

**MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
THURSDAY, 17 SEPTEMBER 2009**

Councillors Councillors Bull (Chair) Adamou (Vice-Chair), Adje, Newton, Alexander, Allison, Peacock and Bull (Chair)

Apologies Councillors Aitken, Mallett and Winskill

Also Present: Joseph Ejiofor (Parent Governor Representative), Helena Kania (Local Involvement Network (LINK)), Sarah Marsh (Parent Governor Representative), Marcelle Jemide (Parent Governor Representative) and Yvonne Denny (Church Representative), Councillor Engert and Council Officers

**MINUTE  
NO.**

**SUBJECT/DECISION**

<b>OSCO01.</b>	<b>WEBCASTING</b>  The meeting was recorded for live or future broadcasting on the Council's website.
<b>OSCO02.</b>	<b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b>  Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Mallett, who was substituted by Councillor Peacock, and Councillors Aitken and Winskill, who were substituted by Councillors Allison and Alexander.
<b>OSCO03.</b>	<b>URGENT BUSINESS</b>  There was no urgent business.
<b>OSCO04.</b>	<b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</b>  There were no declarations of interest.
<b>OSCO05.</b>	<b>DEPUTATIONS/PETITIONS/PRESENTATIONS/QUESTIONS</b>  There were no deputations, petitions, presentations or questions.
<b>OSCO06.</b>	<b>ORDER OF AGENDA</b>  <b>RESOLVED</b>  That the order of the agenda be varied to consider item 7 first to enable Councillor Jones' to proceed to another meeting. The minutes will appear in the same order as items listed on the agenda.
<b>OSCO07.</b>	<b>JOINT AREA REVIEW ACTION PLAN - UPDATE ON PROGRESS</b>  The Committee noted the update on the Joint Area Review (JAR)

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	<p>Action Plan and listed completed actions introduced by Peter Lewis (Director of Children and Young People's Service (C&amp;YPS)).</p> <p>Councillor Reith, the Director of C&amp;YPS and the interim Deputy Director (Children and Families) answered questions from the Committee and the Committee noted that nationally there were not sufficient numbers of health visitors. The Director of C&amp;YPS also commented that moving to more independent chairing of bodies such as the Local Safeguarding Board and Serious Case Review (SCR) panels meant more demand on a small number of qualified people. Part of the improvement work within the service had been the employment of three social-work consultants working with Haringey social-work staff. The Council worked towards filling the professional gaps by the end of the financial year. The Department had so far recruited at least 12 new permanent staff including new Heads of Service and the Assistant Director of Safeguarding. Staffing charts for the Children's Services departments were tabled.</p> <p>The Committee asked whether further funding would be sought by the Council to cover short term capacity needs and were informed that on-going negotiations were continuing with the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF).</p> <p>The Committee questioned whether the target of clearing the backlog of cases by December 2009 was realistic. The Director of C&amp;YPS recognised the challenge and stated that the Department could meet the target.</p> <p>The Committee noted that the data provided in the assessment framework was a combination of statutory and local performance indicators. Officers recognised that the data needed to be easier to understand and were working with the Secretary of State's office and the Government Office for London (GOL) to present the information better.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>i. That the progress made to date against the Joint Area Review (JAR) Action Plan, specifically the JAR 2008 recommendations and main findings, be noted.</li><li>ii. That the overall summary programme update be noted.</li><li>iii. That the key performance indicators, programme level risks and issues be noted.</li></ul>	
<b>OSCO08.</b>	<p><b>CHILDREN'S SAFEGUARDING POLICY AND PRACTICE ADVISORY COMMITTEE - UPDATE ON THE WORK OF THE PANEL</b></p> <p>The Committee received the report which provided an overview of the work of the Safeguarding Policy and Practice Advisory Committee</p>	

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	<p>which ensured the involvement of Members in safeguarding children and examined Council policy, practice and effectiveness. The Advisory Committee would make recommendations to Cabinet to improve the safeguarding of children.</p> <p>Councillor Emma Jones, Chair of the Advisory Committee, presented the report and introduced colleagues Graham Badman (Independent Chair of the Local Safeguarding Board), Hillary Corrick (Independent Member of the Policy &amp; Practice Advisory Committee), Eleanor Brazil (Interim Deputy Director - Children and Families) and Mark Gurrey (Interim Assistant Director for Safeguarding).</p> <p>The Committee noted the advance questions that had been submitted and the written answers provided.</p> <p>The Committee noted that whilst there should be a shared responsibility between partner agencies it was the social worker who was ultimately responsible for a child. Referral threshold guidance was being finalised and all partner agencies would receive training on the document.</p> <p>The Committee were informed of the processes in place to deal with referrals and suggested that a recommendation be made to ensure that it should be highlighted when parents failed to take their children for health checks, which Councillor Jones stated would be part of discussions at the next Advisory Committee meeting.</p> <p>The interim Deputy Director –Children &amp; Families explained that part of the improvement plan was about integrated working across agencies including multi-disciplinary services.</p> <p>Councillor Lorna Reith informed the Committee that she had met with the Cabinet Member for Adults and Social Care and directors within children’s and adults services to discuss issues including transition (from children into adults) and the possibility of individual social workers working with both children and adults to improve links between the two departments.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED</b></p> <p>That the report be noted.</p>	
<p><b>OSCO09.</b></p>	<p><b>CHILD PROTECTION PERFORMANCE AND KEY ISSUES REPORT</b></p> <p>The Committee received the Safeguarding Plan for Haringey introduced by The Director of C&amp;YPS who drew the Committee’s attention to a factual inaccuracy in at paragraph 2.1.3 of the report which suggested that there were two Serious Case Reviews (SCR) to be published at the end of September 2009. This was not the case; there were no SCRs scheduled for publication.</p> <p>In response to concerns raised by the Committee Councillor Reith and</p>	

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	<p>The Director of C&amp;YPS explained that regular “parenting meetings” occurred for those children with protection plans in place as well as in cases of foster-parenting and adoptions.</p> <p>Management team meetings between Children’s Services and Urban Environment officers took place which included discussions on homelessness operations. Priority was given to removing children at risk out of temporary accommodation following discussions between the Urban Environment, Housing and Children’s services departments.</p> <p>Officers would circulate a briefing note to Committee Members about children in care moving from one borough into another and how it was decided which borough would have responsibility for those children.</p> <p>The Committee was informed that Children’s Services managers actively reviewed files on a monthly basis to ensure work was covered and regularly talked with front-line staff. Child Protection was also part of targets in staff performance appraisals.</p> <p><b>RESOLVED</b></p> <p>That the Safeguarding Plan for Haringey be noted.</p>	
<p><b>OSCO10.</b></p>	<p><b>NEW ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS</b></p> <p>There were no new items of urgent business.</p>	

The meeting ended at 21:05pm

COUNCILLOR GIDEON BULL

Chair

**SIGNED AT MEETING.....DAY**

**OF.....**

**CHAIR.....**