

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY PANEL HELD ON MONDAY 23RD JANUARY 2017

PRESENT:

Councillors: Kirsten Hearn (Chair), Mark Blake, Toni Mallett, Liz Morris and Reg Rice

Co-opted Members: Luci Davin (Parent Governor representative and Yvonne Denny (Church representative)

6. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Uzma Naseer.

7. ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

None.

8. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

9. DEPUTATIONS/PETITIONS/PRESENTATIONS/QUESTIONS

None.

10. MINUTES

AGREED:

That the minutes of the meetings of 19th. October, 13th December and 19th December 2016 be approved.

11. CABINET MEMBER QUESTIONS

Councillor Elin Weston, the Cabinet Member for Children and Families reported on key priorities from within her portfolio and answered questions from the Panel as follows:

- Since the Panel's budget scrutiny meeting on 19 December, the government had announced proposals for the National Funding Formula for schools, which would lead to a real terms cash cut for schools of 2.7%. Every school in the borough would be affected to some extent. The changes would be phased in over two years and would need to be taken on board alongside other budgetary pressures. The recent data on test results had put Haringey 10th amongst English local authorities for the Progress 8 performance measure. The budget reductions arising from the National Funding Formula changes could put this position at risk. Representations would be made by the Council concerning

this. Haringey was classed as an inner London borough for the purposes of the new funding formula and, as such, Haringey's schools would be amongst the most badly affected by the proposals in London.

- In answer to a question, she stated that the Council had not invested resources in Tottenham University Technical College (UTC).
- In answer to a question, she stated that she was happy to circulate details of the outcome of the recent consultation on the funding of early years education in the borough. The government's tight timetable for the three year free early education offer had made putting the necessary arrangements in place challenging. Providers had been broadly supportive of the Council's proposals, which involved a universal base rate and a supplement of 40p. per child. The additional amount that had been paid in excess of the funded level by the Council to providers of the two year old offer would be maintained but tapered down in the next two years. Responses from residents had shown that most people were prepared to pay between £150 and £300 per week for full time care. This amount did not take into account free hours. Residents expressed concerns about fee increases and maintaining standards. Some settings in the North Tottenham were already experiencing low occupancy rates and the Council was committed to re-examining provision in that part of the borough so that it met the needs of the community.
- The Early Help team had now been in place for over a year. Work had taken place with over 900 families, including 2,500 children. There had been positive outcomes in approximately 500 cases. 493 families had been stepped down from intervention whilst 71 had been stepped up into social care. A new initiative had recently been introduced called Conversation for Change, which involved families being contacted within 24 hours of referral and a meeting arranged within 5 days. Specific work was undertaken by the Early Help team with schools. For example, the Early Help team had established a 'team around the school' at Park View to support the school with concerns about behavioural issues. The Schools Forum provided support for the service and had recently re-allocated funding.
- In answer to a question regarding whether there were any nurseries that were struggling, she stated that although there would be significant challenges over the coming months and years, evidence gathered through working with providers as part of the preparation for the early years funding formula changes suggested that nursery schools and schools with nursery classes could survive. The Schools Forum had allocated £700,000 for maintained settings to ease the change to the new funding arrangements. However, there were concerns about some private, voluntary and independent providers.

Councillor Ayisi, the Cabinet Member for Communities, responded to questions on his portfolio as follows:

- There was a need for stable youth provision. There was currently the Bruce Grove Youth Space, which had around 200 visits by young people per week. However, the service did not cover the majority of young people within the borough and consideration needed to be given to their needs as well. If the needs of young people were met early on, there was the potential for long term savings to be made.
- He reported that there were three performance indicators in respect of youth justice. These were;
 - Reduction in first time entrants;

