



## **Children and Learning Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Committee Summary of Work Undertaken and Annual Report 2019/20**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This report is the annual report of the Sub-Committee, summarising the Sub-Committee's activities during its year of operation ended May 2020.

It is planned for this report to stand as a public record of achievement for the year and enable Members and others to have a record of the Committee's activities and performance.

### **SUB-COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP FOR THE YEAR 2019/20**

Councillor Judith Holt (Chairman)  
Councillor Christine Vickery (Vice-Chair)  
Councillor Gillian Ford  
Councillor Tony Durdin  
Councillor Tele Lawal  
Councillor Dilip Patel  
Councillor Carol Smith  
Councillor Christine Vickery  
Councillor Reg Whitney

#### **Statutory Member representing the Churches:**

Mrs Lynne Bennett (Church of England)  
Mr Jack How (Roman Catholic Church)

#### **Statutory Members representing parent governors:**

Mrs Julie Lamb (Special)  
Mrs Kathy Freeman (Primary)

#### **Non-voting members representing local teacher unions and professional associations:**

Mr Ian Rusha (NEU)

During the year under review, the Sub-Committee met on six occasions and dealt with the following issues:

## **1. CHILDREN'S SERVICES ANNUAL COMPLAINTS REPORT 2018-19**

The Sub-Committee received the Children's Services Complaints Annual Report for 2018-19. The report was a requirement under the Children Act 1989 and Representations Procedure (England) Regulations 2006.

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 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 was attributed to the improved working and communication with young people and the opening of the Cocoon Centre.

It was noted that the Director and Assistant Director of the Service operated a surgery for Young People. Other partner agencies such as Department of Works and Pensions, Housing Services and Social Workers attended the centre and provided advice and also dealt with issues.

The report outlined that six stage 1 cases were escalated to stage 2 but none had reached stage 3 during 2018-19.

The Sub-Committee noted that Children's Services continue to deliver in line with its vision for children and young people, with the aim to learning and making improvements. The Assistant Director added 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 were referred to the relevant educational establishment.

The Sub-Committee noted the report.

## **2. PRIMARY SATS OUTCOMES, 2019 (PROVISIONAL)**

The Sub-Committee received an update report on the provisional outcomes of the 2019 statutory assessments within the Primary School sector.

The report informed the Sub-Committee that the standards in the Early Years Foundation Stage were broadly at the national average. The proportion of children achieving a good level of development in Havering remained at 72% in 2019 – exactly the same as the national average.

It was noted that although the percentage of Year 1 pupils assessed for the Phonics Check standard fell by 2% in 2019, standards in Havering remain just above the national average and generally in line with statistical neighbours.

The Sub-Committee was informed that the overall standards at Key Stage 1 were just above the national average. In Reading, the outcomes remained broadly average, which were 2 percentage points above the national figure. In Writing, the outcomes indicated Havering children were above the national average and likely to be in line with other London neighbours and higher than statistical neighbours. The percentage of pupils meeting the expected standard or above in Mathematics improved by 1 percentage point to 79%; this was 3% above the national average.

The report indicated that attainment in Key Stage 2 in all subjects were well above the national average and better than the outcomes achieved by other London boroughs and the statistical neighbours.

The proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in Reading, Writing and Mathematics combined increased by 1 percentage point in 2019, Havering was 6% above the national average, which is classified as 'well above average' in the Performance Tables.

The report also detailed that while progress was lower than in 2018, it was still positive in all three subjects as the rating was significantly above the national average in Writing and Mathematics, and expected to be better than its statistical neighbours. It was stated that Havering was likely to be in the top 40% of all Local Authorities nationally, when results are finally validated.

The Sub-Committee noted the report.

### **3. SCHOOL ADMISSIONS PLACES**

The Sub-Committee received a report that informed on the School Admissions process and its application in Havering, as well as an overview of performance.

The report detailed that the School Admissions Code was the statutory guidance for Admission Authorities, Governing Bodies, Local Authorities, Schools Adjudicators and Admission Appeals Panels.

The Code has the force of law and imposes mandatory requirements and includes guidelines setting out aims, objectives and other matters in relation to the discharge of functions relating to admissions.

