

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
CHILDREN & LEARNING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
Committee Room 2 - Town Hall
4 March 2014 (7.00 - 9.50 pm)**

- Present:** Councillors Sandra Binion (Chairman), Gillian Ford (Vice-Chair), Nic Dodin and Melvin Wallace and Keith Wells
- Co-opted Members:** Julie Lamb (Special Schools), Anne Ling (Primary Schools) and Ian Rusha (NUT)
- Officer Attendance:** Kathy Bundred (LBH), Mary Pattinson (LBH), Phillipa Brent-Usherwood (LBH) and Lorraine Hunter-Brown (LBH)
- Observer:** Hemant Patel (Healthwatch)
- Apologies:** Councillors Robbi Misir and Pat Murray. Phillip Grundy (Church of England), Jack How (Roman Catholic Church), Gary Dennis, (Secondary Schools), Margaret Cameron (NAHT) and Keith Passingham (NASUWT)
- +Councillor Pam Light was substitute for Councillor Wendy Brice-Thompson and + Councillor Rebecca Bennett was substitute for Councillor Frederick Thompson

96 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND ANNOUNCEMENT OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

Apologies for absence were received and noted. The Chairman welcomed Councillors Pam Light and Rebecca Bennett as substitutes for Councillors Wendy Brice-Thompson and Frederick Thompson respectively.

97 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

None declared.

98 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.

99 **MINUTES**

The Committee considered and agreed the minutes of the meeting held on 21 January 2014 and authorised the Chairman to sign them.

100 **JOINT OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MINUTES 23 JANUARY 2014**

The Committee considered and approved the minutes of the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 23 January 2014 and authorised the Chairman to sign them.

101 **ANNUAL CABINET REPORT - REVIEW OF CHILDREN'S CENTRES FEBRUARY 2013**

The Committee noted the annual Cabinet Report on Children's Centres for 2013 and agreed that the Committee should receive an updated report as soon as possible in the new term and that the item should be added to the future work plan for 2014/2015.

102 **CHILDREN & LEARNING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE/CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL ANNUAL REPORT 2013-2014**

The Committee noted and agreed the contents of the Annual Report pending the addition of topics discussed at the Children's Health Topic Group meeting in paragraph 7.1.

103 **EARLY HELP ASSISTANCE/TROUBLED FAMILIES - TO FOLLOW**

Officers apologised to the Committee for the absence of written reports as they were incomplete, however, a verbal update was given.

The Committee were informed that the Local Authority had been largely successful in identifying all the families and that all necessary measures had been taken. This phase had been focused mainly on teenagers and that the planning of new priorities for the second phase was currently underway. The Committee were asked to note that there had been some criticism from OFSTED which was based around criteria for crime prevention and school exclusions. It was difficult for Havering to find criteria formulas when it did not operate an exclusions policy.

Officers also advised that they believed they were making a difference in early help by addressing such issues as domestic violence and drug and alcohol abuse.

The Committee agreed that this should be a future agenda item and should be included in the future work plan for 2014/2015.

104 **SELF EVALUATION OF THE EDUCATION QUALITY ASSURANCE FUNCTION & OFSTED INSPECTION (EDUCATION) LOCAL AUTHORITY DASHBOARD**

The Committee noted the final document.

Section one was a summary of performance in all the main education stages, early years foundation stage, key stage 1, key stage 2, key stage 4 and post-16, focusing mainly on Key stage 5. This section looked at trends, strengths and areas for development in terms of regulator judgements, attainments and progress and the gap between average attainment and progress and that of vulnerable groups.

Section two evaluated the borough's effectiveness in the areas as set out by OFSTED under paragraph 17 of its framework for the inspection of Local Authority arrangements for supporting school improvement. There were nine separate areas, and the self-evaluation comprised of an outline of key strengths, the evidence supporting areas of strength, the areas for development, the link with the LA's 2013/14 and 2014/15 service/implementation plans and the lead officer accountable for each set of actions. Members were advised that a Consultant had been engaged to look at how the borough was evaluating and who had spoken to a sample of secondary school teachers (not academies). The outcome was that Havering did have an accurate evaluation.

