

**MINUTES OF THE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY PANEL
THURSDAY, 22 JANUARY 2015**

Councillors Berryman, M Blake, Hearn (Chair), Ibrahim and Morris

CYPS22. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Akwasi-Ayisi, Mr Collier and Mr Taye.

CYPS23. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

CYPS24. DEPUTATIONS/PETITIONS/PRESENTATIONS/QUESTIONS

None.

CYPS25. MINUTES

AGREED:

1. That the minutes of the meeting of 3 November 2014 be approved;
2. That, subject to the following amendment:

*Item CYP21 (Scrutiny of the Draft Medium Term Financial Strategy)
Reference 2; Services for Young People Including Young Offenders -*
(i). Recommendation 4, line 3: Delete all after the word "statutory"; and
(ii). Add recommendation 5: "That the proposal be withdrawn";

the minutes of the meeting of 15 December 2014 be approved.

CYPS26. BUDGET UPDATE

The Chair expressed concern at the late receipt of the further information that had been requested by the Panel in respect of the savings proposed for Services for Young People, including Young Offenders (Ref. 2). She stated that, in the future, she was minded to not accept any late documentation that was received by the Scrutiny Support Officer for circulation less than 48 hours before the meeting.

The Panel noted that 90% of work undertaken by the Youth Offending Service was statutory. 10% of clients were non statutory but work with this group was focussed on prevention. The services associated with the Youth and Community Participation Service were non statutory. Although the budget reductions in the Youth Offending Service were more than 10%, it was considered that the Council's statutory responsibilities could still be achieved by addressing staffing ratios and caseload allocation.

One of the Council's key strategic priorities was early help and it was anticipated that this would perform a preventative role in respect of youth offending. In particular, more support could be provided through universal services. One current key issue was

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that individuals at risk were being identified far too late. It was proposed to undertake engagement with young people in a more flexible way through outreach work and this would ensure that young people who were not in the education system continued to be accessed.

Concern was expressed by Panel Members at the move away from direct provision of services for young people. The remaining funds within the budget were for the commissioning of services and it was felt that the community sector were less effective in addressing the needs of the full range of young people as they tended to target specific groups. Directly provided services were also good at monitoring young people. The Assistant Director for Children's Services (Quality Assurance, Early Help and Prevention) stated that work needed to be undertaken with providers to ensure that these issues were addressed. In addition, quality levels needed to be maintained. The Interim Director of Children's Services commented that the challenge would be to define what the universal offer should be.

In respect of the proposals for Public Health (Reference 3), the Interim Director of Children's Services stated that the Council could not dictate to schools how they spent the Pupil Premium. The Cabinet Member for Children and Families commented that the suggestion was that schools could spend some of the funding on public health related areas that impacted on school performance.

In respect of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (Reference 7), it was noted that there were two particular areas where it was intended to make savings. These were contracting and transport. One particular objective was to promote greater independence amongst service users and developing their skills and confidence could reduce their reliance on transport. There had been little feedback in respect of the future of Haslemere so far but engagement would be arranged with service users. The recruitment of more foster carers would also enable greater flexibility in respect of the provision of respite care.

Panel Members commented that transport was of particular benefit to families of children with special educational needs and disabilities that had other children who went to different schools as it provided them with some respite. In addition, children got to know the bus drivers, which could reduce stress levels for them.

AGREED:

That the Panel's recommendations in respect of the Medium Term Financial Strategy, as recorded in the amended minutes of the meeting of 15 December 2014, be confirmed.

**CYPS27. OPTIONS AFFECTING FUTURE TRADING ACTIVITY AT THE COUNCIL'S
OUTDOOR EDUCATION CENTRE, PENDARREN HOUSE IN POWYS,
WALES**

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The Interim Assistant Director for Schools and Learning reported that the subsidy for Pendarren was a particular issue that needed to be addressed particularly as schools already received funding that was intended to cover such activities. It could be argued that the service was effectively receiving a double subsidy. It was intended to undertake some market testing in due course. Price levels were normally nominally increased each year.

