

CABINET MEMBER UPDATE REPORT

Councillor	Portfolio	Period of Report
Ian Moncur	Children, Schools and Families & Leisure	June 2013

1. Vulnerable Children and Young People

Children's Social Care Re-design

The Sefton assessment service incorporating the triage team and 3 'Child in Need' teams is now located in St Peter's House, Bootle. Staff from early intervention and prevention services will join us over the next few weeks, followed by Merseyside Police to form a Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH).

The Bootle locality team dealing with children subject to child protection plans and court work will move into Merton House in May leaving two teams based in Litherland and one in Southport.

The review of the Independent Review Officers service and the child protection co-ordinators will be complete by end of May.

The Residential Children's Homes review is now complete and all posts recruited to.

Part 2 of the re-design for 2013/14 includes Emergency Duty Team, Disability Service, Fostering and Adoption Services.

Outcome of Safeguarding Diagnostic

The diagnostic covered 4 key areas:

- Validation of the new QA framework
- Case record review
- Social work Practice observation
- Inspection Information Health Check

The team commented on each section in relation to strengths and areas for improvement and provided some overarching messages. The following is an abridged version:

Lots of change in key personnel and decision to reorganise benefits not yet seen. Peer team felt a narrative setting out rationale for change and a vision for future service and progress to date would help explain to staff and partners how children are kept safe.

Response - a graphic display of child's journey and progress to date produced and copies in each work site and portable version for external discussion.

Focussed only on social care – Messages need to be shared with LSCB and partners to gain an integrated response.

Response – meeting to discuss between Head of Service and LSCB Chair on 5th June with a view to presentation at Board.

Lots of commitment, willingness and effort to improve safeguarding practice from senior managers, frontline staff and partners

Present evidence to elected members to promote scrutiny.

Response – present report and recommendations to cabinet member via briefing and seek direction.

Clarify arrangements for new ‘front door’

Response – negotiations underway to relocate 2/3 SSCAT staff to sit in triage service. Crib sheet being developed. Initial visit by team to assessment service

Balance between compliance and behaviours and culture to support – team felt QA framework was robust but not adhered to and that work needed doing to help understand why important but have clear consequences of non adherence.

Response – Manager’s away day on May 15th to consider values, ‘tools’ and QA framework. Team managers devised behaviours and activities needed to ensure children were safe and agreed to take back to individual team meetings

Practice Issues – more effort into ensuring full and accurate information is held on Case and Management Information System and is accurately analysed to inform decision making. Files seen did not give a full picture of the child’s journey.

Response – series of lunch time workshops to support the evidence for ‘defensible decision making’ started.

Performance Information needs to be robust and data used to interrogate hypotheses and KLI’s about performance.

Response – Data specialist to work with local authority around data needs week commencing June 3rd.

Set milestones and celebrate success – use a widely disseminated project plan, measurable achievement targets at regular intervals – report on progress.

Response - Display of Child’s journey showing arrival and departure boards.

Focus on smaller number of key priorities and reported to members and partners via LSCB

Response – Agreed 3 key priorities:

1. Data
2. Supervision
3. Defensible decision making

Review social work health check in 6 months - look at measurable changes, focus on lessons learnt and recognition of achievements.

Response - agreed to undertake in November 2013.

The detail of the report will be incorporated in to existing action plans as necessary and progress monitored via the performance management Group in Children's Social care.

2. Health and Wellbeing

Active Sefton

- Confirmation has recently been received that all public health funding has been guaranteed for a further 12 months for a number of Active Sefton healthy living projects including: Active Lifestyles, MOVE IT, Relax & Revive, Positive Futures, Dance 4 Life, Active Kidz and Healthy Habits.

Active Lifestyles

- Active Lifestyles received 982 referrals in the period between Jan- Mar 2013. 88% of people were confident to continue with an active lifestyle on completion of the programme.

Sports Development

- The Active Sports programme in 2012/13 attracted over 50,000 visits.
 - Over 70 schools, colleges and children's centres were engaged in programmes
 - Over 200 Sefton residents attained coaching qualifications
 - Over 500 vulnerable young people were supported in accessing sport and physical activity opportunities
- The Sefton Positive Futures team is continuing to work in partnership to provide positive diversionary health activities for young people at risk of social inclusion.
- The Aspiring Instructors Programme participants graduated in 2013 with Sefton@Work at Crosby Lakeside Adventure Centre with 19 individuals successfully graduating from the scheme with more than 140 accredited qualifications ranging from coaching qualifications to first aid. The Leader of the Council, Councillor Peter Dowd and I presented the awards to the graduates.