It was acknowledged that there were still some areas where urgent improvement was required as outlined in the report as follows:

- EYFS: getting more settings to good; increasing the average point score; narrowing the gap between children from poor homes and the rest;
- Primary: increasing the number of good and outstanding schools; supporting schools that are vulnerable to a judgement of requires improvement or worse; and ensuring the gap is narrowed for children in poverty;
- Secondary: the number of schools rated as satisfactory or requires improvement by Ofsted; levels of progress and overall attainment; and the gap between most vulnerable groups and the average of all other pupils;
- School VI forms and colleges: to develop outstanding providers; the average points score (APS); the percentage of pupils getting three good A levels;
- NEETs: the low percentage of young people aged 17 and 18 in full-time education
- compared with London and England; and NEET levels amongst some vulnerable groups (most minority groups have very low NEET levels);
- Special schools: none outstanding as rated by Ofsted; ensuring we develop robust attainment data;

- Primary and secondary attendance: levels of absence are higher than London and England averages;
- Secondary exclusions: permanent exclusions are higher than the average of London and English LA areas
- In summary, our key priorities therefore are to, together, increase the percentage of good and outstanding providers and narrow the performance gap, particularly for those children in poverty.

The Committee noted that a 15 month action plan focusing on areas for development would be completed shortly and agreed that this document should be a future agenda item and included on the Children and Learning Overview and Scrutiny Committee work plan for 2014/2015.

105 **OFSTED ACTION PLAN**

The Committee noted the amended RAG rated OFSTED Action Plan for Children and Young People's Services. Although there were no Red ratings, there were a number of Amber ratings which officers advised were being given the highest priority. An amber rating was possibly awaiting sign off and therefore the action had been completed but was not showing as completed on the system. Additional resources were being put into IT and training and that the department was almost fully staffed. The Committee requested an update on Amber rated actions and were advised as follows:

Timely Completion of Assessments

There were difficulties in assessment timescales owing to processes which were under review, however, officers stressed this situation would never compromise child safety.

Chronologies in Child Protection

Generally these were of good quality but some were not. System reprogramming was necessary in order to implement the action fully. Members received assurances from Officers that casework was up to date but not perfect. A running case record would have every conversation whilst a good chronology would select significant events and conversations. The new CCM system had a chronology tool and that this system would be fully operational by May 2014.

Collation and analysis of Management Performance Data

Officers advised that OFSTED had felt that this was not sufficiently robust in the way information was presented to the monthly Children's Social Care Performance Monitoring Board, however, performance management frameworks had been refined throughout the year in line with OFSTED requirements. A new performance reporting cycle would be implemented from February 2014.

Workforce strategy

OFSTED had found the strategy did not translate into a coherent action plan in line with transformation of services. Officers advised that an action plan was in place however delays had occurred because additional recruitment had been required in order to take the strategy forward.

Quality of Supervision variable

The quality of supervision during the OFSTED inspection ranged from good to adequate. The supervision policy had been refreshed to reflect the OFSTED findings and was due to be implemented by March 2014. As a permanent management team was now in place, this would also ensure consistency. Officers advised that this action would be rated green very soon as it was a high priority.

Quality Assurance

The inspection found that plans were not consistently coherent and all too often focused on tasks or services required rather than what was needed to change for the child. Progress had been delayed owing to staff turnover issues which were being addressed and that target timescales had been put back to March 2014.

Children's and families viewpoints

As Children's and families viewpoints are sought on their experiences, current feedback to improve service delivery had yet to be embedded. Officers underlined that views were being sought and that improvement had continued at all levels although there was not yet consistent evidence that feedback was informing service delivery.

Officers advised that all LAC contribute their views and this is evidenced in their files. In response to being questioned about how often Social Workers would talk to children, the Committee were informed that there were statutory times which vary according to which plan the child was on. None the less, it was also important to give children space to talk to others – ie teachers.

Officers advised that this was an area where improvements would continue to be developed and asked the Committee to note that 100% of LAC contributed their views to a statutory review. Early Help Services also generated a lot of feedback and this would be systemised following restructuring.

The Committee noted the report and were of the view that a lot of work had still yet to be done in order to achieve a good standard and that the recruitment and retention of staff was a key component. Officers advised that they were looking to implement better pay and reward structures as well as training and development programmes in order to address this.

