

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CREATING OPPORTUNITIES AND TACKLING  
INEQUALITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD AT THE BOURGES/VIERSEN ROOM -  
TOWN HALL ON 20 SEPTEMBER 2010**

**Present:** Councillors J Wilkinson (Vice-Chairman), S Day, Y Lowndes,  
B Saltmarsh and M Jamil

**Also Present:** Four Anti-Bullying Ambassadors from Dogsthorpe Junior School  
Felicity Schofield, Peterborough Safeguarding Children Board  
Judy Jones, Peterborough Safeguarding Children Board  
Tim Bishop, Assistant Director of Social Care, NHS Peterborough

**Officers Present:** John Richards, Executive Director - Children's Services  
Marie Southgate, Lawyer  
Louise Tyers, Scrutiny Manager

**1. Apologies for absence**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Thacker.

**2. Declarations of Interest and Whipping Declarations**

Councillor Saltmarsh declared a personal interest in Item 5 – Children's Trust – Enjoy and Achieve Partnership – as she was a governor at Dogsthorpe Junior School.

**3. Minutes of meeting held on 3 August 2010**

The minutes of the meeting held on 3 August 2010 were approved as a correct record.

**4. Call In of any Cabinet, Cabinet Member or Key Officer Decisions**

There were no requests for call-in to consider.

**5. Children's Trust - Enjoy and Achieve Partnership**

We welcomed four pupils from Dogsthorpe Junior School to the meeting who talked about their roles as Anti-Bullying Ambassadors and the work being done at the school to prevent and deal with bullying.

The Assistant Director of Learning and Skills presented the report which detailed the work undertaken by the Enjoy and Achieve Partnership (EAP), which was one of the Every Child Matters Outcome Groups which underpinned the Children's Trust.

One of the key priorities of the EAP was to improve outcomes for the three cross-cutting themes of bullying, community cohesion and Minority Ethnic New Arrivals. The EAP had the lead for equality and diversity, including community cohesion, play and anti-bullying and strong policies and partnerships were being developed for all of those areas. The BRAVE Strategy was impacting on bullying outcomes as evidenced through the results of the Health-Related Behaviour and the Tellus Surveys. The EAP were currently looking at how bullying data could be collected from schools on a regular and consistent basis.

A recent report in the Evening Telegraph had highlighted the increasing number of bullying incidents in Peterborough schools but this needed to be looked at in context. Officers were

looking at how bullying was defined by both children and staff and they were also working with schools to ensure that any incidents were dealt with straight away. The important impact of BRAVE was that children would have the confidence to tell a responsible adult if they suspected bullying and that any incident of bullying was dealt with quickly and effectively. The BRAVE Strategy was led by a multi-agency group and a competition had been won by Watergall School to design a strategy leaflet. A big challenge was the growth of cyberspace bullying and the Council had received additional funding to focus on this area.

Dogsthorpe Junior School was the first school in Peterborough to have Anti-Bullying Ambassadors and four pupils from the school spoke to the Committee about their role and answered questions.

Observations and questions were raised around the following areas:

- What did the Anti-Bullying Ambassadors feel was the most important part of their role? *To try and stop bullying and to make sure it does not happen.*
- Did the School's Playground Pals see an Ambassador if they thought someone was being bullied? *Some of the Ambassadors were also Playground Pals.*
- How would the Anti-Bullying Ambassadors Scheme be rolled out to other schools? *We would be looking at how Dogsthorpe's action plan was delivered and then support other schools to roll it out.*
- The figures of bullying may appear high because children were now more confident in reporting incidents of bullying.
- It had been said that bullying was something that had happened more than once, however research in the 1970s had said that even a fear of bullying could be perceived as bullying. *The definition used was the Anti-Bullying Alliance's definition but if a child perceived that they were being bullied then it would be taken seriously. There was excellent practice in schools and Anti-Bullying Week would be held in November 2010.*
- Were officers confident that reporting was accurate? *The Tellus Survey was no longer in place so we were looking at ways to gather data locally. This meant that we could ask the questions pertinent to this city. We were optimistic that we could get quality data. Bullying could be measured in two ways – incidents of bullying and how safe children felt.*

We thanked the pupils of Dogsthorpe Junior School for talking to us.

