

**MINUTES OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY, 30 MARCH 2011**

Councillors Councillors Bull (Chair), Browne (Vice-Chair), Basu, Ejiofor, Newton, Winskill and Allison

Apologies Councillor Alexander

Also Present: **Councillors:** Cllr Lorna Reith (Cabinet Member for Children's Services), Cllr Reg Rice (Chair of the Children's Safeguarding Policy and Practice Advisory Committee)

Officers: Peter Lewis (Director – Children & Young People's Service), Marion Wheeler (Assistant Director for Safeguarding), Sarah Hunt (Drug and Alcohol Team (DAAT)), Duncan Mulvany (Involve), Doda John-Baptist (Nightingale Primary School), Jane Flynn (Alexandra Primary School), Wendy Tomlinson (Head of Service Commissioning and Placements), Bob Garnett (Interim Deputy Director, School Standards and Inclusion), Rob Mack (Scrutiny Officer), Natalie Cole (Clerk)

**MINUTE
NO.**

SUBJECT/DECISION

OSCO228.	WEBCASTING NOTED that the meeting was webcast for live or future broadcasting on the Council's website.
OSCO229.	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Alexander (Councillor Allison attended as substitute), Helena Kania (Haringey LINK), Yvonne Denny (Church Representative), Hilary Corrick (Independent Social Work Consultant and Member of the Children's Safeguarding Policy & Practice Advisory Committee), Debbie Haith (Deputy Director – Children and Families) and Marion Morris (Drug and Alcohol Action Strategic Manager).
OSCO230.	URGENT BUSINESS There was no urgent business.
OSCO231.	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST There were no declarations of interest in relation to items on the agenda.
OSCO232.	DEPUTATIONS/PETITIONS/PRESENTATIONS/QUESTIONS There were no such items.
OSCO233.	SUPPORT TO CHILDREN AT RISK OF SUBSTANCE MISUSE RECEIVED the report updating on the review of support to young people at risk of substance misuse (pages 1-18 of the agenda pack) further to the 2009 scrutiny review, presented by Sarah Hunt (Drug and Alcohol Action Team),

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	<p>Wendy Tomlinson (Head of Service - Commissioning and Placements) and Duncan Mulvany (In-Volve). A discussion took place.</p> <p>NOTED</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Common Assessment Framework (CAF) now included a section on substance misuse and a team worked together to provide screening and drug and alcohol treatment. The commissioning of services would soon be transferred to the Drug and Alcohol Action Team (DAAT).• There was a link between parental substance misuse and the impact on children but the other side of substance misuse was young people misusing as they became adults.• Adults Services worked with Children's Services where parents were known to be misusing drugs or alcohol and the police were also informed in cases where substances were obtained by children from their parents.• In-Volve, a voluntary sector organisation, conducted group and targeted work with a pilot school, which was very effective and would be rolled out across other schools. In-Volve also provided advice to parents and referred them on to other services such as COSMIC who often worked with parents and children from individual families at the same time. <p>RESOLVED to note the report.</p>
<p>OSCO234.</p>	<p>CABINET MEMBER QUESTIONS - CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES</p> <p>RECEIVED the briefing (pages 19 -22 of the agenda pack) from the Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Cllr Lorna Reith and the responses to advance questions submitted. Supplementary questions were asked and discussions noted below.</p> <p>NOTED</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Re: Q2 & 22 – School meals - Take-up might be low for a number of reasons including where a school was near an estate of houses pupils might go home for lunch. The answer to Q22 focussed on free school meals; the Committee would be provided with an updated answer in relation to general school meals take up, particularly in primary schools (Action No. 234.2).• Re. Q5 – Children in Care Placements - The Committee requested a more expansive briefing note on why more children being placed in care needed re-placements and more specific detail about legal costs with reference to Action 98.1 from the meeting held on 1st November 2010, Page 114 of agenda pack, (and Action 159 from Budget Scrutiny 17th January 2011). It was noted that some of the re-placements were due to bringing together children as a family group when they had been separated as emergency interim measures. Such re-placements did not require additional court action as court orders had already been obtained for the children (Action No. 234.1).• Re. Q5 – In response to the Committee's concerns about the number of times a case can go to court the Director of CYPS explained that this was often due to judges and guardians asking for additional assessments to

