

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
CHILDREN & LEARNING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
Town Hall
14 June 2012 (7.30 pm - 10.00 am)**

Present: Councillors Sandra Binion (Chairman), Gillian Ford (Vice-Chair), Nic Dodin, Robby Misir, Pat Murray, Frederick Thompson and Keith Wells

Co-opted Members:

Non-voting Member: Bev Whitehead

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

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Dennis Bull and Councillor Billy Taylor, co-opted member Margaret Cameron, Phillip Grundy, Jack How, Julie Lamb, Anne Ling, Keith Passingham and Garry Dennis

1 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 29 March 2012 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

2 DRUGS, ALCOHOL AND TEENAGE PREGNANCY

The Committee received a report from the Young People at Risk Commissioner regarding the progress made with strategies and action plans that are in place to contribute to reducing teenage pregnancy and substance misuse among young people in Havering.

The Committee was informed about progress made to date with reducing the rates of teenage pregnancies, noting that by 2008, Havering's teenage pregnancy rate was stubbornly high (above the England and London average) with over 60% of conceptions leading to a termination. The Children's Trust Board had approved the development and launch of a local Teenage Pregnancy Reduction Strategy in 2010 which had a strong emphasis on preventing teenage conceptions. In addition, the Children's Trust Board had adopted teenage pregnancy reduction as one of its key priorities in the Children and Young People's Plan (2011-14).

In 2010, the Teenage Pregnancy (TP) Board agreed that its overall Strategic aim is to work towards achieving a 15% reduction in the under 18 teenage conception rate by 2013 from the 2008 average conception rate of 42.6 per 1000 females aged under 18 to achieving 35.0 per 1,000 by 2013. Based on evidence gathered from across the UK, the TP Board agreed focusing its planning on the following four strategic objectives: Commissioning, prevention, education and workforce.

Led by the Teenage Pregnancy Board, since 2010 there had been steady progress to the point where Havering had the lowest under 18 conception rate for over 12 years. The Committee was asked to note that Havering continued to experience a reduction in the number of teenage conceptions that contributed to and strengthened a consistent downward trend in numbers and pregnancy rates in Havering (a trend that began early 2009).

In 2010, the Havering TP Board undertook a consultation project with young people aged 13 – 19 years old. The TP Board was eager to conduct a research project so that young people's views could develop local understanding of young people's sexual health needs. The survey had two main aims:

- To seek the views of young people aged 13-19 years about their experience of the delivery of sexual health information and contraceptive services in Havering.
- To learn from young people living in Havering what would help to improve access to sexual health information and contraceptive services.

Evidence from the survey had been used in part to inform the Teenage Pregnancy Action Plan (2012-13), which set out a coherent framework of actions to contribute to achieving the local strategic objective to reduce under 18 conceptions by 15% by 2013. Priorities of the Strategic Plan were as follows:

- Commission the Integrated Youth Service to deliver the Phoenix Teenage Pregnancy Counselling Service and coordinate the delivery of the free Condom Card Scheme
- Commission Young add action, the young people's substance misuse service provider, to deliver the targeted Sexual Health Support Service
- Provide a SRE Grant Scheme targeting and inviting 6 schools in Havering that are located in TP hotspots (Harold Hill, Rainham & North Romford) to apply for a grant to support and enrich their Sex and Relationships Education.
- Commission Living Well to provide the "TXTM8" service, the free 24hr sexual health information and advice text service for young people.

- Commission a new Z Card information mini booklet ensuring that is available and accessible to young people through a range of young people services borough-wide.
- Commission a sexual health training programme for staff who works across a range of children and young people services addressing subjects including skills to speak with young people about sex, supporting young people within the law, contraception & sexually transmitted infection courses.
- Conduct the annual Condom Card Scheme's User Satisfaction Survey with registered users to evaluate the service and measure its impact and outcomes on scheme users.
- Review and update the "Only Way is Safer Sex" Facebook campaign and Teenage Pregnancy & Contraception pages on the LBH website.

The Committee moved on to consider progress and actions taken to tackle substance misuse of drugs and alcohol amongst young people. The Government recognised that substance misuse could prevent children and young people from achieving positive outcomes - of living in a safe society and leading healthy, enjoyable and rewarding lives. The National Drugs Strategy Reducing Demand, Restricting Supply, Building Recovery (HO, 2010) included commitments to reducing alcohol and drug consumption that put young people at risk of harm.

Havering's strategic priorities in this area were commissioning, improving services, partnerships and digital worlds. The latter of these was about responding to and exploring new digital opportunities and maximising current technology to provide information, advice and support to young people, parents and professionals whilst recognising the need for reliable on-line sources of accurate information which young people could trust.

Robust data had been gathered from, amongst other places, the annual needs assessment. This exercise involved investigating the existing sources of information available at local, regional and national level and about drug and alcohol use and deciding the key questions that were to be asked to meet needs and improve services.

