled staff and experienced employed across London Borough of Havering, working with children with learning difficulties and disabilities. These staff include specialist workers who are hard to recruit and retain so particular attention has to be paid to staff development and training opportunities for attainment of relevant competencies and clarity in terms of career pathway within the Council.
- 11.2 The Council needs to ensure that it continues to provide the type and shape of workforce that it is able to meet the needs of children with LDD, both now and in the future and must employ the most effective and appropriate workforce planning and development strategies in order to achieve and maintain this fundamental position.
- 11.3 It is also essential that continued partnership working with relevant health, private, voluntary and third sector organisations is a key feature of the provision of targeted services to children with LDD in Havering. This may lead to greater multi-agency delivery options in line with the transformation programme around services for children and young people and their families.

12. Equalities and Social Inclusion Implications and risks:

- 12.1 Disabled children are less likely to achieve as much in a range of areas as their non-disabled peers. Improving their outcomes, allowing them to benefit from equality of opportunity and increasing their involvement in society will help them to achieve more as individuals. It will also reduce social inequality.
- 12.2 Additionally the Disability Equality Duty (2005, 2010) requires organisations across the public sector to be proactive in ensuring that disabled people are treated fairly.
- 12.3 Havering has an active Parents' Forum, which hosted its first consultation event with senior officers across the Local Authority on the 31 March 2011. Parents are being consulted on a range of issues and are represented on the Children with Disabilities and Special Educational Needs Group and the Transition Strategic Group.

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Chief Executive

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CHILDREN & LEARNING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

ANNUAL REPORT, 2010/2011

SUMMARY

This report is the annual report of the Committee, summarising the Committee's activities during the year ended May 2011.

It is planned for this report to stand as a public record of achievement for the year and enable Members and others to compare performance year on year.

There are no direct equalities or environmental implications attached to this covering report. Any financial implications & risks from reviews and work undertaken will be advised as part of the specific reviews.

RECOMMENDATION

1. That the Committee note the 2010/11 Annual Report and authorise the Chairman to agree the final version for Council.
2. That the Committee agree the report be referred to full Council.

Staff Contact: Sean Cable
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Cheryl Coppell
Chief Executive

Background Papers - None



CHILDREN & LEARNING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Subject Heading:

CMT Lead:

Report Author and contact details:

Policy context:

Annual Report
2010/2011

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To summarise the
work of the
Council's Children &
Learning Overview
& Scrutiny
Committee.

SUMMARY

This report is the annual report of the Committee, summarising the Committee's activities during the past Council year.

It is planned for this report to stand as a public record of achievement for the year and enable members and others to compare performance year to year.

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RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Committee note the 2010/2011 Annual Report and authorise the Chairman to agree the final version for Council.
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REPORT DETAILS

During the year under review, the Committee met on 8 occasions and dealt with the following issues:

1. SCRUTINY TOPIC GROUPS.

1.1 LEARNING VILLAGE

- 1.1.1 At its meeting on 16 February 2011, the Committee considered the final report of the Learning Village Topic Group; the work of which had transferred from the previous Council as part of the Committee's predecessor, the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- 1.1.2 The Group had been formed in 2009 to monitor and review the process of Kingswood School becoming the Draper's Academy. The Topic Group, in the course of its work, sought to investigate best practice and made numerous visits, spoke to various stakeholders and presented a number of recommendations for the Committee's approval.
- 1.1.3 The Group's recommendations were for consideration by the Drapers' Academy Governing Body and/or Council officers and therefore they were not submitted to Cabinet. One recommendation, regarding a visit by the Topic Group to the Academy during and after construction is currently being organised and it is expected that the first of these visits will take place before the summer holidays.

