

Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on 2 January 2018

Present:

Councillor Reid – in the Chair

Councillors Sameem Ali, Collins, T Judge, Lovecy, K Simcock, Stone and Taylor

Co-opted Voting Members:

Mr A Arogundade, Parent Governor Representative

Ms Z Stepan, Parent Governor Representative

Co-opted Non Voting Members:

Mr R Lammas, Primary sector teacher representative

Councillor S Newman, Executive Member for Children's Services

Councillor Rahman, Executive Member for Schools, Culture and Leisure

Councillor Sheikh, Assistant Executive Member for Children's Services

Apologies:

Councillors Alijah and Cooley

Mr L Duffy, Secondary sector teacher representative

Mrs J Miles, Representative of the Diocese of Salford

CYP/18/01 Minutes

Decisions

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 5 December 2017.

CYP/18/02 Re-inspection of services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers

The Committee received a report of the Strategic Director of Children's Services which outlined the key findings of Ofsted's re-inspection of Manchester's services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers. Ofsted's inspection report dated 21 December 2017 was included as an appendix.

Officers referred to the main points and themes within the report which included:

- The key findings;
- Recommendations for further improvement; and
- Next steps.

Some of the key points that arose from the Committee's discussions were:

- Recognition of the progress made so far and all those who had contributed to it;
- What plans were being made to replace the Strategic Lead for Children's

- Social Care, who had recently left the Council;
- Ofsted's findings regarding the police's handling of cases where children were living with domestic abuse, the role of partner organisations and whether the police could attend future meetings of the Corporate Parenting Panel or the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee;
- The importance of improving outcomes for care leavers, including housing, skills development and opportunities for further and higher education;
- How the scrutiny committee could best contribute to the continued improvement of children's services;
- Concern that Ofsted inspectors would no longer be meeting with Elected Members on future inspections and that Members should lobby to challenge this; and
- Social workers' caseloads.

The Deputy Director of Children's Services informed Members that, instead of replacing the post of Strategic Lead for Children's Social Care, three managers would be appointed to take on responsibility for each of the three localities within the city. He advised that this would help to drive improvements in social work practice and that he would have oversight of the whole social work service across the city. He informed Members that the Council was working with the police to address the domestic abuse issue raised in Ofsted's report. He reported that the Getting To Good Board, which was replacing the Improvement Board, would ensure that appropriate action was taken to address all of Ofsted's recommendations. The Executive Member for Children's Services, who was also the Chair of the Corporate Parenting Panel (CPP), advised that health partners regularly attended the CPP and that it would be beneficial for the police to attend future meetings. She advised that domestic abuse was within the remit of the Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee but suggested that the two Committees jointly consider this issue. The Deputy Director agreed that further work needed to be done to improve outcomes for care leavers, while drawing Members' attention to the positive findings of Ofsted in paragraphs 74 and 75 of their report. The Executive Member for Children's Services advised that the Council was likely to receive a further Ofsted inspection in relation to the issue of child neglect and suggested that the Committee could look at this issue and also child sexual exploitation. The Deputy Director advised that the Council aspired to reduce social workers' caseloads further. He informed Members about the variations in referrals received across the year, which correlated with the school year, and advised that the Council was working to engage better with schools and other partners to ensure that they were taking whatever actions they could and considering the Early Help offer before referring cases to the social work service.

Decisions

1. To recommend that the Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee and the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee jointly consider domestic abuse, in particular the issue raised in the Ofsted report, during the next municipal year, and to note that this will also be discussed at a meeting of the Corporate Parenting Panel.
2. To hold an additional meeting of the Ofsted Subgroup in March 2018 to consider

the action plan developed in response to the Ofsted report.

[Councillor K Simcock declared a personal interest as the Director of Programme at the Tim Parry Johnathan Ball Foundation For Peace.]

CYP/18/03 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 referred to the main points and themes within the report which included:

- Key initiatives and current pieces of work; and
- Progress and outcomes since June 2017.

Some of the key points that arose from the Committee's discussions were:

- Work to ensure children were school ready and that special educational needs (SEN) were identified and supported as soon as possible;
- The quality of early years provision and the importance of monitoring private providers, including through Ward Co-ordination; and
- School funding, including early years funding and the consultation on the Working Families Tax Credit and its impact on the Pupil Premium.

The Executive Member for Children's Services informed Members about the Early Years Delivery Model, reporting that the Council had commissioned and was overseeing the Health Visitor programme. She advised that additional needs should be picked up through the Health Visitor assessments but that further work was needed to increase the number of children being seen at the 9 month and 2 year assessment stages. She also outlined the current funding arrangements for early years provision in schools.

Decisions

1. To request that the Committee receive a report on the Early Years Delivery Model, focusing on the Health Visitor programme, at a future meeting.
2. To include information on the consultation on the Working Families Tax Credit and its impact on the Pupil Premium as part of the future report on School Funding.

CYP/18/04 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.

A Member, who was also the Chair of the Ofsted Subgroup, informed Members that Liz Clarke, who had been the Lead Officer for the Subgroup, had now left the Council. He thanked her for her work and informed Members that Simon Taylor would be the new Lead Officer for the Subgroup. He also requested that Mr Lammas be added to the membership of the Subgroup.

Decisions

1. To note the report and approve the work programme.
2. To add Mr Lammas to the membership of the Ofsted Subgroup and to note that Simon Taylor would replace Liz Clarke as the Lead Officer.