

Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on 19 June 2018

Present:

Councillor Stone – in the Chair

Councillors Sameem Ali, Alijah, Collins, Hewitson, Lovecy, McHale and Madeleine Monaghan

Co-opted Voting Members:

Mr A Arogundade, Parent Governor Representative

Mrs B Kellner, Representative of the Diocese of Manchester

Mrs J Miles, Representative of the Diocese of Salford

Co-opted Non Voting Members:

Mr L Duffy, Secondary sector teacher representative [CYP/18/29 - CYP/18/33]

Councillor Bridges, Executive Member for Children's Services

Councillor Rahman, Executive Member for Schools, Culture and Leisure

Apologies:

Mr R Lammas, Primary sector teacher representative

Ms M Neall, Parent Governor Representative

Ms Z Stepan, Parent Governor Representative

CYP/18/29 Minutes

Decision

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 21 May 2018.

CYP/18/30 Ofsted Subgroup

Councillor Alijah informed Members that she was standing down as the Chair of the Ofsted Subgroup. The Committee agreed to appoint Councillor Lovecy as the new Subgroup Chair. Members also agreed to add Councillor Collins and Mrs Kellner to the Subgroup's membership.

Decisions

1. To appoint Councillor Lovecy as the Chair of the Ofsted Subgroup.
2. To appoint Councillor Collins and Mrs Kellner to the Ofsted Subgroup.

CYP/18/31 Review of Manchester City Council's Leaving Care Service

The Committee received a report of the Strategic Director of Children and Education Services which set out proposals for the future of Manchester City Council's Leaving Care Service.

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

- The options considered for the future of the service;
- The proposal to deliver the Leaving Care Service through a Wholly Owned Trading Company (WOTC), which had been approved by the Council's Executive at its meeting on 30 May 2018;
- The service delivery model;
- Governance/legal, procurement and financial considerations;
- Workforce implications;
- Risk assessment; and
- Next steps.

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

- How this linked in with work at a Greater Manchester (GM) level;
- Why no other councils had taken this approach; and
- The cost of the new Leaving Care duties for 21-25 year olds.

The Strategic Director of Children and Education Services advised that, as a number of Manchester care leavers resided elsewhere in GM, and care leavers from other GM councils resided in Manchester, reciprocal arrangements were being developed between the councils, for example on council tax exemptions for care leavers. He reported that, while Manchester would be the first council to deliver its Leaving Care Service through a WOTC, there were some councils where children's services had been taken outside the control of the local authority so there was proof of concept. He advised that the Council had written to all care leavers affected by the new Leaving Care duties. He reported that the government had allocated funding for these new duties but that at present it was not known how many of these care leavers would take up the offer so the costs were unclear.

Decision

To receive a report in October 2018 on the establishment of the WOTC and to receive a further report in March 2019 on its impact so far.

[Councillor Collins declared a personal interest as a member of the Manchester Foster Care Association Board.]

CYP/18/32 Proxy Indicators and Other Measurements to Evaluating Performance

The Committee received a report of the Deputy Director of Children's Services which proposed that the Committee receive a regular set of proxy indicators that provided an insight into the performance of Children's Services and their partners.

Officers referred to the main points within the report, highlighting the proxy indicators that they proposed to provide to future meetings.

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

- Why the proxy indicator for schools only referred to the percentage which were judged good or better; and

- Whether school attendance and exclusions data should be included.

The Director of Education advised that the percentage of schools judged good or better was a national performance measure. She informed Members that school attendance data was available on a termly basis; however, she advised that it was important to look at attendance figures in relation to national attendance data which was only available much later.

Decision

To request that the Committee receive quarterly presentations of the proxy indicators outlined in the report and that these presentations also include information on school attendance and exclusions.

CYP/18/33 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 his portfolio.

The Executive Member for Children's Services referred to the main points and themes within the report, which included:

- Priority themes that he would be focusing on as part of Children's Services' improvement journey;
- Early Years;
- Poverty; and
- Timescales for the work he was involved in.

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

- What was being done to improve school readiness;
- What was being done to tackle poverty and its effects on vulnerable families; and
- What was being done to improve mental health services for children and young people.

The Executive Member for Children's Services acknowledged that school readiness was still a challenge. He informed Members about two pilots which would be taking place to improve school readiness, advising that the Council would assess what was the most effective approach and then extend that across the city. He reported that the Statutory Deputy Leader was leading on the Family Poverty Strategy but that he was working closely with her to align this with Children's Services. The Executive Member for Schools, Culture and Leisure informed the Committee about a £50,000 Welfare Fund which had been made available to schools to support pupils experiencing extreme poverty. The Executive Member for Children's Services informed Members that last year, as the Assistant Executive Member for Adult Health and Wellbeing, he had been involved in a project on the transition from Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) to adult mental health services and that

this work was still ongoing. He agreed that, while the CAMHS service in Manchester was well-regarded, young people's mental health remained a key issue and would be a priority. The Strategic Director of Children and Education Services reported that work was taking place with health partners on the transformation of children's mental health services.

Decision

To note the report.

CYP/18/34 Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Strategic Review

The Committee received a report of the Director of Education which provided information on the strategic review of provision for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). It outlined views received from stakeholders and set out the actions put in place to date to respond to these views. The report also outlined longer term proposals to improve provision for children and young people with SEND.

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

- The current education offer in Manchester for children and young people with SEND;
- The consultations carried out and the responses received;
- Actions in response to the strategic review; and
- The proposal for capital investment.

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

- That some children's needs were not being identified before they started school and that, in cases where it was assessed that the child's needs would be best met in a special school, the child was still spending time in mainstream education waiting for a suitable place to become available;
- What support was available for parents;
- Whether there was a shortage of Educational Psychologists; and
- Concern about the exclusion of pupils with SEMH (social, emotional and mental health) needs.

The Director of Education acknowledged that more special school places were needed. She outlined the steps being taken to address this, highlighting the report that had been considered by the Committee and the Executive in May 2018, requesting approval to invest capital funding to secure sufficient capacity. She advised that most children requiring assessment entered mainstream schools in the first instance but that a minority went straight into a special school for assessment there. The SEND Lead (Education) informed Members about the support available to parents of children with SEND, including both statutory provision and additional support, for example, peer support through parent support networks. The Director of Education advised that there was a national shortage of Educational Psychologists and that there was a lot of competition to recruit them as soon as they qualified. She reported that Manchester schools had their own funding for this and could source

them from any of the Educational Psychology providers in the city. She reported that there was variability in the level of exclusions across schools and that the Council was working to identify and share best practice and developing a plan to reduce exclusions. She also outlined how the Council and Manchester schools were contributing to the national review on school exclusions. She offered to provide further information on this in a future report.

Decisions

1. To note the report.
2. To receive further information on work to reduce the number of school exclusions, including the national review, in a future report.

CYP/18/35 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 provided feedback on the Committee's recent visit to the Early Help Hub South. She advised that it had been a very informative visit, which gave Members a good sense of the working methods used and the multi-agency approach and also the challenges of the work, including the reliance on voluntary partners to provide early help, the need for additional resources in CAMHS and the need for better communication with health visitors. She reported that Members had been very impressed on their visit, in particular by the team ethos.

Members discussed receiving a report on the work to address child poverty at a future meeting. The Executive Member for Children's Services informed Members that he would update them on timescales once he had met with the Statutory Deputy Leader. The Chair advised that consideration would need to be given to which Committee should receive this report.

Decisions

1. To note the report.
2. To write a letter to the staff at the Early Help Hub South to thank them for accommodating the visit.