

Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on 6 December 2016

Present:

Councillor Reid – in the Chair

Councillors Sameem Ali, Collins, Hewitson [CYP/16/50 - CYP/16/54], Reeves, Stone and Taylor

Co-opted Voting Members:

Mrs B Kellner, Representative of the Diocese of Manchester [CYP/16/51 - CYP/16/57]

Ms M Neall, Parent governor representative

Co-opted Non Voting Members:

Mr L Duffy, Secondary sector teacher representative [CYP/16/50 - CYP/16/55]

Ms J Gudgeon, Primary sector teacher representative

Councillor S Newman, Executive Member for Children's Services

Councillor Rahman, Executive Member for Culture and Leisure

Councillor Bridges, Assistant Executive Member for Children's Services

Julia Stephens-Row, Independent Chair of Manchester Safeguarding Children Board

Craig Harris, Executive Nurse, Director of Commissioning and Quality and Executive Director of Safeguarding, North, Central and South Manchester Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs)

Helen Scott, Children and Young People's Health and Wellbeing Commissioner, Manchester Central, North and South CCGs

Maria Slater, General Manager, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services

Helen MacDougall, Head of the Lancasterian Sensory Support Service

Apologies:

Councillors Madeleine Monaghan and K Simcock

Mrs J Miles, Representative of the Diocese of Salford

CYP/16/50

Minutes

Decision

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 8 November 2016.

CYP/16/51

Post Ofsted Improvement Plan Update: Annual Report of Manchester Safeguarding Children Board (MSCB) April 2015 – March 2016

The Committee received a report of the Strategic Director of Children's Services and Julia Stephens-Row, Independent Chair of MSCB. The report provided an overview of the MSCB Annual Report for the period April 2015 - March 2016. The full Annual Report was appended. The Committee welcomed Julia Stephens-Row who introduced the report across its main themes.

In response to a member's question, Ms Stephens –Row advised that forced marriage was referred to in the report but agreed that this needed to be strengthened and that more information on forced marriage would be included in the following year's report. The Strategic Director of Children's Services informed the Committee that he chaired the MSCB Complex Safeguarding Subgroup and that they were actively working on the issue of forced marriage and that this work would be reflected in next year's report.

The Chair requested further information on the closure of the Family Nurse Partnership (FNP). The Executive Member for Children's Services reported that in last year's budget cuts it had been agreed to reduce the funding provided by the Council to the Central Manchester Foundation Trust (CMFT) and that due to this and other budget pressures the CMFT was facing, it had decided to stop providing the FNP. She advised that the FNP provided support to first-time mothers under the age of 20 but, due to capacity issues and the strict criteria for support, most teenage first-time mothers, including some of the most vulnerable ones, were not receiving support through this service. She advised that this would be replaced by a more flexible targeted service provided by health visitors. The Director of Public Health reported that the new offer would provide support for a wider group of vulnerable young mothers and better value for money.

The Committee discussed the recent visit to Wetherby Young Offenders Institute. The Executive Member reported that the young people were well-treated, particularly the most vulnerable Looked After Children. She advised that she would like to see all the young people receive the same level of care as the most vulnerable young offenders, although she acknowledged that this was dependent on costs and staffing ratios. She advised that, as corporate parents, members should focus on ensuring young people did not enter the youth justice system but that there were fewer young people in custody than previously and those that were there had committed serious crimes. A member advised that she had been reassured by the support provided to the young people in Wetherby. The Chair advised that she was concerned about the distance from Manchester, which was particularly an issue for parents who had to travel long distances for visits, and that she would like provision within Greater Manchester, to which the Committee agreed.

Decision

To note the report.

CYP/16/52 Children's and Young People's Mental Health

The Committee received a report of Craig Harris, Executive Nurse, Director of Commissioning and Quality and Executive Director of Safeguarding, North, Central and South Manchester CCGs, the Director of Public Health and the Director of Children's Services. The report provided an overview of provision in support of children and young people's mental health across Manchester, including provision from the health sector, the social care sector and the voluntary sector. It identified the current challenges and described the transformational programme that was underway. The Committee welcomed Craig Harris, Helen Scott, Children and Young People's Health and Wellbeing Commissioner, and Maria Slater, General Manager of

Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS). The Strategic Director of Children's Services and Craig Harris introduced the report across its main themes. Members discussed the impact of exam pressure on children and young people's mental health and self-esteem. In response to a member's question, Craig Harris advised that there was a distinction between young people who had a mental health diagnosis and young people who reacted under extreme pressure by self-harming or attempting suicide. He advised that members might find it useful to look at the Suicide Prevention Plan. The Director of Public Health advised that this was considered by the Health and Wellbeing Board in August and was a comprehensive, all-age plan which was evidence-based. He reported that Professor Nav Kapur was a national expert on self-harm who had attended Health Scrutiny Committee previously and could attend this Committee.

