

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY PANEL HELD ON THURSDAY 6TH SEPTEMBER 2018

PRESENT:

Councillors: Mahir Demir (Chair), Josh Dixon, Tammy Palmer, Dana Carlin, James Chiriyankandath, Julie Davies and Khaled Moyeed

Co-opted Member: Luci Davin (Parent governor representative) and Yvonne Denny (Church representative)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Ms Naseer.

2. ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

None.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

4. DEPUTATIONS/PETITIONS/PRESENTATIONS/QUESTIONS

None.

5. MINUTES

AGREED:

That the minutes of the meeting of 8 March 2018 be approved.

6. TERMS OF REFERENCE AND MEMBERSHIP

AGEED:

That the terms of reference, protocol for overview and scrutiny and policy areas and remits for each scrutiny panel be noted.

7. SERVICE OVERVIEW AND PERFORMANCE UPDATE

The Panel received an overview of services for children and young people in Haringey from Ann Graham, the Director of Children's Services. This included the current structure of the service, the context within which it worked, some key facts and details on what the service currently did. Areas of key importance for Members were

highlighted. Corporate parenting was a particularly relevant area. It was a responsibility for all Members and specific training would be offered on it.

The Panel noted that vulnerable young people were at risk of becoming both victims and offenders. Gill Gibson, Assistant Director for Early Help and Prevention, reported that research on the 20 most prolific offenders in Haringey had revealed that high percentages of them had experienced poor parenting, loss of a parent and domestic violence. The average age of their first exclusion from school was 11. Large percentages had also gone missing and become victims of crime, often violence. Despite all the services that existed for children and young people, it had proven difficult to make inroads.

In respect of Special Educational Needs (SEN), the Panel noted that Haringey had above average rates for prevalence. However, exam achievement levels for children with SEN were above the London average. The Panel also noted the range of support and interventions that were provided for children with disabilities. Transition to adulthood was a particularly important stage and joint work was undertaken with adult services to ensure that this went smoothly.

Working in partnership was particularly important and there were a number of bodies that were especially significant, including:

- The Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB);
- The Health and Wellbeing Board;
- The Community Safety Partnership;
- The Youth Justice Partnership Board;
- The Early Help Partnership Board; and
- The Schools Forum.

The government's "Working Together to Safeguard Children" was the key piece of guidance on joint safeguarding arrangements and a new version of this had recently been issued. OFSTED was the regulator that was responsible for children's services and had recently completed a Joint Targeted Area Inspection (JTAI) focussing on neglect in respect of Haringey, the results of which had been reported to the previous meeting of the Panel.

Eveleen Riordan, the Assistant Director for Schools and Learning, reported that, in respect of Early Years, 74% of Haringey children achieved a good level of development in early years in 2017, which was in the London top quartile. 99% of nursery and 90% of all early years settings had been rated as good or outstanding. 100% of schools in Haringey were now rated as good or outstanding. GCSE results had improved at a faster rate than the average for London and England. Exclusion rates and mental health issues were higher than the rates for London and England.

The Panel noted that there were a number of key challenges to be faced and these included:

- Hearing and responding effectively to the views of children and young people;
- Reducing demand for acute services;
- Recruiting and retaining social workers and managers; and
- Addressing the current predicted overspend of £8.1 million.

In answer to a question, Ms Graham stated that practice evolved and what had previously been thought to be beneficial to young children could sometimes be found to not work. There was a collective responsibility amongst partners to improve outcomes. It had always been known that school exclusions were extremely detrimental to a young person's outcomes and there was now a national focus on reducing them. Detailed work was currently being undertaken in Haringey on fixed term exclusions and a key part of this involved schools. A bid had been made to the Mayor's Young Londoners fund for £0.5 million for the next three years for work with partners to address these issues.

She reported that there was currently a focus on mental health and well-being in schools and work was being undertaken to put back some of the funding that had previously been provided for this but cut. Strategic work was taking place with partners to develop a strategy for young people at risk from serious violence. There had been a loss of youth services and consideration was now being given to putting some money back in. £100,000 has been provided during the summer and an evaluation of the work that this funded was currently be undertaken.

