

**MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY, 21 JULY 2010**

Councillors Councillors Bull (Chair), Alexander, Basu, Ejiofor, Newton and Solomon

Apologies Councillors Browne and Jemide

Also Present: **Co-optees:** Helena Kania (Local Involvement Network (LINK)), Sarah Marsh (Parent Governor Representative) and Sandra Young (John Loughborough Secondary School)

Councillors: Allison, Egan, Reith and Rice

Officers: Peter Lewis (Director Children & Young People's Service), Marion Wheeler (Assistant Director for Safeguarding), Hilary Corrick (Independent Social Work Consultant and Independent Member of Safeguarding Policy and Practice Advisory Committee), Trevor Cripps (Scrutiny Manager), Rob Mack (Scrutiny Officer), Natalie Cole (Clerk)

MINUTE NO.	SUBJECT/DECISION
OSCO19.	<p>WEBCASTING</p> <p>It was noted that the meeting was recorded for live or future broadcasting on the Council's website.</p>
OSCO20.	<p>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Councillor David Browne and Councillor David Winskill. Councillor Juliet Solomon attended the meeting as a substitute for Councillor Winskill.</p> <p>Apologies for lateness were received from Councillors Alexander and Rice.</p> <p>RESOLVED that Councillor Joseph Ejiofor would act as Vice Chair in the absence of Councillor Browne.</p>
OSCO21.	<p>URGENT BUSINESS</p> <p>The responses to actions requested at previous Child Protection Scrutiny meetings were circulated to members prior to the meeting and would be considered at item 11.</p>
OSCO22.	<p>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</p> <p>There were no declarations.</p>
OSCO23.	<p>DEPUTATIONS/PETITIONS/PRESENTATIONS/QUESTIONS</p> <p>There were no such items.</p>

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OSCO24.	<p>CABINET MEMBER QUESTIONS</p> <p>The Committee received the briefing and answers to advance questions (tabled and on the Council's website) on Councillor Reith's Cabinet portfolio for Children & Young People.</p> <p>The Committee noted that the Children's Services department faced challenges in increasing children's centre provision due to the substantial withdrawal of grant funding arising from the financial deficit in central government. The Cabinet Member agreed to keep Councillor Newton informed of developments for children's centre provision in Fortis Green (action no. 24.1).</p> <p>The Committee requested further analysis of school exclusions including comparisons in numbers of exclusions in different schools, unique circumstances, recurring issues and how different schools dealt with exclusions. It was noted that there was no universal model of how schools should deal with exclusions but within the Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme discreet spaces were being provided at new schools to provide an alternative to exclusion (action no. 24.2).</p> <p>The Scrutiny Manager agreed to circulate the recent scrutiny review report on school exclusions to the Committee (action no. 24.3).</p> <p>The Committee noted that Haringey was seeing a larger increase of teenagers (particularly asylum seekers and those with no recourse to public funds) coming into care than pre-school although this was not consistent with other local authorities.</p> <p>Further to question 23 on Muswell House children's home the Director of Children and Young People's Service assured the Committee that an audit had taken place and all CRB (Criminal Records Bureau) checks were up-to-date.</p> <p>The Committee would be provided with details on the process for CRB checks after expressing concerns at the length of time it takes to get the results of a CRB check (action no. 24.4).</p> <p>Further to question 23 the Committee was informed that Haringey was expected to meet the national average for school exam results in 2010.</p> <p>RESOLVED that the Cabinet Member briefing be noted.</p>	
OSCO25.	<p>CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICE SAFEGUARDING PLAN</p> <p>The Committee received the report updating on the Safeguarding Plan for Haringey and noted that the majority of safeguarding milestones had been completed or were on track and those not on track were detailed in appendix 2b of the report.</p>	

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In response to Committee members' concerns about the lengthy application process for Special Education Needs (SEN) support the Director of Children & Young People's Services explained that, whilst SEN matters were mainly managed by the school, there was a statutory assessment required to be completed within statutory timeframes. A child requiring less than 14 hours of SEN support a week would be funded by the school's delegated resources; more than 14 hours a week would be paid for as part of a funding stream to the school. The Committee noted that three new people would join the Children & Young People's Service (CYPS) in September 2010 to ensure that SEN was provided to relevant children.

In response to questions and discussions it was noted that General Practitioners (GPs) in Haringey attended meetings (there are four area collaboratives) which senior council officers attended to discuss safeguarding issues in their area.