Helen Scott reported that a lot of the current transformation work focused on providing support through schools. She reported that every high school now had a named CAMHS Lead, that the need for a universal offer was recognised and that the CCGs were working on developing this as part of the integrated school health offer with Public Health, Healthy Schools and the School Nursing Service. The Chair expressed concern that schools could opt out of the School Nursing Service. A member asked whether all schools participated in the Healthy Schools Programme. Craig Harris advised that he would obtain figures on the number of schools participating in this programme, including academies, and circulate this to members.

In response to a member's question, Maria Slater advised that CAMHS had a dedicated service for Looked After Children (LAC). In response to a member's question on how access to support for other vulnerable groups would be improved, Helen Scott reported that the new model of care (i-THRIVE) would involve research to understand local communities and where vulnerable children were and to ensure the system enabled them to access services to remain well and supported. Maria Slater reported that CAMHS was now more integrated with Children's Services and was receiving referrals through the Early Help Hubs. The Chair advised that the Early Help model was now working and achieving positive results.

The Chair highlighted a number of factors which could impact on children and young people's mental health and access to support, including neglect, poverty, waiting lists for services and cuts to youth work. She advised that this was a good, comprehensive report and welcomed the work that was taking place to transform services for children and young people. She recommended that the Committee receive a further report at an appropriate time, to include examples of the improvements the transformation work had made at the individual child level.

Decisions

1. To request that the Executive Nurse (Craig Harris) provide further information on the number of schools participating in the Healthy Schools Programme, including academies.
2. To receive a further report at an appropriate time, to include examples of the improvements the transformation work has made at the individual child level.

CYP/16/53 Changes to Lancasterian Sensory Support Service

The Committee received a report of the Director of Education and Skills which outlined proposed changes to the Sensory Support Service which the Council commissioned from Lancasterian School. The report informed members that the changes would improve and clarify the offer of provision to children and young people in the city with a sensory impairment and ensure that the Sensory Service was more aligned with services and provision for children and young people in the city with Special Educational Needs/Disabilities (SEND). It advised that the proposed changes would also reduce the overall cost of the commission which would release funding within the High Needs Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant to be used for additional special school places to meet rising demand and enable the Sensory Support Service going forward to operate within budget. The Committee welcomed Helen MacDougall, the Head of the Lancasterian Sensory Support Service. The Director of Education and Skills provided an overview of the report.

The Executive Member for Children's Services reported that the proposals for the Sensory Support Service had been consulted on in June and July with the intention that the proposal would be considered by the Committee in September. However, she advised that, due to the size of the response, the Council had spent additional time reviewing the consultation responses and had revised its proposals, proposing to retain two resource bases. However, she reported that the High Needs Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant had not increased, despite increasing pupil numbers, so savings did need to be made.

A member expressed concern that the High Needs Block had not increased and recommended that members lobby government on this issue. He welcomed the amended proposal to retain two resource bases and to have a further period of consultation. The Chair expressed concern about future changes to the funding formula for schools, which were likely to disadvantage urban areas should as Manchester.

A member expressed concern at the impact of the proposed changes on children and families and asked whether the impact would be monitored. He also noted that, while the report stated that Manchester spent more on its Sensory Support Service than other north-west local authorities, these were not cities and advised that the Council should compare its spending with other cities. Helen MacDougall reported that children's progress would be well-monitored as teachers of the deaf had developed a system to track progress of children's language development and the teachers of the visually impaired were developing a visual skills curriculum which would also enable children's progress to be tracked.