Ms Gibson reported that the analysis of the most prolific offenders in the borough had proven to be a useful learning tool to design better services, both internally and with partners. Bids had been made for external funding for a number of initiatives, including ones relating to domestic abuse and children living with alcohol dependent parents. Councillor Weston reported that she had set up a Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) Steering group to look at inequality in educational outcomes and this had also looked at the analysis. A vulnerable to underachievement toolkit had been developed as part of the work that they had done.

Ms Graham reported that society was changing and the challenges for the current cohort of children and young people were likely to be different. Social media was having a considerable impact and its adverse effects were being felt by a wide cross section of young people.

In answer to a question, Ms Riordan reported that socio-economic factors were being considered alongside a range of other data to address youth offending. It was likely that there would be a strong correlation with deprivation. In answer to another question, she reported that provisional GCSE results could be provided to the Panel as well as details of SATs results. It was noted that validated data on GCSE results would not be available until later in the year. A full report with analysis was normally provided to the Panel when the results had been finalised.

In answer to another question, Ms Riordan reported that education would continue to be provided by the school if a child was excluded internally. This sanction was normally used when schools were trying to keep a child within the school. The Council did not have access to statistics on such instances.

Ms Graham reported that a detailed action plan had been prepared in response to the JTAI inspection report and agreed by the Council and partners. The successful implementation of the plan was important and she was chairing regular meetings to monitor progress. As part of the response to the plan, a neglect tool had been

developed and was being rolled out to all relevant partners. David Archibald had been appointed as the new Chair of the Haringey LSCB and was also working to ensure that partners implemented the plan. There had been an issue with a backlog of cases that had been referred to the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) but this had now been cleared. Performance levels needed to be sustained and a process for ensuring this took place had been developed.

AGREED:

1. That the Assistant Director for Schools and Learning be requested to provide a briefing note on SATs and provisional GCSE results;
2. That a regular progress reports be made to the Panel on the implementation of the JTAI action.

8. CABINET MEMBER QUESTIONS - CHILDREN AND FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

Councillor Weston, the Cabinet Member for Children and Families, reported on key areas within her portfolio as follows:

- It was highly likely that there would be an OFSTED inspection soon, which would be undertaken using the new format for this;
- The budget was a major concern. However, the priority needed to be ensuring that children were safe. Work was taking place to establish the base level of cost of running a childrens' service so that this could be factored into budget discussions;
- New safeguarding arrangements were due to come into operation next year. The LSCB would cease to exist and responsibility for safeguarding would be shared by the Council with the Police and Health Services;
- She was keen to continue the work that was taking place with care leavers. This was important as care leavers could be vulnerable. Recent legislative changes had changed the age for which the local authority had responsibility for them from 21 to 25;
- There was need to better understand the reason why young people sometimes went missing;
- She was keen to ensure that corporate parenting training was arranged for Members in order to promote greater understanding of their role.

Councillor Davies requested information regarding the SATs results achieved in Haringey schools during the summer and well as details of any school that had had their results annulled. She also requested a copy of the Freshwater report, which had been undertaken on human resource provision and support for schools that had been provided by the Council. In addition, she stated that she felt that the Panel should include the apprenticeship levy within its work plan. In response, Councillor Weston stated that the results of Harris Academy in Tottenham had been annulled. Haringey SATs results could be shared with the Panel. She was not familiar with the report referred to but was happy to look into it.

In answer to a question, she stated that budget savings proposals had not yet been finalised. They would be submitted to the Panel in due course. In respect of support

to children from refugee families, she stated that she had recently met with representatives of Refugees Welcome Haringey. It was hoped to arrange a fostering event that focussed on the refugee children. Work was also being undertaken on support to children from families with no recourse to public funds (NRPF) and she was happy to provide an update on this in due course.