The Local Authority, acting as the Admission Authority for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools in the borough was required to determine its admission arrangements to these schools for each school year.

The Sub-Committee noted that children in the borough secured 77.11% of first preferences at secondary level for the current academic year 2018/19; (the highest

in London based on Department for Education data), and 88.52% of primary first preferences.

The report outlined that the trends within the data suggested that the reduction over time links to schools improving their Ofsted grade thus becoming more attractive to families but without always having scope to increase the Published Admission Number.

The Sub-Committee noted the comments of the report.

#### **4. SCHOOL EXPANSION PROGRAMME**

The Sub-Committee received an update report on the progress of the school expansion programme since the last report in August 2017. The report stated that the Local Authority had a statutory duty to plan and secure sufficient school places to meet the needs of its children and families.

It was noted that under Phase 3 and Phase 4 of the school expansion programme, a total of 19 schools have been expanded which created an additional 3106 permanent primary and secondary school places in the borough.

In March 2019, Cabinet approved the Commissioning Plan for Education Provision 2019-2023 that contained detailed pupil projections across Early Years, Primary, Secondary, Post 16 and SEND phases and also setting out the likely demand for school places as a result of the two housing zones planned for Rainham and Romford.

The Sub-Committee noted that subject to Cabinet approval, the School Expansion Programme would be updated for the Phase 4 and Phase 5 expansion programme.

The report detailed that there were plans to increase the Early Years provision in key wards, including Elm Park, Harold Wood, Hacton, Hylands, Pettits, Romford Town and South Hornchurch to meet the growing demand for places for 3 and 4 year olds.

There were also proposal for two new primary schools to open in 2023/24 on the 2 housing developments sites in Beam Park, Rainham and Bridge Close, Romford, both start-up would be closely linked to the delivery of the new housing.

The report also outlined proposals to meet the increasing needs for Special Educational Needs and Disability places by providing more alternative Resources Provision "ARP" that focus on supporting children who have Autistic Spectrum Disorder "ASD" and Social Emotional and Mental Health "SEMH", particularly in early years and primary schools.

Two primary schools are proposed to have facilities for ARP and provide 12 places each. A third primary school will have facilities for SEMH and provide 12 places. There are also proposal for ARP facility at a secondary school for ASD needs.

During discussion, it was noted that a sponsor had been identified for the primary school provision in Beam Park.

The Sub-Committee noted the update report.

## **5. OFSTED PROGRESS REPORT ON SEND**

At its request the Sub-Committee received a report that outlined progress on the Ofsted Improvement plan to standards of social care practice, workforce development and associated systems.

The Sub-Committee noted the following seven themes and objectives:

1. Pathway Planning and Transitions to Adulthood. The aim of the objective was to further improve the quality of care planning. It was noted that 61% of care leavers were in education, employment and training. The Cocoon – Young People Centre recently celebrated its second anniversary. The community space provides care experienced Young People to access support and leisure activities.
2. Strategy and Meetings. It was noted that standards have been agreed regarding holding strategy meetings and attendance by partner agencies being tracked via the case management system.
3. Supervision - The aim was to clarify what 'good' supervision looks like, and set out clear guidance and principles. A revised supervision template was rolled out across the service in October 2019, following consultation across the service. The new template had been created in line with systemic principles and was designed to enable reflective and purposeful practice.
4. Quality Assurance - The theme considered the auditing and other quality assurance activities across the services. A new quality assurance framework and supporting tools were introduced. The Deep Dive audit tool and monthly case file audits have been developed in Liquid Logic and the services organised a 'What Good Looks Like' workshops in June 2019 which was attended by 31 managers/supervisors.
5. Workforce and Practice Development - The theme would progress the work of the Social Care Academy and set out a route of professional development for all practitioners and managers within the service. The report indicated that 82% of social workers are now permanent staff. The service have improved its use of social media to raise the profile of Havering and advertise roles.
6. Adolescent Safeguarding - The aim of the theme was to ensure there were coherent approaches to the range of risk issues that affect young people. It was stated that there were agreement for a multi-disciplinary safeguarding arrangement, involving all main partners. Resources have been secured via funding from the Local Authority and Health partners. Some programmes/projects were already underway, including a £400k investment from the Home Office via the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC)

7. Case recording and data quality - The aim of the theme was to ensure a more consistent approach to record keeping, whilst ensuring practitioners spend significant time engaged in direct work with families. It was stated that with the implementation of Liquid Logic Implementation; the focus had been on data cleansing, data migration and training. It was noted that the service worked with the Youth Management team to develop its case recording principles and these would be launched in November.

