



OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
(CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND SAFEGUARDING)

MEETING HELD AT THE TOWN HALL, SOUTHPORT
ON TUESDAY 10TH JULY, 2018

PRESENT: Councillor Murphy (in the Chair)
Councillor Carragher (Vice-Chair)
Councillors Brenda O'Brien, Yvonne Sayers,
Spencer and Webster

ALSO PRESENT: Mrs. S. Cain, Advisory Member
Ms. L. Kitt, Healthwatch Representative
Councillor J. J. Kelly, Cabinet Member – Children,
Schools and Safeguarding

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Hands and his Substitute Councillor Brodie-Browne; Councillor Pitt and his Substitute Councillor Jones; and Councillor Dan T. Lewis.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of personal or pecuniary interest were received.

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 20 March 2018, be confirmed as a correct record.

4. SEFTON PUBLIC HEALTH ANNUAL REPORT 2017

Further to Minute No. 5 of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Adult Social Care and Health) of 26 June 2018, the Committee considered the report of the Head of Health and Wellbeing on the Annual Report of the Director of Health and Wellbeing 2017/18 that was a statutory requirement and identified key issues affecting health in the Sefton population. This year's annual report had been produced as a short film that explored the emotional wellbeing and mental health of

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children and young people, together with the services and resources available to support them.

Prior to consideration of the report, a short video presenting the latest Public Health Annual Report (PHAR) was shown to the Committee, which was entitled "Growing Up Healthy and Happy". The film explored the emotional wellbeing and mental health of children and young people and the services and resources which were available to support them. The film recognised the importance of building resilience, promoting good mental health and wellbeing and enabling children and young people to grow up happy and healthy. The PHAR also covered key facts and figures and highlighted a number of recommendations for implementation during 2018/19.

Following the meeting of the Council on 19 July 2018, the video would be available for viewing via the Council's web-site and would be widely disseminated.

Steve Gowland, Public Health Lead, was in attendance at the meeting to present the PHAR and respond to questions put by Members of the Committee.

Hard copies of the PHAR were circulated at the meeting.

Members of the Committee asked questions/raised matters on the following issues:-

- The PHAR was very well received by Members.
- Which groups had been involved with the video?
There were so many established groups it had been difficult to determine who to involve. A number of schools had been involved including Greenbank High School and Merefield School.
- How would the PHAR be promoted within schools so that young people would be aware of services?
Some activity was just commencing and a charity, Young Minds, would be getting involved with schools. The link to the video would go live once full Council had received the PHAR and the link would be shared with schools. Liverpool John Moores University would be evaluating a number of pilot projects that had been commissioned to develop resilience amongst school age children.
- How widespread was mindfulness practiced in schools?
Some schools were using forms of mindfulness practice. However, the Public Health team had not identified a cost effective intervention that could be rolled out across all schools.

RESOLVED:

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That the Public Health Annual Report be received and its contents be noted.

5. DEVELOPMENT OF FAMILY WELLBEING SERVICE – PROGRESS REPORT

Further to Minute No. 27 of 5 December 2017, the Committee considered the report of the Director of Social Care and Health providing the Committee the opportunity to comment on the proposals to align Family Wellbeing Centres into Locality working and note the outcomes of Sefton Community First.

The report set out the background to the matter; the context of Family Wellbeing; the all-encompassing operating model developed, namely Sefton Community First offer that provided a holistic approach and joined up work with public health, NHS and wider council work, together with the ASPIRE outcome framework; engagement sessions held with the community, partners, parent/carers, schools and Head Teachers; the implementation of a new funding methodology; the delivery programme currently being developed, timetabled and shared with families; and conclusions.

The following appendices were attached to the report:-

- Appendix 1 - Sefton Community First;
- Appendix 2 - Delivery model;
- Appendix 3 - Staffing structure; and
- Appendix 4 - Staffing allocation.

