

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
CHILDREN & LEARNING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE
Committee Room 3A - Town Hall
13 February 2020 (7.00 - 8.25 pm)**

Present: Councillors Judith Holt (Chairman), Christine Vickery (Vice-Chair), Sally Miller and +Timothy Ryan

Co-opted Members:
Julie Lamb

Church Representatives:
Lynne Bennett

Non-voting Member: Ian Rusha

Apologies:

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Dilip Patel, Councillor Gillian Ford, Councillor Carol Smith, Councillor Reg Whitney, Councillor Tele Lawal, Jack How and Kathy Freeman

Absent:

Councillor Tony Durdin

+Councillor Tim Ryan substituted for Councillor Dilip Patel at the meeting.

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

28 DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

No interest was disclosed at the meeting.

29 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 18 December 2019 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

30 PERFORMANCE REPORT UPDATE - QUARTER THREE

The Sub-Committee received the quarter three performance indicators (PIs) update. The PIs are the standards by which performance of services are

measured within the Council. The update provided an overview of performance against the eight performance indicators selected for monitoring by the Sub-Committee in 2019/20.

The report outlined that five of the indicators have been given a RAG status; one had a status of Green, one had Amber and three indicators have a Red.

The report provided the following highlights and potential areas for improvement:

1. The percentage of 16-18 year olds who are not in education, employment or training (NEET), or not known remained at 3.5%, which was lower than the same period last year. The service was confident that the continued tracking and recording of Havering learners would improve the performance further.

Areas for improvement:

2. The percentage of initial child protection conferences held within 15 days had improved during the third quarter but remains just outside of the accepted target tolerance. The figures are impacted by a slight increase in reconvened conferences due to the conference not being quorate. There have also been instances of late notification when an initial child protection conference was required. The service was now exploring ways in which Safeguarding Standards Unit (SSU) could be notified earlier via early alerts of section 47 investigations.
3. The percentage of looked-after children who ceased to be looked after as a result of permanency (Adoption and Special Guardianship Order) was behind target at 12.4%. It was outlined that the two component parts of the indicator were also measured and the percentage leaving care for adoption was within the agreed tolerance level of 8% (Q3 performance is 7.6%). The percentage leaving care due to Special Guardianship Order had been considerably lower this year than last year. The upward trajectory seen in the last quarter was anticipated to continue considering the children who were presently in the 'Family finding' process.
4. Foster carer recruitment across London and nationwide remains a challenge. Between April and December 2019, three new in-house foster carers were approved. There were five further foster carers awaiting final approval. The service had increased its advertising to the public to promote the opportunities. The service was also exploring a range of additional benefits in line with other LAs, which the Council might consider in order to retain and recruit foster carers.

5. The percentage of care leavers in education, employment or training (EET) at the end of Quarter 3 was below target at 45%. The statutory DfE methodology includes care experienced young people who were not receiving services and whose EET status is therefore not known, which reduces the percentage considerably. It is important to note that the number of care experienced young adults requiring a service has doubled in the last 2 years with the extension of duties. EET performance based only on young people receiving services was higher at 60.2% and this figure compared well based on the latest available data for our Statistical Neighbours, Outer London and England.
6. The Sub-Committee noted from the report that there was no data available for the number of apprentices aged 16-18 and aged 19+ recruited in the borough. The report indicated that there was no long term direction of travel provided as the monthly data was not directly comparable to annual published data.

The report informed that data on apprenticeships had been flagged up with the Department for Education and it was envisaged that data would be available for reporting in quarter 4.

The Sub-Committee noted the report.

31 ADOLESCENT SAFEGUARDING STRATEGY AND SERVICE UPDATE

The Sub-Committee received an update report on the adolescent safeguarding approach across a spectrum of 10-18 year olds (up to 25 with SEND) focussing on risk to children and young people outside of the familial context.

It was stated that as with many other London boroughs, Havering had increasingly seen the effects of serious youth violence and criminal gang activity impacting on Havering children and young people which had led the service and its partners have developed an “adolescent safeguarding” approach across a spectrum of 10-18 year olds (up to 25 with SEND) focussing on risk to children and young people outside of the familial context.