- Reduction in the use of custody; and
 - Reduction in re-offending.
- The current statistics for violence with injury showed that levels within Haringey were the fifth highest in London and 319 people had been affected.
 - The Youth Justice Partnership Board would be responding to the recommendations of the Charlie Taylor review. One initiative of note was the establishment of Campus, a specific free school for young people who had offended with the aim of providing an alternative to custody. The aim was to assist young people at risk into education, employment or training. The Panel noted that efforts were currently being made to identify a suitable site.
 - Addressing the issues raised in the Panel's review on disproportionality was one of his political priorities and action in response was being taken. There was a relationship between the issue and school attainment and there was a specific group within the Council looking at the issue. The Panel noted that a needs analysis of the cohort within the youth justice was taking place and work was also taking place with the DfE and other partners on the Youth Justice Partnership Board. In particular, the complexities were being considered as well as how to ensure that the young people in question accessed employment, education and training.
 - Councillor Ayisi stated that he had met with the Borough Commander and there was recognition of the need to avoid criminalising vulnerable young people. It was also acknowledged that a change of attitude was needed amongst some Police officers to improve relationships with young people. Confidence was a key priority for the Police and, in particular, some young people did not have the confidence to report crime.
 - In answer to a question regarding provision within the youth offer for girls, he stated that it was critical that space was provided for them, particularly as part of addressing Violence Against Women and Girls. Consideration would be given to the provision of space for women within development proposals. Gill Gibson, Assistant Director for Early Help and Prevention, added that work with girls and the community and voluntary sector was already taking place and would also be an aspect considered in the development of the Youth Zone.
 - In respect of the "post codes" issue, he stated that there were 45,000 young people in the borough and only 200 on the Gangs Matrix. The majority of young people travelled freely around the borough. Youth services were only currently provided for a membership of 500 young people, with around 200 visits per week. There had been consultation with young people on what activities that they would like and there was a particular need to get young people active.

AGREED:

1. That a briefing be provided to Panel Members on the development of the Compass Free School; and

2. That a report be submitted to a future meeting of the Panel on the development of Haringey Youth Zone.

12. HARINGEY SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD ANNUAL REPORT 2015/16

Sir Paul Ennals, the Chair of Haringey Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB), introduced its annual report for 2015/16. This was his third and final report as Chair as he would be stepping down in two months time. It was normal for LSCB chairs to move on after such time. He was pleased with the progress that had been made in the last three years. The partnership felt strong and had improved its effectiveness. It worked together well and challenged effectively.

There were nevertheless challenges to be faced. There had already been severe budget pressures on the Police and Council and NHS services were now facing similar challenges. In addition, schools would now have to address budget reductions. It could sometimes be difficult for partners to admit to the extent of the difficulties that they faced. The only way forward was for partners to be sharper and smarter in their approach.

He felt that the setting up of the Council's Early Help Service had been of particular significance. This facilitated interventions at key transitional points and allowed families to be stepped down or up into social care.

It was never possible to say with absolute confidence that all children were safe. However, the increase in the number of schools in the borough that were now rated as either good or outstanding by Ofsted had helped to improve levels of safety. Public health indicators for the borough were mixed but better overall than predicted.

Although the Police had performed well locally, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary had judged the Metropolitan Police's arrangements for safeguarding to require improvement. One particular issue for the LSCB was that the Borough Commander was not responsible for all of the Police that the LSCB worked with. Police teams also worked with a number of different LSCBs.

Although he felt that safeguarding arrangements were broadly robust at the moment, there were likely to be big changes in the next year. The LSCB would have to manage with less money and consideration would need to be given to streamlining services including sharing and collaboration with other boroughs.

In terms of his replacement as Chair, the LSCB executive would be meeting shortly to consider options. Although his contract ended in May, he was not intending to finish his work until such time as a successor had been appointed to facilitate a smooth transition.

He answered questions from the Panel as follows:

- There had been no change in the financial contribution from the Police Service. They currently contributed 2% of the LSCB's budget. 90% came from the Council. The level of the Police contribution was based on Metropolitan Police policy. He hoped that a more equitable system of funding could be developed in time.