1.2 CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE'S PLAN

- 1.2.1 This Group is an open Topic Group, meetings of which all members of the Committee are welcome and encouraged to attend, however, the core group of members comprises: Councillors Sandra Binion (Chairman), Wendy Brice-Thompson, Robby Misir, Garry Pain, Billy Taylor and co-opted member Anne Ling.
- 1.2.2 The Group was formed at the Committee's meeting on 11 November 2010 and has met on three occasions during the Municipal Year to scrutinise Havering's Children & Young People's Plan, which has been under development, led by Havering's Children's Trust.
- 1.2.3 The Group has met with officers from Social Care & Learning, including the Assistant Director (Commissioning) to discuss the formation of the Plan and the consultation process. The Group identified one theme (of the three in the Plan) that it would like to explore in the greater detail ("Breaking Negative Cycles").
- 1.2.4 A further meeting was held with the Service Manager, Prevention and Intervention to examine key services in greater depth, namely the Intensive Family Intervention Service and the role of the Fathers' Officer. Arising from this meeting the Group identified a number of areas that it would like to pursue

further, including planned visits to Children's Centres to gain a greater understanding of their role in prevention and intervention.

1.2.5 The Group's work is ongoing.

2. REQUISITIONS

2.1 The Committee held a special meeting on 14 March 2011 to consider two requisitions of executive decisions regarding the Integrated Youth Service.

2.2 The first decision concerned the closure of school based youth facilities, which would affect three sites in the borough. The second decision concerned the withdrawal of funding for the re-provisioning of the Angel Way development to accommodate the youth facilities previously at Century Youth House (which in turn was being transferred for the use of the Pupil Referral Unit).

2.3 After a detailed debate, members were informed that the move away from fixed based services would enable greater flexibility and nuance in service delivery through a street-based provision. Also, the Council planned to establish an (as yet unspecified) sum of money to encourage and enable the voluntary sector to take over the running of some youth services. Members were also reassured that there would be no anti-social behaviour implications as a result of the changes.

2.4 The Committee voted not to uphold the requisitions by 9 votes to 1 with 2 abstentions in respect of the first decision and by 7 votes to 3 with 2 abstentions in respect of the second decision.

3. ADMISSIONS REPORT

3.1 At its September meeting, the Committee considered a report from the Manager of Additional Education Needs regarding the statutory provisions underpinning school admissions.

3.2 The Committee considered the statutory framework underpinning the school admissions process, noting the role of the Admissions Forum and the School Admissions Code in ensuring that the admission arrangements of all schools in the borough were fair and equitable. The Committee was also informed about the role of community, foundation, voluntary-aided and academy schools in relation to the admissions team.

3.3 Particular attention was given to the security of the system and its propensity for abuse by those wishing for their child to go to a certain school. Officers informed the Committee that the admissions team was rigorous in ensuring that fake addresses did not allow certain people an unfair advantage and that council tax records were used where possible.

3.4 When considering the impact of future school place pressure, particularly in areas such as Harold Hill, the Committee was informed that an extra 1000 places would be needed in the coming years. This problem was exacerbated by the fact that the number of secondary schools in the area had decreased dramatically. Officers stated that a long-term strategic planning report was

being prepared which would address issues of future school places as well as the broader question of community infrastructure to accommodate an increased population.

4. SOCIAL CARE & LEARNING ANNUAL COMPLAINTS/COMPLIMENTS REPORT

- 4.1 At its meeting in September 2010, the Committee received a report, presented by the Head of Children & Young People's Services, regarding the complaints received by Children and Young People's Services in the previous council year.
- 4.2 The report outlined information around the numbers and types of complaints handled by Children & Young People's Services and how they dealt with these to minimise the impact of justifiable concerns and to reduce the likelihood of future complaints.
- 4.3 The Committee noted that the overall number of complaints was around 120 (37 matters raised by MPs and Councillors), which was relatively low given the nature of the services involved and against a backdrop of a significant increase in referrals to social care in 2009/10. In addition, the Pre-Stage 1 process (45 matters raised) had been very successful in resolving many initial concerns, with both more handled through that process and with none moving from that stage to the formal stage 1 process.
- 4.4 Members were pleased that the overall number of Stage 1 complaints had decreased from the previous year by 15. Members felt that this reflected the proactive work that had been carried out in dealing with Pre Stage 1 complaints: 32% of Stage 1 complaints were upheld. However, the Committee was concerned that compliments were not captured consistently, but in some areas they were received to quite high levels. Members noted that compliments usually related to a specific event or service dimension, but wished for more work to ensure that all were captured and reported.