The borough’s approach was preventive, multi-disciplinary and long term to better safeguard children and young people vulnerable to a range of exploitation factors. The strategy was to improve current interventions by bringing services together whilst seeking to plan and intervene earlier in the longer term.

It was noted that the two-fold approach was consistent with the Ofsted improvement plan and Community Safety partnership priorities.

The report informed that one of the key recommendations from the Ofsted inspection of June 2018 was to improve the response to children at risk outside of the home as the service had a statutory duty under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to produce an annual refreshed community safety plan.

The report provided an update on the developed strategy, via multi-agency workshops to ensure multi-disciplinary input. The strategy and workplan contained various priority areas.

The Sub-Committee was informed that the service continue to successfully engage with a diverse group of young people. In late 2019 the borough was represented at a discussion panel that focussed on knife crime hosted at Havering College. It was stated that engagement workshops would continue as the strategy was implemented.

In operational developments terms, early identification and increased support were identified as key to increased likelihood of prevention of violence and criminal exploitation. The service was coming to the end of a consultation process with staff and would shortly be recruiting specialist staff in addition to commissioning a training offer for the partnership.

The integrated Adolescent Safeguarding Service will come under a single management arrangement, comprising:

- Youth services, including targeted youth services
- Youth offending service
- New adolescent safeguarding team
- Child Exploitation coordination, working across this team and social care
- Clinical health posts
- Data analysis to enable earlier identification of children vulnerable to criminal exploitation.

The new structure, subject to consultation with staff and successful recruitment, is intended to be embedded by March 2020.

The Sub-Committee was informed that a multi-agency strategic partnership adolescent safeguarding strategy group was established chaired by the Director of Children's Services with engagement with community organisations, police and health representatives.

The Adolescent Safeguarding Strategy as outlined was launched at an event marking the next stage of implementation of the service approach to intensify safeguarding of adolescents in the borough.

The Sub-Committee noted the content of the report as an update on the borough's approach to multi-disciplinary adolescent safeguarding.

32 HAVERING YOUTH SERVICE

The Sub-Committee received an update report on the work of the Youth Services during 2019, and its focus upon targeted work and increasing need to develop a contextual safeguarding approach.

The report detailed that Havering Youth Service provides a wide range of opportunities for young people to grow and develop new and existing skills, make a positive contribution to their community and where relevant, reduce their involvement in risky, antisocial or criminal activities.

Havering Youth Service delivers an inclusive service that was available to all young people in Havering as well as providing targeted and preventative work in partnership with the wider Children's Services, Education and Housing.

The report outlined that youth work was an educational process that engaged with young people in a curriculum built from their lived experience and their personal beliefs and aspirations. The Youth Worker builds positive relationships with young people based on mutual respect.

It was noted that young people choose to attend a youth provision and engage with youth workers. The youth workers help young people learn about themselves, others and society, through informal educational activities which combine enjoyment, challenge and learning.

The Youth Service operated the facilities at MyPlace Centre and the Robert Beard/Olive facilities delivering 18 weekly projects/clubs and over 10 bespoke additional programmes.

The report provided the following impact and success of Services during 2019:

- The Service was engaged with over 1000 individual young people through club based and outreach projects. The predominant age is 13 to 19 (up to 25 with additional needs).
- The Youth Bus – During the summer, the bus visited 10 different areas and communities within Havering to engage in a range of projects – this included knife crime awareness, art activities, life skill consultations, sport projects, positive activities, group work and more. Over 200 young people have benefited. The project was also supported other activities such as Street Wheels.