The Committee noted that both Whittington and North Middlesex hospitals A&E Departments could access Network I communication systems used by GPs (including those in other neighbouring boroughs) to check whether a child was known to safeguarding services. There were plans to roll-out this facility pan London.

RESOLVED

- i. That the progress in delivery of the Safeguarding Plan milestones be noted.
- ii. That the refreshed Safeguarding Plan, which had been considered by Cabinet and approved by the Children's, Trust be noted.

OSCO26.

CHILD PROTECTION PERFORMANCE AND KEY ISSUES

The Committee received the update report on key performance issues in child protection and noted that 988 case file audits had been conducted, in addition to the usual regular reviews as part of day to day supervision.

The Director of CYPS acknowledged the Committee's concerns about budget overspend within the service and assured members that there had been a substantial increase in the volume and quality of the work of the service in the past 18 months; agency foster-carers which cost twice as much per placement as in-house foster-carers was a contributing factor. The Committee requested detail of the cost of in-house Vs agency foster-care placement and spend on each, which the Director of CYPS agreed to provide (action no. 26.1).

It was noted that as well as the usual recruitment campaigns for foster-carers the Council advertised via Haringey People, community groups, schools, churches and posters on buses and boards across the borough. The Council was considering joint advertising

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	<p>campaigns for foster-carers with other North London boroughs.</p> <p>Committee would receive samples of advertisements and literature and links to web-pages used to encourage people to become foster carers (action no. 26.2).</p> <p>Committee members asked how many people attended the foster care open evening at Raglan Hall on Tuesday 20th July and how the event was publicised (action no. 26.3), this information would be provided.</p> <p>Committee members questioned NI 67 (paragraph 19 on Page 55 of the agenda pack) where 2 children’s cases had not been reviewed within timescales. It was noted that these on these two occasions one social worker had been called to attend court to give evidence and the other had been off work due to illness and field social workers had not been available at the time.</p> <p>The Director of Children’s Services agreed to include data on how Haringey compared to other boroughs with similar demographics in relation to children in care in future performance reports (action no. 26.4).</p> <p>RESOLVED that the update report on key performance issues in child protection be noted.</p>	
<p>OSCO27.</p>	<p>SAFEGUARDING POLICY AND PRACTICE ADVISORY COMMITTEE</p> <p>The Committee received a verbal update from Hilary Corrick, Independent Social Work Consultant and Independent Member of Safeguarding Practice & Performance Advisory Committee. It was noted that there had been one meeting of the Advisory Committee this municipal year which served to update new members on the issues the borough was facing. In the forthcoming year the Advisory Committee will track what happens to children who did not meet thresholds for support by the service. The Advisory Committee may also follow up on the previous year’s work on young people who were vulnerable by investigating whether they met the criteria for support from Adult Services. Some work would also be conducted alongside the police on domestic violence as well as any other safeguarding issues that might arise during the year.</p> <p>The Advisory Committee reported to the Cabinet on a six monthly basis including recommendations which also went to full Council but would report immediately to the Director of CYPS or the Assistant Director for Safeguarding if particular cases concerned the Advisory Committee. The Terms of Reference of the Children’s Safeguarding Policy and Practice Advisory Committee would be circulated to Committee members (action no. 27.1).</p> <p>RESOLVED to note the verbal update on the work of the Safeguarding Practice & Performance Advisory Committee.</p>	

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OSCO28.	<p>MINUTES</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on 8th March 2010 were confirmed as a correct record.</p>
OSCO29.	<p>NEW ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS</p> <p><u>Actions requested at previous Child Protection Scrutiny meetings</u></p> <p>The Committee received the list of actions arising from previous Child Protection Scrutiny meetings.</p> <p>In relation to action no. 54 the Committee asked for a breakdown of which centres in the list in Appendix 1 of the actions document were full children’s centres and which were satellite offices (action no. 29).</p>
OSCO30.	<p>FUTURE MEETINGS</p> <p>Overview & Scrutiny Committee meetings dedicated to Child Safeguarding will be held on Monday 1st November 2010 and Thursday 17th March 2011.</p>

COUNCILLOR GIDEON BULL

Chair

The meeting ended at 20:05 hrs

Councillor

Chair

SIGNED AT MEETING.....DAY

OF.....