5. SCHOOL ADMISSION APPEALS

- 5.1 At its meeting in November 2010, the Committee considered a report from the Committee Administration Manager regarding the administration of the statutory provisions underpinning the process by which parents could appeal against decisions relating to the admission or permanent exclusion of children from school.
- 5.2 The Committee noted that each year the Council, as Local Authority for education purposes, arranged for the admission of children to schools in the borough, the vast majority of which were dealt with to parents' satisfaction. In Havering, the appeal processes were managed by Committee Administration in Legal & Democratic Services. This arrangement had applied since the appeal system was set up in 1982. All Committee staff were trained to be Appeal Panel clerks and administrative support staff played an essential role in preparing for, delivering and following up appeals.

- 5.3 In relation to admission, although the parents' right was often loosely referred to as being the exercise of "choice", it was in fact no more than the right to express a "preference" and, as such, the Admission Authority (the LA for Community Schools, the Governors for Voluntary Aided and Foundation Schools) were entitled to refuse admission if to do so would cause "prejudice to the provision of efficient education or use of resources". This meant, in practice, that once the School had admitted children up to its declared Admission Number, it could only admit more if directed to do so by the Local Authority under its Fair Access Protocol (generally in relation to children who are being Looked After by a Local Authority, or who require a managed move on disciplinary grounds) or by an Appeal Panel allowing an appeal. Admission to Infant Classes (years Reception, 1 and 2) was further restricted by the statutory limitation of Infant Class sizes to 30 pupils.
- 5.5 The Committee further considered various statistical data relating to the number of appeals heard in Havering. The Committee noted the fluctuating numbers and considered the various reasons as to why this would happen. The Committee noted that a total of 707 appeals had been received, but only 398 of those had gone to a full hearing.
- 5.6 Members asked questions relating to the cost of the appeals process, to the Council. The Committee was informed that as of 1 April 2011 Havering would receive £93,000 from the Dedicated Schools Grant to administer the appeals process in the borough. The average cost of an appeal leading up to the point of a hearing was around £110, whilst another £50 pounds would be added to this total after the hearing.

6. 14-19 LEARNING PATHWAYS

- 6.1 At its meeting in November 2010, the Committee received a report, presented by the 14-19 Strategy Manager, regarding the commissioning and delivery of 14-19 Learning Pathways since the functions were assimilated by local authorities after the abolition of Learning and Skills Councils.
- 6.2 The Committee noted that the Coalition Government was proposing further changes to education, which could affect 14-19 services and commissioning. The Committee noted that The Local Government Association (LGA) was involved in key discussions with ministers on the issue; the main mechanism for taking these discussions forward was the Ministerial Advisory Group (MAG) which was convened by Michael Gove, Secretary of State for Education. The MAG comprised ministers, leading councillors representing the LGA and individual local councils, representatives of the Association of Directors of Children's Services (ADCS), the Society of Local Authority Chief Executives, school and academy representatives. The MAG's role was to advise the Secretary of State on how the role of Local Authorities might need to change in the light of the government's programme of reform and the current economic climate. It covered the whole age range of 0-19 and would input to the education white paper (currently expected on 1 November). This meant that there would not be a replacement for the National Commissioning Framework until the white paper was issued.

