

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
CHILDREN & LEARNING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE
Committee Room 3B - Town Hall
9 July 2019 (7.00 - 8.15 pm)**

Present: Councillors Judith Holt (Chairman), Christine Vickery (Vice-Chair), Gillian Ford, Tele Lawal, Dilip Patel and Carol Smith

Co-opted Members:

Church Representatives:
Jack How

Non-voting Member:

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Sally Miller, Councillor Reg Whitney, Lynne Bennett, Ian Rusha, Julie Lamb, Kathy Freeman and Tim Aldridge.

Councillor Tony Durdin was absent.

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

1 DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest.

2 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman welcomed Councillor Dilip Patel to his first meeting of the Sub-Committee.

The Chairman informed the Sub-Committee that she was looking forward to visiting four schools; Emerson Park Academy, Redden Court Academy, Ardleigh Green Infants and Junior Schools before the summer closure.

3 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 30 April 2019 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4 **PERFORMANCE REPORT UPDATE - QUARTER FOUR**

The Sub-Committee received the Quarter Four performance indicators (PIs) update. The PIs are the standards by which performance of services are measured within the Council. These are compared over four quarters of the municipal year to monitor performance standards. Most are given a “RAG rating” on the basis of Red (off track), Amber (at risk) and Green (on track).

The report provided the following highlights:

- The percentage of 16-18 year olds who are not in education, employment or training (NEET), or not known was recently confirmed as 3.1% for 2018/19, which was better than both the England average of 5.5% and the London average of 4.8%, and places Havering in the top quintile.
- The percentage of children in good or outstanding schools improved during the final quarter of 2018/19. All of the schools received a ‘Good’ judgement, with two Primary schools improving their rating from ‘Requiring Improvement’ (RI). The percentage of early years providers judged to be good or outstanding also remains very comfortably above target.
- The number of adopters approved during 2018/19 outperformed the target set.

The update report also detailed the following areas where improvement was required:

- The average number of children missing from education increased in comparison to the last quarter by two children; it was stated that when compared to the same point last year; it was exactly the same number of individuals. Two of the seven children reported are from the same family, overall the figures remain consistently low.
- The percentage of initial child protection conferences (ICPCs) held within 15 working days was slightly outside of the agreed tolerance of 90%. Members noted that there remains close scrutiny of performance in this area by managers within the service.
- The target for the number of new in-house foster carers in 2018/19 was missed by two. Foster carer recruitment across London and nationwide was proving to be a challenge. The current approach to recruitment and marketing was under review, with fostering ambassadors taking on a more active role. Havering continues to

outperform neighbouring boroughs in terms of recruitment. There are plans to collaborate with other LAs to look at recruitment and a joined-up approach to attracting the right candidates, speeding up the recruitment process and reviewing foster carer allowances; all of which impact on shaping the market.

The Chairman opened the deliberation on the review of performance indicators to be reported in 2019/20. Following a brief discussion, the following PIs were agreed for the new financial year:

Children's Social Care

- % of Initial Child Protection Conferences held within 15 days
- % of looked-after children who ceased to be looked after as a result of permanency (Adoption and Special Guardianship Order)
- Number of in-house foster carers
- % of care leavers (aged 19-21) in education, employment and training

Learning and Achievement

- Number of Children missing from education
- % of 16-18 year olds who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) or not known
- Number of apprentices (aged 16-18) recruited in the borough
- Number of apprentices (aged 19+) recruited in the borough

The Sub-Committee **noted** the report.

5 CHILDREN'S SERVICES ANNUAL COMPLAINTS REPORT 2018-19

The Sub-Committee received the Children's Services Complaints Annual Report for 2018-19. The report provided information about the numbers and types of complaints handled by the Children's Service during 2018-19, as well as Members' correspondence.

The report was a requirement under the Children Act 1989 and Representations Procedure (England) Regulations 2006.

The Sub-Committee noted that the number of Stage 1 complaints increased by 15% from 90 to 106 in 2018-19. The complaints made directly by Young People decreased from 18 in 2017-18 to 9 in 2018-19, the decrease were

attributed to the improved working and communication with young people and the opening of the Cocoon Centre. It was stated that the Director and Assistant Director operated a surgery for Young People. Other partner agencies such as Department of Works and Pensions, Housing Services and Social Workers attended to the centre and give advice and deal with issues.

The report outlined that six Stage 1 cases were escalated to Stage 2; there were no Stage 3 Reviews during 2018-19.

The Sub-Committee was informed that the Triage/MASH & Assessment Team received the highest number of complaints during 2018-19, which have almost doubled from 2017-18; followed by Intervention & Support Services. These were reflective of the type of complaints received from parents around the unwelcomed intervention or decisions made regarding their children.

Member enquiries have decreased from 63 in 2017-18 to 47 in 2018-19 with 78% being responded to within timescale.

The report detailed that the number of compliments was still quite low but had increased from 10 to 19 in 2018-19, with Children and Adults with Disabilities and Learning & Achievement receiving the highest number. Staff will need to be reminded to send compliments to the Complaints & Information Team to be logged.

The Sub-Committee noted that Children's Services continue to deliver services in line with their vision for children and young people, with the aim to learning and making improvements. The Assistant Director stated that this was reflected in the recent OFSTED inspection in which inspectors found improvements across all service areas. The report by OFSTED identified that opportunities for workforce learning are well established and this has been pivotal in driving improvements.

The Sub-Committee was informed that Education complaints are reported corporately. However, enquiries relating to schools, academies or colleges have dropped from 42 in 2017-18 to 25 in 2018-19. These complaints are referred to the relevant educational establishment to be taken through the school's 2018-19.

The Sub-Committee **noted** the report.

6 FUTURE AGENDA ITEM

Following discussion, Councillor Ford suggested the following items be placed on the Sub-Committee's work plan for the year:

- Feedback and actions to be taken with regard to the last Borough Peer Review

- Borough's Youth Provision including the current youth offer
- Children's Centres current offer – proposed offer. Opportunity for pre-scrutiny to help the delivery of the most efficient cost effective service
- Transitional services into Adult Social Services – Transitions Team presentation including housing provision
- County Lines
- Regionalisation of Care Home provision update
- Regionalisation of Adoptions process update
- Update on School Expansions including supply and demand expectations
- Update of process of monitoring of added value of Children's Services and early interventions into Adult Services
- SEND expansion programme update
- Financial break down of Children's Services budgets including growth and pressures and viements. Including budgets for children that may come under different directorates.

Councillor Lawal suggested that a County Line Topic Group be considered and an update report on School Expansion.

Chairman