

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Monday, 18 March 2013

<u>Present:</u>	Councillor	W Clements (Chair)	
	Councillors	J Crabtree D Dodd P Doughty B Mooney	C Povall W Smith P Williams S Williams (In place of P Hayes)
<u>Apologies</u>		Mr A Scott Mrs N Smith	Mrs J Owens

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

Members 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 are subject to a party whip in connection with any item(s) to be considered and, if so, to declare it and state the nature of the whipping arrangement.

Councillor Wendy Clements declared a non pecuniary interest in general by virtue of her employment in an early years setting.

Councillor Darren Dodd declared a non pecuniary interest in item 4 - 2012/13 Quarter Three Performance and Financial Review (Minute 68 post refers) by virtue of his appointment on the Merseyside Fire and Rescue Authority.

Councillor Jim Crabtree declared a non pecuniary interest in item 4 - 2012/13 Quarter Three Performance and Financial Review (Minute 68 post refers) by virtue of his employment with The Vocational College.

66 MINUTES

Members were requested to receive the minutes of the meetings of the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 21 January, 2013 and 12 February, 2013.

Resolved – That the minutes of the meetings of 21 January, 2013 and 12 February, 2013 be approved as a correct record.

67 **CHILD POVERTY**

Jane Morgan, Corporate Policy Manager, Chief Executive's Department gave a verbal report that updated the Committee about the actions being taken by the Child and Family Working Group and responded to members questions.

Resolved – That Jane Morgan be thanked for the report.

68 **2012/13 QUARTER THREE PERFORMANCE AND FINANCIAL REVIEW.**

The Acting Director of Children's Services reported upon the performance of the Council's Corporate Plan 2012-13 and Departmental Plan 2012-13 for October 2012 - December 2012, in relation to children and young people. She provided members with an overview of performance, resources and risk monitoring.

For Quarter three 2012/13 there were 22 performance indicators that could be reported upon, of these 77.3% (17 indicators) were achieving or exceeding their target. The report provides an overview of 2012-13 quarter three performance including corrective action for performance issues.

The Acting Director of Children's Services further reported that pressures of £ 3.2 million had been reported by the Children and Young People's Department as at 31st December 2012. This had reduced from £4.4m in quarter two. The pressures relating to looked after children and home to school transport remained, although there has been some reduction in projected expenditure on areas such as residential care, Connexions and School Maintenance in recent months. Numbers of children in care continued to remain high compared to similar Councils. The council spend freeze remained in place and expenditure was closely monitored.

Officers commented on the report and responded to Members questions.

Resolved – That the report be noted.

69 **YOUTH PARLIAMENT 2012**

A report of the Acting Director of Children's Services presented the Committee with an evaluation of the 2012 Youth Parliament including the lessons learnt. The report also presented proposals for the delivery of Youth Voice Conference and Youth Parliament 2013.

The report informed Members that Wirral Youth Voice Conference (YVC) was an annual conference organised by Wirral Council's Children and Young People's Department. Both this event and the Youth Parliament, which took place on the evening of the day of the YVC, had previously been planned to take place in Local Democracy Week.

Maureen McDaid, Principal Manager (Commissioning/Participation) attended the meeting and reported that the number of schools at the Youth Voice Conference was on target however the number involved in the Youth Parliament was lower than anticipated. There were a number of reasons for this, the main one being the long day for the young people who remained behind after the YVC.

There was also the timing of the Youth Parliament which took place during the political parties' conference season. This clash of events had resulted in one of the local political parties being unable to have full representation at the Youth Parliament. It was proposed that in 2013 the YVC would take place as usual on 15th October and that the Youth Parliament would take place on 12th November.

Resolved – That the proposal to hold the Youth Voice Conference and Youth Parliament on separate days with the aim of increasing participation by councillors and young people at the Youth Parliament be approved.

70 APPROVED SCHEME OF DELEGATION - CONTRACTS EXCEEDING £50,000

A report of the Acting Director of Children's Services provided an update to Members, in accordance with the Constitution of the Council, of those instances where delegated authority has been used by the Acting Director of Children's Services with respect to the acceptance of tenders and to the appointment of Contractors.

The report gave details of tenders and the appointment of contractors that had been accepted by the Acting Director of Children's Services under delegated authority.

In response to questions from members the Acting Director of Children's Services agreed that 2/3 case studies could be circulated to Members for information.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

71 EDUCATION QUALITY - WIRRAL SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT TRADED SERVICES

A report of the Acting Director of Children's Services provided information about Wirral school improvement traded services, Education Quality (EQ) and invited consideration by members.