Leisure Centres

- Dunes Splash World, Bootle Leisure Centre and Meadows all continue to offer £1 swim sessions for children under 16yrs and over residents aged 60yrs+.
- Crosby Lakeside Adventure Centre is positioning itself as a key healthy living and sporting attraction.

The Atkinson Centre

- Emma Anderson has been appointed as The Atkinson's first Director following a career in both curatorship and venue management in major arts institutions in both London and the North West.
- The Atkinson Theatre and Studio opened to the public on the 2nd of May with 3 days of comedy and music.

- The community engagement programme continues at four centres across the Borough.
- Over the past 8 weeks, many groups and organisations have been given guided tours of the Atkinson facility and the public response to the building development has been very positive.

3. Learning Support

Academies

The Secretary of State for Education has the power to change a school into an academy if either the governing body pass a resolution to do so or the school is in receipt of statutory intervention. One primary school and two secondary schools in Sefton fall into the latter category and DfE advisors have visited the schools and met the governing bodies/board regarding this policy.

Officers have expressed concern about the manner in which DfE advisors have approached this. All three schools have said that they do not wish to be forced to become an academy.

Hawthorne's Free School

The dispute with the Hawthorne's Trust and the DfE over the application of TUPE to the Free School is ongoing.

Meetings have been held with former staff some of whom are suffering real hardship because they do not have employment and cannot access a redundancy payment. The Local Authority has brokered an offer from the Trust/DfE which would provide a payment for those former employees who do not have jobs. These consultations are ongoing with Unions, the Trust's legal advisors, and ACAS have been asked to support in reaching an agreement.

Industrial Action

NUT and NASUWT members are planning to take industrial action on 27 June as part of their ongoing industrial action in protest against changes to teachers pay, conditions and pension arrangements and the refusal of the Secretary of state to “genuinely engage with the NASUWT and NUT to seek to resolve” the dispute. It is likely that a number of schools will be closed as a result and guidance has been issued to schools.

Inspections of LA arrangements for supporting school improvement

Ofsted has published the new framework for the inspection of local authority arrangements for supporting school improvement, which will come into force in 1 June 2013. This function of LAs has not been inspected since 2004-05, but this will be another high profile type of inspection with potentially significant implications for LAs.

The inspection will include all support services for schools such as finance, education welfare, SEN and HR.

Like a number of other LAs Sefton has significantly reduced resources in this area over the last few years.

School Performance

Since the last report the following schools have been inspected:

- St Patrick's Primary: inspected 12/13 March, grade 1 (Outstanding) and was previously grade 2 (Good).
- Presfield Special School: inspected 13/14 March; grade 2 (Good) and was previously grade 2 (Good).
- St Edmund and St Thomas' Primary School: inspected 16/17 April, grade 2 (Good) and was previously grade 2 (Good).
- Great Crosby Primary: inspected 17/18 April; grade 2 (Good), previously grade 1 (Outstanding)
- Sacred Heart Secondary: inspected 23/24 April; grade 3 (Requires Improvement), previously grade 1 (Outstanding)
- St Nicholas' CE Primary: inspected 23/24 April; grade 1 (Outstanding), previously grade 1 (Outstanding)
- St Michael's High: inspected 24/25 April; grade 4 (Inadequate –serious weaknesses), previously grade 1 (Outstanding)
- St John's Primary, Waterloo: inspected 25/26 April; grade 2 (Good), previously grade 2 (Good)
- Our Lady of Wallsingham Primary: inspected 25/26 April; grade 3 (Requires Improvement), previously grade 2 (Good)
- St George's Catholic Primary: inspected 7/8 May; grade 2 (Good), previously grade 2 (Good)
- Churchtown Primary: inspected 9/10 May; grade 2 (Good), previously grade 1 (Outstanding)
- Kings Meadow Primary: inspected 15/16 May; grade 3 (Requires Improvement), previously grade 1 (Outstanding)

4. Early Intervention and Prevention

Nothing to report.