

**MINUTES OF THE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY PANEL
THURSDAY, 26 SEPTEMBER 2013**

Councillors Brabazon, Bull, Christophides, Engert and Newton (Chair)

Co-opted Members Ms Y Denny (Church representative) and Mr E Reid (Parent Governor representative)

CYPS60. WEBCASTING

The Chair welcomed all present and informed them that the meeting was being webcast.

CYPS61. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None.

CYPS62. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

CYPS63. DEPUTATIONS/PETITIONS/PRESENTATIONS/QUESTIONS

None.

CYPS64. MINUTES

The Panel commented on matters arising from the minutes as follows:

- LC52 (Minutes); The Chair reported that a briefing paper had been circulated to the Panel on the future development of the health-visiting service. The Panel commented that the key issue was the re-establishment of a universal service and requested that they be kept updated on further developments.
- LC53 (Cabinet Member Questions); In reference to school expansions (LC53), the Panel noted that the recent paper to Cabinet on this issue had referred to expansions taking place within three schools. Cllr Waters, the Cabinet Member for Children, reported that bulge classes had needed to be used in some schools to accommodate additional demand for places. This included Year 1 at Stamford Hill School where there had been 54 additional places required. There were also bulge classes at Stamford Hill and St Margaret's schools. It was planned to expand St. Mary's and St. John's whilst work on Welbourne was underway.
- Panel Members reported that there had been large influxes of children in some areas of the borough. Significant proportions of these were Spanish speaking. Some schools were currently dealing with difficult circumstances. The Assistant Director of C&YPS (School Standards) reported that the influx had been unprecedented and had contradicted predicted levels of demand, which were usually accurate. However, the situation was starting to settle down.

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- The Panel noted that negotiations were taking place in respect of the expansion of St James'. The Chair enquired whether there were plans to link this to the construction of homes on the Cranwood site. The Cabinet Member stated that there was an awareness of the development proposals. It was noted that school expansion proposals were due to go to Cabinet in December.
- The Cabinet Member reported that the University Technical College in Tottenham, which would be opening shortly, aimed to complement the 6th Form Centre. It would also be close to Northumberland Park School. The 6th Form Centre had a number of challenges to address and had chosen to become an academy to address them.
- Although the 6th Form Centre had become an academy, this would not have an adverse affect on academic standards. It was noted that results this year were above the national average and this was part of an improving trend. It was felt to be in a good position to be rated 'good' now. Panel Members expressed concern that prospective parents might not have been fully appraised of the outcome of the recent OSTED inspection of the Centre.
- LC55 (Haringey 54000); The Panel noted that proposals relating to the project had been due to go to Cabinet but had been delayed. They would now be going to Cabinet on 12 November. They would include details of governance arrangements, including the role of the scrutiny panel. There was an understanding of where the Council was now and how it wanted to develop. The objective was to shift funding to early intervention. It was recognised that additional support was required to deliver the programme of change and an external provider was being procured to provide this.
- LC57 (Update on AB and CD Judgement); The Panel noted that a report on the outcomes of the external reviews arising from the judgement would be forthcoming in due course. Parental consent was now recorded on assessment forms.

In terms of the draft early help policy which had been due to be considered by the Panel, it was noted that it was no longer felt that this constituted a key decision. In addition, additional work was required on this area of work.

AGREED:

That the minutes of the meeting of 16 July be approved.

CYPS65. FINANCIAL OUTTURN 2012/13 AND BUDGET UPDATE 2013-14 (UP TO AND INCLUDING PERIOD 4)

The Panel requested further information on the overspend of £572k on school related premature retirement costs and redundancies. The Assistant Director

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(School Standards) agreed to report back with further information. It was likely this had arisen from residual costs associated with redundancy and early retirement, which could build up over time. Further work was required with academies regarding responsibility for meeting such costs.

It was noted that income streams for the PDC had declined and budgetary assumptions had proved to be unachievable. The long-term future of the PDC was now being considered and various options were being explored. It was agreed that an update would be made to the next meeting of the Panel.

In respect of the overspend arising from capital works undertaken to Rhodes Avenue School, the Panel noted that efforts were being made to recover some of this.

In reference to the underspend in the YOS team, the Panel noted that staffing was the main cost. There had been staff vacancies within the service but the workload arising from these had been covered by existing staff and used as opportunities for development. The service had also received unanticipated grant income and there had been some delay in using funds earmarked for IT. The underspend in the Children's Centres budget had arisen for similar reasons, with managers anticipating the need to make savings in the future.

The Panel requested further details of the proposed savings to SEN transport of £250,000 that had been identified as high risk. Officers agreed to report back on progress with this in due course.

AGREED:

That updates be provided to the Panel on future plans for the Professional Development Centre (PDC) and savings to the SEN transport budget.

CYPS66. END OF YEAR PERFORMANCE MONITORING

Panel Members commented that the OFSTED ratings of Children's Centres was partially dependent on the effectiveness of support that they received from the Council as a whole. In particular, some had been marked down in consideration of their strategic role and leadership. This could create a misleading negative perception as these areas were not the sole responsibility of Children's Centres but were possibly more to do with the support services provided by the Council. The Deputy Director of Children's Services (Commissioning) concurred with this view and accepted that there was a responsibility to improve services and support to Children's Centres.

