

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
CREATING OPPORTUNITIES AND TACKLING INEQUALITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
HELD IN THE
BOURGES/VIERSEN ROOM, TOWN HALL, PETERBOROUGH
ON 7 JANUARY 2013**

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| Present: | Councillors S Day (Chairman), Harper, N Arculus, B Rush, B Saltmarsh, J Shearman, | |
| Also present | Alastair Kingsley Councillor S Scott Councillor I Walsh | Parent Governor Representative Cabinet Member Children's Services Cabinet Member for Community Cohesion and Safety |
| | Councillor Peach Councillor Forbes Councillor Kreling Councillor Johnson | Councillors in attendance representing the Strong & Supportive Communities Scrutiny Committee |
| Officers in Attendance: | Sue Westcott Wendi Ogle Welbourn Jonathan Lewis Lou Williams Julie Rivett Ian Phillips Jawaid Khan Paulina Ford Ruth Griffiths | Executive Director, Children's Services Assistant Director, Strategy, Commissioning and Prevention Assistant Director for Education and Resources Head of Commissioning, Specialist Services Neighbourhood Manager - North and West Assistant Community Cohesion Manager Cohesion Manager Senior Governance Officer, Scrutiny Lawyer |

1. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Fower.

2. Declarations of Interest and Whipping Declarations

There were no declarations of Interest or whipping declarations.

3. Minutes of the meeting held on 12 November 2012

The minutes of the meetings held on 12 November 2012 were approved as an accurate record.

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

There were no requests for Call-in to consider.

5. Inspire Peterborough

The Cabinet Member for Community Cohesion and Safety presented the report to the Committee which informed them about the proposed Inspire Peterborough programme. A short presentation was given which highlighted the following information:

- Inspire Peterborough Vision statement: *To increase the choice of disability sports and to invigorate and inspire disabled people to have better life outcomes through, sport, physical activity and volunteering.*
- What Inspire Peterborough was and what it would do. A charitable organisation that would through close community links become the:
 - First point of contact for anyone interested in disability sports
 - Signpost to opportunities, advice and information
 - Bring together local sports providers and venues under a unified 'brand'
 - Support clubs to develop pathways to success
 - Bid for funding, increase capacity and improve facilities
 - Provide opportunities for those wishing to improve their physical and mental health and well being
 - Provide volunteering opportunities for able bodied and disabled people
 - Encourage and enable competitive sporting opportunities locally and throughout the region

Benefits to sports providers:

- To be part of a city-wide movement
- Access to specialist advice, support and funding opportunities leading to upgraded facilities
- Unified branding and marketing
- Increased business opportunities and higher footfall
- Creating a local and regional network

Benefits for participants and their families:

- Improved physical and mental health
- Creating the opportunity to take part in competitive games
- Building confidence
- Social opportunities
- Pathways to success
- Respite and sibling support
- Increased sense of achievement

Benefits to Peterborough:

- Tackling inequalities
- Creating strong and supportive communities
- Delivering substantial and truly sustainable growth
- Helping people to live more healthy and sustainable lives

How this would be achieved:

- Establish a charitable body associated to DIAL Peterborough
- Establish a shadow board to include representatives from PCC, DIAL, PCVS, Living Sport, Public Health, PCC – Neighbourhoods, Vivacity, Ward Councillors, RNIB and Armed Forces.
- Bring people and partners together under one single brand and access point
- Dedicated project management and support
- Co-ordinated funding, volunteering and marketing
- Access to national bodies

The project was being seed funded by the Cohesion Board and donations through the Community Leadership Fund. It has also been supported by the City Council through some officer time to kick start the initiative.

Observations and questions were raised and discussed including:

- Had the proposed programme model been used anywhere else? *Members were informed that the model had not been used anywhere else and government bodies had advised that it could be used as a pilot scheme and rolled out elsewhere if successful.*
- How would the programme be funded long term? *Members were informed that legacy funding was being sought. Big lottery funding was available which matched the programmes objectives and the Cabinet Member therefore felt confident that funding would be available but it would take some time before it was received. The main concern was to continue with setting up the programme before that funding arrived. There had been some local interest in the programme which could help in the interim period. Sport England had also shown interest in the community asset and wider benefit to the community. The Armed Services were also keen to get involved.*
- Was there an opportunity to involve schools in the programme? *Members were advised that Councillor Shearman was leading on involvement with schools. The City College had already shown an interest in getting involved with people with learning difficulties.*
- Some Members were concerned that there was no gap in the market for the programme and that it was already covered by other organisations. Was the programme therefore necessary. *The Cabinet Member confirmed to Members that there was a gap in the market. Inspire Peterborough would interrelate with all the other organisations, community and sports providers to provide a service that no one else offered. In the past a disabled person often found it difficult to know exactly where to go or who to contact to be helped. The programme would ensure that any disabled person or person wanting to help with disability issues would know exactly where to go for help and receive help. This would ensure that the health and wellbeing of the disabled community was strengthened.*
- Members wanted to know why existing charitable trusts had not been encouraged to provide the same offer. *Members were advised that Inspire Peterborough was offering something completely new and not replicating what was being offered already.*
- Members sought clarification on the financial implications and wanted to know if there was detailed information available on the set up costs for the programme. *Members were advised that there were detailed figures available and the Cabinet Member had worked with DIAL to provide these.*

The Chair thanked the Cabinet Member for Community Cohesion and Safety for attending the meeting and giving a detailed presentation. The Chair wished the Cabinet Member well with the Inspire Peterborough programme.

ACTIONS AGREED

1. The Committee noted the report and agreed to endorse the Inspire Peterborough Programme.
2. The Committee requested that the Cabinet Member for Community Cohesion and Safety return to the Committee in six months time to report on progress made with the Inspire Peterborough Programme.

6. Portfolio Progress Report from Cabinet Member for Children's Services

The Cabinet Member for Children's Services provided the Committee with an update on the progress that had been made on her portfolio since her last report to the Committee in July 2012. The report provided information on the following areas:

- Children's Social Care
- Duke of Edinburgh Award
- Connecting Families Programme
- Residential and Respite Homes

- Medium Term Financial Strategy

Members were informed that the council had recently agreed to take part in the Eastern Region Peer Safeguarding Health Check. This had taken place and the Peer team had provided feedback confirming the outcomes of the Health Check which had been positive. It showed that the organisational and cultural change that had been implemented as part of the improvement programme was beginning to be reflected in frontline practice. Many strengths had been highlighted and some areas for further development or consideration and been mentioned. It had been recognised that considerable progress had been made by the council over the past year.

An Ofsted inspection of the councils fostering service had taken place during October 2012 and had been judged as adequate. It had been noted by the inspectors that progress had been made and identified many strengths in Peterborough.

Observations and questions were raised and discussed including:

- Members were concerned that the fostering service had been judged as adequate and sought confirmation that everything was being done to continually improve the service. *Members were advised that it had been a particularly unsettling year and that there were new Ofsted arrangements in place which had been quite severe. The Cabinet Member had been pleased to maintain adequate under the new Ofsted inspection arrangements but confirmed that she was not complacent and aspired to improve the judgement. Ofsted had advised that some outcome areas had bordered on good.*
- Members noted that there were still a number of management posts that were covered by temporary staff but that there had been considerable interest in the posts that had been advertised. *Members were advised that recent recruitment to middle management posts had gone well through a recent campaign. There had been nineteen applicants fifteen of which had been strong. Out of those fifteen the following appointments had been made; Head of Service for Referral and Assessment, Head of Quality Assurance and Service Manager for Looked after Children and Disability.*
- Members noted that the report had not contained an update on the Children's Centres and wanted to know if things had settled down since the transfer to the new providers. *Members were informed that there had been no further complaints and things were beginning to settle down. The Assistant Director, Strategy, Commissioning and Prevention advised Members that one of the challenges that the new providers had faced was to decide on the priorities and how things could be delivered differently from the Children's Centres with the money provided. The use of volunteers was being looked at.*
- The Chair commented that she had applied to be a volunteer and that the application pack had been complex and requested that this be looked at as it may deter some volunteers from applying.
- Members noted in the report under the Connecting Families Programme that the council could receive some money back from the Government on a 'payment by results' basis. How did this work? *Members were advised that a sum of money per family under the national Troubled Families Programme was received from the Government. Workers in each of the agencies identified as Connectors worked with the children and families and payment was made by outcomes e.g. children attending school or children not reoffending. Work was being done with 125 families this year and 225 families next year. The amount of pay back received could be up to £8000 depending on the outcomes achieved.*
- The Chair on behalf of the Committee welcomed the new Executive Director of Children's Services Sue Westcott into post and wished her success in her role in continuing the good work already accomplished. Members acknowledged that Safeguarding had improved but wanted to ensure that this continued to improve. The Chair also acknowledged the good work being done by the social workers. *The Executive Director of Children's Services assured Members that there was no complacency from the Directorate or Management*

Teams with regard to continued improvement, rigorous continued performance management and keeping on track with the improvement programme.