Based on the data from the annual survey, 'Drugs, Smoking and Drinking in England in 2010' (NHS, 2010), the estimated numbers of secondary school aged pupils (ages 11 to 15) in Havering experimenting and using substances were:

- In Havering, it was estimated that 1,068 young people aged 15 years old would have used a drug with 815 young people using a drug in the last year.
- It is estimated that 450 young people would have used a drug in the last month with an estimated 197 young people aged 15 using drugs at least once a month. For young people aged 15, it is estimated that 140 are using every day.

- The general trend across all the reported categories for frequency of use below show that use increases as young people get older, for example from 11yrs of age (4%) to 15 yrs of age (29%).
- For pupils reporting using drugs in the last year and pupils reporting cannabis use in the last year, it is estimated that this rises from 0.9% (Year 7) to 21.8% (Year 10).
- However, as the frequency of reported use increases, the difference between age groups becomes less, for example from 11yrs of age (3%) to 15 years of age (7%) for pupils reporting using drugs in the last week.
- Cannabis (9%), solvents (5%) and amphetamines (0.9%), are estimated as the three most used drugs.
- The age of 13 marks the beginning of a steep increase in the use of alcohol across all frequencies of use with a significant percentage of young people aged 15 reporting drinking during the last week (38% or circa 900 pupils) and month (24% or circa 600 pupils).

Replacing the previous drug and alcohol 'Tell Us Survey' in 2011, the new local schools survey asked pupils their views about their health, education, leisure and personal safety. The survey was carried out in the autumn 2011 and a total of 4 local secondary schools in Havering participated in the survey. Overall, 411 pupils completed the survey. Some of the key findings included:

- In the past 12 months, 24% of pupils reported that people drinking or being drunk had made them feel unsafe "all of the time" or "most of the time". Also, 24% of pupils reported that they "sometimes" felt unsafe as a result of other drinking or being drunk. 29% reported that they had never felt unsafe.
- In the past 12 months, 34% of pupils reported that people dealing or using drugs had made them feel unsafe "all of the time" or "most of the time". 31% of pupils reported that they had never felt unsafe.
- 76% of pupils reported that they were satisfied with the information about drugs and alcohol at school.
- 48% of pupils reported drinking alcohol within the last 12 months while 52% reported that they had never drunk alcohol.
- 14% of pupils reported to have been drunk at least once or more in the last 4 weeks; this equates to circa 2,100 secondary school aged pupils.
- 7% of pupils reported drinking alcohol "1 or 2 times a week"; this equates to circa 1,050 pupils. 3% reporting drinking "most days" which equates to 450 pupils.
- 10% of pupils reported using drugs within the last 12 months which equates to 1,500 pupils.
- 4% of pupils reported using drugs "every day" which equates to 600 pupils.

The data above had informed the Substance Misuse Action Plan 2012-13 had an over-riding purpose of ensuring that both the commissioned and

youth offending services would be accountable to and working towards developing consistently high quality standards and arrangements for professionals, young people and their families.

The key priorities for the 2012-13 action plan were:

- Commission a service to identify and build resilience with schools pupils with substance misusing parents.
- Commission a workforce training programme in 2012-13 for professionals working with children and young people in Havering, ensuring that all sectors are invited to attend the training programme.
- Establish a volunteering scheme to ensure that young people engaged with the commissioned substance misuse service have their wider health and social needs identified and supported to access local services.
- To strengthen the annual needs assessment, design and launch a young people's drugs and alcohol survey encouraging schools and youth support services to support young people complete the survey.
- Design, consult on and implement on-line user satisfaction surveys that invited professionals, young people and parents to comment on their experience of using the commissioned substance misuse service.
- Consult on and design a Quality Assurance Charter outlining a set of standards that professionals can expect from the commissioned service, promoting this Charter through the on-line and paper referral pathways.
- Consult on the development of the local authority website pages for substance misuse related to young people, promoting new pages to the community through the website, professional groups and social media pathways.
- Consult on the development, design and implementation of social media products, in particular developing Facebook and Application software (known as "Apps") in order to maximise new technology to signpost young people and parents to the local commissioned services.

Members discussed various issues arising from the strategies and sought to understand the challenges that Havering faced in relation to the other local authorities that were the borough's statistical neighbours. Members sought to understand the issues that led to girls becoming pregnant and discussed the possible correlation between children in care and teenage pregnancy. Members further questioned and sought clarification on the kinds of digital and school or other public-based campaigns that were seeking to raise awareness. The Committee highlighted other venues and spheres which might increase the effectiveness of campaigns.

The Committee noted the report.

The Committee considered and discussed its annual report from the previous council year, which provided a summary of work and activity undertaken by the Committee.

Members requested that the work of the Committee's sub-committee, the Corporate Parenting Panel, be added to the end of the report, highlighting the success of the Panel in the recent Ofsted Safeguarding Inspection as well as the work of Members in ensuring better housing for young people.

Subject to changes, the Committee accepted its annual report for submission to Council.

4 FUTURE AGENDAS

The Committee requested the following items for future agendas:

- Update on the new careers service to replace the service previously provided by Connexions.
- The SEN Code of Practice and resources given to headteachers for dealing with children with SEN or disabilities in reception year.

Chairman