

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Monday, 16 November 2009

<u>Present:</u>	Councillor	S Clarke (Chair)	
	Councillors	F Doyle T Harney K Hayes P Hayes	C Povall T Smith A Taylor
<u>Deputies:</u>	Councillors	A Jones (for JF George) JJ Salter (for WW Smith)	
<u>Co-opted:</u>		Mr M Clarke Mrs M Liddy	Mrs J Owens

38 MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST / PARTY WHIP

The Members of the Committee were asked to consider whether they had a personal or prejudicial interest in connection with any item on the agenda and, if so, to declare it and to state the nature of such interest. Members were reminded that they should also declare, pursuant to paragraph 18 of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules, whether they were subject to a party whip in connection with the item to be considered and, if so, to declare it and state the nature of the whipping arrangement.

Councillor Harney declared a personal interest in minute 44 (Special School Developments) by virtue of him being Chair of Governors at The Lyndale School.

39 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair informed the Committee that Maureen Cain, Parent Governor representative, had resigned her position as co-opted member on the Committee due to family commitments and the Committee recorded its thanks.

40 MINUTES

Members were requested to receive the minutes of the meetings of the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 17 September and 3 November, 2009.

A Member suggested the need for clarity on the issue of the proposed academies in Birkenhead (minute 37 (3/11/09) refers).

The Chair remarked that future meetings should be organised so that a clear distinction was made between where Committee members were seated and

members of the public and that the Chair should always be provided with a microphone.

Responding to comments made in a motion by Councillor Smith, which was then withdrawn, Vicki Shaw, Group Solicitor, Department of Law, HR and Asset Management, advised the Committee that the minutes of the Call-in meeting on 3 November, including both the resolution and the alternative motion which fell, would be referred to Cabinet on 26 November.

Resolved – That the minutes of the meetings held on 17 September and 3 November, be approved as a correct record.

41 YOUNG PEOPLE AND COMMUNITY SAFETY

The Director of Regeneration submitted a report on the scale of young people's involvement in community safety issues, ranging from criminal activity to issues of anti social behaviour and the interventions available across Wirral to prevent their involvement in this type of behaviour.

Steve McGilvray, Community Safety Co-ordinator, introduced the report which gave details on the following:

- The profiles of victims and perpetrators of crime and anti social behaviour.
- The forms and scale of enforcement action being taken against young people.
- The support which was available to young people and their parents prior to, and once within, the criminal justice system.
- The range of initiatives in place to prevent young people from becoming involved in community safety issues.

Steve McGilvray responded to comments from Members and informed the Committee that there was a temporal analysis of statistics undertaken and interventions were now carried out at times of greatest demand, traditionally on a Friday and Saturday evening. He agreed that the numbers of interventions were breeding confidence in the reporting of incidents. In respect of truancy figures, analysis was being undertaken on patterns amongst schools and individuals.

He elaborated on the work of the Family Intervention Programme and the funding this attracted. The Director commented that the Authority had been invited to bid for more funding to enable work to be carried out with social housing providers.

Members commented that the use of Section 30 dispersal orders could have a 'knock on' effect in adjoining areas and that they could also have a downside in their effect on household insurance premiums.

A Member commented on the need for more analysis of the correlation between those young people arrested for alcohol misuse and those young people with a 'statement' or with ADHD and that statistics should be circulated to Area Forums.

The Director remarked that he did want to look at providing statistical data at a ward level and an Area Forum level.

Resolved – That the report be noted and that the issue of young people and community safety be agreed as a topic for a scrutiny review possibly jointly with the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

42 **THE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S PLAN 2008-2013 ANNUAL REPORT**

The Director of Children's Services submitted the Children and Young People's Plan Annual Report. The Plan covered all the services for children and young people in the Borough and brought together all the strategic and operational plans to improve their lives and enable them to achieve their potential. It covered every aspect of children and young people's lives from before birth to their 19th birthday and beyond that if they had a disability or had been in care.

The CYPP annual review was carried out by multi-agency strategic groups linked to the five Every Child Matters Outcomes. The groups consisted of representatives from all agencies working with children and young people in Wirral. In addition, consultation was carried out with a range of children and young people.

The annual report was both a review of progress in the first year of the CYPP (2008/09) and an opportunity to refresh the priorities in order to be responsive to national and local change. The report had been produced in two sections, Part 1 being an overview report and Part 2 a detailed delivery plan outlining progress in year one and how refreshed priorities for the next two years would be delivered. A comprehensive equality impact assessment had been carried out with the plan review, the outcome of which highlighted how the implementation of the CYPP would have a significant impact on improving equality of opportunity for children and young people.

Responding to comments from the Committee, the Director reported that it took time for people's perceptions to change with regard to the integration of services and people did not necessarily see the inter-relationship that Children's Services had with other services such as the health service, although improvements in perceptions had occurred over the last three to four years.