Officers asked the Committee to note that there was a new OFSTED framework for Children and Young People's Services. The scope of the inspection would cover the following:

- Children and young people at risk of harm
- Children and young people referred to the Local Authority
- Those who become the subject of a multi-agency child protection plan
- Children and young people or whose families are receiving social work services
- Children and young people accommodated under section 20 and those in care
- Children and young people who have been looked after under the Children Leaving Care Act 2000
- Children and young people who have left care

Officers advised that a four point judgement scale would be made in relation to the service – outstanding, good, requires improvement and inadequate. There would be three judgements and sub-judgement categories as follows:

- Experiences and progress of children who need help or protection
- Experiences and progress of children looked after and achieving permanence, including graded judgements on adoption performance and care leavers
- Leadership, management and governance, including a review of the effectiveness of the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

A judgement of inadequate in any category would mean that overall effectiveness would be also judged inadequate.

The Chairman requested that the new framework be presented at the forthcoming Corporate Parenting Panel meeting on 18 March 2014.

106 **SCHOOL TRANSPORT UPDATE**

The Committee received a verbal update from the Head of Learning and Achievement on the issue of School Transport to Dycorts and Corbets Tey Schools.

Members were advised that the authority had a statutory responsibility for Special Education Needs. Much work had been carried out over the last few years and there was still further work to be done. Supporting SEN children to become travel independent by introducing Travel Training was one option. The Authority recently ran a pilot scheme where 29 children had been trained and that a further 19 children were also receiving training. The Authority was looking to significantly increase the number of children and young people to become independent in travelling to school.

A transport review had been carried out on the current arrangements where the number of coaches had been reduced with the introduction of more pick-up points. The same routes were still being maintained. An additional factor for travel time was the needs of the wheelchair users which added to the complexity of the journeys.

There had been an increased demand for SEN transport at the same time as significant budgetary savings had to be made. A further review would be linked to changes in the SEN Bill and to providing parents with more options.

It was also the Committee's view that not all SEN children were suitable for travel training or that travel training would be more apt once they were older. The officer confirmed that this was indeed understood and that no child would be forced to undergo the training.

The Committee noted the update and it was agreed that the Committee would be kept updated on the review process and outcomes for 2014/2015.

107 **SCHOOL PERFORMANCE - EQUALITIES ANALYSIS**

The Committee received the School Performance Report for Havering's Primary and Secondary schools for 2013 and accompanying annexe of tables. The report summarised performance in key stage assessments, tests, examinations and Ofsted inspections.

The 2012 / 2013 school year was generally a positive year for Havering schools. Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) results were strong, and once again Havering enjoyed its best ever results at key stage one and equalled the previous best (2012) at key stage two. Following a fall at GCSE in 2012, the 5 A*-C grades (including English and Maths) pass rate also increased in 2013. There was only one Havering school in the primary sector below the government floor standard (at least 60 per cent achieving Level 4+ in Reading, Writing and Mathematics) and none below floor in the secondary sector.

Overall attainment at key stages one, two and four remained above the national average for each of the main attainment measures and were higher than the average performance of our statistical neighbours.

Early Years (EYFS)

Table 1 showed that pupils in Year R in Havering schools did particularly well in 2013 outperforming London (a high-performing area), its 'statistical neighbours' (Bexley) and England. The four year olds performed better than those in 134 out of 152 'top tier' LAs. Havering was 18th which is near to the top 10 per cent.

Key Stage 1

Table 2 showed that Year 2 pupils in performed at a consistently high level against all comparator groups, within the top half of the top quartile in 2013 and was close to the top 10 per cent in England.

Key Stage 2

The table showed that pupil performance was now very good, and had improved in the four year period shown. Performance was better than that in most of the comparator groups, and significantly better than most. Inner London boroughs had on average, overtaken Havering but this was within the context of Inner London being the area that was the most improved in the country, and remained extremely well-funded.

In reading and writing, performance was very good when compared with statistical neighbours – first in reading and second best progress in writing but only in the second quartile against all LAs and slightly lower than the London average.

Key Stage 4

The two key performance indicators were progress pupils had made since key stage two and their attainment. Progress was measured in mathematics and English. Key stage 4 progress in mathematics was improving in absolute terms, although declining slightly in comparative ranking – from top quartile to ‘top second quartile’ progress. The decline was primarily due to the excellent improvement in London as a whole.