#### **ACTION AGREED**

- (i) To note the work being undertaken around bullying especially the Anti-Bullying Ambassadors Scheme at Dogsthorpe Junior School.
- (ii) To receive any bullying data once survey and questionnaires were rolled out and base-line data set.

#### **6. Presentation of 2010 Examination Results, EYFS to Key Stage 4**

The Assistant Director of Learning and Skills gave a presentation on the 2010 examination results.

Children's Services were celebrating some very good exam results this year. The Early Years Foundation Stage Profile results for achievement had improved again and we had already met our 2011 LAA target, although we were not narrowing the gap significantly and this would be a focus for 2010-11. Our 2009 KS 1 results had been the best ever and we had been top in the country for improvement between 2008 and 2009. Although we did not maintain this dramatic improvement in 2010, results were relatively secure and we were now seeing noticeable improvements in the higher levels. KS2 data was still very unreliable and very un-validated and we did not know nationally what would happen to results for schools

that had boycotted the tests; early results were a slight decline on last year. KS3 data was now based on teacher assessment but still remained a key indicator of progress between KS2 – 4; 2010 KS3 assessment data showed a decline from last year. The KS4 GCSE results were the best ever for the second year running. We were still below our ambitious LAA target but determined to achieve that target by 2010-11. Results at A level also improved slightly on last year and would be reported on in May 2011, although we were reviewing A Level provision across our school sixth forms this year.

### Early Years Foundation Stage

These results were teacher-led, based on the observation of children in a number of areas within Reception classes (children are 5 years old).

In 2010 there was a +3% improvement (compared to +5% in 2009) and we had narrowed the gap (but only by 0.1%) but were still a long way away from our challenging LAA target of -6%. We had improved in all areas making up the National Indicators (NIs).

### Key Stage 1

These were classroom assessments in reading, writing, mathematics and science, taken by children in Year 2, aged 7. The expected level of attainment for KS1 was Level 2 (L2).

The 2010 results showed a mixed picture but we had largely sustained the 2009 outcomes and had maintained significant increases over a 3 year period:

- L2 – declined in all 3 areas by 1-2%, the best area was maths, -2% from national
- L2b – improved by +2% (girls had significant improvement (+4 and +5%), although boys' declined, especially in maths
- L3 – sustained last years results

### Key Stage 2

These were externally set tests in English, mathematics and science, taken by children in Year 6, aged 11. These tests were externally marked and results were nationally validated although 26% of all schools nationally boycotted these tests this year. The expected level of attainment was Level 4 (L4) and for pupils to have made 2 levels' progress between KS1 and KS2 tests.

For 2010 current figures showed small declines of -1% at L4 and -2% at L5 in maths.

### Key Stage 4

Pupils sat a variety of examinations including the core subjects of English, maths and science. 5+A\*-C (plus all of the additional vocational equivalent qualifications) was now referred to as Level 2 (L2), the key data reported on nationally was 5+A\*-C including English and maths as well as 5+A\*-C (all subjects). Pupils normally sat GCSE or equivalent exams in Year 11 aged 16.

In 2010, 5+ A\*-C with English and Maths improved by +5.4% to 46.2%.

