



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

MEETING HELD AT THE TOWN HALL BOOTLE
ON TUESDAY 5TH JULY, 2022

PRESENT: Councillor June Burns (in the Chair)
Councillor Spencer (Vice-Chair)
Councillors Danny Burns, Carlin, Evans, Hardman,
Killen, Murphy, Prendergast and Wilson

ALSO PRESENT: Mr. M. Byrne, Healthwatch Representative
Ms. M. McDermott, Parent Governor Representative
Ms. C. McDonough, Parent Governor
Representative
Mrs. S. Cain, Independent Advisory Member
Councillor Doyle – Cabinet Member – Children's
Social Care
Councillor Roscoe, Cabinet Member – Education
Councillor Brough

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Ms. K. Christie, Healthwatch Representative.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 15 March 2022 be confirmed as a correct record.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That it be noted that the Minutes of the Improvement Board, in relation to the Children's Services Improvement Journey, have been requested by the Committee.

5. OFSTED REPORT AND IMPROVEMENT PLAN

In response to a request by the Chair of the Committee, the Executive Director of Children's Social Care and Education provided a verbal update

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on the above matter, indicating that the Improvement Plan was currently in course of preparation, would be submitted to Ofsted in mid-August 2022 and would be submitted to the next meeting of the Committee.

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

- The lack of opportunity for Committee Members to consider the Improvement Plan before its submission to Ofsted.
- Representatives on the Improvement Board.
- The lack of opportunity for Committee Members to debate the Ofsted report.
- The Independent Advisor who chaired the Improvement Board.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the Improvement Plan be submitted to a Special meeting of the Committee prior to its submission to Ofsted; and
- (2) the Improvement Advisor who chairs the Improvement Board be invited to attend a meeting of the Committee.

6. OFSTED INSPECTION REPORTS

The Committee considered the report of the Executive Director of Children's Social Care and Education updating on recent Ofsted Inspection Reports and the work of the School Improvement Team.

The following schools had been inspected and reports received during the Spring term of 2022:

- Litherland High School;
- Waterloo Primary School;
- Bedford Primary School;
- Maghull High School;
- Woodlands Primary School;
- Range High School; and
- Our Lady of Walsingham RC Primary School.

A Summary of Ofsted Outcomes and Support during Spring 2022 was attached to the report.

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

- The role of the local authority in school improvement.
- Feeder schools.
- Views on academisation and the Archdiocese. A report could be provided on an event with Headteachers of Catholic High Schools.

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- The representatives of the Diocese and Archdiocese on the Committee.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the report be noted;
- (2) the Head of Education be requested to submit a report of the event with Headteachers of Catholic High Schools to be held on 6 July 2022, particularly regarding views on academisation and the Archdiocese; and
- (3) a letter be forwarded to the representatives of the Diocese and Archdiocese on the Committee, requesting them to attend meetings.

7. IMPACT OF COVID 19 ON THE PRIMARY CURRICULUM WORKING GROUP - FINAL REPORT

The Committee considered the report of the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer presenting formally the final report of the Impact of Covid 19 on the Primary Curriculum Working Group.

The Final Report of the Impact of Covid 19 on the Primary Curriculum Working Group was attached to the report:

Councillor Spencer, Lead Member, introduced the Final Report.

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

- Many teachers and support staff felt unappreciated.
- Schools should be provided with an electronic version of the letter, in order that it could be forwarded to each member of staff.
- Recruitment issues.

RESOLVED:

That the Cabinet and the Council be recommended to approve the following recommendations:

- (1) that, once data is available, the Head of Education Excellence be requested to submit a monitoring report to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Children's Services and Safeguarding), on primary school performance, to include school attendance and any available information on SATs results, and other performance indicators, in order to draw comparisons with 2019 performance and also with regional and national performance;
- (2) that the Council be requested to agree in writing to all Headteachers of schools throughout the Borough, to thank teaching staff for their

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on-going input throughout the pandemic and to raise the following matters:

- (a) to remind schools of the continued support available from the Council;
 - (b) to remind schools of the various options available for securing additional teaching staff, such as:
 - the graduate teaching apprenticeship scheme
 - School Centred Initial Teacher Training (SCITT)
 - Teach First
 - Degree course in Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) and
 - a Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE)
 - (c) to remind schools of the availability of mental health support, including the Young People's Emotional Wellbeing Toolkit that can be accessed via the following link:

[Mental Health & Emotional Wellbeing \(sefton.gov.uk\)](https://sefton.gov.uk/mental-health-emotional-wellbeing)
 - (d) to encourage schools to try to re-engage with families as a source of support in schools **where possible and where practical**, particularly given covid concerns.
- (3) that the Mayor of Sefton be requested to consider hosting an event for representatives of all schools throughout the Borough, to thank them for their ongoing input throughout the pandemic;
 - (4) that the Council be requested to agree to writing to the Department for Education in the strongest terms, to request additional resources for Sefton schools, particularly in view of forthcoming literacy and numeracy expectations on primary schools by 2030; and
 - (5) 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.