Panel Members questioned whether children from black and minority ethnic communities were now taking full advantage of the facilities. It had been the case that girls from several communities were often not allowed to participate by their parents for cultural reasons. The Interim Assistant Director stated that she would endeavour to find out the demographic of children who remained at school whilst trips were taking place.

It was noted that the asset management report had yet to be received. The buildings were nevertheless now very old and likely to require work. The results of the asset management report would be a key determinant of the viability of the Council retaining the property. There was a need for the facility to be better marketed and for opportunities to be exploited. Panel Members were of the view that outside organisations and other boroughs could be targeted.

The Panel expressed their support for the development of the facility along the lines outlined in option one of the three alternative management options for the Council, as referred to in the summary of the feasibility study. However, should it not be possible for the Council to afford to continue funding the facility, the Panel would wish to consider the matter further. They felt that Pendarren was an immensely useful facility that the Council should seek to maintain.

AGREED:

1. That option one of the three alternative management options for the Council outlined in the summary of the feasibility study be supported;

(Councillor Ibrahim requested that her dissent in respect of this be recorded).

2. That in the event of it being determined that it was no longer feasible for the Council to continue funding the Centre, a further report be submitted to the Panel; and
3. That the Interim Assistant Director for Schools be requested to determine the demographic of children who remain at school whilst trips to the Centre are taking place and to share this information with the Panel.

CYPS28. 2014 TEST AND EXAMINATION RESULTS

The Head of School Performance (Standards and Provision), reported that recent test results had been overwhelmingly positive. Results now showed performance in Haringey to be either in line or above the England average. In addition, the gap between Haringey and rest of London had narrowed. In Key Stage (KS) 4, the Council was now in the second quartile of authorities. The borough was now rated as either A or B in the Department for Education (DfE) ratings for all categories except KS2 progress with reading and writing. Other areas of note were the improvement in

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performance in KS1 above level 3, where there had been particularly notable improvement amongst black pupils. It was likely that projections for 2015 would be met. However, the Council was not complacent.

A Panel Member reported that a DfE press release regarding improvements in GCSE performance had shown Haringey to be the third most improved authority rather than first, as stated by the Council. The Panel noted that this had been looked at by officers and it appeared that the benchmarking used by the DfE had used different parameters, particularly in respect of qualifications that were considered equivalent to GCSE. As far as the Council was concerned, its data was correct.

The Panel noted that relevant data had been used to ensure that there was a strong level of accountability and to identify risk effectively, which enabled effective early intervention. There had also been a real will to succeed and effective collaboration. The Cabinet Member for Children and Families commented that school governors were becoming more effective in their role. There had been a need for them to gain a better understanding of how schools worked and this was now happening.

In respect of academies, the Interim Assistant Director for Schools and Learning reported that approximately half of secondary schools had now converted. The conversion of primary schools was influenced by different criteria to that of secondary schools and this was based on performance. All were nevertheless regarded as part of the family of schools, irrespective of their status. There was a rota of visits to schools and all were visited at least three times per year. Challenged schools were visited more frequently. Some academies were very easy to work with but they could be challenged robustly if the need arose.

The Panel noted that the performance of black pupils overall was improving very well and the gap with other pupils was narrowing. There was key data available on all ethnic groups. The Interim Director reported that data for groups of schools was shared with Network Learning Communities and they were encouraged to identify specific challenges within it.

A Panel Member highlighted the recent considerable improvement in the rating given by Ofsted to some of the new academies with the borough. The Interim Director reported that schools that were supported by the local authority had shown equal or better levels of improvement. The improvements were likely to be indicative of a number of issues.

In respect of performance levels for KS2 in reading, a working party was looking at how these could be improved. Early progress was very important as it gave children and better chance of success later on.

AGREED:

That a report outlining comparative performance data in respect of the attainment of children and young people with special educational needs be submitted to a future meeting of the Panel.

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The Interim Head of Youth, Community and Participation provided an overview of the challenges relating to young people who were not in education, employment or training (NEET) and how these could be best addressed.

