

CABINET MEMBER QUESTIONS: CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN &
YOUNG PEOPLE, COUNCILLOR LORNA REITH
For Overview & Scrutiny Committee – 15th February 2010

Finance

The Council in forming the 2009-10 budget strategy recognised the need to address the issues which had been identified in Children's Safeguarding by the Joint Area Review. It made available provision for an additional £4.2m which has been earmarked for the actions set out in the agreed JAR Action Plan submitted to the Government in February 2009.

In addition the Council has agreed to direct £0.75m from 2008-09 DSG resources for safeguarding purposes and the Schools' Forum has received details of how these resources are to be deployed.

Despite this additional resource, which is largely for one-off additional work targeted at improving safeguarding practice, the current projections indicate a significant overspend. This is a result of increasing numbers of Looked After Children (LAC) and in particular their placement and associated legal costs. Virtually all local authorities have experienced significant increase in referrals and the need for placement

The key points relating to the overall increase in the number of Children in Care can be summarised as follows:

- (i) The number of LAC children has increased from 464 in April 2009 to 505 at the end of December 2009;
- (ii) The Southwark Judgement, which requires all 16 and 17 year olds presenting to the Council as homeless, to be considered as Looked After Children, has increased pressure in this area.
- (iii) The improvements in safeguarding practice have undoubtedly helped to identify children needing services.
- (iv) Many other London authorities are also experiencing large increases in LAC numbers.

School Improvement and Inclusion

Successes

- Haringey schools have improved by 20.1% in the percentage of pupils attaining 5+ A* - C grades at GCSE since 2005, this compares with a national improvement of 13.2%. Haringey improved by 8% from 2008 to 2009 compared to national improvement of 4.7%. Haringey is now at 67.7% compared to national of 70.0%
- In the 5+ A* - C (including English and maths) measure, Haringey schools have improved by 13.5% since 2005 compared to a national improvement of 5.1%. Haringey improved by 3.7% from 2008 to 2009 compared to national improvement of 2.2%. Haringey is now at 45.7% compared to national of 49.8%
- There are no Haringey schools below the government threshold of 30% 5+ A* - C (including English and maths).

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- The levels of young people who are Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) successfully decreased in 2009 to a record low for Haringey of 6.8% which indicates the improvements made in getting young people engaged and re-engaged with learning and work. The challenge will be to continue this in 2010 against an economic recession, and we have already seen figures rise slightly in 2009-10, and relentlessly tracking the destination of every young person aged 16+ in Haringey.

Areas of Focus for 2010

- Plans for post 16 commissioning of places are going well and we have fully met the government requirements. This also gives an opportunity to look at future plans and make sure that the post 16 provision meets the needs of our young people.
- The Keys to Well-Being strategy is taking shape and the plans for improvements to provision for young people at risk of exclusion and those who have been excluded are being put in place. The Keys to Well-Being will gradually become operational in 2010, including the opening of the BSF funded refurbishment of the Young People's Centre, Commerce Road in April 2010 for secondary aged pupils.

Investment in primary schools

Haringey has continued to manage the London-wide primary reception places shortage pro-actively, with work progressing on the expansion of Rhodes Avenue and planning in progress for additional places in the east of Haringey. In recent years 120 new primary admission places have been created, with 30 more at Rhodes Avenue for 2011. We have recently won £8.57m of capital funding to provide more places in future years. All London boroughs face major challenges in this area but Haringey is better prepared than most.

At Broadwater Farm we are creating a new primary special school linked closely to a rebuilt primary school as an innovative learning campus, providing the best for some of our most vulnerable children alongside a superb mainstream primary school environment. We are also investing across the primary estate to support the continuing rise in Haringey school standards.

BSF

The Building Schools for the Future programme remains on target, with the new secondary school – Heartlands High School – opening in September this year. Over £200m of works includes major re-building of Haringey secondary schools.

Also through the BSF programme, Haringey secondary schools are being equipped with state of the art information and communications technology to transform learning and to support effective school leadership.

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FISD

Haringey's award-winning Family Information Services Directory (www.fisd.haringey.gov.uk) has been operating for over a year, putting the borough in the vanguard of local authorities in providing a comprehensive information source on local facilities and services for children and young people.

School meals

Haringey's school meals service introduced healthy eating menus a year before the new national menus and nutritional standards were required. Meal take up in the all-important primary years has increased by 8% over the last two years.

Children's Networks

The Children's Networks Business Unit of the CYPs contains a number of services that deliver both prevention and early intervention and support to children and young people who have additional needs. The BU works with universal services to increase their capacity to identify and support children at an early stage and more specialist services that support children with complex needs. Primarily the BU seeks to build and maintain strong partnership arrangements across the continuum of provision, bringing services together on a locality basis to deliver a coordinated and joined-up approach to children, young people and their families.

The organisation of the business unit is:

- Children and Young People's Participation – consisting of services that support the active involvement of children and young people, parents and the community;
- 0-19 strategy – consisting of children's centres, play and extended school provision that provide the wrap-around support to universal provision, including strong partnerships with other statutory, voluntary and community partners;
- The three Children's Networks multi-disciplinary teams – delivering support to children/young people identified through the CAF and requiring targeted services e.g. family support, behaviour support, speech and language provision, education welfare, and other targeted interventions; and
- Leading on the Children's Trust approach to locality-based working including developing the model of Area Partnerships and supporting

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the developing role of schools as commissioners of services through
the Networked Learning Communities.

Children and Families

The focus of the Children and Families service in the past year has been on improving our services, in particular in relation to safeguarding. Actions in the Safeguarding plan are being taken forward in the service and we have made significant changes in the way referrals and assessments are managed, the support to social workers including improvements to Framework i, supervision, management and training.

The service has been re-organised with new managers taking on some new roles. Safeguarding leadership is now held by an AD Safeguarding with 2 Heads of Service in First Response and Safeguarding and Support managing and developing their services. Extensive auditing has demonstrated a gradual improvement in the quality of practice. Developing more joint working with other areas of CYPS, particularly Children's Networks, and with other agencies, particularly the police and health is ensuring that the service we provide is better able to meet the needs of the most vulnerable children.

We have responded to a significant rise in demand, with over 50% more referrals than in the previous year and have seen the numbers of children looked after and subject to child protection plans rise. This has put pressure on all our staff and a key part of our action plan is around recruitment and retention of social workers and delivering training and development opportunities.

Our services to children with disabilities have been greatly enhanced by delivering the Aiming High programme which has resulted in a sharp rise in the number of families benefiting from short breaks. We have been working closely with Adult Services to improve transition.

We will continue to focus on improving safeguarding and develop multi-agency working and improving commissioning to extend the range of support for the most vulnerable children particularly those affected by domestic violence