In answer to another question, Councillor Weston stated that there was an attainment gap which showed a strong correlation with poverty. This generally showed a disparity between the east and west of the borough. However, there was also a disparity between some minority ethnic groups. There could also be specific disparities within individual electoral wards. She was not aware of whether any work had been undertaken on the relationship between housing status and school attainment. She agreed to check to see if anything had been done on this issue. However, it could be an issue that schools looked at as part of the process for identifying children at risk from under achievement. The response to the Panel's review on support to children from refugee and asylum seeker families had been considered at the Cabinet meeting on 17 July. Most of the recommendations from this had been accepted. She would be happy to update the Panel on progress with this as part of the previously referred update on support to children from families with no recourse to public funds.

Councillor Mark Blake answered question in respect of his portfolio as Cabinet Member for Communities. He wished to ensure that the voice of young people across the borough was central to the Council's strategic approach to developing youth services. A recent study of the views of young people in Tottenham in respect of knife crime had been undertaken by the Godwin Law foundation and this had reported that there was a sense of being let down by statutory authorities amongst many young people. It was important that services delivered on their promises and listened to the hard messages and not just the easy ones. There were three key strategies that were in development:

- Youth services, including provision from the voluntary sector;
- Serious youth violence strategy, in collaboration with the Community Safety Partnership; and
- Vulnerable children.

Youth services had been decimated across London and it was not possible to turn the clock back. However, the Council was committed to finding additional investment so that there could be some infrastructure. Whilst there was some provision in Tottenham, there was nothing in either Wood Green or Hornsey. Moves were afoot to address this and provide a venue for generic youth work.

In respect of gun violence, there was regular liaison with the Borough Commander and senior Council officers. It was acknowledged that there was a particular problem in Haringey and a lot of this was related to drugs. There were no easy solutions though. The previously referred to report by the Godwin Law Foundation had made reference to the issue and there was a clear need for earlier intervention and education.

In answer to a question, he agreed that schools should have a central role in the provision of youth services and support for young people. School exclusions and

alternative provision were big issues. 70% of young people who had come into contact with the youth justice system had been excluded from school. He felt that a system needed to be developed where schools gained a benefit from a better outcome for a young person. The Panel also felt that the College of North East London (CoNEL) could play a role and the Cabinet Member agreed to raise this with the Cabinet Member for Children and Families.

The Panel noted that schools had been used as the sites for neighbourhood learning centres. These were being extensively used by schools for lessons but it was felt that there was a moral obligation for them to be available for wider use. The Cabinet Member stated that he agreed with this view and was happy to take it forward. It was also noted that young people were not just the responsibility of the Police, schools and the Council and that parenting had a major influence.

The Cabinet Member reported that some additional resources had been provided for youth services and a report was being drafted on the outcome of the summer scheme. This could be shared with the Panel when it became available. Feedback on it had been positive. However, consideration needed to be given to provision for older children as most provision had been aimed at those up to the age of 13. As part of this, work could be undertaken with Fusion and Alexandra Palace to see if they were able to offer discounts to Haringey young people for activities.

AGREED:

1. That an update be provided to the Panel on support to children from families with no recourse to public funds and that this includes an update on the implementation of the recommendations of the Panel's review on support to children and young people from refugee and asylum seeker families; and
2. That the Cabinet Member for Communities be requested to explore the potential wider use of school facilities and CoNEL for youth provision.

9. WORK PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT 2018-20

The Panel noted the process for the development of the work plan and considered potential issues for inclusion within it. The following were raised;

- School exclusions;
- Mental health;
- Services to schools;
- Youth services;
- Support for young people; and
- The impact of domestic violence on children.

It was noted that no final decision had yet been taken in respect of the Onside initiative for youth services in the borough and that a report to Cabinet was being drafted regarding it.

The Panel agreed to cancel the meeting of the Panel scheduled for 11 October. This was because an additional meeting of the Panel had been included by error in the

Council calendar for the year. In addition, it was scheduled too soon to take into account the outcomes of the work planning process for the year.

AGREED:

That the Panel meeting on 11 October be cancelled.

10. NEW ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

None.

11. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

- 8 November 2018;
- 18 December 2018 (budget);
- 4 February 2019; and
- 7 March 2019.

CHAIR: Councillor Mahir Demir

Signed by Chair

Date