- 6.3 Locally, work was continuing to develop local commissioning statements and 14-19 strategy and the LGA and YPLA have both confirmed that it was crucial that this continues, despite the withdrawal of the National Commissioning Framework and the national policy uncertainty. Local Authorities continued to have a legal duty to secure provision and should continue to work towards this. Havering continued to build positive relationships with local providers, including through the 14-19 Partnership and those relationships would remain fundamentally important.
- 6.4 The Committee acknowledged the background to the 14-19 pathways at Havering. The Local Authority had never had a full 14-19 team, operating for years through various secondments and short-term consultancy support with no-one on core staffing budget. The Local Authority had however benefited from the recent appointment of a 14-19 Commissioning Officer (Dedicated School Grant funded) to support employer engagement, a secondment from Havering College of Further and Higher Education as a Diploma Lead Assessor (DfE Grant funded) and the 14-19 Senior Inspector in HIAS (which was core funded). The current focus for this last role was quality assurance, inspection and developmental support as undertaken under the auspices of HIAS.

7. BUDGET SCRUTINY

- 7.1 In both August 2010 and January 2011, the Committee met jointly with the other Overview and Scrutiny Committees in order to scrutinise aspects of the Council's proposed budget for the coming year. The meetings scrutinised several issues of relevance to this Committee.

8. SCHOOL'S PERFORMANCE

- 8.1 The Committee received a report from the Principal Inspector of Havering's Inspection & Advisory Service (HIAS) for schools, on the performance improvements in primary and secondary schools supported by the service.
- 8.2 The Committee noted that the core purpose of HIAS was to challenge and support all schools to improve. Overall attainment at all Key Stages in 2010 remained above the national average for each of the main national attainment measures in each Key Stage and was higher than the performance of Havering's statistical neighbours.
- 8.3 There was a particularly pleasing improvement in Key Stage 4, where Havering's improvement was greater than that of other local authorities and using the measure 5+A*-C GCSE grades with English and maths Havering was performing within the top 20% of all 150 Local Authorities for the first time for four years. In Key Stage 1 Havering's performance in reading, writing and maths remained within the top 20% of all Local Authorities. During 2009-10 primary and secondary schools receiving support improved in all cases more quickly than those schools not in receipt of support. Improvements were particularly significant in supported secondary schools.

9. EDUCATION COMPLAINTS

- 9.1 The Committee considered a report providing information regarding the numbers and types of complaints handled by the Learning and Achievement Department and Schools for the Future during 2010 and how they were dealt with to minimise the impact of justifiable concerns and to reduce the likelihood of future complaints.
- 9.2 The Committee noted that the Council currently had a corporate complaints model that captured non-social care complaints, principally education, and Children's Services activity. Attached to that are separate regulated processes, for the Children's Social Care and Adult Social Care Service (including health aspects). These complaints systems are statutory and have separate defined and differing regulated processes. A review was currently assessing how the current arrangements could be more effectively structured and managed for the future within the Social Care and Learning Directorate. There was an intention to explore the possibility of a more comprehensive single reporting process for the directorate.
- 9.3 Members noted the number of enquiries received from MPs and councillors and officers explained that a large proportion of these related to letters responding to refused school places. Often parents would go to elected members seeking support for their application/appeal for a school place. Members wished to see a briefing take place for all members on the school admissions process to assist them in supporting constituents.
- 9.4 On 10 March 2010, a briefing was organised for all councillors at the invitation of the Chairman of the Committee. The briefing sought to explain to members the school admissions process so as to better equip councillors with the knowledge and expertise with which to assist their constituents.

10. CHILDCARE SUFFICIENCY ASSESSMENT

- 10.1 The Committee received a report, presented by the Service Manager of the Foundation Years & Independent Advice Service, regarding the borough's second Childcare Sufficiency Assessment, which was required to be completed and published by April 2011.
- 10.2 The Committee noted that under Section 6 (1) of the Childcare Act 2006, local authorities have a duty to ensure that there is sufficient childcare in their areas. The findings from the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (CSA) would enable the Local Authority to draw up an Action Plan aiming to narrow the gaps in childcare provision as highlighted. The LA, in line with good practice had produced annual reviews of its first CSA and made these available to the public to clearly show that priorities were being met. Havering's reviews were published in April 2009 and in April 2010.
- 10.3 Members were gratified that the LA was meeting its sufficiency duty as the availability of childcare on a Borough wide basis continues to outstrip the number of 3 and 4 year olds in Havering.

