



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

MEETING HELD AT THE TOWN HALL, SOUTHPORT
ON TUESDAY 20TH DECEMBER, 2022

PRESENT: Councillor June Burns (in the Chair)
Councillors Danny Burns, Hardman, Lloyd-Johnson,
Chris Maher, Murphy and Prendergast

ALSO PRESENT: Mr. M. Byrne, Healthwatch Representative
Mrs. S. Cain, Independent Advisory Member
Ms. C. Swainbank, Parent Governor Representative
Councillor Roscoe, Cabinet Member – Education

30. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Carlin and her Substitute Councillor John Kelly; Councillor Doyle, Cabinet Member – Children's Social Care; and Ms. Joan McCarthy, Archdiocese Representative.

31. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of any disclosable pecuniary interests or personal interests were received.

32. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 7 November 2022, be confirmed as a correct record.

33. MATERNITY SERVICE BRIEFING

The Committee considered the report and presentation submitted by Southport and Ormskirk Hospital NHS Trust and NHS Cheshire and Merseyside (Sefton). Kate Clark, Executive Medical Director and Dawn Meredith, Maternity Services, Southport and Ormskirk Hospital NHS Trust, and Kerrie France, Associate Director of Quality and Safety Improvements, NHS Cheshire and Merseyside (Sefton), attended to present information on Maternity Services for women and babies and an overview of maternity provision by Southport and Ormskirk Hospital NHS Trust. The presentation outlined the following:

- Maternity Services
- Geographical area covered by Southport and Ormskirk
- The areas and population served
- Population Demographics 2020-21

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- Maternity Services offered across the two Hospital sites
- Activity 2021/22, in terms of booking and deliveries
- Additional Specialist Clinics
- Community Midwifery
- Action Plan following 2015 Quality Assurance (QA) Visit
- Headlines
- Reding the Signs – overview of East Kent services led by Kirkup (October 2022)
- Implementation System learning

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

- Ante-natal classes offered
- Statistics on alcohol intake during pregnancy
- Percentage of on-line patient records
- Proportion of under-19s pregnancies in Sefton
- Measuring improvements in reductions in neo-natal deaths
- Work undertaken and sharing of learning with Liverpool Women's Hospital NHS Foundation Trust.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) Kate Clark, Dawn Meredith and Kerrie France be thanked for their attendance;
- (2) the report and the presentation be noted; and
- (3) additional information be requested on stillbirth rates, neonatal death and brain injury.

34. CHILDREN'S SERVICES IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME

The Committee considered the report of the Executive Director of Children's Social Care and Education on progress made against the Children's Services Improvement Plan. The report outlined progress made against quality; implementation of learning; tools available; and strategic partnerships. The report also indicated that the priorities for the next quarter would be developed.

A copy of the Improvement Plan was attached to the report and outlined the four themes of improvement, which were Improving Quality; Improving Implementation of Learning; Improving Tools; and Improving Strategic Partnerships.

Martin Birch, Executive Director of Children's Social Care and Education, reported on current staffing levels.

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

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- Recruitment of Practice Improvement Managers.
- Phase 2 of the Children's Services Improvement Plan and when it would be submitted to this Committee. A draft was likely to be submitted to the next meeting.
- Numbers within the Social Work Academy.
- Whether Sefton staff had applied for higher level posts.
- Cohorts of individuals joining the Academy.
- The possibility of having a moratorium whereby local authorities were less likely to poach each other's staff, due to the national shortage of social workers.
- Further to Minute Nod. 4 and 5 (2) of 5 July 2022 and 18 (4) of 27 September 2022, the request for this Committee to receive copies of reports and Minutes of the Improvement Board was reiterated, as was the request for the Chair of the Improvement Board to attend a meeting of the Committee.
- Monitoring of targets.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the progress made be noted;
- (2) the Executive Director of Children's Social Care and Education be requested to submit the draft version of Phase 2 of the Children's Services Improvement Plan to the next meeting of the Committee; and
- (3) it be noted that the Committee has again requested receipt of copies of reports and Minutes of the Improvement Board, together with a request for the Chair of the Improvement Board to attend a meeting of the Committee, and the Committee has not yet been notified of the outcome of the requests.

35. REFERRALS AND THRESHOLDS

The Committee considered the report of the Executive Director of Children's Social Care and Education setting out the current process around referrals into Sefton's Integrated Front Door (IFD). The report outlined key functions of the IFD; how contact was made to Sefton's Children's Services; the IFD process; child contact outcomes; and an overview of the key working practices in the Sefton Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH).

The new Sefton Safeguarding Children Partnership Level of Need Guidance was attached to the report.

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

- Timescales for MASH enquiries and whether they were being met.

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- Whether Ofsted would see any improvements to the Children's Services function.
- The IFD in the MASH.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

36. CABINET MEMBER REPORTS

The Committee considered the report of the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer submitting the most recent update reports from the Cabinet Member – Children's Social Care, and the Cabinet Member – Education, whose portfolios fell within the remit of the Committee.

The Cabinet Member update report – Children's Social Care, attached to the report at Appendix A, outlined information on the following:

- Children's Social Care
- Youth Justice Service:
 - Performance
 - Audit Plan
 - Turnaround Programme Funding
 - Community Connectors

The Cabinet Member update report – Education, attached to the report at Appendix B, outlined information on the following:

- Education Excellence
- Schools
- Academisation
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)
- Finance

Councillor Roscoe attended the meeting to present her report and to respond to any questions or issues raised by Members of the Committee.

RESOLVED:

That the update reports from the Cabinet Member – Children's Social Care and the Cabinet Member – Education be noted.

37. WORK PROGRAMME KEY DECISION FORWARD PLAN

The Committee considered the report of the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer seeking to:

- review the Committee's Work Programme for the remainder of the Municipal Year 2022/23;

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- note the progress made in obtaining information relevant to considering the possible re-establishment of a Working Group to review the topic of Secondary School Performance and Attainment Working Group;
- note that an informal briefing on the Leeds Family Values has taken place and to indicate if there are any further informal briefing sessions that Members would wish to be arranged during 2022/23;
- note the outcome of the site visit for Committee Members to meet with Children's Services Teams at Magdalen House, Bootle;
- note that there were no items for pre-scrutiny by the Committee from the latest Key Decision Forward Plan;
- receive an update on the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee;
- note the preference for the Committee to continue to meet on a six-weekly basis during 2023/24 and to seek the views of the Committee as to whether it would wish to alternate formal and informal meetings during 2023/24.

Appendix A to the report set out the Committee's Work Programme for 2022/23.

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

- The preference was for the Committee to continue to meet formally on a six-weekly basis during 2023/24, rather than to alternate between formal and informal meetings.

RESOLVED:

- (1) the Work Programme for 2022/23, as set out at Appendix A to the report, be noted;
- (2) progress made in obtaining information relevant to considering the possible re-establishment of a Working Group to review the topic of Secondary School Performance and Attainment Working Group, be noted;
- (3) the fact that an informal briefing session on the Leeds Family Values has taken place, be noted;
- (4) the outcome of a site visit for Committee Members to meet with Children's Services Teams at Magdalen House, Bootle, be noted;
- (5) the fact that there are no items for pre-scrutiny from the Key Decision Forward Plan that fall under the remit of the Committee, on this occasion, be noted;
- (6) the update on the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee be noted; and

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- (7) the preference for the Committee to continue to meet formally on a six-weekly basis during 2023/24 be noted, rather than to alternate between formal and informal meetings.