Members of the Committee asked questions/raised matters on the following issues:-

- What control did the Local Authority have over the delivery of services commissioned directly through schools?
When Children's Centres were first delivered through schools, the specification/model was probably not robust enough. There was much more clarity on the model now and services would be commissioned through schools with the Local authority having control through the Locality model. An annual review would also take place.
- Reference was made to Appendix 1 – the “Sefton Community First 2018-2020” document which was marked as a draft.
The Locality model had been agreed by the full Council and consultation had taken place during 2017. There were still a small number of board meetings yet to receive the document.

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- Concerns were raised regarding issues with the speech and language service.
The service was commissioned and discussions might be required with the Clinical Commissioning Groups. An update could be provided to the Committee in the future. The Director of Social Care and Health would contact the Member concerned for details.
- There were anecdotal reports of parents/carers not receiving services for children with autism unless they were classed as targeted families. This was considered to be contrary to early intervention and prevention approach.
The Director of Social Care and Health would contact the Member concerned for details.
- Reference was made to Appendix 4 – “Proposed Staffing”. Which Council Department(s) would these posts come under?
The services referred to would become part of the Locality model which would be one generic service and would be more seamless, rather than officers working in silos.

RESOLVED: That the following aspects of the development of the Family Wellbeing Service be noted:-

- (1) the principles of Sefton Community First;
- (2) the ASPIRE outcomes;
- (3) the role of Family Wellbeing Centres within Sefton Community First; and
- (4) the new posts currently being consulted on within the structure.

6. CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE ANNUAL REPORT

Further to Minute No. 5 of 21 June 2017, the Committee considered the report of the Director of Social Care and Health providing a summary of the progress in relation to the Children's Social Care Improvement Plan 2017 /18, to be considered alongside the performance scorecard data.

The Plan identified three key objectives, namely:-

1. Ensure frontline practice is consistently good, effective and focussed on timely, measurable outcomes for children.
2. To improve management oversight at all levels to ensure effective services for children and young people receive good quality supervision
3. Ensure that frontline services are sufficiently resourced and the workforce appropriately skilled to enable high quality work to be undertaken with children and young people.

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The following appendices were attached to the report:-

- Children's Social Care Annual Report
- Annual performance score card

Members of the Committee asked questions/raised matters on the following issues:-

- What sort of accommodation was available for care leavers?
An increasing number of care leavers were continuing to live with carers. A range of accommodation was available and close work took place with Housing associations to identify types of supported living schemes. Care leavers were not placed in Bed and Breakfast type accommodation.
- Reference was made to front-line services being sufficiently resourced and the workforce being appropriately skilled. When would this support be "bedded-in"?
Although the re-structure had gone smoothly, some issues had arisen since and it was considered that support was required for newly qualified social workers. The Local Government Association (LGA) had undertaken a peer review and a new improvement plan would be developed to ensure that improvement continued.
- Could information on Serious Case Reviews be reported to this Committee for information?
Serious Case Reviews were reported to the Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB) and could also be reported to the Committee.
- Timeliness of reports to Child Protection conferences was a concern as only 28.5% of reports were available 3 days prior to conference. What could be done to support this process?
This action was monitored via monthly monitoring reports and it was anticipated that performance would improve.
- Were newly qualified social workers being retained by the Council?
The Council was generally good at retention and not over-dependent on agency workers, although this area was always a challenge. National research indicated that social workers tended to stay for around three years in a front-line role.
- When would the next update to the Committee be reported?
The refreshed Improvement Plan, together with the outcome of the peer review was likely to be submitted to the Committee in September 2018.

RESOLVED: That

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- (1) the Committee continues to receive bi-annual reports and updated performance scorecards;
- (2) the Committee receives the reviewed and refreshed version of the Children's Social Care Improvement Plan at the September meeting; and
- (3) the receipt of information on Serious Case Reviews be added to the Committee's Work Programme for 2018/19 and the Head of Children's Social Care be requested to submit information to the Committee as and when cases arise.

7. CAHMS WORKING GROUP - INTERIM REPORT.

Further to Minute No. 102 of the Cabinet meeting of 11 January 2018, the Committee considered the report of the Head of Schools and Families highlighting the work done on implementing each of the agreed recommendations contained within the Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) Final Report.