- The Cabinet Member for Children's Services requested that Alistair Kingsley and Councillor Harper revisit the Liquid Logic System to reassess its use and how the Social Workers were getting on with it.
- Members requested that the Cabinet Member for Children's Services in future portfolio progress reports report on all aspects of her portfolio.
- The Executive Director of Children's Services thanked the Members of the Task and Finish Group for their involvement in monitoring the Improvement Plan. The involvement by Members had been picked up in the recent Peer Review as a strength.

ACTIONS AGREED

1. The Committee noted the progress made on the portfolio of the Cabinet Member for Children's Services.
2. Alistair Kingsley and Councillor Harper to arrange a follow up visit to review the use of Liquid Logic.
3. The Committee requested that the Cabinet Member for Children's Services in future portfolio progress reports to the Committee report on all aspects of her portfolio.
4. The Chair requested that the Assistant Director, Strategy, Commissioning and Prevention look at the application pack for volunteers to work for the Children's Centres to see if it can be simplified.

7. Prevention and Early Intervention for Children and young People and Families in Peterborough

The report provided the Committee with an update on the development of the Overarching Multi-agency Prevention and Early Intervention Strategy. The Head of Commissioning, Specialist Services gave a short presentation on the Prevention and Early Intervention in Peterborough Strategy. Key areas covered in the presentation included:

- A comprehensive needs analysis found the following key findings:
 - Peterborough child population was increasing rapidly with the biggest increase being the 0-4years age range
 - Child population was becoming increasingly diverse
 - Child and maternal health an issue
 - Emotional and mental health resilience
 - Significant achievement gap for EAL
 - School attendance an issue at some schools;
 - Tendency for children's difficulties to be medicalised, for example in relation to Special Educational Needs;
 - Teenage pregnancy, NEET and alcohol and/or substance misuse, vulnerability to sexual exploitation;
 - Parenting and parenting support deficits
- Some Key Priorities
 - Supporting holistic assessment of need through CAF;
 - Developing nuanced range of evidence based family support services;
 - Supporting effective partnership working through the MASGs
 - Improving accessibility to services through community volunteering
- Some Key outcomes:
 - Improved educational attainment and parental aspiration;
 - More families supported without requiring escalation to social care;
 - Children safeguarded as they are stepped down from CSC interventions;
 - Reduced expenditure on specialist services allowing continuing investment in prevention

- Accountability for Delivery:
 - In most cases, existing delivery groups had responsibility for ensuring delivery;
 - A small number of new delivery groups would be established;
 - Those groups would report into a new overarching Prevention & Early Intervention delivery group which monitors overall progress;
 - Final progress monitoring is through the Children and Families Commissioning Board.

Observations and questions were raised and discussed including:

- Members noted that the presentation had highlighted that there was a disproportionate number of children in special schools with English as an Additional Language (EAL) compared to those in standard schools. Was this because there were not sufficient resources in standard schools to deal with those children. *Members were informed that there had been a significant increase in Special Schools of children with EAL. More work needed to be done around those statistics but it was likely that a large proportion of the cohort were children with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. The Assistant Director, Strategy, Commissioning and Prevention advised that she was aware through the Peterborough Location Support Panels that there were a number of children in special schools where behaviour was the issue and was often linked to language and their inability to express themselves. Some of those children may not have been in school in their own country until a very late stage. There were some volunteer workers who spoke the same language as the parents who were working with them to try and address those issues.*
- The strategy mentioned the 'Outcome Star' for parents. Members sought clarification as to how this method differed to current practice. *Members were informed that it was an evidence based model developed by parents, practitioners, people and children in Camden. The Outcomes Star was a unique suite of tools for supporting and measuring change when working with people. It came with a database that measured outcomes. Further details to explain the model could be circulated.*
- Is the Prevention and Early Intervention Strategy feeding into the teacher recruitment debate? *Members were informed that it was and teacher recruitment was being taken very seriously. Teacher training would also reflect the needs of the city and teachers would be trained to deal with behavioral issues in the classroom.*
- What was being done with regard to lack of attendance at schools? Was the best practice to reduce the lack of attendance at one school being passed on to other schools that were having poor attendance? *Members were informed that the role of the Attendance Team was about best practice and working across the schools sector to provide strategies. Different approaches were being taken at different schools. The Assistant Director, Strategy, Commissioning and Prevention advised Members that the key focus for Connected Families was around attendance.*
- Councillor Shearman suggested that the Committee hold a 'Scrutiny in a Day' event to discuss in depth the eight priority needs in Peterborough identified in the strategy. *Members were informed that two stakeholder events would be held in March and October 2013. The March event would explain in detail the strategy and the October event would cover what had been achieved to date.*
- Members wanted to know what the success rate was for prosecutions of parents whose children did not attend school. *Members were advised that prosecuting was a legal process which the Local Authority had an obligation to use where attendance did not happen. 60% of prosecutions are proven. Prosecution in some families did not make a difference in attendance at school and in these cases it was more about working differently with the family to find a solution.*