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	<p>be conducted.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Re. Q22 – A Committee Member expressed concern that 17.6% of referrals had been previously referred in the last 12 months and asked why. It was noted that the referrals could be for different issues and could come from different professionals. After the initial information gathering it could be concluded that there was no underlying issue and the referral not followed through.• Re. Q29 – The Committee commented that the role of Corporate Parent should be defined. It was noted that the Assistant Head of Legal – Social Care was preparing a briefing, which would be circulated to all members, in response to new regulations coming into force.• Re. Q34 & 35 – The work of children centres will be more targeted towards early intervention and all centres will have a set of outcomes to meet which might include health visiting targets or looking at families in temporary accommodation or those on child protection lists. The Cabinet Member agreed that early intervention would impact children's behaviours. <p>RESOLVED to note the briefing.</p> <p><i>Clerk's note: 19:55 hrs - Cllr Bull left the meeting and Cllr Browne, Vice-Chair, took over as Chair.</i></p>
<p>OSCO235.</p>	<p>CHILDREN'S SAFEGUARDING POLICY AND PRACTICE ADVISORY COMMITTEE</p> <p>RECEIVED the report for the Children's Safeguarding Policy and Performance Advisory Committee (pages 23 – 24 of the agenda pack), presented by Cllr Reg Rice (Chair of the Advisory Committee). A discussion followed.</p> <p>NOTED</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The last paragraph in the report stated that the Advisory Committee would no longer report to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee under the new governance arrangement. Committee members asked which other bodies scrutinised the quality of advice given to the Cabinet. The Chair of the Advisory Committee stated that he understood scrutiny of the Cabinet's role to be the responsibility of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee.• The Advisory Committee differed from the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB – a statutory committee) and the Children's Trust (which focused on partnership planning and working) as it formally considered specific matters and recommended action and provided independent social worker advice.• The Committee, the Cabinet Member for Children's Services and the Chair of the Safeguarding Policy & Practice Advisory Committee all recognised that there was duplication of work among committees. The Committee asked that the Children & Young People's Service provide a short report on the roles, remits and composition of the different committees which considered the safeguarding of children including the Children's Safeguarding Policy and Practice Advisory Committee, Local Safeguarding Children's Board and the Children's Trust, for future

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	<p>consideration by the Committee. (Action No. 235.1).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Chair of the Advisory Committee would discuss the issue of children’s needs assessments (which the Committee expressed some concern about) being undertaken by assistant social workers with Hilary Corrick (Independent Social Work Consultant and Independent Member of the Advisory Committee) (Action 235.2). <p><i>Clerk’s note: 20:05 hrs Cllr Bull returned to the meeting and resumed in the Chair.</i></p> <p>RESOLVED to note the report.</p>
<p>OSCO236.</p>	<p>SAFEGUARDING ACTION PLAN - UPDATE ON PROGRESS</p> <p>RECEIVED the report on the Safeguarding Plan for Haringey (pages 25 – 86 of the agenda pack) introduced by the Director of Children & Young People’s Service (CYPS).</p> <p>NOTED</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Committee congratulated the Director of CYPS on achieving Grade 2 “Good” rating by Ofsted in “capacity for achievement” (paragraph 18, appendix 3). • In response to a suggestion by a Committee Member it was reported that until recently a magistrate had sat on the Haringey Children’s Trust and discussions about recruiting a permanent magistrate to the Trust will be taken forward. • In response to concerns raised about assistant social workers conducting assessments (supervised by qualified social workers and signed off by managers) the Director of CYPS reported that, whilst the Ofsted report highlighted that this was not consistent with national guidance, assistant social workers conducted assessments in many other local authorities and this was a comment found in many Ofsted reports. • The Committee requested information on how children in care homes (including the 5 private homes) were monitored in terms of where children spent their time if they were not at the home and who they mixed with and whether the Police were involved when there were concerns (Action No. 236.1). • Committee Members expressed concern about the additional investment for 2011-12 (paragraph 19, appendix 3) and noted that this was further investment by the Council and NHS rather than overspending. The Director of CYPS explained that the service had been asked to make savings and was doing so. • The Committee recommended that the Safeguarding Action Plan be considered by the Committee twice per year (Action No. 236.2). <p>RESOLVED to note the report and that the Safeguarding Action Plan be considered by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee at least twice a year in future.</p>
<p>OSCO237.</p>	<p>CHILD PROTECTION PERFORMANCE AND KEY ISSUES REPORT</p> <p>RECEIVED the update report on key performance information on child</p>

