

CABINET MEMBER QUESTIONS: CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN &  
YOUNG PEOPLE, COUNCILLOR LORNA REITH  
For Overview & Scrutiny Committee – 21<sup>st</sup> July 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 596 in April 2010
- (ii) Similarly, the number of children subject to child protection plans has increased from 180 in March 2009 to 278 in April 2010 – many children move from child protection plans to the care system when those plans are not successfully safeguarding them
- (iii) 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.
- (iv) The improvements in safeguarding practice have undoubtedly helped to identify children needing services.

Many other London authorities are also experiencing large increases in LAC numbers and nationally the reported increase is around 17%.

## **School Standards 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 the national figure of 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

CABINET MEMBER QUESTIONS: CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN &  
YOUNG PEOPLE, COUNCILLOR LORNA REITH  
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compared to national improvement of 2.2%. Haringey is now at 45.7% compared to national of 49.8%. This is currently the more significant of the GCSE attainment measures. For 2010 Haringey is targeting a further substantial increase, to 55%. If this target is met, it is likely for the first time to see Haringey schools attaining above the national average at GCSE.

- There are no Haringey schools below the government threshold of 30% 5+ A\* - C (including English and maths).
- The levels of young people who are Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) has remained at 6.8% (2009-2010 figure). The figure for those young people who are unknown has reduced from 11.2% to 5.0% over the same period. These figures now bring us in line with statistical neighbours and close to the national figures. The further the unknown figure reduces the more pressure will be put on the NEET figure to rise. The challenge will be to continue this improvement in 2011 against an economic down turn. The current April figure shows an improvement for NEET and unknown levels of 0.9% and 1% respectively over the previous April.

#### **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.
- Following the change in government and the announcement of public sector cuts, we will need in the months ahead to review our services to schools to ensure that they are within constrained budget limits but still provide a good quality of support and challenge for our schools.

#### **Investment in primary schools**

Haringey has continued to respond to the London-wide primary reception places shortage pro-actively, with work progressing on the expansion of Rhodes Avenue (subject to confirmation that funding can be made available) 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. All London boroughs face major challenges in this area.

We are currently in dispute with the Department for Education (DfE) over the withdrawal of £8.57m previously allocated for new primary places in Haringey. Without this funding our plans for meeting the primary places shortage will necessarily be short-term and potentially disruptive to some schools.

CABINET MEMBER QUESTIONS: CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN &  
YOUNG PEOPLE, COUNCILLOR LORNA REITH

For Overview & Scrutiny Committee – 21<sup>st</sup> July 2010

At Broadwater Farm (subject to confirmation that funding can be made available) 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.

## **FISD**

Haringey's award-winning Family Information Services Directory ([www.fisd.haringey.gov.uk](http://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 consists of a number of services that deliver both prevention and early intervention and support to children and young people who have additional needs. This means working in a coordinated way to prevent children and young people from progressing to the higher levels of the Haringey thresholds of need and wherever possible enabling their needs to be met through universal provision.

## **Areas of Focus**

- further development of the three Children's Networks multi-disciplinary teams in order to deliver more integrated support to children/young people identified through the CAF as requiring targeted services e.g.

family support, behaviour support, speech and language provision, education welfare, and other targeted interventions;

CABINET MEMBER QUESTIONS: CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN &  
YOUNG PEOPLE, COUNCILLOR LORNA REITH  
For Overview & Scrutiny Committee – 21<sup>st</sup> July 2010

- extension of partnership arrangements with other statutory, voluntary and community agencies services so that children, young people and families receive coordinated and joined-up support within existing arrangements for multi-disciplinary working;
- consolidation of an intense piece of work across the CYPS and partners, particularly NHS Haringey and the Mental Health Trust, to develop a strategy to support children and young people with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties to ensure that the needs of these children are appropriately identified, that they receive the right support at the right time and, wherever possible, they are retained in Haringey provision.
- review of Participation services to ensure that children and young people contribute to decisions that are made about them;
- reviews of Youth and Connexions, and Play.

The Coalition Government announced in May that the requirement to have the ContactPoint database will be scrapped. However there has been no further announcement on how this is to be achieved and subsequently we have been told that there still an expectation that an interim service will be delivered. Further Government guidance on this is expected.

### **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 Fi, 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 two 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. The January 2010 Ofsted report spoke very positively of the progress in this area, whilst identifying areas for further development. 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.

CABINET MEMBER QUESTIONS: CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN &  
YOUNG PEOPLE, COUNCILLOR LORNA REITH  
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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