Education Quality was a traded school improvement service developed by Wirral's Children and Young People's Department in joint partnership with its schools over the last 2 years. It was confirmed that 94% of its schools, including all academies had bought back into the service for Year 1 and a similar buyback had been achieved for 2012/13. EQ was radically different and more comprehensive than anything Wirral, or indeed many of its local authority neighbours, had done as a traded service for its schools. EQ encompassed support for professionals and volunteers in schools through a range of services. It had generated £850,000 of new income from its schools in its first year and had generated nearly £1 million in its second year.

Gordon Lester, Consultant Leader, CPD & Commissioning attended the meeting and responded to Members questions.

Resolved – That the report be noted.

72 COMMISSIONING OF SERVICES

A report of the Acting Director of Children's Services presented the Committee with the results of the Commissioning of Children's Services which was undertaken in

December 2012. This was the same report that was presented to Cabinet on 14th March 2013 and it was presented to Overview and Scrutiny as requested by the Committee. The recommendations were for the awarding of contracts from 1st May 2013 for Early Intervention Services costing £2.4m for a 12 month period. The providers who were being recommended for award of contract were as listed in Appendix 1 to the report. Appendix 1 of this report was exempt under Wirral Council's Access to Information Procedure Rules Section 3 Category b. In addition to the award of those contracts, it was requested that the following contracts would be extended as follows:

- PA1.2 Domestic Abuse 5-13 year olds for 12 months.
- PA1.3 Family support for Black and Minority Ethnic Families for 12 months.

In Priority Area 4.1, the request was made to agree to the contract for Young Runaways/Children who were sexually exploited being extended for 3 months during which time the contract would be re-tendered.

RESOLVED – That the report and the recommendations regarding the award of contracts to the providers outlined in the Exempt Appendix 1 to the report be noted.

73 THE INTEGRATED BEHAVIOUR STRATEGY

A report of the Acting Director of Children's Services provided the rationale and proposed implementation of a Local Authority Integrated Behaviour Strategy. The aim of the strategy was to improve the social, emotional and behaviour skills of children and young people, raising their standards of achievement and enhancing educational inclusion.

It was reported that the Education and Inspections Act 2006 made it a duty for a Local Authority to promote high standards and maximise every child's educational potential.

Included within the current Children and Young People's Plan was a key action to review the provision of behaviour support and reduce school exclusion. This included reviewing the policy and practice document relating to behaviour and exclusions. This refresh of the strategy had been supported and informed by a working group involving Local Authority officers and Headteachers from primary, secondary and special schools. It would be consulted on by schools and other local authority stakeholders.

Steve Dainty, Primary Consultant Head Teacher and Phil Sheridan, Consultant Secondary Headteacher, attended the meeting and responded to Members questions.

Resolved – That the report be noted.

74 WORK PROGRAMME

The Chair noted that the Spokespersons were working on a Looked After Children Scrutiny Review which would hopefully be brought to the next Committee. Other suggested items to be considered by the Children and Young People's Overview and

Scrutiny Committee were Serious Case ongoing Action Plan; Wirral Youth Zone; a report in respect of Primary and Secondary school numbers and Changes in Preventative Services

Resolved - That the suggested items for the Work Plan for future meetings of the Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Committee be noted.

75 FORWARD PLAN

The Forward Plan for the period Jan to April 2013 had now been published on the Council's intranet/website and Members were invited to review the Plan prior to the meeting in order for the Committee to consider, having regard to the Committee's work programme, whether scrutiny should take place of any items contained within the Plan and, if so, how it could be done within relevant timescales and resources.

Resolved – That the Forward Plan be noted.

76 EXEMPT INFORMATION - EXCLUSION OF MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Resolved – That in accordance with section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business, on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined by the relevant paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 12A (as amended) to that Act. The public interest test has been applied and favours exclusion.

77 EXEMPT APPENDIX

Further to minute 72 ante, the Committee noted the exempt appendix to the Acting Director of Children's Services report.

78 MAUREEN MCDAID

The Chair indicated that this meeting would be the last attended by Maureen McDaid, Principal Manager (Commissioning/Participation). The Committee thanked her for her hard work and wished her very best wishes for her retirement.

79 ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS ACCEPTED BY THE CHAIR

The Acting Director of Children's Services referred to a Serious Case Review regarding Child G, a young person who had been murdered by her boyfriend last year. The Acting Director gave a brief overview of the case and informed the Committee that a report and Action Plan would be brought to the next meeting of the Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Committee.