This Committee had established a Working Group in July 2016, to review the CAMHS Service across Sefton. At its meeting on 5 December 2017, the Committee had considered the Working Group Final Report and commended it, together with the recommendations, to the Cabinet for approval. Following Cabinet approval in January 2018, the Committee had asked for an interim report on the recommendations of the Working Group.

The report set out the background to the matter, together with an update against each of the recommendations made by the Working Group and agreed by Cabinet.

Fiona Taylor, Chief Officer for NHS South Sefton Clinical Commissioning Group and NHS Southport and Formby Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), was in attendance from the CCGs to update the Committee.

Members of the Committee asked questions/raised matters on the following issues:-

- Concerns had been expressed at the last meeting regarding the waiting times to access services.
The average waiting time from referral into the service was now 23 weeks. The first assessment waiting time was 7-10 weeks.
- Were the CCGs satisfied with the current waiting times?
The CCGs were not content with the waiting times but were contributing additional funding to the Provider and working with the current Provider to improve performance. Investment was also being made with the Voluntary, Community and Faith (VCF) sector, as some organisations provided certain services.

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- Could Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trust be considered as an alternative Provider?
Mersey Care was registered to provide services to adults, not children and young people.
- What was an acceptable waiting time to access services?
Ideally, waiting times should be zero. The NHS Constitution provided for 18 weeks waiting time and the CCGs would like to see 18 weeks waiting time to be achieved, as a minimum.
- At what point would the CCGs consider withdrawal from the contract with the current Provider?
Consideration would be given at the end of the current financial year. The CCGs would at least expect the waiting times to be reduced by then.
- A number of initiatives were being provided for children and young people and these would be evaluated by Liverpool John Moores University.
The Committee would be interested to see the results, once available.
- Mindfulness was used in adult services and Members expressed surprise that it was not adopted by schools.
Mindfulness tended to be an expensive intervention and whatever interventions were implemented needed to be sustained. Interventions adopted tended to be evidence based as they were able to be evaluated.
- A Task and Finish Group had been established to develop an on-line resource for schools to access information for pupils' emotional health and wellbeing needs. Was there any update on this?
An update could be obtained prior to a further report providing an annual position.
- The CCGs had undertaken a piece of mapping work on "Every Child Matters" and this could be provided to Committee Members.
- Would the THRIVE model affect the service and the way it was provided?
The model was used to locate the child in its environment, with a view to understanding a child's challenging or troubling behaviour or communication.
- Further information on performance and patient experience could be provided to Committee Members.
- A further update on CAMHS would be made available to the Committee in January 2019.

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RESOLVED: That

- (1) the report be noted; and
- (2) the Head of Schools and Families be requested to submit a further update on CAMHS to the Committee in January 2019 and this be included in the Committee's Work Programme for 2018/19.

8. NEETS WORKING GROUP REPORT

Further to Minute No. 5 of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regeneration and Skills), the Committee considered the report of the Executive Director setting out the progress made against each recommendation of the Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) Working Group Final Report, published in 2013.

The report detailed the evolving context for NEET support relating to the Liverpool City Region (LCR) Careers Hub; the Liverpool City Region (LCR) Apprenticeship Hub; the LCR Apprenticeship Growth Plan; the National Careers Strategy; provision for special educational needs and disability and Youth Employment Initiatives through Sefton@work; and the local impacts for Sefton.

The report concluded by detailing updates against each of the recommendations in the Final Report; and recommended that future reporting on this issue form part of the reporting framework to be devised once the Council had adopted the forthcoming Sefton Economic Strategy, as this would supersede and update the recommendations of the NEET Working Group dating back to 2013.

Claire Maguire, Service Manager (Employment and Learning) referred to Career Connect key performance measures, "unlocking potential" statistics and 4 case studies which highlighted the work being undertaken by Career Connect.

Information was provided on Career Connect.