#### 5A\*- C English and Maths

- No school had a decrease in results
- 7 schools had increases of +2% or more
- 4 schools had increases of +7% or more

#### 5A\*- C

- No school had a decrease in results
- Every school had increases of + 2% or more
- 7 schools had increases of + 7% or more

Observations and questions were raised around the following areas:

- How and when would all the results be validated? *The validation period was between November and January. There could be marking errors and appeals on the results and if new arrival children had been in the city for less than two years they could be taken out of the exam cohort through the FORVUS process. However it should be noted that less children were being taken out of the cohort each year.*
- Why was there a difference between the achievement of boys and girls at KS1? *The Team were looking at that issue in depth and would be happy to share the outcomes of that work when they were available. Last year the biggest improvement had been with boys and that improvement had followed two years of targeted programmes aimed at boys. Some programmes had been introduced this year aimed at girls but we needed to ensure that support was equally weighted between both groups. It was important to have a universal offer for all KS1 pupils and to then look at results and develop targeted programmes.*
- In KS2 why was there a difference between the teacher assessments and results? *There were a number of possible reasons, for example the environment for the teacher assessments was set by the teacher and was often more comfortable and familiar. There had also been issues with the setting and marking of KS2 tests over the years, particularly in English. It seemed likely that the KS2 tests would stay but the government was working to make them more robust and meaningful.*
- What was the racial breakdown of the exam results? *That information would be available after the validation process and could then be reported to members.*
- Councillor Jamil advised that a constituent had told him that there was no where available in Peterborough for pupils to resit their GCSEs and that they had to go to Stamford. Why was there no provision available in Peterborough? *Peterborough was a relatively small city and it may be not possible to give a full offer to pupils in all cases. The Assistant Director would follow up this particular case with Councillor Jamil outside of the meeting.*
- It was noted that there was a big difference in the improvement of GCSE results between schools. It is important that the lower improving schools were not lost in the process. *Officers had a meeting with all of the Headteachers and a hard conversation had been had on how they would demonstrate improvement in results. The Headteachers all had a responsibility to get it right for young people and they wanted to work with the Authority who constantly supported them.*

#### **ACTION AGREED**

- (i) To note the invalidated examination data for 2010.
- (ii) To receive a report on the validated examination data in March 2011.

#### **7. Draft Personal Relationships Policy**

The Assistant Director for Social Care presented the report which provided an updated version of the Personal Relationships Policy. The revised Policy had taken into account the comments made previously by the Scrutiny Committee in addition to comments made by other parties involved in the consultation process.

The final draft would be presented to NHS Peterborough's Board in November 2010 for approval and procedural guidance, training and support would then be developed to support the launch and implementation of the Policy.

Observations and questions were raised around the following areas:

- Had the visual version of the Policy been amended as the Committee had had previous concerns over its interpretation? *No changes had been made but it was only an example of what the document would look like. Different versions of the document would be developed to meet individual needs.*
- The Committee were conscious that the Chair was unable to be here tonight and that she had had some previous concerns over the policy.

#### **ACTION AGREED**

To accept the Personal Relationships Policy in principle, subject to any further comments the Chair has on the Policy.

#### **8. Peterborough Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report (PSCB) 2009/10 and Business Plan 2010/11**

Felicity Schofield, Chair of the Peterborough Safeguarding Children Board (PSCB) presented the Annual Report and Business Plan of the PSCB.

In March 2010, the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 introduced a requirement for Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs) to produce and publish an annual report. The report was required to demonstrate the extent to which the functions of the LSCB were being effectively discharged. It provided an assessment of the effectiveness of local arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, recognised the achievements and progress that had been made in the local authority area as well as providing a realistic assessment of the challenges that still remained.