- Knife Crime Summit – In November 2019, the Youth Service worked in partnership with Community Safety to put on a Knife Crime Summit. Young people were involved in this event.
- Go Girls, Goodfellas and Life Skills Projects – Go Girls: 36 Referrals – 26 attended in 2019 of which 5 LAC, 4 Early Intervention, 6 CIN Referrals came from Schools, CSE Panel, Social Workers and CAMHS.
- Goodfellas – 8 young people were referred to the programme scheduled for January 2020.
- Co-Producing a Life Skills Project – Currently taking place with Havering Youth Council and other young people from schools and clubs
- Central Park, Harold Hill Sport Engagement - The project was co-produced by a young person leaving care – where youth workers have engaged with up to 60 young people in Central Park Harold Hill.
- The Junior Transitions Project for young people transitioning from primary to secondary school. The programme looked at key themes such as developing skills & confidence for school and life transitions, overcoming fears, personal safety, 'friendships and relationships' and healthy life style.
- The increase in the use of bikes and bike projects have led to a new funded programme called the Bike Shed. (£10, 000 from Ground Work, with another £10,000 from Sport England). The project will enable young people to develop bike maintenance skills, provide peer education, and expand on bike and cycle projects within key targeted areas. Youth workers will also support young people to develop communication skills.
- Duke of Edinburgh (DofE): 60 young people participated and completed DofE awards. 4 SEND young people were part of the cohort.
- Outreach – Working in 12 different community areas with Youth Bus/Outreach Team.
- Summer Programme - 27 different weekly projects/events over the 6 week school summer holidays.
- Youth Bus engagement in Brittons Park to support Kelvedon/Ongar Way. Creation of Kicks Football project at Brittons School.

- Harold Hill Festival: hundreds of young people, and a range of members of the public (Some young people involved in local performances)
- One to One Support – In the last year, 23 young people have been supported and mentored on a one to one basis. The impacts of the interventions have reduced the need for young people to access higher tiered services, and young people gaining resilience and independence.

The report informed the Sub-Committee that the next step for the service was to align service provision via the Integrated Adolescent Safeguarding Strategy bringing together services to better to respond to the needs of children and young people at risk outside of the familial context.

The Sub-Committee noted the update report.

33 ADOPT LONDON EAST - UPDATE REPORT

At its request, the Sub-Committee received a report that provided background and update on the work of Havering hosted Adopt London East.

Adopt London East formed in response to a 2015 government directive to all Local Authorities to streamline adoption services through the development of regional arrangements by 2020.

Adopt London East provides adoption services for Havering, Tower Hamlets, Newham and Barking and Dagenham.

The report provided a summary of the development and functions of the agency and contained a brief progress report since the service became operational on 1st October 2019.

The report informed the sub-committee that statistical returns measure long-term trends but Adopt London East in-house statistical records provided clear evidence of early improvements in performance and activity since go-live.

Service transition

It was stated that the transition from four Local Authority teams to one integrated service had its complexity and challenges have been felt in respect of pre-transition performance; service staffing; caseload information transition and demand for adoption support services. It was noted that there have been substantial progress made in all areas.

The Sub-Committee was informed that only one team manager joined Adopt London East and the service had been able to recruit three further team managers from within the service. The service currently has 15 permanent staff in place and 3 interim social workers.

Performance

The quarterly Adoption and Special Guardianship Leadership Board (ASGLB) report for all Local Authorities have been analysed to provide a service baseline. It indicated that performance have declined in all Local Authorities in the 6 months prior to Adopt London East go-live. Decline in performance was linked to a number of factors including: adoption service staff leaving; higher levels of sickness absence; caseload transitions and a delay in operational go-live.

Adoption performances are measured over one and three year cycles and improvements therefore take time to be fully captured in the data returns. Early indicators are however monitored closely within the service.

Performance in respect of child matches had improved considerably. Adopter approvals are predicted to decline further in Q3 and 4 due to the decline in adopters in early stages of approval. Early stage applications have though increased from month to month and improvements are predicted for 2020/21

Target	Previous full year	2019/20 Q1 and 2 All	2019/20 Q3 and 4 predicted All
Adopter approved	42	17	12
Child placed	57	11	24
Adopter support	Not available	60 support 14 contact 600 letterbox	112 support 50 contact 1000+ letterbox

The Sub-Committee noted that demand for adoption support services had increased considerably as has the number of children requiring a placement. In the last reporting year, a total of 57 children were placed. It was likely that less children would be placed this year due to the slowdown in quarters one and two but a total of 167 children were currently receiving a family finding service.

The demand for adoption support had shown a similar increase along with an improved support for our families would improve outcomes for our adoptive children and families.

The report outlined that the board would monitor an increase in demand closely so that savings made from an increase in the number of adopters available to accept a placement would be re-invested into service improvement to ensure the service was able to meet identified increased demands.

The Sub-Committee noted that content of the report.

Chairman