Members of the Committee asked questions/raised matters on the following issues:-

- Could information regarding monitoring of young people leaving care and young people with SEND and their participation in education, training or employment be provided to the Committee?

RESOLVED: That

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- (1) the report setting out the progress made against each recommendation of the Not in Education, Employment or Training Working Group Final Report be noted;
- (2) future reporting on this issue form part of the reporting framework to be devised once the Council adopts the forthcoming Sefton Economic Strategy, as this will supersede and update the recommendations of the NEET Working Group dating back to 2013;
- (3) the information relating to Career Connect Ltd. key performance measures, “unlocking potential” statistics and 4 case studies which highlighted the work being undertaken by Career Connect be circulated to all Committee Members; and
- (4) the Executive Director be requested to submit information regarding the destinations of young people with SEND in terms of education, training and employment to the Committee at its meeting to be held in January 2019.

9. LICENSING/CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION WORKING GROUP FINAL REPORT – JUNE 2018

Further to Minute No. 6 of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regulatory, Compliance and Corporate Services) of 12 June 2018, the Committee considered the report of the Head of Regulation and Compliance setting out progress made against each of the recommendations formulated by the Licensing/Child Sexual Exploitation Working Group and approved by Cabinet.

One recommendation requested that contact be made with the borough's three Members of parliament seeking the views of Government on strengthening the existing Regulations regarding personal licences and to ensure that Care Providers who offer residential placements for 16 – 18 year old children and young people were inspected by a regulatory body. Peter Dowd M.P. had contacted Nadhim Zahawi M.P. Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Children and Families and Mr. Zahawi's response was attached to the report.

A Further recommendation requested the Head of Schools and Families to promote the Child Sexual Exploitation e-learning tool with all schools and governing bodies and with a request that school e-newsletters contain a hyperlink to the e-learning tool. The report provided information on how 23 schools across the borough had actioned the request.

Members of the Committee asked questions/raised matters on the following issues:-

- The Child Sexual Exploitation e-learning tool was being promoted with all schools and governing bodies, with a request that school

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newsletters should contain a hyperlink to the e-learning tool. What was the Council doing to encourage the issue of on-line safety with schools?

The Director of Social Care and Health chaired a group on child exploitation. He would ensure that the e-learning tool was promoted at the next meeting.

RESOLVED:

That the report setting out progress made against each of the recommendations formulated by the Licensing/Child Sexual Exploitation Working Group and approved by Cabinet be noted.

10. SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITY PROCESS OF ASSESSMENT WORKING GROUP - FINAL REPORT

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Regulation and Compliance formally presenting the final report of the Special Educational Needs and Disability Process of Assessment Working Group. The Committee had established the Working Group at its meeting on 26 September 2017 and the Final Report of the Working Group was attached to the report.

The Terms of Reference for the Working Group had been as follows:-

“To review the Special Educational Needs and Disability Process of Assessment, in terms of “what it will look like in the future”, to include the following aspects:-

- Confidence in mainstream education to support Special Educational Needs; with particular reference to:-
 - Referrals and Assessments;
 - Information provided to parents/carers, particularly on assessment and during the transition to secondary school;
 - SEN provision in schools;
 - Sharing of “good/best practice”.

Councillor Spencer, Lead Member of the Working Group, presented the Working Group's Final Report to the Committee.

The Chair commented that she had only been able to attend a couple of Working Group meetings. She requested recommendation 1. (h) to be re-worded, in order to make it more directive in nature.

Members of the Committee asked questions/raised matters on the following issues:-

- The role of the School Nurse.

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- Dedicated non-teaching Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators (SENCOs), as opposed to those SENCOs with a combined teaching role; and
- The use of the term “unit” within schools.

The Director of Social Care and Health indicated that recommendation 1. (a) was likely to require a report back on the matter.

The Chair raised concerns regarding the revenue costs that were potentially associated with the recommendations and requested the recommendations to be subject to any budget implications.

The Chair thanked Members of the Working Group for their time and input into the review.