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protection (pages 87-100 of the agenda pack), introduced by Marion Wheeler (Assistant Director for Safeguarding). A discussion followed.

NOTED

- The Committee questioned the discrepancy between the figures provided on Page 90 (Children with a Child Protection Plan (CPP) moving into the Borough) and Page 115 (minutes of the previous Child Protection Overview & Scrutiny Committee meeting) of the agenda pack. Page 90 stated that 43 Children on CPPs had moved-into the Borough and 36 had moved out since January 2011 and Page 115 provided the figure of 40 children on CPPs moving into the Borough. The Director of Children and Young People's Service would investigate and provide Committee members with an explanation (Action No. 237.1).
- In response to questioning it was reported that where assessments were not completed within timescales managers would establish the reasons, however, some assessments were immensely complex and meeting high standards of work was a priority.
- The Director of Children and Young People's Service and Councillor Joseph Ejiofor would be meeting to discuss how information should be reported to the Committee and would include how to clarify the performance indicators NI 59 and NI60 (Action No. 237.2).
- The Committee asked for a presentation at a future meeting on the causes for delays in assessments (Action No. 237.3).
- A piece of work had recently been conducted within the Children's Services department on how child protection had been audited over the past two years and meeting quality standards and timings. It was agreed that a presentation on the results of this piece of work would be presented to the Committee at a future meeting.
- First Response process was explained to the Committee and in response to questioning it was reported that the First Response team did not always write to people, by way of a follow-up, who had contacted the First Response team as this could compromise cases or confidentiality.

RESOLVED to note the report.

OSCO238. SCHOOL EXCLUSIONS

RECEIVED the report (pages 101-106 of the agenda pack) on fixed term and permanent exclusions in schools for the autumn term 2010/11 introduced by Peter Lewis (Director – Children and Young People's Service (CYPS)) and Cllr Lorna Reith (Cabinet Member for Children's Services). A discussion and questions followed.

NOTED

- The Director of Children & Young People's Service had identified some inaccuracies in the report. An amended School Exclusions report would be considered by the Committee at its meeting on 9th May 2011 and the Headteachers from St. Thomas More and Gladesmore Secondary Schools would be invited (Action No 238.3).
- The report of a previous Scrutiny Review on Exclusions would be

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circulated to the Committee (Action no 238.1).

- The Committee asked for details about whether children who were being excluded had accessed Children's Centres. (Action No. 238.2).

The Committee welcomed and questioned the Headteachers from Nightingale Primary School, Doda John Baptist, which had comparatively high levels of exclusions and Alexandra Primary School, Jane Flynn, where there had been no exclusions during the autumn term, on their practices regarding exclusions in their schools.