- The number of meetings of the LSCB had been reduced from six to four per year and most boroughs were taking similar steps. The LSCB's sub groups were where most of the most significant work took place, including analysis of data and consideration of cases of CSE. Board meetings currently still required the presence of a large number of people but there were new proposals to develop a smaller core group and devolve more of the work to task and finish and other sub groups.
- The barriers that there were to the sharing of data were the same as those experienced by every LSCB in London. In particular, some partners were unable to provide separate statistics for each borough that they dealt with. The Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) had a key role in analysing data and the situation was now better than it had been three years ago.
- It had been established that some children and families were moving across borough boundaries on a regular basis and the Bi-borough CSE and Vulnerable Children Project was set up to address this. There was now a better understanding of the issues and the policies of individual boroughs had now been aligned, saving both time and money. There was also now a single point of access to services. Arrangements were better and stronger, although the funding had now expired. It was hoped to undertake similar work with boroughs to the south of Haringey.
- In respect of engagement with children and young people, some progress had been made but not as much as hoped. They had looked at areas where they were already engaging and had made real progress with some, including CSE and return home interviews for missing children. A new model of social work practice had been adopted called Signs of Safety and this had a stronger focus on the voice of the child. Head Teachers had stated that they felt that the new system had a better focus.
- He stated that the LSCB did not monitor the budget proposals of individual agencies. However, the direction of travel demonstrated within the Council's medium term financial strategy, which involved initiating interventions at an earlier stage, was supported and consistent with the LSCB's overall philosophy. He nevertheless felt that there were also risks arising from current policies, such as the possibility that some children and families might find it more difficult to access help. However, the Council had put in place a whole new team to deal with the large increase in referrals it had experienced last year and this was evidence of a system that responded effectively.
- He felt that workforce development was a good option when there was a shortage of money. Common training programmes had been developed for agencies on the LSCB. Good quality workforce development was not a big money item.
- The LSCB was considering ways in which partners could enhance the "broadly robust and effective" safeguarding arrangements through actions like aligning auditing mechanisms across partners. He felt that there was more that could be done jointly to reduce duplication but this would take some creative thinking.

Individual agencies were collaborating with other boroughs and on a sub regional level whilst Hackney and City were now working together as a single LSCB. Leeds had also undertaken some effective conflict resolution initiatives which had led to a steadily reducing level of children in care.

- There was conclusive evidence that poverty and neglect increased levels of risk. Local authorities in deprived areas were also significantly more likely to be rated as requiring improvement by Ofsted. The levels of deprivation in Haringey were higher than two of the other LSCBs that he chaired but, despite this, thresholds for intervention were higher. More needed to be done in relation to neglect, including multi agency training.
- Attachment theory was important in child protection. Very young children developed attachments and this had a large impact on how they learned. Neuroscience showed that an adverse experience could adversely affect how nerve connections in the brain were developed, making them significantly slower in how they functioned.
- It was not possible to provide an exact figure for the number of children who repeatedly went missing as Police data covered episodes and not the number of children. However, such data was available for looked after children. Work was taking place to address this issue.
- He felt that post code issues had some impact on safeguarding. Work had been taking place on the profile of CSE and there was now a greater awareness of hotspots and particular locations.
- Work with schools in respect of CSE and FGM was taking place as part of the healthy schools initiative. Some young people did not fully understand the issue of consent and work was taking place in schools to address this. Schools had updated their safeguarding policies and procedures as a result of a historical abuse case but he felt that there were still less than 50% of them that had very good procedures. There was nevertheless enthusiasm amongst schools to do better. The Panel noted that FGM was typically addressed at primary schools when children were around the age of nine and this was checked annually.
- Sir Paul reported that the communication project in Northumberland Park had involved 3-4,000 young people using Accident and Emergency at the North Middlesex Hospital. As part of this, information packs on risks to health had been passed to young people.
- The Prevent initiative was not specifically a safeguarding programme. However, there could be safeguarding risks arising from radicalisation but the number of children involved was very low and it was less of an issue now.
- The number of children who were home educated had risen and had numbered 177 in October. It was not clear what the reason for the increase was. Parents home educated their children for a mixture of reasons. Some parents were very good educators and the children thrived. In other cases, parents were motivated by issues arising from provision for their child's special educational needs. It was

also possible that there was intent to commit abuse in some cases but it was not possible to know how many children were in jeopardy. There was a website called “Education Otherwise” where home educating parents could find advice and guidance. The Panel noted that each home educating family was visited once per year and that this visit was unannounced.

- Almost all CSE in Haringey was peer-on-peer abuse and most of these cases were related to gangs. Work was being done with schools to address this issue and, in particular, the issue of consent.