The strategic priorities for the PSCB had been streamlined for 2009 - 10 in light of the establishment of the Children's Trust and in order to form a more realistic basis for development. The priorities were:

- **Governance** - Develop effective governance arrangements with partner agencies and ensure that safeguarding was embedded within their business planning and monitoring arrangements
- **Structure** - Revision of the structure to reflect the relationship with the Children's Trust, the changing role for the board as adviser of good practice and to ensure a more focussed use of partner and staff resources
- **Scrutiny and Challenge** - Sharpen up quality assurance and monitoring arrangements by regular auditing, validation of single agency training and by ensuring action plans from serious case reviews were implemented
- **Communication** - Developing a communication and marketing strategy to raise the profile of the Board so that children, young people, families and the wider children's workforce were aware of and act upon our guidance

Observations and questions were raised around the following areas:

- Under Priority 3 it stated that a supervision audit had been undertaken and it was felt that four agencies would benefit from a more focussed approach to safeguarding supervision and multi agency training had been offered. Had that offer of training been taken up by the agencies? *Training had been arranged but unfortunately had had to be cancelled as it had conflicted with the Children's Trust inspection. It needed to be rearranged but the agencies were keen to take up the training.*
- Was it a concern that only 39% of schools had been judged as outstanding in relation to their safeguarding performance? *The new Ofsted framework had been introduced in September 2009 and we were performing well compared to other authorities.*

*Obviously the aim was to get more schools as outstanding as safeguarding was a limited judgement for a school during an Ofsted inspection.*

## **ACTION AGREED**

To note the Peterborough Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report 2009/10 and Business Plan 2010/11.

### **9. Progress Report on Children's Service Development Plan**

The Executive Director of Children's Services presented the report which detailed the progress made in addressing the recommendations made by Ofsted following their recent inspection of Safeguarding and Children in Care services.

Observations and questions were raised around the following areas:

- *What progress had been made around initial assessments? We were now regularly performing at about 90% in ensuring initial assessments were undertaken within seven working days and were clawing back to an acceptable position. We were now performing at a high level and the quality of assessments had also improved. A regular audit of assessments was now undertaken and an overall improvement in the quality of the audits had been identified.*
- *Had the efforts to improve performance been hampered by social worker vacancies? The current level of vacancies was higher than hoped but only two or three posts were not covered by agency staff. Two social workers had started in September and that now meant there were 8.5 members of staff. Newly Qualified Social Workers would be coming back to Peterborough in November. We continued to be represented at social worker recruitment events and we offered very good post qualification training. We were satisfied that we had the capacity at the moment but would prefer to have permanent members of staff in post.*
- *Was there anything in the contracts of staff about how long they had to stay at Peterborough following training? There was an expectation that they stayed for two years after post qualifying training. This would be monitored carefully as it was expensive to put them through training.*
- *Did the University Centre offer social work training? The University Centre did not offer training and it was mainly done through Anglia Ruskin University.*
- *What was being done to reduce the caseload of social workers? As of today the situation was improving. This was due to a reducing volume of work and referrals and also because of appointing new staff. Two social workers had over 30 cases due to delays in closing down the backlog.*
- *Was the trend in the number of referrals continuing? On average we received 120 initial assessments per month. We were now more sophisticated in identifying what was a contact and what was a referral. For the next report we would include the analysis of referrals and contacts since April 2010.*
- *What was an example of a contact? An example would be if a child was present during a case of domestic violence the Police would automatically refer it to us. A social worker would investigate that referral and it may then become a contact. It also worked the other way when a contact became a referral.*

## **ACTION AGREED**

- (i) To note the progress made in addressing the recommendations made by Ofsted following their inspection of Safeguarding and Children in Care services; and
- (ii) That the next report included analysis of referrals and contacts since April 2010.

## **10. Forward Plan of Key Decisions**

The latest version of the Forward Plan, showing details of the key decisions that the Leader of the Council believed the Cabinet or individual Cabinet Members would be making over the next four months, was received.

### **ACTION AGREED**

To note the latest version of the Forward Plan.

## **11. Work Programme**

We considered the Work Programme for 2010/11.

It was agreed to add the following to the work programme:

- Validated 2010 Examination Results (March 2011)

### **ACTION AGREED**

To confirm the work programme for 2010/11.

## **12. Date of Next Meeting**

Monday 15 November 2010 at 7pm

CHAIRMAN  
7.00 - 8.32 pm