

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee

held on Monday, 30th November, 2015 at Committee Suite 1,2 & 3,
Westfields, Middlewich Road, Sandbach CW11 1HZ

PRESENT

Councillor Rhoda Bailey (Chairman)

Councillors B Dooley, D Flude, L Jeuda, G Merry, A Moran and J Saunders

Apologies

Councillor L Wardlaw and Jill Kelly

26 ALSO PRESENT

Councillor Rachel Bailey - Children and Families Portfolio Holder
Councillor George Hayes – Deputy Cabinet Member

27 OFFICERS PRESENT

Nigel Moorhouse - Director of Children's Social Care
Mark Bayley – Head of Service – Achievement and Attainment
Janine Smart - Capital and Land Development Manager
Eleanor Spencer - School Organisation, Technical Support Officer

28 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting of held on 28 September 2015 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

29 PUBLIC SPEAKING TIME

There were no members of the public present who wished to speak.

30 DECLARATION OF PARTY WHIP

There were no declarations of the existence of a party whip.

31 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

32 CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S IMPROVEMENT PLAN

The Committee considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Children's Services on the proposed action plan to address the recommendations

and areas for improvement identified by Ofsted in its inspection report of Children's services published in September 2015.

The effectiveness of the Council's arrangements for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers were inspected by Ofsted in July 2015. Inspectors also carried out a review of the Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB).

The inspection report had subsequently identified 17 recommended actions for the Council and its partners and a further 8 for the LSCB to achieve a consistently good standard.

The improvement plan had been considered recently by the Improvement Board which had recommended significant changes. A final version would be submitted to the Government and Ofsted by 22 December 2015.

RESOLVED-

- (a) That the report, draft improvement plan and action plan be received and noted;
- (b) That the arrangements for submitting the plan to the Department for Education and Ofsted in December 2015 be noted;
- (c) That the Director of Children's Social Care be requested to report back to the committee at its next formal meeting to provide details of the current number of agency workers employed by the Council in the context of the work undertaken by this committee previously in respect of the terms and conditions of children's services social workers;
- (d) That the offer to provide a demonstration for Members of the new management software in Children's Services by the Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Children's Services be accepted;
- (e) That the Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Children's Services be requested to submit a progress report on the improvement plan to this committee in 3 months time.

33 SUMMARY OF PROVISIONAL SCHOOL'S PERFORMANCE 2014-15

The Committee considered a report of Mark Bayley the Corporate Manager, Standards and Learning concerning provisional data relating to schools' performance in 2014/15.

At this stage the results were provisional and Mark explained that during the coming months, the results would be validated and would subsequently be included in the annual education report which would be shared with key stakeholders at the end of February 2016.

In presenting the data, Mark emphasised that the analysis of the figures was constantly changing and that the results should be viewed in the context of where

Ofsted considered that Cheshire East ought to be in the national rankings, i.e. to be the highest ranked authority in the North West and one of the best in the country.

In response to questions about the Council's responsibilities in connection with the results of academy schools and how results of multi academy trusts were presented, Mark informed the committee that the Council had a responsibility to challenge all schools on their results whether they were academies or maintained schools and that in respect of multi academy trusts, each school retained examination data on an individual school basis.

In response to a further question about the effectiveness of using school data as an indicator of performance, as opposed to, for instance, the number of pupils who go into apprenticeships or university when they left school, Mark explained that schools now also had to provide reports on destination status.

It was noted that there had been a dip in the results of Cheshire East across the board. Mark explained that similar results had been experienced elsewhere but at the moment there was no explanation for the dip.

In response to a question about summer born children, Mark explained that parents of children born between April and August now had an option to delay the start of their child's education and the Council was currently assessing the take up of this offer.

RESOLVED – That the report be received.

34 SCHOOL ORGANISATION AND CAPITAL STRATEGY FRAMEWORK

The Committee considered a report of the School Organisation and Admissions Manager relating to the school organisation and capital strategy framework. The report also included pupil forecasts based on the October 2014 school census.

The strategy was intended to drive the Council's approved capital strategy and provided a mechanism for discussions and decisions to be made and acted upon by the Council, Diocesan Boards of Education, other formal groups and individual schools.

The framework document supported the following six priorities as set in the Children and Young People's plan:

1. Children and young people would be actively involved in decisions that affect their lives and communities;
2. Children and young people feel and were safe;
3. Children and young people experienced good emotional and mental health and wellbeing;
4. Children and young people were healthy and made positive choices;
5. Children and young people leave school with the best skills and qualifications they could achieve and the life skills they needed to thrive into adulthood;
6. Children, young people and young adults with additional needs had better chances in life.

The Committee was informed that there would be wide consultation on the framework.

Under the Education Act 2011, local authorities must seek to commission rather than provide the school places it identified were necessary to meet future demands by working alongside a wide range of partners including schools, academy trusts and sponsors of academy chains.

Mark Bayley informed the committee that particular pressures had been identified in Shavington and Wilmslow in connection with the provision of secondary school places and that for example in Wilmslow, current assessments predicted that Wilmslow High School may have to accommodate 2,750 pupils in the near future.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the report be received;
- (b) That the school organisation and capital strategy framework be endorsed.

35 WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee reviewed its work programme.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the item relating to the health responsibilities of 0-19 year olds be dealt with at the 25 January 2016 meeting;
- (b) That the Chairman be requested discuss the item relating to Special Education Needs (SEN) with the Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Children's Services with a view to including milestones within the work programme.

36 FORWARD PLAN

The Committee reviewed the current forward plan.

RESOLVED – that the forward plan be received and noted.

The meeting commenced at 2.00 pm and concluded at 4.00 pm

Councillor Rhoda Bailey (Chairman)