In answer to a question, Jon Abbey, the Director of Children's Services, reported that funding for SEND services was facing challenge but there were not any cuts being made to funding for schools and thresholds were not being raised either. Education and healthcare plans were now required for children and this required more strategic thinking. Although the numbers of children with special educational needs had gone up, funding levels had not increased. Whilst there were no specific proposals within the budget that would have direct implications for children with special educational needs, the proposal to provide, where possible, foster care closer to home would be of benefit to them.

The Panel thanked Sir Paul for his kind assistance.

13. 2016 TEST AND EXAMINATION RESULTS

Jane Blakey, the Head of School Performance, Standards and Provision, reported that there continued to be strong improvement in test and examination results. The current results were the best to date. Of particular note was the fact that they borough was 10th nationally for performance against the new Progress 8 measure. Priority areas for improvement were Key Stage 2 reading and the performance of African Caribbean and Black African pupils.

In answer to a question, she reported that the progress made by Turkish pupils was above the Haringey and national average. They only area where they did not do quite so well Key Stage 2 English. Despite being born here, some Turkish children could lack fluency in English. This could be due to English not being the dominant language at home.

The continuing improvement in results could be due to a number of factors. There were good leaders in schools and 96% were rated either good or outstanding. There was forensic use of data which prevented problems and addressed areas of under performance. Officers and school leaders were also always up to date on the OFSTED inspection framework. Officers collected targets from schools and challenged them, where appropriate. In addition, there was a lot of support provided between schools. There was also strong accountability through the Corporate Plan Priority 1 Board.

In answer to a question, she reported that performance by black African girls varied between different communities. For examples, Nigerian and Somali girls had very high levels of attainment. However, other groups did not have such high levels and it was therefore important to break down the figures. There was a black achievement

steering group that was looking at relevant issues. A conference had taken place that had been addressed by Dr Tony Sewell, author of "Generating Genius". High expectations and no excuses were the key messages from this. The Steering Group had put together good practice guidelines for holding schools to account. A programme was also being developed that was aimed to assist high attaining young people in getting into the top universities.

Panel Members noted that the African Caribbean community had been in Britain for over half a century and the majority of young people from it could now be more accurately described as Black British. Ms Blakey commented that the categorisation had been based on census data.

In answer to a question regarding post 16 attainment, she stated that the Steering Group was aiming to ensure that all young people reached their full potential. There was a split between the east and west of the borough and the aspiration was to close this gap. Work was taking place with 6th forms to encourage them to work together and develop further vocational options. The introduction by OFSTED of the use of retention as a performance measure meant that many schools had become more selective in which young people they enrolled. The borough's Sixth Form Centre had aimed to be inclusive in approach but had been assessed as requiring improvement due to its poor retention data.

Mr Abbey reported that Haringey could be proud of the progress that had been made by the borough's schools. Virtually all indicators were now good and in only 4 years the percentage of schools assessed as good or outstanding had gone up from 60% to 98%.

AGREED:

That the issue of ethnic minority attainment be considered further at a future meeting of the Panel.

14. FINANCIAL HEALTH OF HARINGEY SCHOOLS

Anne Woods, the Head of Audit and Risk Management, reported that a wide range of tests were used to assess the financial strength of schools. There was a high degree of correlation between those schools that had deficits and those schools that had been audited had only received limited assurance in their audit reports. Only one of the schools with a negative balance had received substantial assurance. The vast majority of schools with deficits had received limited or nil assurance. Audit had never been able to give a school full assurance yet and the vast majority of schools with reserves had received substantial assurance. If basic processes were not right, any issues that arose were likely to be more significant.

In answer to a question she stated that the optimum level of reserves was between 5% and 8%. In answer to another question regarding the amount of funding that remained unspent, Mr Abbey commented that there was a widely held view that that this should be re-distributed amongst schools. However, they were nevertheless required to account for any revenue budget amounts above 5% that were not spent. It was noted that it was likely that schools would have to deal with a 10% cut in budgets and, in such circumstances, it would be prudent to provide for this within reserves.

Special schools had a range of additional financial challenges, including the need to maintain lower staffing ratios and maintain comparatively large buildings. In addition, funding followed individual children.

15. WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE

AGREED:

That the work plan be approved.

CHAIR: Councillor Kirsten Hearn

Signed by Chair

Date