The report provided an assurance that Havering was meeting its statutory responsibilities and continuing to evidence improvement against Ofsted recommendations,

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

## **6. SECONDARY OUTCOMES 2019 (PROVISIONAL)**

The Sub-Committee noted a report that updated on the provisional outcomes of the 2019 statutory assessments within the secondary sector in Havering.

The report outlined that the eighteen secondary schools were all academies, six of the schools have Sixth Forms facility. In addition, there are 3 Special Schools, 2 of which are Academies.

The attainment 8 was made up of 8 subjects. Grades 1-9 are translated into a numerical score, the total of which was attainment 8. The average attainment 8 score in Havering compared with the attainment of pupils nationally.

The report detailed that standards in the GCSEs in Havering were above the national average. The average Attainment 8 score in 2019 was 48.3 – marginally above the national average of 46.7, which places Havering in the second quintile nationally and above the majority of its statistical neighbours, and the same as the outer London average.

The attainment outcome at A Level or Key Stage 5 have fluctuated over the last few years with the ongoing changes in exams and methodology calculations, however the 6 academy sixth forms have had a 2 year improvement where Havering have outperformed its statistical neighbours ranking 1st and 26th nationally.

It was stated that the best 3 A-Levels outcomes have also fluctuated. It was indicated that improvement has not been as rapid as elsewhere nationally, or as other London boroughs. Havering still outperformed its statistical neighbours, ranking 3rd and 31st nationally.

The percentage of pupils achieving grades AAB or better at A-level for the last 4 years have remained below that of national averages but Havering was still in the better performing half. It was explained that both the outer London and Havering's statistical neighbours have had a 2 year decline resulting in Havering's position improving.

During discussion the Sub-Committee requested a breakdown of the result according to each school. The Assistant Director for Education informed the Sub-Committee that the service had raised concern with the Regional School Commissioner on the performances of some of the Academies. It was also stated that following the change in status to Academy, most of the secondary schools have not taken up the council's offer to undertake quality assurance.

The secondary schools outcome was viewed with concern by the Sub-Committee.

## **7. SEND ACTION PLAN – PROGRESS UPDATE**

The Sub-Committee received a report on the progress made to implement the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) action plan following the Care Quality Commission (CQC) /Ofsted inspection in March 2018.

Following the inspection an action plan was produced and has been monitored by the SEND Executive Board, comprising of Partners, Parent representatives, Schools in addition to Local Health and Local Council representation. The SEND Strategy was signed off by the Health and Wellbeing Board in September 2018 and an update was provided to a meeting of the Sub-Committee in November 2019.

The report detailed the following areas for improvement and progress on implementation:

- The SEND Executive Board was now fully engaged including parents and partners.
- Implementation of Havering's High Needs Strategy. The strategy was approved in 2017 and will run until 2022. But an earlier review was carried out. The outcome of the review was that the local priorities remain similar and progress was being made. The main theme of the Strategy remains to ensure Havering had quality and inclusive education for children with SEND.
- The strategy guides the development of new provision and the plan for a new build free school for children with SEND which have been approved by the Department for Education and the Local Authority.
- The strategy indicated the need to deliver a programme of new provision to see a better distribution across the borough and throughout both primary and secondary schools. Progress have been made in this area.
- Local Offer – to continue to develop, maintain and keep the local offer up to date, including children, young people and their families. This would ensure the offer is responsive to the needs. The work was in progress and the offer is reviewed regularly.
- Educational Health Care Hub – An interactive web-based platform to make EHC assessment and planning process more efficient and transparent, supporting inclusion of all partners including children/young people and parents. The hub is

now implemented and being used by parents and carers for new EHC plans from September 2019.