RESOLVED:

That provided the recommendations are subject to any budget implications and the inclusion of the revised recommendation 1 (h), the report and the following recommendations be supported and commended to the Cabinet for approval:-

- (1) That the Head of Schools and Families be requested to:-
 - (a) Review the current provision of Special Educational Needs (SEN) units within schools, in order to ensure that appropriate provision is available within the relevant schools, as evidence provided suggests that the current system is not meeting the needs of children and their families appropriately;
 - (b) Encourage relevant schools to consider an alternative term for “SEN unit”, possibly describing themselves as a “SEN-friendly school”, in order to reduce stigma and improve compliance with the Equality Act;
 - (c) Liaise with the Sefton Clinical Commissioning Groups and Alder Hey Children’s NHS Foundation Trust in order to explore the possibility of requesting assessment appointments by professional experts to be carried out in schools wherever possible, particularly specialised schools and those schools with a unit, in order to provide a “safe” environment for children, with less preparation required for those children who experience anxiety when their routine is disrupted;
 - (d) Encourage those schools that have a SEN unit to have a dedicated Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO), particularly where there are a high proportion of children with SEND, as evidence provided indicates that

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access to appropriate resources is greater in settings where there is a dedicated SENCO;

- (e) Encourage schools to include SENCOs on the management team for the school, in order to enhance the profile of SEND;
- (f) Encourage schools to support SENCOs to undertake referrals of children with SEND for professional input and assessment appointments, in order to minimise delays in obtaining Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs);
- (g) Explore the possibility, in conjunction with the Council's Senior Educational Psychologist, of encouraging schools to undertake joint training on SEND for parents/carers' groups within schools, with teachers and governors, in order to ensure that the information and approach provided are consistent, appropriate embedded;
- (h) Include Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for parents/carers of children with SEND within the information available on school admissions, as part of the "school readiness" approach, in order to create an efficient and effective home-school partnership from the outset, in conjunction with the Assessment, Resource and Provision Planning Team;
- (i) Explore the possibility of increasing communication with parents/carers on SEND through the Borough's Family Wellbeing Centres, particularly from an early years' perspective and possibly through the development of leaflets, in order to enhance "school readiness" for the children and their parents/carers;
- (j) Liaise with the Sefton Clinical Commissioning Groups to explore the possibility of requesting that information on SEND for parents/carers is included with/within the Personal Child Health Record (red book) and through the Healthy Child Programme, in order to assist in early intervention;
- (k) Encourage schools to include potentially useful contacts and useful events on SEND within school newsletters, in order to ensure that all parents/carers have access to them;
- (l) Encourage primary schools to share good practice and to consider undertaking inclusivity education with all children, particularly relating to SEND and neuro-diversity, in order to raise standards and ensure equitable and universal access to provision within schools;
- (m) Revise Sefton's Local Offer in order to make it more user-friendly and accessible to parents/carers, which could

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include ensuring that it is easier to find on the Council's website, using less formal language and the inclusion of a glossary of terms and abbreviations;

- (n) Liaise with the Council's Head of Health and Wellbeing in order to:
 - (i) Encourage schools to advertise and promote the School Nurse drop-in sessions within their newsletters, so that parents/carers have a greater opportunity to access them;
 - (ii) Request the School Nursing Service to approach the SENCO Forum, with a view to discussing the Healthy Schools Programme and to clarify the role of the School Nurse, particularly in relation to assessing children with SEND and in order to minimise delays in obtaining EHC Plans, as this would help to manage the expectations of parents/carers;
- (o) Submit a report to a future meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Children's Services and Safeguarding), following an audit, providing information on the following:-
 - (i) Any high schools which are restricting the number of enhanced transitions for SEND, together with explanations for the reasons behind the decisions;
 - (ii) The number of children with SEND accessing Sefton schools who come from outside the Borough and the reasons for this;
 - (iii) Consideration of how parents who have children with SEND and who are not engaging with schools could be engaged, or re-engaged;
 - (iv) Whether funding has been withdrawn for children with SEND in Year 6 and the reasons for withdrawal;
- (2) That the Head of Health and Wellbeing be requested to ensure that the School Nurse carries out their role prior to any collaboration with the school SENCO, in relation to assessing and referring children with SEND, in order to minimise delays in obtaining EHC Plans;
- (3) That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Children's Services and Safeguarding) be requested to consider the establishment of a Working Group in the future to examine post-19 provision for SENDs, in order to improve conditions for this vulnerable group of young people. This could be a Joint Working Group with the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regeneration and Skills); and