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Background Papers

None.

The following comments have been submitted by members of staff:

Financial implications and risks:

There are no financial implications or risks arising directly from this report.

Human Resources implications and risks:

There are no human resources implications or risks arising directly from this report.

Legal implications and risks:

There are no legal implications or risks arising directly from this report.

Equalities and Social Inclusion Implications and Risks:

There are no equalities or social inclusion implications or risks arising directly from this report.

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CHILDREN & LEARNING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Subject Heading:

Corporate Parenting
Panel Annual Report
2010/2011

CMT Lead:

Ian Burns
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Executive
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Policy context:

Under the Council's Constitution, each Overview and Scrutiny Committee is required to submit an annual report of its activities to full Council. As a Sub-Committee of the Children & Learning Overview & Scrutiny Committee, practice has been for the Corporate Parenting Panel's Annual Report to also be referred.

SUMMARY

This report is the annual report of the Panel, summarising the Panel's activities during the past Council year.

It is planned for this report to stand as a public record of achievement for the year and enable members and others to compare performance year to year.

There are no direct equalities or environmental implications attached to this covering report. Any financial implications from reviews and work undertaken will be advised as part of the specific reviews.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Committee note the 2010/2011 Annual Report and authorise the Chairman to agree the final version.
2. That the Committee agree that an abridged version of the report be included in the Committee's own annual report and referred to Council.

REPORT DETAILS

- 1.1 Since the Panel's previous Annual Report, there had been both a Local and General Election, which had in turn led to changes in the membership of its parent body, the Children & Learning Overview and Scrutiny Committee, including a new Chairman. This has resulted in new membership of the Panel and consequently its early work was concerned with building an understanding of the Panel's role and responsibilities as well as the wider care system.
- 1.2 The Corporate Parenting Panel met 4 times throughout the Municipal year, and made two visits, firstly to the Leaving Care Club to talk to those who had left or who were about to leave care and secondly to the Children in Care Council. Some members of the Panel also made visits on the Panel's behalf to the accommodation of a number of children in care to scrutinise the standard of provision. The Panel's visit resulted in some of the young people being re-housed in more suitable accommodation, as well as a review of the service provided by some of the Council's contractors. A member of the Panel also made a visit to a Corporate Parenting Conference and highlighted a number of important matters for the Panel's consideration.
- 1.2 At its meeting in September 2011, the Panel met with officers from Social Care to consider and be advised and the roles and responsibilities of the Panel, noting that all councils, and particularly all elected members, carried responsibility for ensuring good outcomes for children looked after by their authority. They [members] were required to consider whether the standard of care provided would be good enough for their own children and, if not, to take steps to improve it. The Panel was informed that their role applied to all children defined legally as "looked after", which was a legal term created by the Children's Act 1989 to describe all children in the care of the local authority. The Panel also considered the various reasons why children were taken into care as well as the various legal sub-categories by which a child was in care.
- 1.3 At its meeting in November 2011, the Panel met with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Havering Foster Carers' Association to discuss their work and the quality of foster care in the borough, as well as satisfaction amongst the foster

carers. Members were keen to establish the difficulties and challenges faced by social workers. The foster carers responded by talking of arranging normal necessities such as doctors appointments and school day trips could be difficult. This was particularly the case when the parent of the child was still the legal guardian. Where the LA had care of the child then this process was easier. Carers would often place children under their own doctor, for ease and for emergencies approval was not required. Members were informed that pocket money for children would come out of the Carers Allowance. Child Benefit money would stop once the child was placed in care, though the parent would receive the payment for six weeks after the child had been placed. Most children in care were eligible for the Education Maintenance Allowance (this has since been abolished and replaced by a £180 million bursary scheme).

