

Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on 6 November 2019

Present:

Councillor Stone – in the Chair

Councillors Alijah, Cooley, Hewitson, T Judge, Kilpatrick, Lovecy, Reeves and Reid

Co-opted Voting Members:

Mr A Arogundade, Parent Governor Representative

Dr W Omara, Parent Governor Representative

Ms Z Stepan, Parent Governor Representative

Co-opted Non Voting Members:

Mr L Duffy, Secondary Sector Teacher Representative

Councillor Bridges, Executive Member for Children and Schools

Councillor Rahman, Executive Member for Skills, Culture and Leisure

Councillor Igbon, Ward Councillor for Hulme

Jeff Seneviratne, Supporter of Ghyll Head Outdoor Education Centre

Justin Watson, Young Manchester

Toni Good, Barlow Moor Community Association

Apologies:

Councillors Madeleine Monaghan and Wilson

Mrs J Miles, Representative of the Diocese of Salford

Mr R Lammas, Primary Sector Teacher Representative

CYP/19/44 Minutes

The Chair informed the Committee that this was the last meeting for Ms Stepan, Mr Arogundade and Mr Lammas, due to their terms of office as Co-opted Members finishing, and thanked them for their contributions.

Decision

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 9 October 2019.

CYP/19/45 Update on the Planned Manchester Healthy Weight Strategy to Tackle Obesity and Update on Progress in Delivering the Manchester Reducing Infant Mortality Strategy

The Committee received a report of the Director of the Public Health/Population Health Consultant in Public Health which provided an overview of the health data for Manchester children in relation to childhood obesity and infant mortality. Information was provided on the causes and impact of obesity and the work taking place to develop a Manchester Healthy Weight Strategy 2020-2025, which would take a whole system, partnership approach to tackling obesity in the city. The report included an update on new service models being commissioned to reduce obesity in children and their families. It also summarised the progress that had been made in

delivering the Manchester Reducing Infant Mortality Strategy following its publication in March 2019.

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

- Childhood obesity;
- Measuring obesity in children;
- Cause and impact of obesity;
- Developing a new Healthy Weight Strategy to tackle obesity;
- Commissioned Services - Healthy Weight;
- Obesity and safeguarding;
- Reducing infant mortality;
- Patterns and trends in infant deaths;
- Summary of Manchester Reducing Infant Mortality Strategy; and
- Progress on delivering the Reducing Infant Mortality Strategy.

The Consultant in Public Health reported that there was an error in table 2 (Infant Mortality Data for 2018 - Manchester and England) under point 9.2 and clarified that the neonatal period was 0-28 days, not 7-28 days, as stated in the table.

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

- What could be done to address the increase in obesity between reception and Year 6, noting that this was above the national average;
- The impact of poverty and deprivation;
- Reasons behind the increase in infant mortality;
- Drinking during pregnancy and whether the Committee could consider Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder at a future meeting;
- The impact of takeaways, particularly those close to schools, and whether there should be more regulation of this;
- The impact of smoking on infant mortality; and
- Why stillbirths were not included in the infant mortality figures.

The Consultant in Public Health advised the Committee that tackling child obesity required working not just in schools but also with families and in the community. The Commissioning Manager (Starting Well) reported that the Population Health Team had reviewed their approach to tackling child obesity, advising that Public Health England had advocated a whole system approach. The Consultant in Public Health explained that this involved a range of partners such as the Early Help Hubs, Manchester Local Care Organisation (MLCO) and Licensing working together to tackle obesity and advised that a workshop was being planned to bring different partners together to develop a shared approach. The Manchester Healthy Weight Strategy Lead author informed Members that the Healthy Weight Strategy was due to be published in Spring 2020 and informed Members of the some of the other partners to be involved in this including businesses, transport and the Food Board.

The Commissioning Manager (Starting Well) reported that the Healthy Schools Team had a dedicated weight management project. He advised that his service had

recently commissioned this team to do some additional work focusing on reception age children and that work was also starting to take place with the 0 – 5 year age range.