- Review of EHC planning and processes, to improve the quality of Education, Health and Care needs assessments and plans. The borough now have approximately 1,600 children with EHC plans, up from 800 former statements of SEN in 2014. New EHC plans were up from 133 in 2016 to 195 in 2018. As at January 2019 (the latest published data) 70% of EHCPs in the borough meet statutory timescales, compared with 58% across London boroughs.
- Jointly Commissioned Services to develop a single process which will inform the commissioning of services for children and young people with SEND.
- Co-production of a strategic level for working with parents and partners to determine the future commissioning of short breaks and Transport provision. A series of workshops and events have been held with parents and carers, to develop an outcome-focused joint commissioning model and framework for short breaks focused on young people with complex and multiple needs.
- Improved transition into adulthood - Providing a timely and joined up transition to ensure that young people with SEND (age 13 up to age 25) and their parents/carers have a smooth and positive experience of transition.
- Improving the Social Care Offer – work was underway to develop a 6 bed residential facility to provide long term and short break support for children in Havering.

The Sub-Committee noted the report.

## **8. SEND TRAVEL ASSISTANCE - UPDATE REPORT**

The Sub-Committee noted a report that outlined the key issues in respect of the provision of travel assistance for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities.

It was noted that the Education Act 1996 requires Local Authorities to make suitable and where eligible, free travel arrangements for 'eligible children' as they consider necessary to facilitate attendance of school or college and this duty underpins the Council's policy. There was a requirement to refresh and re-publish the Council's policy annually.

The Council's policy was underpinned by the following principles:

- It was the parent/guardian's responsibility to ensure that their children attend school regularly
- The use of existing provision such as free travel on public transport will be encouraged wherever possible



- Students who are able to travel independently, use public transport or be transported to school by a parent/guardian or other appropriate person are encouraged to do so
- Students who have additional travel needs are offered the most independent and personally enabling solution for their situation
- All travel options are explored for students and any assistance offered will look at what is efficient and effective, both in terms of sustainability and cost – where travel assistance is provided, the most cost-effective mode of transport that meets the individual's needs must always be used
- The travel needs of students will be reviewed regularly to ensure the arrangements are still appropriate for their assessed needs.

The Sub-Committee noted that the budget for travel assistance for children and young people was about £3million and expenditure for 2019-20 was forecasted at £3.46million.

The demand for travel assistance was increasing and applications received during the 19-20 renewal period have risen by almost 70 compared to last year.

The report also highlighted the continued overspend on budgets for the service over the last three financial years, which highlights the need to respond differently to the needs of the borough.

The Sub-Committee was informed that as part of the 2019-20 annual refresh of the policy some refinements in practice have been introduced.

The Sub-Committee noted the council was part of a London Borough Travel Assistance Group, which seeks to share information, issues, best practice and opportunities for the future of service provision. It was stated that Havering would continue to participate in such groups to share information about options and learn from other initiatives.

During a brief discussion the Sub-Committee requested further information on the average journey time on the passenger transport bus at a future meeting.

It was confirmed that parents and other users of the SEND transport were aware of the consultation and have responded.

## **9. ADULT EDUCATION OUTCOMES - UPDATE REPORT**

The Sub-Committee received a report that provided an update on Havering Adult College performance outcomes for 2018-2019.

The report outlined that Havering delivers Adult and Community Learning (ACL) through Havering Adult College. The college receives two direct grants to fund its operation, one from the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) and one from the General London Authority (GLA), which enables the delivery of a range of

courses aimed at learners aged 19+ who could be resident in the borough or attend from outside of the borough.

The report indicated that in the academic year 2018-19, Havering Adult College delivered learning opportunities to 4368 learners. The achievement rate for learners overall was 98.79%, based on the Management Information System data returned to the ESFA for that year.

The last three Ofsted inspections have found the provision to be Good, and with some excellent features.