8. 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:

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- Children's Social Care;
- Youth Justice Service; and
- Reframe – a New Intervention.

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

- Education Excellence;
- Schools;
- St Teresa's RC Infant and Nursery School;
- Sacred Heart Catholic College;
- Savio Salesian College;
- Exams, assessments and tests;
- Attendance;
- Inspecting Local Authority Children's Services (ILACs);
- Virtual School;
- Update on Children Missing Education (CME) and Elective Home Education (EHE); and
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

Councillors Doyle and Roscoe attended the meeting to present their reports and to respond to any questions or issues raised by Members of the Committee.

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

- Fees associated with the international recruitment of social workers.
- Strategies used to support newly qualified social workers.
- Parity of esteem between Overview and Scrutiny and the Cabinet.
- Other partner organisations involved in the Improvement Board.
- Investment in the Social Work Academy.
- The impact of smaller caseloads for newly qualified social workers on existing social workers.
- The possibility of apprenticeships.
- Maintaining children with SEND in mainstream schools.
- The correlation between school attendance and performance.
- Fines for non-attendance of school in different areas of the Borough.
- Inclusivity in schools.
- Academisation of high schools and the relationship with the local authority education authority.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the update reports from the Cabinet Member – Children's Social Care and the Cabinet Member – Education be noted;

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- (2) the Head of Children's Social Care be requested to submit a report on recruitment and support for newly qualified social workers to the Committee in 6 months' time; and
- (3) information regarding attendance and sanctions be provided by the Head of Education to the Senior Democratic Services Officer for circulation to Members of the Committee.

9. WORK PROGRAMME KEY DECISION FORWARD PLAN

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

- seeking the views of the Committee on the draft Work Programme for the Municipal Year 2022/23;
- noting the progress of the Impact of Covid 19 on the Primary Curriculum Working Group;
- consideration of deferring the re-establishing the Secondary School Performance and Attainment Working Group for a further 12 months, to the Autumn of 2023;
- inviting Committee Members to participate in informal briefing sessions during 2022/23, rather than establish a traditional working group;
- identifying any items for pre-scrutiny by the Committee from the latest Key Decision Forward Plan; and
- receiving an update on the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The following appendices were attached to this report:

- Appendix A - Work Programme for 2021/22;
- Appendix B – Terms of Reference for the Committee (extract from the Council's Constitution); and
- Appendix C – the latest Key Decision Forward Plan items relating to the Committee.

A supplementary agenda requested Committee Members to comment on the proposed frequency of meetings and the revised draft Work Programme for 2022/23, as attached at revised Appendix A.

Since the agenda for the meeting was published, a further Key Decision Forward Plan had been produced and the Committee was invited to identify any items for pre-scrutiny, as set out at Revised Appendix C.

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

- The possibility of providing a briefing session on the Leeds Family Values and the Sunderland model.
- A partnership event on 21st July 2022.

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- The proposed frequency of meetings of the Committee.
- A report on the Children's Services Improvement Journey.
- Timings of any briefing sessions held.
- The frequency of Improvement Board meetings.
- The replacement for the Chief Officer of the Clinical Commissioning Groups.
- The possibility of a briefing on the MacAlister Review.
- The impact of Section 106 monies to education services, regarding projected school admission numbers.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the revised draft Work Programme for 2022/23, as set out at Revised Appendix A to the report, be agreed, along with any additional items to be included and agreed;
- (2) progress of the Impact of Covid 19 on the Primary Curriculum Working Group be noted;
- (3) the re-establishment of the Secondary School Performance and Attainment Working Group be considered further at the next meeting of the Committee;
- (4) all Members of the Committee be invited to participate in informal briefing sessions, the timings to be considered and the following topics be considered for inclusion:
 - the Leeds Family Values and the Sunderland model; and
 - the MacAlister Review;
- (5) the Key Decision Forward Plan for the period 1 August – 30 November 2022, be noted; and
- (6) the update on the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee be noted.