The Consultant in Public Health noted the relationship between deprivation and both childhood obesity and infant mortality rates and advised that this could explain the increase in infant mortality in the city. She highlighted that poverty was linked to poor housing conditions and other factors which impacted on infant mortality rates and informed Members that this was incorporated into the strategy. The Executive Member for Children and Schools advised Members that poverty also led families towards poor food choices such as cheap takeaway meals. He informed Members about the midwife-led smoking cessation programme at St Mary's Hospital and suggested that the Committee might want to look at this in future.

In response to a Member's question, the Consultant in Public Health reported that she would contact the Member outside of the meeting to provide him with more detail on the data and analysis behind the information in the report. The Chair supported this and commented that, if there was any additional information for circulation to the wider Committee, to do this via the Scrutiny Support Officer.

The Programme Lead reported that the infant mortality rate was a national measure so officers could not change it to include stillbirths; however, she advised that the work being done in Manchester to reduce infant mortality, for example work to reduce smoking in pregnancy and to raise public awareness about changes in foetal movement, should also reduce stillbirths. She advised Members that her team was monitoring stillbirth rates, despite this not being included in the infant mortality rate figure.

Decisions

1. To support the proposed Manchester Healthy Weight Strategy to reduce obesity.
2. To receive a report on Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder at a future meeting.

[Councillor Alijah declared a personal interest as a member of the steering group of the charity Safety4Sisters.]

CYP/19/46 Ghyll Head Outdoor Education Centre

The Committee received a report of the Director of Education and the Strategic Director (Neighbourhoods) which set out the work that had been undertaken to examine the option of progressing a new operating arrangement for Ghyll Head as part of the Council's wider leisure contract.

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

- Background information;
- The current situation;
- The capital proposal;

- Controlling risk; and
- Next steps.

Jeff Seneviratne outlined his involvement with Ghyll Head, including as a member of the Friends of Ghyll Head. He emphasised the value of outdoor education and welcomed the work outlined in the report. He noted the references in the report to the 50% occupancy rate at Ghyll Head and informed Members that it was unrealistic to expect a 100% occupancy rate because, for example, a school could book the house for one class which would not require all the beds. He advised that the Council should consider how usage of the centre could best be measured. He commented that he hoped the centre could be used to provide outdoor education not only to children but also to families to improve their health and well-being.

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

- That Ghyll Head was a well-loved and valuable provision;
- Members shared positive experiences of Ghyll Head from themselves, their family members and other Manchester residents, including Our Children (Looked After Children);
- That the centre could also be used by families whose children were on the edge of care;
- That, with capital investment, Ghyll Head could be marketed commercially, at a higher rate, at weekends;
- Concern that some parents could not afford to send their children to Ghyll Head, while noting that some schools used their own funds to subsidise places;
- The importance of not changing the ethos of the centre; and
- That some schools did not use it.

The Director of Education reported that the intention for the future was that Ghyll Head would not be just a one-off positive experience but something that introduced children to an activity which they could then continue to take part in once they were back in Manchester, for example, at Debdale Outdoor Centre. She confirmed that a number of schools did subsidise places at Ghyll Head for their pupils, advising that schools could use their Pupil Premium, money given to schools to improve the attainment of disadvantaged pupils, on this. The Strategic Lead (Parks, Leisure, Youth and Events) advised that the contracting arrangements would allow the Council to control the prices and protect prices for Manchester schools. The Director of Education commented that some schools did take their pupils to other centres which also offered similar activities but that this investment would enable Ghyll Head to compete with them.

The Strategic Lead (Parks, Leisure, Youth and Events) reported that Ghyll Head did not currently have a dedicated website and that this was something that would need to be invested in in order for the centre to be able to attract commercial bookings. He advised Members that the ethos and values of Ghyll Head were due to its workforce and that the Council intended to protect the current workforce through this transition period while also giving the centre an element of commercial focus.

The Ward Councillor for Hulme expressed her support for the proposals in the report. She emphasised the importance of recruiting experienced staff, commenting that the centre currently had high quality, experienced staff. She reported that play and youth services and colleges also used Ghyll Head and that they should be encouraged to use it more. She also noted the proposal to establish a Stakeholder Board to oversee and govern the management of the centre and suggested that representatives from the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee and the Friends of Ghyll Head could be involved in this.