NOTED

- Nightingale Primary School had recently seen a change in the area's demographics and this was reflected in the intake of children at the school. The last 5 years had seen more children enter the school with complex needs which had not previously been identified. Where a child displayed behavioural problems resulting in exclusion the school conducted an informal assessment and worked with other agencies where necessary. The best results were when the school was able to work with the parents of a child and they engaged with the additional services offered.
- In response to questioning Ms John-Bapstist explained that at Nightingale School every single incident was officially recorded, for example, if a parent was asked to collect a child from school early as a result of behaviour – some schools did not record this as an exclusion.
- Committee members expressed concern that children's needs were not picked up before they started at the school and Ms John Baptist explained that in previous years children had been identified by health visitor checks and concerns followed up.
- Alexandra Primary School was a small school and had a strong ethos focussed on children understanding their behaviour and there were structures followed when bad behaviour was identified, for example a child would be sent out of class and if such behaviour persisted the next stage of the structure would be implemented. Some staff at the school had commented that the school was too lenient as there were some younger children who displayed violent behaviour. Ms Flynn worked closely with these children rather than excluding them, which she felt was sending them back to where the problem was created.
- The Director of CYPS highlighted that there were different perceptions of levels of behaviour and different ways to deal them but all schools had access to support services to find the right programme for children to help them manage their own behaviour and return to school as quickly as possible. Schools Special Education Needs (SEN) teachers met on a termly basis and exclusions and behaviour were regular topics for discussion.
- National Research showed that between 1990-2000 black boys were eight times more likely to be excluded from school.
- In response to concerns that pupils were being excluded from the Support Centre (who had already been excluded from school) the Director of CYPS explained that it was important to maintain that there would be sanctions for inappropriate behaviour.

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	<p>RESOLVED that the amended Exclusions Report be considered at the next meeting of the Committee and that representatives from St. Thomas More and Gladesmore Secondary Schools be invited.</p>
OSCO239.	<p>EXAM RESULTS</p> <p>RECEIVED the preliminary analyses of results at the end of the Foundation Stage, Key Stages 1,2,4 and Post 16 for 2010 (pages 107 – 112), introduced by Bob Garnett (Interim Deputy Director, School Standards and Inclusion) who highlighted that whilst Haringey’s improvement rates were twice the national average there were still gaps in performance and looked after children were still underperforming. A discussion followed.</p> <p>NOTED</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher performing schools had fewer exclusions and schools that fostered a good ethos had better academic results. • A Committee Member highlighted that in relation to the figures for Key Stage 2 results on page 112 the data was not a comparison of like for like as only 20 schools had taken the SAT tests in 2010 therefore it could not be concluded that these results were improving. The Director of CYPS explained that the schools that had not taken SATs had undertaken rigorous teacher assessments and the Secretary of State had agreed that Haringey’s overview of Key Stage 2 was valid and action plans robust. • Concerns were raised about categorising all schools together as some schools performed better than others. It was explained that the borough was judged as a whole and therefore had to be recorded as such but more in-depth information was available. <p>RESOLVED that the report be noted.</p>
OSCO240.	<p>NEW ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS</p> <p>There were no new items.</p>
OSCO241.	<p>MINUTES</p> <p>RESOLVED that the minutes of the Child Protection Overview & Scrutiny Committee held on 1st November 2010 were agreed as a correct record.</p> <p>NOTED the following matters arising.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re: Action 100.2 – NI 148 – Number of Care Leavers not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) – a Committee Member requested more information on why the numbers had increased from 7 to 9 since the last meeting (Action 241.1). • Re: Gap Widening – In relation to P112 of the agenda pack, Summary of Provisional Results, the Committee expressed concern that officers were stating that results had improved when, whilst the national average was increasing, Haringey’s figures were decreasing. (Action 241.2).
OSCO242.	<p>FUTURE MEETINGS</p>

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	<p>The next meeting will be on 9th May 2011.</p> <p>The meeting ended at 21.15 hrs.</p>
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COUNCILLOR GIDEON BULL

Chair

SIGNED AT MEETING.....DAY

OF.....

CHAIR.....