The Sub-Committee noted the following In-Year Outcomes for Learners:

1. For skills-based (accredited) courses, retention was excellent at 97.94%, and achievement was particularly excellent at 98.86%.
2. For community learning (non-accredited) courses, retention was very good at 95%, with achievement remaining excellent at 98.72%.
3. All withdrawn learners were followed up as part of the college's robust quality assurance and improvement infrastructure, and reasons were recorded for the early departure.

## **10. SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AND EXCLUSIONS - UPDATE REPORT**

The Sub-Committee received a report that provided progress made to improve School Admissions & Inclusions arrangements across all Havering's Schools/Academies and Alternative Provisions.

The report stated that the Local Authority had a statutory duty to provide pupils who have been permanently excluded an education from day 6 of the exclusion. The Inclusion Team work with schools/academies to avoid permanent exclusion where possible and offer other alternative pathways to support pupils.

The Sub-Committee noted that the Attendance, Behaviour and Traveller Support Service, an Early Help Education Service monitors pupil attendance where the attendance of pupils falls below the acceptable level in school.

The report informed that the levels of overall absence and persistent absence (PA) have reduced in Havering in the past 5-year period and only remain slightly higher than London and national averages. It was stated that unauthorised absence was slightly below London average in both primary and secondary schools over the 5-year trend which was a positive step in the right direction.

The Sub-Committee noted that in the last academic year, the Attendance, Behaviour and Traveller Support Service led on an attendance project with the key aim of sharing outstanding practice within schools and academies across key stages with a focus on challenging the rationale for authorising absence; this resulted in an Attendance Summit that was attended by thirty Schools and Academies.

The following key measures around attendance/absence were set by as indicators:

- Overall Absence
- Authorised Absence
- Unauthorised Absence
- Persistent Absence at 90% and below

## **11. 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 year old with SEND) focussing on risk to children and young people outside of the familial context.

The report outlined that 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 work plan contained various priority areas.

The new structure, subject to consultation with staff and successful recruitment, was 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 to engage 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.

## **12. 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 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 respond to the needs of children and young people at risk outside of the familial context.

## **13. 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 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.

Adoption performance were measured over one and three year cycles and improvements therefore would take time to be fully captured in the data returns. Early indicators were 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.

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.

#### **14. COUNCILLOR CALL FOR ACTION**

In accordance with the Localism Act 2011, a Member of the Council requested that the sub-committee consider a Councillor Call for Action on the proposed changes to the delivery of Children's Centre Re-design recommendations Services following a public consultation that was undertaken between June and September 2019.

The sub-committee considered the grounds for the Councillor Call for Action and noted that changes and new arrangements were being considered by the service to the proposed recommendations to Cabinet.

The Sub-committee also made comments to the proposed Cabinet report.

#### **15. CORPORATE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

Throughout the year, the Sub-Committee had received reports on the outcome of performance against the indicators which fell within the Sub-Committees remit.

This included demand pressure dashboards which illustrated the growing demands on Council services and the context that the performance levels set out in the reports had been achieved within.

#### **16. THE CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL**

The Corporate Parenting Panel met on periodically throughout the year, alternating Formal and Participation meetings. The Participation meetings comprising discussions with a variety of contributors, including care leavers, foster carers, social workers, the assistant head of the virtual school and importantly the young people themselves. The Panel considered a variety of topics, including policy, information, advice and support, service improvement, communication for the borough's children in care and the transition into Adult Services and Leaving Care. The Formal meetings focused on a number of areas including performance, outcomes, out of

borough provision, the fostering and adoption process, and housing issues as they related to children.

## **17. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

During the year the Chairman regularly updated the Sub-Committee of her visit to schools in the Borough and Children's Services offices.

The Chairman would like to thank all Members, Officers and outside body members for their dedication to the Sub-Committee over the last municipal Year 2019/2020.

### **IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS**

#### **Financial implications and risks:**

None – narrative report only.

#### **Legal implications and risks:**

None – narrative report only.

#### **Human Resources implications and risks:**

None – narrative report only.

#### **Equalities implications and risks:**

While the work of the Sub-Committee can impact on all members of the community, there are no implications arising from this specific report which is a narrative of the Sub-Committee's work over the past year.

### **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None.