

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE  
CHILDREN & LEARNING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
Town Hall  
19 November 2013 (7.00 - 9.40 pm)**

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

**Co-opted Members:** Philip Grundy (Church of England), Jack How (Roman Catholic Church, Anne Ling (Primary Schools) and Ian Rusha (NUT)

**Officer Attendance:** Joy Hollister, Group Director, Adults, Children and Housing, Mary Pattinson, Head of Learning and Achievement, Daren Mulley, Public Health Commissioning Manager, Deborah Redknapp, Health Improvement Contracts Specialist, Lorraine Hunter-Brown, Committee Officer

**Apologies:** Garry Dennis (Secondary Schools), Margaret Cameron (NAHT) and Keith Passingham (NASUWT) and Kathy Bundred, Head of Children's Services

**70 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND ANNOUNCEMENT OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**

Apologies for absence were noted.

**71 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

None declared.

**72 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

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

**73 SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND CHANGES ARISING FROM THE CHILDREN AND FAMILY BILL 2013**

The Committee were asked to note the changes as follows:

- Arisen out of the Green Paper Support and Aspiration which was published in March 2011
- Creating a more family friendly SEND process
- Draws together the support a child requires across education, health and care (EHC)
- Statements of Special Educational Need replaced by EHC plan
- Law early next year (February/March 2014)
- Implementation in September 2014
- Local Authorities across the country have received a small amount of funding as pathfinders for the new approach.
- Havering is working with Bexley and Bromley who are London Pathfinder Champions.

Officers were advised that the Statement of Educational Needs will be replaced by a new plan for every child who has special needs up to the age of 25 years if they remain in education. A SEND Project team with representatives from education, children's, adults and parents health services had been set up with working groups to cover all major changes. In addition there would be a Parents/Carers Forum and an advocacy group gathering the views of children and young people.

There were four major areas of change and development:

The Local Offer

- Requirement to publish a local offer of services for children with SEND on its website
- To show parents how services can be accessed and include health, education, social care, schools and the voluntary sector.
- Over 50 parents have been consulted about how the offer should look and how they would wish to access it.
- Working groups producing content
- Model site now up and running
- Discussion about how to incorporate into other Council websites.
- Additionally Local Authorities will have to introduce a system of mediation

Education Health and Care Plans from 0-25

- Local Authorities must ensure the integration of services for education, health and social care for children and young people with SEND up to the age of 25
- Single assessment procedure (involving parents and children) so that families do not have to repeat their story a number of times
- Work has begun with a view to creating a simpler system with a single point of access if possible
- A pilot programme will start with the very youngest children in December

### Joint Commissioning

- Clause 26 of the Draft Bill says there must be joint commissioning arrangements between education, health and social care
- Must ensure that there are resources are provided to assess children and then provide for their needs.
- Formal mechanism for resolving complaints and difficulties between the agencies.  
Discussions have begun with colleagues in the CCG and a working group has been set up

### Personal Budgets

- Clause 26 of the Draft Bill says there must be joint commissioning arrangements between education, health and social care
- Must ensure that there are resources are provided to assess children and then provide for their needs.
- Formal mechanism for resolving complaints and difficulties between the agencies.

It was noted that the DfE were consulting on how quickly the move to education, health and care plans should be, however, it was proposed that all new assessments from September 2014 should be under the new system. Eventually over the next two to three years, all children would have had their statements changed to EHC plans following consultation with their parents. Officers assured the Committee that Havering was well placed to achieve timescales however it was advised that there was a need to take care around commissioning future health services. With regards to education, an EHC plan would name a school or education provider with the appropriate facilities. If there is disagreement between parties, the mediation service would then be asked to resolve the issue. Officers confirmed that there was no additional government funding for the scheme.

The Committee noted the report and requested a briefing be provided on different tariffs. The Chairman requested an update on the new scheme at the end of 2014.

## 74 **TEENAGERS SEXUAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE**

The Committee received a presentation of the report by Daren Mulley and Deborah Rednapp. The first part of the report was council funded for the Children's Trust and provided data collated by the Office of National Statistics for the years 2010 and 2011.

### Teenagers Sexual Health

Officers acknowledged that it was an absolute priority of the council to reduce teenage pregnancy in Havering, however, it was disappointing that the borough continued to experience a relatively higher rate of fewer than 16 conceptions although overall there had been a steady reduction in the

rate and number of teenage conceptions. It was suggested that the increase could be due to young people coming into Havering from outside areas.

Committee members expressed their concerns about the abortion rate at 7.7% per 1000 and that the conception rate per 1000 of 7.4% was disappointing. Officers advised that Havering had a very high school attainment rate which was linked to high terminations, and that within the live birth statistics, the actual number of teenage mothers was low. The Committee were also advised that key areas in the borough were being targeted by School Nurses.

Officers reassured the Committee that all options were discussed and every support given to teenage mums whether they chose to terminate or proceed with the pregnancy.