The Head of Education Strategy, Access and Inclusion reported that the changes would lead to an improved service, including greater consistency, opportunities for joint working and linking the service to the wider local offer for children with SEND. She advised that teachers in mainstream schools needed to be able to meet the needs of children with a sensory impairment because, even where they received visits from peripatetic teachers, the children spent most of their time with mainstream teachers. She reported that the consultation responses had indicated that there was

a need to improve the skills of staff in mainstream schools to better meet the needs of children with sensory impairments.

The Chair reported that the Committee would receive a further report at its 28 February 2017 meeting following the additional consultation period.

Decision

To note the report and that the Committee will receive a further report at its 28 February 2017 meeting, following the additional consultation period.

CYP/16/54 Budget Process 2017-2020: Consideration of Options and Further Information

The Committee received a report of the Strategic Director (Children's Services), the Director of Education and Skills and the City Treasurer. The report set out the financial considerations, the current forecast position and savings options for the period to 2019/20. The Committee was asked to use the information provided to identify which, if any, of the options put forward fell into either of the following categories: A: Options which should only be considered by the Executive if the overall level of savings required exceeds £40m or B: Options which should only be considered by the Executive if the level of savings required means that all options have to be taken forward, and no alternative savings can be found. The report was accompanied by a number of appendices including the Directorate Budget Report and briefing notes containing the additional information requested by the Committee at its November meeting. The Strategic Director of Children's Services and the Director of Education and Skills introduced the report.

The Committee discussed the budget savings option for School Crossing Patrols. Members expressed serious concerns about this option and categorised it as Option B. The Committee additionally stated that this was their least preferred option and advised that it should only be taken forward if there was no alternative. However, members also had a wider discussion on road safety around schools, including the behaviour of parents and other road users, the need to educate children on road safety and other issues which could potentially improve road safety, including co-ordinating bus services with school finish times. The Chair recommended that a Road Safety Around Schools Task and Finish Group be established, in consultation with the Neighbourhoods and Environment Scrutiny Committee.

A member reported that he was saddened that the Council was having to consider closing some Sure Start Children's Centres but that he was reassured that there would be no reduction in service and, therefore, reluctantly supported this budget savings option. A member emphasised the importance of ensuring that the de-designated buildings were used effectively. The Head of Quality Assurance reported that discussions were taking place with schools for them to take on responsibility for a number of centres, which could continue to be used to provide services for children. The Chair recommended that this option be categorised as Option A, to which members agreed.

The Committee discussed the budget savings option for Youth and Play. The Executive Member for Culture and Leisure reported that the Council was working with the Independent Youth and Play Trust to ensure that it could bring in additional funding. In response to a comment from the Chair, he informed members that he had confidence in the Trust taking appropriate decisions on which voluntary organisations to fund. The Chair recommended that this option be categorised as Option A, to which members agreed.

The Committee additionally agreed to categorise the options for Children's Services (LAC Investment and Capacity Model, Special Guardianship Orders and Commissioning), the Closed School Budget and Short Breaks as Option A and to categorise the options for the Health Visitor Contract and the Early Years New Delivery Model Rescale as Option B.

A member noted that at its 8 November meeting the Committee had supported the proposal that funding from the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) be used to mitigate service reductions resulting from cuts to the Education Services Grant (ESG). Members recommended that, subject to the Schools Funding Forum agreeing this, the option for the ESG should be categorised as Option A.

Decisions

1. To categorise the following options as Option A whereby they should only be considered by the Executive if the overall savings required exceed £40m:
 - Children's Services (LAC Investment and Capacity Model, Special Guardianship Orders and Commissioning)
 - Closed School Budget
 - Reconfiguration of the Early Years New Delivery Model including Sure Start Children's Centres
 - Youth and Play
 - Short Breaks
2. To note that at its 8 November meeting the Committee supported the proposal that funding from the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) be used to mitigate service reductions resulting from cuts to the Education Services Grant. Subject to the Schools Funding Forum agreeing this, the Committee would categorise the option for the Education Services Grant as Option A.
3. To categorise the following options as Option B, whereby they should only be considered by the Executive if the level of savings required means that all options have to be taken forward, and no alternative savings can be found:
 - Health Visitor Contract
 - Early Years New Delivery Model Rescale
 - School Crossing Patrols
4. To note that the option for School Crossing Patrols was the Committee's least preferred option and advise that this should only be taken forward if there is no alternative.
5. To propose the establishment of a Road Safety Around Schools Task and Finish Group, in consultation with the Neighbourhoods and Environment Scrutiny Committee.