The Executive Member for Skills, Culture and Leisure commented that the Council wanted to increase the use of Ghyll Head by Manchester residents and that this included encouraging play and youth providers to use the centre. He reported that consideration would be given as to how to engage Members in the work of the Stakeholder Board.

Decisions

1. To support the proposals in the report wholeheartedly and to recommend to the Executive that the Council invest £1.1 million in capital to achieve this.
2. To recommend that officers look into how Ghyll Head could be used by families whose children are on the edge of care.
3. To request that consideration be given as to how Members and the Friends of Ghyll Head can be engaged in the work of the Stakeholder Board.

CYP/19/47 Youth Strategy and Engagement

The Committee received a report of the Strategic Director (Neighbourhoods) which provided a summary of the Our Manchester Youth Offer Strategy which replaced the Valuing Young People Strategy 2016 - 2019. It was the city's multi-sector strategic framework jointly owned by Manchester City Council, its partners and stakeholders, all of whom were responsible for making sure that young people had access to a high quality-driven youth offer that addressed both universal and targeted needs and which directly contributed to and enabled young people to grow into responsible, independent and successful adults. The Committee was invited to comment on the report prior to its submission to the Executive on 13 November 2019.

The main points and themes within the report included:

- Our Manchester Youth Offer Strategy 2019 – 2025;
- Workshops and engagement events;
- Outcomes and success;
- Strategy document production;
- Delivery of the strategy; and
- Next steps.

The Committee watched a video produced by Members of Manchester Youth Council (MYC). The video included Youth Council Members talking about the MYC, its new election model and how MYC had helped to shape the Youth Strategy.

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

- To thank the young people for their contribution;
- To welcome the report;
- That Stockton Council had adopted a similar approach which had been very effective, that they had developed an action plan from this work and that it would be useful to look at some of things they had done;
- The importance of play provision;
- To request demographic information on the young people accessing youth services, particularly the youth hubs, including by ward; and
- The importance of universal youth services and of reaching out to young people who were not currently accessing youth services or communicating their views through MYC.

The Executive Member for Skills, Culture and Leisure informed Members how MYC was being developed as a membership organisation which all young people could join and get involved in to different levels. He advised that it was important for all young people to have a mechanism to raise any issues that concerned them and that the Council was creating a website through which any young person could raise an issue.

The Strategic Lead (Parks, Leisure, Events and Youth) agreed that play provision was important, informing Members that there were over 100 play areas in Manchester parks. He reported that over the previous 12 months approximately £1.3 million had been invested in commissioning play activities across the city and it was hoped that this could be increased, with Young Manchester playing a key role in bringing in additional funding.

The Head of Youth Strategy reported that Manchester had a higher level of youth engagement than other areas of the country, citing that 50.3% of Manchester young people had taken part in the Make Your Mark ballot, compared to 18.6% nationally, but that the Council wanted to improve this further. She advised Members that her service was working to reach young people who did not currently access youth services or visit other facilities such as libraries by using detached youth workers to talk to young people where they were. She agreed that Stockton Council had a good reputation for their Youth Strategy work and informed Members that her service was working to put together an action plan for the Youth Strategy, which would be wide-ranging and involve work with other services.

Decisions

1. To request demographic information on the young people accessing youth services, particularly the youth hubs, including by ward.
2. To endorse the recommendations to the Executive that:

The Executive is recommended to:

1. To agree, subject to budget, the continuation of investment into Young Manchester for the next 3 years, on the basis that Young Manchester uses this as leverage to grow external investment to support the sector.
2. To consider and approve the adoption of the proposed vision, strategic themes and 'We Wills' to deliver the Strategy over the next 3 years.
3. Delegate authority to the Strategic Lead (Parks, Leisure, Events and Youth) in consultation with the Executive Member for Skills, Culture and Leisure to complete the production of the strategy document for communication with young people, partners and the Youth Sector.
4. Delegate authority to the Deputy Chief Executive & City Treasurer in consultation with the City Solicitor and Strategic Director of Neighbourhoods and the Executive Member for Skills, Culture and Leisure to finalise the contract value following conclusion of the VAT assessment to ensure that the contract fee is delivered within the available budget.
5. Delegate authority to the City Solicitor to enter into, complete and execute any documents or agreements necessary to give effect to the recommendations in this report.

