

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (CHILDREN'S SERVICES)

MEETING HELD AT THE TOWN HALL, SOUTHPORT
ON TUESDAY 18TH NOVEMBER, 2014

Overview
& Scrutiny



PRESENT: Councillor Brennan (in the Chair)

Councillors Ball, Keith, McKinley, Webster, Booth,
Jo Barton, P. Maguire, Mr David McCaughrean,
Mrs Carol-Anna Ryan-Palmer and Healthwatch
representative, Ms. Libby Kitt.

Also Present: Councillor Bennett.

11. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Bradshaw, Hands, Murphy, Preece and Thompson.

An apology for absence was also received from Substitute Member Councillor O'Brien.

12. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

13. MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 23 September 2014 be confirmed as a correct record.

14. SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS REFORMS

The Committee received a presentation from the Head of Learning and Support, Mr. Mike McSorley, in relation to the Special Educational Needs Reforms. The presentation focused on the implementation of reforms in relation to special educational needs and disability in Sefton and the key headlines were presented as follows:-

- That the Department for Education state "Our vision for children and young people with special needs is the same as for all children and young people – that they achieve well in their early years, at school and in college; lead happy and fulfilled lives; and have choice and control".
- The Special Educational Needs (SEN) and Disability Reform Journey.
- The SEN Reform and the justification for change.
- The SEN Code of Practice – overview
- The SEN Code of Practice – principles

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- New SEN Code of Practice – Sefton's aims

Arising from the presentation the following issues were raised:

- The option of a personal budget for families and young people with a plan to extend choice and control over their support – is there an assessment that the Local Authority carry out to ensure that the families who choose the option of a personal budget are using the budget in the most efficient and effective way? Response: The individual Education, Health and Care Plan will set out the outcomes required by the individual. There is an assessment process whereby the parent/carer/family would need to illustrate that they can deliver the outcomes set out in the plan in an efficient and effective way.
- Is there a process relating to potential disputes about personal budgets. Response: There is a process to address disputes: there are three phases in attempting to resolve disputes locally before reaching the tribunal stage.
- Does the legislation include Higher Education Institutes? Response: The Head of Learning and Support undertook to investigate this matter further.

RESOLVED:

That the Head of Learning and Support be thanked for his informative presentation.

15. TROUBLED FAMILIES PROGRAMME

Further to Minute No. 20 of 24 September 2013, the Committee considered a presentation by Mr. Colin Pettigrew, Director of Young People and Families and Mr. Mike Hanrahan, Troubled Families Co-ordinator, updating on the above Programme. The presentation focused on the troubled families programme in Sefton and the key headlines were presented as follows:-

- “The Troubled Families Programme aims to change the way services are run, save taxpayers money and turn around the lives of some of the hardest to help in the country”.
 - Children back in school
 - Youth crime and anti-social behaviour reduced
 - Adults better able to work
- What we are trying to achieve
- Payment by Results
- Finance Summary
- Governance
- Results to date
- Expanded Programme
- Development Areas

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Arising from the presentation the following issues were raised:

- Why are families not represented on the Steering Group?
Response: Currently families are not represented on the Steering Group. However, the Steering Group is evolving and in that respect the suggestion to include a Troubled Family representative on the Steering Group will be reported at its next meeting.
- During the next 5 years it is anticipated that there will be approximately 2070 Troubled Families in Sefton. How are they identified and are all the agencies and schools aware of the process? Response: There is a process in place through the Common Assessment Framework and a nomination form that all the agencies are aware of. There are also seven officers that work across seven schools in supporting the Troubled Families project. The Service Manager for Early Intervention and Prevention (Family Support) undertook to provide the Committee with a report relating to the nomination and assessment process of identifying a Troubled Family.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) Mr. Colin Pettigrew, Director of Young People and Families, and Mr. Mike Hanrahan, Troubled Families Co-ordinator, be thanked for their informative presentation;
- (2) the Director of Young People and Families be requested to refer the suggestion of an additional member being included on the Steering Group representing the Troubled Families cohort, to the next meeting of the Steering Group; and
- (3) the Director of Young People and Families be requested to submit a report to a future meeting of this Committee in relation to the nomination and assessment process of identifying a Troubled Family.

16. CABINET MEMBER REPORT

The Committee considered the report of the Director of Corporate Services submitting the most recent report of the Cabinet Member for Children, Schools, Families and Leisure for the November 2014 period.

The Cabinet Member Update Report outlined information on the following:-

- Child Sexual Exploitation in Rotherham - Report of Professor Jay.
- Changes to Children's Home Regulations and Amendments.
- Conversion of St. Michael's High School to a Sponsored Academy.
- Progress of Schools led by Interim Executive Boards.
- GCSE Results 2014.
- Inspection Outcomes.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

17. WORK PROGRAMME KEY DECISION FORWARD PLAN

The Committee considered the report of the Director of Corporate Services in relation to the Committee's programme of work and submitting the latest Key Decision Forward Plan. There were no Key Decisions within the latest Key Decision Forward Plan which fell under the remit of the Committee on this occasion.

The report referred to the Committee's appointment of Ms. Libby Kitt as a Healthwatch representative to serve on this Committee in a non-voting capacity. The report indicated that Healthwatch had nominated Ms. Jenny Southern as a second representative to serve on this Committee in a non-voting capacity.

The report also referred to a proposed list of key questions to be put to the headteachers of the 19 secondary schools in connection with the School Performance Review.

The report also set out the revised Work Programme for 2014/15.

Councillor Keith brought the Committee's attention to concerns regarding a social housing provider's hostel and the level of anti-social behaviour from some of the 16 – 25 year olds residing at the hostel. Councillor Keith raised the issue of safeguarding and drew Members' attention to an incident report that she had written and requested that the report be passed to the relevant Cabinet Members for their attention.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the fact that there were no items for pre-scrutiny from the current Key Decision Forward Plan be noted;
- (2) confirmation of the appointment of Ms. Jenny Southern, Healthwatch representative, as an advisory Member on the Committee be agreed;
- (3) in relation to the School Performance Working Group, the Director of Young People and Families be requested to approach the co-ordinator of the Sefton Association of Secondary Heads with a view to the School Performance Working Group being invited to speak with them regarding the proposed list of key questions drafted for Head teachers;
- (4) the submitted work programme for this Committee be agreed subject to the following items being included on the work programme:-
 - Ofsted Inspection – Early Years Provision and Day Nursery Provision;

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- An explanation of the process and level of Inspection of registered and unregistered homes and hostels;
 - The nomination and assessment process undertaken in the identification of a Troubled Family; and
- (5) the Director of Young People and Families be requested to forward the incident report submitted by Councillor Keith to the Cabinet Member - Children, Schools, Families and Leisure, the Cabinet Member - Communities and Environment and the Cabinet Member - Older People and Health.

18. ERICK MAINA

The Chair, Councillor Brennan referred to the recent sad passing of Erick Maina, who was a student at Maricourt Catholic High School, Maghull. The Chair requested that the Director of Young People and Families send the Committee's condolences to Erick's family and friends.