A Committee member expressed concern about one of the survey findings where one in six stated that they knew of someone who had been sexually exploited. Officers advised that there were processes in all schools where young people could safely report about themselves or others being exploited. In addition, the authority was planning a survey on the matter for 2014 and that the police were also involved in discussions in schools. It was noted that an LSCB sub group was carrying out work on the subject and the Chairman requested that their findings be submitted to the Committee on completion. Further concern was raised with regards to the lack of specialist services in the UK to provide support to sexually exploited children.

Officers advised that recommendations were being formulated and would be circulated to the Committee once they had been presented to the Health and Wellbeing Board in the New Year. The Chairman also requested sight of the 2012 data when it became available.

### Substance Misuse

The Committee was advised that the second part of the report provided an insight into how services was performing as well as identifying trends/patterns so that services could be reprioritised if necessary.

The report was summarised as follows:

- Across England in 2012, the prevalence of illegal drug use was at its lowest since 2001 and alcohol use also continues a downward trend since 2001.
- In Havering, the majority of teenagers have never tried a drug. In contrast, the majority of teenagers have tried alcohol.
- In Havering, almost half of all teenagers have not tried smoking. Those who have, tried smoking under the age of 16.

- 60% teenagers in Havering have been offered a drug in the last 12 months.
- 40% teenagers had reported trying drugs. Cannabis, ecstasy, legal highs and cocaine were the preferred drugs.
- 25% of young people have not received drugs education in schools.
- The number of young people referred into the local service remains stable at just over 125 in 2012-13.
- In 2012-13, the overwhelming majority of young people were seeking support for their cannabis and alcohol misuse.
- Almost half of young people referred into the service in 2012-13 were aged 15-16 and lived in Harold Hill, Rainham and Romford.
- Clients receiving early interventions in 2012-13 were more likely to report being drug free whilst specialist clients were more likely to report reduced use.
- 100% of professionals surveyed reported that they would recommend the service to other professionals and parents/carers.

The Committee were advised that there had been a decrease in young people using drugs and alcohol in Havering. The survey was conducted on-line and 324 people between the ages of 16 years and 17 years took part. The Chairman requested that the survey questionnaire be forwarded for circulation to members. The number of young people referred to services for drug or alcohol abuse remained stable at 125 for 2012/13. These services were free of charge and young people were referred by schools or other agencies.

The Committee requested assurance that Trading Standards were still carrying out test purchases in local off licences. In addition, it was requested that the Director of Children's Services and Housing check if a social housing tenant recently convicted of growing cannabis had been evicted.

The data collated confirmed that early intervention provided more positive outcomes. The Committee was advised that preventative measures were being developed and would be the responsibility of School Nurses. Officers also advised that there was a former drug addict who gave talks in schools and colleges and that all schools had drugs and sex education programmes covering primary to sixth form.

Committee Members were concerned that there were no plans for educating parents in addition to the absence of data on children with parents who had drug problems. It was suggested that the Troubled Families Team be

utilised as very often young people obtained money from their parents for drugs/alcohol.

Officers advised that there had been discussions with the Amy Winehouse Foundation about providing free drugs education in Havering Schools. The Chairman requested that an update be provided to the Committee on future discussions with the Foundation.

Officers also advised that an action plan would be formulated with recommendations in response to the report findings and it was agreed that this would also be circulated to Committee Members following submission to the Health and Wellbeing Board.

The Chairman requested sight of the data for 2012 when this became available.

In summary, the Committee noted the full report and recommended that it would be worthwhile to hold an event in Havering featuring sexual health and the dangers of drugs.

**75 COMMISSIONING SCHOOL PLACES STRATEGY**

It was noted that the 2013 report on Commissioning School Places was due to go before Cabinet on 20 November 2013. The Committee agreed to review the report at the appropriate time in the New Year.

**76 APPROVAL OF SCOPING DOCUMENT FOR CHILDREN'S HEALTH TOPIC GROUP**

The Committee noted the Scoping Document for the Children's Health Topic Group.

**77 FUTURE AGENDAS**

An addition meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee would be held on 5 December 2013 to train and prepare members on the Self Evaluation Form relating to OFSTED inspections.

**78 URGENT BUSINESS**

**Corbets Tey School**

Committee members received a verbal update on safeguarding issues at Corbets Tey School from the Director of Children's Services. It was agreed that the original media briefing document provided to Councillors would be circulated to the Committee.

### Transport to Dycourts School

Officers were asked to respond to a complaint received by a Committee member at the September OSC meeting on transport difficulties to and from Dycourts School.

Officers advised that they had been extremely concerned to hear of the transport difficulties. One of the processes had been to review the routes, cluster points and taxi journeys, however, it was decided not to change the cluster points and encourage parents to bring the children to the cluster points. Officers concluded that providing an additional bus would not solve the problem but were looking at the introduction of additional forms of travel in time for January 2014. It was regretted that the number of children in wheelchairs was adding to travel time and complicating the journeys. Dycourts had five or six coaches and there were no further funds to provide another.

Committee members expressed their disappointment that this was the second occasion the matter had been brought to the Committee and that children were still arriving late for school. The Committee also voiced concerns about users having difficulty in contacting colleagues in the Schools and Learning department.

In summary, the Committee requested that there should be a process whereby the driver reports journey times of longer than one hour. The Chairman asked that the officer report back to the Committee with a briefing on what action was being taken.

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**Chairman**