[Councillor Stone declared a personal interest as a trustee of HOME.]

[Councillor Alijah declared a personal interest as chair of the Hideaway Youth Project.]

CYP/19/48 Youth and Play Services - Young Manchester

The Committee received a report of the Director of Neighbourhoods which provided an overview of the progress of Young Manchester, an independent youth and play charity, and its contract with the Council to commission the city's Youth and Play Fund Programme. It presented an update on progress made since the establishment of the fund in April 2018, focusing on outcomes for children and young people and the growth and development of the city's youth and play sector.

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

- Background to the Youth and Play Fund;
- Impact and outcomes;
- Feedback from children and young people;
- Further investment in children and young people;
- Building a national platform for Manchester; and
- Youth and Play Fund 2020.

The Ward Councillor for Hulme welcomed what had been achieved despite the budget cuts. She emphasised the importance of tackling knife crime and requested further information on the next commissioning round.

Some of the key points and themes that arose from the Committee's discussions

were:

- The importance of universal youth services;
- That a lack of facilities such as toilets and changing facilities in parks presented a barrier for parents and grandparents wanting to take children to the park, that better information could make people aware of facilities in park cafes but that, where available, these were still only open for limited hours;
- How funding could be identified for work such as repairing swings in parks; and
- How smaller organisations which did not have expertise in writing bids could be supported to obtain funding.

The Strategic Lead (Parks, Leisure, Events and Youth) informed Members about a new website which was being developed which would provide information on all youth and play services across the city and which would be integrated with the MCR Active website. He advised Members that this would enable the Council and Young Manchester to have a better understanding on where there were gaps in provision. The Executive Member for Skills, Culture and Leisure outlined how this information would be gathered at a local level.

The Strategic Lead (Parks, Leisure, Events and Youth) reported that individual park plans were being developed for each park to identify the highest priority work that needed to be done in that park, following which sources of funding could be identified. He advised Members that the Council was releasing £12.5 million to invest in its parks and that his service was looking at ways to reduce demand on the parks budget and to generate income.

Justin Watson from Young Manchester reported that part of his organisation's role was as an infrastructure organisation, supporting organisations, particularly smaller community organisations, so that they were in a better position to access funding, not just from Young Manchester but from other sources. He informed the Committee that Young Manchester had just launched the new Youth and Play Fund 2020 and he offered to share information on this with Members, as well as more details of the rationale for previous decisions which had been made about funding.

Toni Good, a Youth Worker from Barlow Moor Community Association, outlined what her organisation delivered and how it and the young people she worked with had benefited from working with Young Manchester. She informed Members that the Youth and Play Workers in her organisation did not have expertise in areas such as art and drama but that through the network meetings organised by Young Manchester they had been able to make links with people with that expertise and provide new opportunities for their young people. She also informed Members about a social action project their young people had taken part in through which they had been able to achieve some of the improvements they had wanted to see in their local area. She reported that this had made them feel that they were being listened to and keener to make their voices heard in future.

The Executive Member for Skills, Culture and Leisure reported that this year's Make Your Mark ballot had identified youth violence as the top priority for young people. He advised the Committee that this needed a multi-agency approach and assured

Members that the Council would play its part in this.

The Chair noted that the report recommended that the Committee receive a further report in November 2021 but requested that this be received in November 2020 instead.

Decisions

1. To recommend that a further report be brought back to Members in November 2020, which focuses on qualitative and quantitative data, evidence of impact, outcomes and young people's feedback relating to the Youth and Play Fund 2020/2022.
2. To note the offer from Justin Watson from Young Manchester to share information on the new Youth and Play Fund 2020 with Members, as well as more details of the rationale for previous decisions which had been made about funding.
3. To request that clear information on the availability of toilet facilities, for example, in park cafes, be included on signage in parks.

[Councillor Alijah declared a personal interest as chair of the Hideaway Youth Project.]

CYP/19/49 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 asked for information on concealed pregnancy to be included in a future report. Another Member noted that the Committee had requested a report on Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder under an earlier agenda item.

Decision

To note the report and agree the work programme, subject to the above amendments.