- 1.4 In January 2011, the Panel attended a visit to a group of care leavers, who formed a voluntary group comprised of young people who have left or who are about to leave care. The group would meet every so often at the Council's Midland House. Members discussed with the young people their concerns and the positive things about the care system in Havering, as well as their individual aspirations and how the Council could help them to achieve it. There was also some discussion of the accommodation provided for the young people leaving care in independent living, whether in shared accommodation or supported lodgings; many experiences of the accommodation was negative. Many stated that the hostels provided were of better quality; there was a consensus that the shared lodgings were not up to standard, and examples included broken windows, broken locks, blocked toilets, broken front and rear doors; as well as the accommodation being situated in areas with high-levels of crime and deprivation. In one case the young person lived in a flat that was so small that it could only fit a double bed. The debate was wide-ranging and whilst many expressed an extremely negative view of the care services; it was also clear that each young person's experience of the care system was unique. There was some extreme polarisation in terms of the general view of the care system which seemed to vary significantly depending upon age. Typically, the older amongst them seemed to have a more positive attitude to the care service than the younger
- 1.5 At its meeting in March 2011, the Panel met with a representative from the Council's Housing Department to discuss the allocation of houses to young people, particularly in light of issues arising from the members' visit to the Leaving Care Club. The Private Sector Leasing (PSL) Scheme had been operating for over six years and had built up a portfolio of 820 good quality properties to meet ongoing demand from groups in high housing need such as Young People Leaving Care. Under the scheme, properties were leased from private landlords across the borough for a period of three to five years and then let to the new tenants on a non-secure council tenancy. The Council managed the properties and the tenants were required to comply with conditions of their tenancy which were broadly the same as tenancies for council-owned accommodation. The Panel noted that in March 2010, a Service Level Agreement was made between the Housing Service and the Leaving Care Team that the PSL Scheme would accommodate all Young People Leaving Care, with certain exceptions. The Panel was informed that so far, the PSL Scheme had accommodated 22 Young People Leaving Care and

there was currently a further 13 clients that had been referred to the scheme and were awaiting accommodation.

- 1.6 Also at its March meeting, the Panel met with Havering's Virtual Head Teacher to consider his annual report for the last year. The role of the Virtual Head Teacher was described as providing support to schools and social workers to narrow the attainment gap between LAC and their peers, which was typically pronounced. Designated Teachers also oversaw the Personal Education Plan for every LAC in their respective schools. Personal Education Plans were documents which highlighted the primary needs for each LAC in terms of their education and learning. The PEP commenced at foundation state (age 5) and ran through to GCSE. The PEP needed to track attainment and was added to every 20 days. The Virtual Head Teacher oversaw each PEP. The process for reviewing the PEPS was underway, though only 50 of the 160 PEPs had been received. The Panel noted the various achievements and areas targeted for improvement.
- 1.7 Towards the end of March 2011, the Panel attended a meeting, by invitation, to Havering's Children in Care Council where members participated in a discussion with young people about the Panel's role and responded to a series of questions and requests made by the young people.
- 1.8 Throughout the year, the Panel received statistical data on children in care. The information provided included information on the number of children in care; and the patterns of fluctuating numbers, the ethnicity, care status and age-ranges of the children in care. The purpose of the data was to allow members to judge how effectively the service was providing for the looked after children in the borough.

Background Papers

None.

The following comments have been submitted by members of staff:

Financial implications and risks:

There are no financial implications or risks arising directly from this report.

Human Resources implications and risks:

There are no human resources implications or risks arising directly from this report.

Legal implications and risks:

There are no legal implications or risks arising directly from this report.

Equalities and Social Inclusion Implications and Risks:

There are no equalities or social inclusion implications or risks arising directly from this report.