Progress in English was less good while remaining sound. There was a marking ‘borderline shift’ issue in 2012 that particularly affected pupils here; but in 2013 progress was better than the figure nationally and amongst statistical neighbours.

The table showed Havering pupils continued good performance. Havering’s national league table position had fallen to just outside the top quartile as progress in all comparator groups had improved and that the three-point improvement in the period was bettered nationally by a seven point increase.

Attainment Gap

Narrowing the attainment gap between pupils entitled to free school meals (FSM) and all other pupils (non-FSM) was a key government priority. Whilst there were other important factors, analysis shows that poverty is often the key factor thus the introduction of the pupil premium.

Pupils attending Havering schools had a larger gap in attainment in 2013 between those currently eligible for FSM and Non-FSM pupils than was found nationally at both key stage two and key stage four. Nationally, the

gap had narrowed by one point in the period, but it was a point lower than Havering's in 2010, and as Havering's increased, it was now three points more.

If the performance of all pupil premium eligible groups in 2013 were used, 43 per cent achieved the benchmark level for key stage four. This was three points higher than the national average. The performance of all other pupils was 68 per cent against the same measure and was only one point higher than nationally. This means the gap at 25 per cent was two points lower than nationally.

It was recognised that the gap was still high and it was the aspiration of the team that it should reduce to zero. A quality assurance team had produced a narrowing the gap action plan and had identified target schools and academies where the gaps were largest. Quality assurance visits had also been scheduled to assess the effectiveness of the school's systems and ensure that the pupil premium resources are targeted correctly and that it funds high impact intervention strategies.

Key Stage Five – post-16 results

Members were asked to note that the movement of post-16 students in London was considerable and therefore the tables should not be relied upon to give an accurate measure of the performance of Havering students.

A level three qualification is an advanced (A) level or equivalent. In 2010, 99 per cent of students in post-sixteen institutions achieved this benchmark. This was top-class – within the top three per cent of areas in performance, however, performance has declined since then along with Havering's ranking which is now in the lower quartile and below all the comparator groups. While all of these have declined, this is at a much lower rate than in Havering.

It was important to note Havering's school sixth forms tended to perform more highly than the colleges. This was largely due to the colleges accepting a lower tariff on entry and offering a higher proportion of non-A-level subjects. The lower levels of attainment on entry meant that generally students from the colleges attained lower levels at the end of their sixth form courses.

Members requested to know what was being done to improve college performance and were advised that the colleges had their own governing bodies and therefore the Local Authority did not have a statutory responsibility. It was noted however that the Head of Learning and Achievement had regular meetings with both Principals.

Schools causing concern

The Havering School Improvement Services (Hsis) had developed a comprehensive quality assurance framework. Following an assessment,

including a comprehensive analysis of detailed performance data, every school including academy schools was placed in one of five categories. Category 1 were schools expected to remain good or outstanding at their next inspection, whilst Category 2 schools were expected to be 'good' at their next inspection

It was schools in category three that were 'of concern' to the Local Authority. Category three schools were split into three sub-categories as follows:

- schools at risk of being categorised by Ofsted as 'requiring improvement to be good (RI)' – note that 'requires improvement' has replaced 'satisfactory, and means a school judged RI will be judged to be 'grade four', requiring intervention, if it is RI at two subsequent inspections;
- schools at risk of failure – defined as schools issued with a formal warning notice by the LA; graded as RI by Ofsted; or at risk of being judged to have 'serious weaknesses' by Ofsted at its next inspection; and
- schools in special measures or judged to have serious weaknesses; or that fell below the relevant Department for Education (DfE) 'floor standard' in the last assessment.

It was noted that 17 per cent of primary schools and 50 per cent of secondary schools in Havering were of "concern". Whilst it was acknowledged there was a need to improve the number of good schools from four out of five to more like nine out of ten and to help to move more good primary schools to 'outstanding', it was the secondary (and post-16) sectors where consolidation was most urgent.

Currently, almost a third of secondary-age pupils attended a school that was not yet good or better. Local Authority quality assurance staff were working closely with a number of schools on improvements in key areas that would reduce the risks of a decline in OFSTED categorisation of secondary schools that were currently rated as good, and to assist those currently judged to be satisfactory or (where inspections have been since September 2012) required improvement to be good.