The Panel noted that although narrowing the gap in educational attainment was no longer a specific priority for the Council, it remained an important issue. The gap with other London authorities had closed but the service still wished to monitor performance. A report on this issue was being prepared for November.

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That a report be submitted to a future meeting of the Panel on educational attainment and continuing efforts to close the gap with other London authorities.

CYPS67. RESPONSE TO THE CORDIS BRIGHT REVIEW OF HARINGEY'S CHILDREN'S CENTRES

The Deputy Director (Children's Commissioning) reported that the review had proposed a range of actions to the Council's Cabinet. A project board had been established to take the changes forward and an effective plan for action would be developed. Clear performance indicators would be established. There was a complex delivery chain involved in developing services and a crucial role for partners so it was important that there was a clear plan in place. The recommendations within the Cordis Bright review would provide the basis for the action plan.

The Panel noted that the delivery plan had been completed. It was agreed that this would be circulated to Panel Members together with a progress report. Feedback on it would be welcome.

Panel Members reported that two consultative meetings with Children's Centres had been cancelled and they had therefore not been able to feed into the review through these. Concern was expressed that the need for outcomes was not clear within the review. In addition, there were other initiatives that were likely to impact on Children's Centres, such as the Haringey 54000 project and the Barnardos lottery bid. One particular concern was whether the Centres would be outsourced. The Centres were mainly rated as excellent. Six of the eight centres were in Tottenham. The costs arising from them needed to be placed in context as some centres contained a high percentage of children in need.

The Cabinet Member for Children stated that the aim was to improve the Centres. There was a particular need for good quality early years provision in Tottenham. The overall aim of the work that was being done was to obtain a better grasp of what the Council and its partners wished to deliver. Management costs appeared high but she was not in favour of privatising the service. There was nevertheless a need to perform better. The Deputy Director (Commissioning) reported that there was no intention to privatise the service. The work that was being undertaken was focussed on considering the most effective way that services could be delivered.

Panel Members commented that the report did not refer to the relationship that Children Centres had with the Council. Outreach was both difficult and expensive but needed to be resourced. The issues involved were complex and were not all the responsibility of the Centres. Strategic matters were also of importance.

The Deputy Director (Commissioning) concurred with this view. Haringey 54000 and the Barnardos bid both needed to be integrated into the overall

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plans. There was much planning data that was available and the Council would work closely with Centres. The Council and its partners needed to agree on a common way forward so that there was clear strategic direction. The service acknowledged that the appropriate level of resources may not previously been in place.

AGREED:

1. That the delivery plan for implementing the recommendations of the review be circulated to Panel Members; and
2. That a progress report be provided to the Panel in due course.

CYPS68. COMMISSIONING OF HIGH QUALITY SERVICES TO EDUCATION

The Assistant Director (School Standards) reported that it had been felt that there was too much variation in services provided for schools. However, some services and personnel were highly rated. Engagement with schools was taking place so their views could be fed into the process and recommendations on the way forward would be developed in due course.

It was noted that the service was moving forward as fast as it could. Some schools were already buying services themselves and a clear structure and a good quality plan was required. It was essential to understand what schools wanted and what they were willing to pay for it. It was also important that services were commercially viable.

Improvements need to be made to the Human Resources (HR) service for schools and a new head of service had recently been appointed who it was hoped would take this agenda forward. The service needed to be both timely and trustworthy. In addition to improving services, it was also hoped to improve their reputation.

The Panel noted that some academies were buying in HR services from the Council. Although the local authority had some ultimate responsibility for the employment of teachers, schools that did not follow HR advice could be liable for costs in cases of dismissal.

AGREED:

That updates on progress be provided to the Panel in due course.

CYPS69. PANEL PROJECT ON NURSERY AND THE TWO YEAR OLD FREE EARLY ENTITLEMENT

The Chair noted that the Panel had a restricted time-frame to work within and it was therefore important that the scope of the review remained focussed on the free early entitlement in order to ensure its effectiveness.

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The Panel noted that support outside of term time for the most vulnerable children could be provided through children's social care. There was a shortfall of places that needed to be addressed and the Council had a key role to play in enabling and resourcing.

Panel Members were of the view that there were choices for local authorities and different approaches had been adopted in different places. The review would provide an opportunity to look at these. It was suggested that a wide range of children's facilities should be asked for their views as part of the project. One option would be to undertake a survey.

AGREED:

1. That the draft scope and terms and reference for the project be approved.
2. That a draft survey be prepared urgently.

CYPS70. ISSUES FROM AREA COMMITTEE CHAIRS

None.

CYPS71. WORK PLAN

The Panel were of the view that the meeting scheduled for 28 November needed to be set aside for discussion of future plans for the youth offer. They therefore agreed that an additional meeting would be arranged to deal with the issues that would have otherwise be considered at the meeting on 28 November.

In respect of the meeting on the youth offer, the Panel requested that a range of views from young people be presented to the meeting, including the Youth Council. It was also suggested that the start time could be varied if necessary to fit in better with the young people.

AGREED:

That an additional meeting of the Panel be provisionally scheduled for Tuesday 19 November and the following items would be placed on the agenda:

- Pupil premium;
- AB and CD judgements – outcomes of reviews arising;
- Provision for Gifted and Talented children;
- School expansion; and
- Troubled families.

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**Cllr Martin Newton
Chair**

Chair