CYP/16/55 School Place Planning and Admissions, including specific proposals for a new secondary school

The Committee received a report of the Director of Education and Skills which provided an update on school place planning and the 2016 reception and year 7 allocations. It outlined the future need for additional secondary school places and outlined the approach to securing sufficient places to meet need. It also sought approval to commence the required process to develop a new secondary school in response to projected increased demand for places in the central area of the City from September 2018. The Director of Education and Skills introduced the report and invited the Committee to comment on it prior to its submission to the Executive on 14 December 2016.

The Chair praised the work of officers in School Admissions and Place Planning, acknowledging that it was challenging due to the large increase in pupil numbers.

In response to the Director of Education and Skills' comments that a new secondary school, Dean Trust Ardwick, had opened in September 2015, a member requested that a visit to the school be arranged for Committee members.

A member expressed concern at the Free School Presumption Process, which would be used to develop the proposed additional secondary school, noting that the Council was required to do a significant amount of work to develop the school but could not then have control over it. The Executive Member for Children's Services agreed, reporting that the Council was funding the building of new schools, through this process, utilising the Basic Need funding it received from the government. However, she advised that this was not sufficient to meet the demand for places so the Council was having to wait and see whether other free schools would be agreed by the government. She reported that this lack of control made planning for school places challenging.

A member supported the recommendations to the Executive but requested that recommendation 5 be amended to include consultation with local ward councillors for the site of the proposed school, to which the Chair agreed.

In response to a question from the Chair, the Executive Member for Children's Services reported that the Council was opposed to grammar schools and selection as it did not benefit children or social mobility.

A member expressed concern that the Tauheedul Education Trust was sponsoring two new schools in the city, reporting that she didn't think their aims and objectives fitted with those of the city. The Executive Member for Children's Services reported that the Council had expressed its concerns about this as it believed the city did not need more single sex schools but the government had approved the schools and the additional places were needed.

Decisions

1. To request that a visit be arranged for Committee members to the Dean Trust Ardwick.

2. To endorse the following recommendations to the Executive, subject to recommendation 5 being amended to require the Director of Education and Skills to additionally consult with local ward councillors for the site of the proposed school.

Executive is recommended to:

1. Note the data relating to September 2016 admissions.
2. Note the pupil forecasts submitted to the DfE during summer 2016.
3. Support the principle that Basic Need funding is used to fund the new high school.
4. Agree that the Council begin consulting to gather local views on the plans to develop a new secondary school as a first step towards identifying a provider for the new school.
5. Delegate responsibility to the Director of Education and Skills in consultation with the Executive Member for Children's Services to:
 - progress the publication of a specification for the new school and an invitation to sponsor based on the outcomes of the consultation;
 - make the final decision on the site for the school;
 - identify a preferred sponsor to be recommended to the DfE.

[Councillor Reeves declared a personal interest as the Chair of the Greater Manchester Learning Trust.]

CYP/16/56 Delivering the Our Manchester Strategy

The Committee received a report of the Executive Member for Children's Services which provided an overview of work undertaken and progress towards the delivery of the Council's priorities as set out in the Our Manchester strategy for those areas within her portfolio. The Executive Member for Children's Services introduced the report, highlighting the additional £10 million investment in social work, the embedding of the Signs of Safety social work model and improved examination results, including for Looked After Children (LAC). She reported that she still had concerns about lack of consistency in social work practice, the number of children missing from education and the number of children missing from home and care but ensured that officers and the Improvement Board were addressing these issues.

A member suggested that the Year 11 exam outcomes for previously looked after children be monitored, including monitoring by the Corporate Parenting Panel, and the Executive Member agreed to look into this.

The Chair expressed concern that some schools were not admitting younger children. The Executive Member reported that all Manchester schools had nursery provision but, due to an increasing population, nurseries could not accommodate all children so some were restricting their nursery places to older children.

Decision

To note the report.

CYP/16/57 Overview Report

A report of the Governance and Scrutiny Support Unit was submitted. The overview report contained key decisions within the Committee's remit, responses to previous recommendations and the Committee's work programme, which the Committee was asked to approve.

Decision

To approve the work programme.