The Committee noted the report and the challenges facing Havering and commended pupils and students in their achievements, and the successful contributions made by head teachers, teachers, support staff and governors.

108 **NEETS STRATEGY**

The Committee received the NEETS update for 14-19 years olds and the accompanying draft Raising Participation Age (RPA) report.

The government had increased the age to which all young people in England must continue in education or training, requiring them to continue until the end of the academic year in which they turn 17 from 2013 and until

their 18th birthday from 2015. Young people would have a choice about how they continue in education or training which could be through:

- full-time study in a school, college or with a training provider
- full-time work or volunteering combined with part-time education or training
- an apprenticeship.

The Local Authorities had a responsibility to support young people into education or training, which were set out in the following duties:

- Secure sufficient suitable education and training provision for all young people aged 16-19 and for those aged 20-24 with a Learning Difficulty Assessment in their area.
- Make available to young people aged 13-19 and to those aged 20-24 with a Learning Difficulty Assessment support that will encourage, enable or assist them to participate in education or training. Tracking young people's participation successfully was a key element of this duty.

In addition, ESA 2008 placed two new duties on Local Authorities with regard to 16 and 17 year-olds as follows:

- A Local Authority in England must ensure that its functions are (so far as they are capable of being so) exercised so as to promote the effective participation in education or training, to which Part 1 of ESA 2008 applies, with a view to ensuring that those persons fulfil the duty to participate in education or training.
- A Local Authority in England must make arrangements to enable it to establish (so far as it is possible to do so) the identities of persons, to whom Part 1 of ESA 2008 applies, but who are failing to fulfil the duty to participate in education or training.
- In order to discharge the duty, Local Authorities must collect information to identify young people who are not participating, or who are at risk of not doing so, to target resources on those who need them most. The information collected is maintained in the appropriate format on the Client Caseload Information System (CCIS). In order to fulfil the duty Local Authorities will need to have arrangements in place to confirm young people's current activity at regular intervals. This includes the exchange of information with education and training providers and other services as well as direct contact with young people.
- Local Authorities were expected to continue to work with schools to identify those who are in need of targeted support or who are at risk of not participating post-16. These learners are identified through the gathering of local intelligence and referrals are made to Prospects for targeted intensive support in order to support sustained participation.

There was also a new duty on young people themselves. From 2013, all young people were under a duty to participate in education or training until the end of the academic year in which they turn 17. From 2015, this would rise to their 18th birthday. In addition, schools and colleges would also be playing a crucial role and would be held to account for the destinations of all their leavers through annual publication of Destination Measure including transition of SEN pupils. It was also a duty of all educational institutions to tell a Local Authority when a young person was no longer participating.

There were also duties on employers to take certain actions in respect of young people who meet the duty by combining work with education/training. These duties, however, would not be brought into force at this stage and the possibility of commencing them would be kept under review.

It was noted that the Local Authority were working with a number of partner agencies to ensure the participation and support for all young people in the area.

Officers assured the Committee that those young people who were considered high risk of becoming a NEET were being tracked. Havering had a low number of NEETs and Unknowns, as in December 2013, 96.92% of young people were actively participating in education, employment and training. Officers advised the Committee that 20% of NEETs were teenage mothers or were connected with the Youth Offending Services.

The Committee noted the report and raised the issue that provision for young people with Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities had yet to be commissioned. Officers assured members that they were aware of this and that two separate teams were investigating the matter in addition to providing clear information for users. The Committee were asked to note that new processes were due to commence for SEN in September 2014 and that key workers would be allocated to them and would remain with them for the duration of their education and training. Committee members requested that this should be noted in the report in addition to the reference to SEN on page 101 of the RPA report where it should also include the parents of children with Learning Difficulties.

109 **FUTURE AGENDAS**

The Chairman announced that this was the final meeting of Children and Learning Overview and Scrutiny until the new term. It was agreed to update the work plan with the additional items from this meeting and to check that all previous items had been dealt with. The finished document would be made available to the new Committee.

110 **URGENT BUSINESS**

No urgent matters were raised.

Chairman