In respect of external providers delivering health advice in schools, the Director agreed on the need to acknowledge the teachings of faith schools and that parents, as co-educators, needed to be drawn in to the process. The relationship with both churches, although complicated at times, was valued by the Department.

Resolved - That the Children and Young People's Plan Annual Review be noted.

43 **PRESENTATION ON SECOND QUARTER PERFORMANCE 2009/10**

David Armstrong, Head of Planning and Resources, gave a presentation and submitted an overview of progress made against the indicators for 2009/2010 in the second quarter and key projects which were relevant to the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

He gave details of what was working well, including:

- This year's GCSE and A-level results had shown that Wirral students had, once again, performed better than ever – achieving results way above the national average
- Aimed at 14-19 year olds, a brand new way of learning was underway in Wirral with the introduction of the new Diploma qualifications.
- Wirral Council had helped to pioneer an innovative new scheme, which had seen 117 new apprentice positions created in local companies.
- 85.7% of children adopted had been placed within 12 months of the decision being made.
- Targets achieved at quarter two for the stability of placements of looked after children.
- Up to 15,000 five - 14 year olds in Wirral would benefit from the launch of a 'Play in the Peninsula' programme, enabling children of all abilities and backgrounds to get together and have fun.
- A campaign aimed at lowering teenage pregnancy rates had been launched in Wirral with the aim of educating young people about contraception and lifestyle choices.
- Working in partnership with NHS Wirral, Wirral Council was leading a new national initiative, 'Aiming Higher for Disabled Children' to help disabled children and their families get the support they needed to live ordinary lives.

In his presentation David Armstrong also referred to key performance issues and key risks, including an increase in the number of safeguarding children referrals following the 'baby Peter' case. The Council had responded by allocating additional resources as part of the 2009/10 budget. He also referred to the number of children in residential placements, and outlined the reasons as to how they had reduced from 58 at the end of August to 51 by the end of October.

In respect of the financial position, the projected deficit stood at £1.4m as at 31 October, down from £3m at the end of August, following action to reduce costs, including £300,000 slippage on Sure Start.

Responding to comments from Members, both David Armstrong and the Director explained how the slippage on Sure Start had arisen and also elaborated on the success of the apprenticeship scheme. The Director also referred to the numbers of 16 – 24 year olds who were unemployed on Wirral, which in this quarter had gone down by 0.4%, which was contrary to the position in the rest of the country.

Resolved – That the presentation be noted.

44 **SPECIAL SCHOOL DEVELOPMENTS**

Peter Edmondson, Head of Participation and Inclusion gave a presentation on improving special school provision in Wirral.

Wirral currently maintained 12 special schools, many of which were now past their best in terms of building fabric and capacity to provide the best education for children and young people. A review of the provision had begun approximately 3 years ago with a focus on the Complex Learning Difficulty (CLD) sector. This had now broadened into the moderate and specific learning difficulties' sector.

Within the CLD sector there were 3 primary schools – Elleray Park, Stanley and The Lyndale and 2 secondary schools – Foxfield and Meadowside. Cabinet, at its meeting on 23 April, 2009 (minute 467 refers) had agreed to the replacement of Elleray Park and Stanley schools, each co-located, also to investigate the feasibility of 2-19 provision for profound and multiple learning difficulties and to the merger of Foxfield and Meadowside schools. Peter Edmondson reported that a progress report on the Stanley School proposal would be going to Cabinet on 26 November.

He gave details of the progress which had been made and outlined future developments with 9 special schools now being part of the review process. These were Elleray Park, Stanley, The Lyndale, Foxfield, Meadowside, Hayfield, Clare Mount, Gilbrook and Orrets Meadow.

Resolved – That the presentation be noted.

45 **YOUTH AND PLAY SERVICE ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

The minutes of the meeting of the Youth Play Service Advisory Committee of 27 October, were submitted for the Committee's information.

Peter Edmondson, Head of Participation and Inclusion, suggested that in future the minutes could be placed on the Council web library.

A Member suggested that there should still be the option for young people to put a report to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee if there was a specific item they wanted to bring to the Committee's attention.

Resolved – That the minutes be noted.

46 **WORK PROGRAMME**

The Committee received an update on its work programme, which included the proposed outline meeting schedule for the current municipal year, and progress on the two in-depth panel reviews.

The Chair stated, as previously agreed, that the matter of young people and community safety be agreed as a topic for a scrutiny review, possibly jointly with the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee. She also reported that as some of the items scheduled for this meeting had slipped back to the January meeting she would discuss with the Director which reports would now be scheduled for the January meeting. The 'Literacy Levels at Key Stage 2' review was virtually complete and would be reported to the January meeting.

Resolved – That the report be noted.