

# **CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL**

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

held on Thursday, 10th May, 2018 at Committee Suite 2/3 - Westfields,  
Middlewich Road, Sandbach, CW11 1HZ

### **PRESENT**

Councillor Rhoda Bailey (Chairman)  
Councillor S Pochin (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors M Beanland, Bratherton, M Deakin, D Flude, M Grant, G Merry,  
B Walmsley and M Warren

### **In Attendance**

Councillor J Saunders – Portfolio Holder  
J Forster - Director of Education and 14-19 Skills  
R Hibbert – Head of Transport (Interim)  
N Moorhouse - Director of Children's Social Care and Deputy DCS  
M Palethorpe - Acting Executive Director of People  
T Ryan - Director of Children's Prevention & Support  
L Seal - Senior Communications Officer

### **54 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors B Burkhill and J Nicholas.

### **55 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting held on 23 March 2018.

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### **56 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest

### **57 WHIPPING DECLARATIONS**

There were no whipping declarations

### **58 PUBLIC SPEAKING/OPEN SESSION**

There were no members of the public present wishing to speak

## **59 NEGLECT STRATEGY - IMPACT PROGRESS REPORT**

Consideration was given to a report and presentation on the neglect strategy. The presentation detailed the current campaign aimed at raising awareness of neglect. The Local Children's Safeguarding Board revised its neglect strategy in 2017 to better address the impact of neglect and launched a campaign called 'user busy'. The report provided a summary of the impact of the strategy and identified areas of focus and improvement.

The Committee was pleased to hear that the campaign had been shortlisted for the Local Government Chronicle 2018 and Municipal Journal Awards 2018.

It was agreed that the Council and partners needed to identify families earlier and tackle the causes of neglect to avoid escalation. The campaign marketing materials such as posters, needed to be placed in locations where children frequented such as shops, bus stops and schools. It was also agreed that Councillors could help to distribute materials and that social media should also be used.

### **RESOLVED**

That officers ensure that the marketing material is placed in suitable locations to ensure it reached as many children as possible and that Councillors be requested to help with the distribution.

## **60 SIGNS OF SAFETY BRIEFING AND PROGRESS UPDATE**

The Committee received an update including a one minute guide on signs of safety, a widely recognised leading approach to child protection casework. Cheshire East would be adopting the approach within early help and prevention services and children's social care to achieve:

- better outcomes for children, young people and families
- child focused services
- practice that was respectful and inclusive
- empowered professionals.

It was agreed that the Committee would complete the signs of safety e learning module.

### **RESOLVED**

That the Committee complete the signs of safety e learning module.

## **61 SUSTAINABLE MODES OF TRAVEL STRATEGY (SMOTS)**

Consideration was given to a presentation on the outcomes of the consultation of the draft SMOTS Strategy as part of the wider suite of home to school travel policies. The Council must maintain a SMOTS strategy under the Education and Inspection Regulations. In summary;

- the consultation period ran from 15 February to 29 March 2018
- the target audience was schools, school managers, parents, transport providers and residents
- publicised through direct mailing, online, school bulletin, press and social media releases
- 289 responses had been received, more than half were supportive of the draft strategy.
- Cheshire East Council would be funding the Modeshift STARS online system to help schools produce a School Travel Plan and sustainable travel activities.
- A Safer Routes to School programme would be introduced, with available funding in FY18/19 to enable schools to submit requests to fund walking and cycling infrastructure measures.
- The strategy would be considered by Cabinet in July 2019.

The Committee noted that Local Highways Groups could receive joint funding from the Safer Routes to Schools Programme for school relate projects. It was agreed that the Committee would receive a progress report in due course.

**RESOLVED**

That a progress report be considered by the Committee in due course.

## **62 SEND INSPECTION**

The Director of Children's Prevention & Support provided an update on the recent SEND Ofsted Inspection following the introduction of new legislation in 2014. The inspection included, a webinar, presentations, focus groups and visits. The inspectors recognised that the Council knew its strengths and weaknesses and recognised the pace of change. The SEND toolkit was commended, however there was still work to do as parents were not yet seeing the benefits. It was noted that a strategy was being developed in relation to diagnosing autism.

An improvement plan was underway, which, along with the SEND Task and Finish Group final report would be brought to Committee on 16 July 2018.

The director and her team were thanked for all their hard work.

**RESOLVED**

That the improvement plan and SEND Task and Finish Group final report be considered by the Committee on 16 July 2018.

## **63 FORWARD PLAN**

Consideration was given to the areas of the forward plan which fell within the remit of the Committee.

**RESOLVED**

That the forward plan be received

## 64 **WORK PROGRAMME**

Consideration was given to the work programme. It was reported that St Johns Wood Academy had gone into special measures and the Council was working closely with the School. It was agreed that an update would be brought back to the Committee in due course.

### **RESOLVED**

That an update report on St Johns Wood Academy and Sustainable Modes of Travel Strategy be considered by the Committee in due course.

The meeting commenced at 10.00 am and concluded at 12.00 pm

Councillor Rhoda Bailey (Chairman)