Although unemployment was dropping, there were still too many young people not transferring from school into further education or training. One additional issue nationally involved young people who disappeared off the statistics. There had been comparatively high levels of NEETs and not knowns in Haringey in recent years but these had diminished. Not knowns began at a high level in September/October but reduced as information came through about the destinations of young people. The local authority was dependent on schools and colleges for data and it was important that there were good relationships. The figures for not knowns and NEETs showed a downward trajectory but there were still issues that needed to be addressed.

Young people in certain ethnic groups and wards were more likely to become NEETs. In addition, children of offenders or young mothers were also at greater risk. For some young people, if they were unable to get on the right pathways, involvement in gangs could become an option.

There had been an increase in employment in London. Of particular note was the growing demand for people with high levels of qualifications. There had been decreases in the level of graduate unemployment as well as a very large increase (400%) in the number of apprenticeships. However, the rate of unemployment in London was higher than that of the UK as a whole and much higher than that for the south east.

There were risks arising from being a NEET. For instance, 15% of long term NEETs were dead within 10 years. In addition, there were high rates of depression, poor physical health, drug use, homelessness and crime. The economic cost had been estimated as being £10,800 per NEET per year with an overall cost for all NEETs of £2.6m.

It was the responsibility of the local authority to identify NEETs and target resources on those who needed support. They were also expected to take the lead role with the September Guarantee, which required local authorities to find education and training places for 16 and 17-year-olds.

The Council's Corporate Delivery Unit had undertaken specific work on post 16 outcomes and found that there four areas which required specific attention;

- Tracking and data sharing;
- Careers education, advice and guidance, which was variable. An Ofsted report on the position nationally had found provision to be poor overall;
- Education, training and employment provision was also variable and could be much improved;
- Early help and support. It appeared that the crucial ages were between 12 and 14, where a lot of significant decisions were taken by young people.

It was important that young people had the right skills and qualities to be accepted in the work environment, such as resilience and confidence, and character education had an important part to play in this. There appeared to be fewer job opportunities within the borough than elsewhere. It was estimated that there 41 jobs per 100 population whereas other boroughs had figures of between 70 and 80. In addition, there was no

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single major employer within the borough. There were a lot of micro businesses which employed between 1 and 5 people and they tended not to have the infrastructure to support training and development effectively due to their size. The information that young people received was often not good and this could cause them to get on courses that were not right for them. There was a particular issue with choices not being clear. The key issue that needed to be considered was how young people could be supported effectively from the age of 14 upwards, including the development of employability.

The issue of access to the creative industries was referred to. It was noted that there were a number of opportunities within the borough for young people in these. They included Unity Radio, Jacksons Lane Community Centre, the Chocolate Factory and Mountview Theatre School.

Panel Members commented that schools could be driven by market forces and this could cause them to channel young people in directions that were not always suitable for them. In addition, young people could be influenced by their surroundings and home life and there were equalities issues that needed to be considered.

The Panel stated that, as part of their work on this issue, they would like to look at what other authorities were doing. In addition, the work could provide a framework for further scrutiny. Further work would be undertaken on the specific questions to be asked of young people as part of the engagement process that would take place as part of the piece of work on the issue.

AGREED:

1. That the scope and terms of reference for the project be approved; and
2. That comparative employment figures for Haringey and information on how other London boroughs were addressing the issue of NEETs be shared with the Panel as part of evidence gathering for the project.

CYPS30. WORKPLAN

In respect of the agenda items for the next meeting of the Panel on bullying/hate crime in schools and children and young people in the justice system, it was agreed that Panel Members would e-mail the Scrutiny Support Officer with any specific issues that they wished to raise under this item.

AGREED:

That the report be noted.

CYPS31. ESTABLISHMENT OF YOUTH TRUST - ON LINE SURVEY

Panel Members expressed concern that an on line survey had been taking place on the possible establishment of a Youth Trust. Although this had been suggested as a possible future option, further discussion and advice needed to be acquired before the matter was progressed. The Assistant Director for Commissioning reported that the survey had not been designed as a consultation and was instead focussed on developing interest from the community sector as further work was needed on the potential model.

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**Cllr Kirsten Hearn
Chair**