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- (4) That the Senior Democratic Services Officer be requested to liaise with relevant officers in order to ensure that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Children's Services and Safeguarding) receives a six-monthly monitoring report, setting out progress made against each of the recommendations outlined above and as a means of ensuring SMART objectives.

11. CABINET MEMBER REPORT

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Regulation and Compliance in relation to the most recent report of the Cabinet Member – Children, Schools and Safeguarding for the period June 2018. The report outlined information on the following:-

- Schools Funding;
- Academy Conversions;
- Sefton School led School Improvement System;
- Free School Meal Eligibility Changes;
- SEND Inspection Letter;
- School Attendance and Absence;
- Family Care Associates; and
- Enhancing Elected Members Involvement with Children's Social Care.

RESOLVED:

That the Cabinet Member update report be noted.

12. WORK PROGRAMME KEY DECISION FORWARD PLAN

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Regulation and Compliance seeking the views of the Committee on the draft Work Programme for 2018/19; requesting the identification of potential topics for scrutiny reviews to be undertaken by any Working Group(s) appointed by the Committee; and identification of any items for pre-scrutiny scrutiny by the Committee from the Key Decision Forward Plan.

A Work Programme for 2018/19 was set out in Appendix A to the report, to be considered, along with any additional items to be included and agreed.

Further to Minutes nod. 6 (3), 7(2) and 8 (4) above, the Committee had requested certain additional items for meetings during 2018/19.

The Committee was invited to consider a topic for review during 2018/19. Further to Minute no. 10 (3) above, a proposal had been made by the Special Educational Needs and Disability Process of Assessment Working

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Group to establish a working group to consider post 19 provision. This could be a joint working group with the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regeneration and Skills).

There were two Decisions within the latest Key Decision Forward Plan, attached to the report at Appendix D that fell under this Committee's remit, and the Committee was invited to consider items for pre-scrutiny.

Further to Minute No. 102 (7) of the Cabinet meeting of 11 January 2018, the possibility of a site visit to the Dewi Jones Unit in Waterloo was currently being investigated and Members would be advised of arrangements in due course. The Senior Democratic Services Officer would liaise with the Chair of the Committee regarding potential dates for the visits.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Work Programme for 2018/19, as set out in Appendix A to the report, be agreed;
- (2) the following additional item(s) be added to the Committee's Work Programme for 2018/19:-
 - The Head of Children's Social Care be requested to submit information on Serious Case Reviews to the Committee, as and when cases arise;
 - the Head of Schools and Families be requested to submit a further update on the implementation of the recommendations of the Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services Working Group (CAMHS) to the Committee on 29 January 2019; and
 - the Executive Director be requested to submit information regarding young people with SEND in paid/voluntary employment to the Committee at its meeting to be held on 29 January 2019;
- (3) the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Regeneration and Skills) be requested to consider the establishment of a joint working group to consider post-19 provision for Special Educational Needs and Disability, with Members of this Committee;
- (4) the contents of the Key Decision Forward Plan for the period July to 31 October 2018 be noted, and
- (5) following the outcome of the Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) review, the Committee is requested to note the possibility of a future site visit to the Dewi Jones Unit, Waterloo.

13. LIBBY KITT, CO-OPTED MEMBER

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The Chair reported that this was Libby Kitt's last meeting of the Committee, as she was stepping down from her role as Healthwatch Sefton Adviser.

RESOLVED:

That best wishes be accorded to Libby for the future and thanks be extended for her input into the work of this Committee.