ACTIONS AGREED

1. The Committee noted and endorsed the Prevention and Early Intervention in Peterborough Strategy and requested that a further report on the progress of implementing the strategy be brought back to the Committee in six months time.
2. The Committee requested that the Head of Commissioning, Specialist Services provide further details on the 'Outcome Star'.
3. The Assistant Director, Strategy, Commissioning and Prevention to discuss with the Chair and Group Representatives a Scrutiny in a Day Event with the theme of the eight priorities identified in the Prevention and Early Intervention Strategy.
4. The Committee to receive an invitation to the Stakeholder events being held in March and October 2013.
5. The Chair requested that the Prevention and Early Intervention in Peterborough Strategy be presented at an All Party Policy meeting.

8. Education Strategy / Improving Outcomes for Children with SEN

The report provided the Committee with an overview and update on the work around reforming the Local Authorities education function and in improving outcomes for children with SEN through the development of an effective strategy for the future. Since last reporting to the Committee in November 2012 significant work had been undertaken looking at best practice, the situation in Peterborough and interventions that would have the most impact upon outcomes of children and young people. Seven key themes had been identified to work on for the Education Strategy. There was a particular focus on establishing a School-to-School Partnership that was cost effective, successful in delivering outcomes and run by schools for schools from which the LA could confidently commission services. The LA would be a partner in this partnership. A draft Education Strategy would be brought back to the Committee in March 2013.

Observations and questions were raised and discussed including:

- Members noted that school improvement had not been mentioned as part of the core team within Children's Services required to deliver services which were high priority to the council. *Members were advised that school improvement would be part of the School-to-School Partnership. There would always be a role for the LA to provide school improvement.*
- Members wanted to know what a school based "training centre" was as mentioned in the report. *Members were advised that this was focused around giving staff in schools support to do the work they needed to do. There were certain schools in the city that had highly developed expertise in dealing with English as an Additional Language. Their expertise could be shared across the city in the provision of a school based "training centre".*
- Some Members felt that more emphasis should be placed on filling the gap for further and higher education within the city.

Members were informed that significant work had been undertaken in the last year in understanding the delivery of SEN provision across the city. The work was now being developed into a strategy to see the direction of travel for this group over the next five years. Having the correct provision in place was key to ensuring an effective SEN strategy.

Observations and questions were raised and discussed including:

- Members were concerned that Peterborough had more children with statements than similar authorities and felt that some children might have been statemented unnecessarily. *Members were advised that from April 2013 there would be a number of changes to the way schools and special educational needs (SEN) would be funded. There would be a new formula to generate a notional SEN budget for each school and funds would no*

longer be provided based on stated hours. This would reduce the number of stated children as there would be more targeted funding.

- Members sought assurance that children with statements attending standard schools would have the necessary resources to support them. *The Assistant Director for Education and Resources assured Members that adequate funding would be put in place under the new funding regime.*
- Members requested that a comprehensive consultation process take place with Governing Bodies, parents, carers, teachers and schools regarding the new national funding formula and how this would affect schools.

ACTION AGREED

The Committee requested that the draft Education Strategy be presented to the Committee at the March 2013 meeting.

9. Children's Services Improvement Plan – Progress Report

The Executive Director of Children's Services introduced the report. The report informed the Committee on progress that had been made on the Children's Services Improvement Programme which had been put in place following an Ofsted Inspection in August 2011. The progress report had been a regular report to the committee and the last update to the committee had been in November 2012. Highlights of the report were:

- Strong performance continued on timeliness in the referral and assessment service. 97.1% of initial assessments had been completed within 10 days and 85.9% of core assessments completed within 35 days.
- The underlying figures for completion of core assessments in October had shown deterioration to 70% completed on time. This was mainly in the long-term teams and was largely due to chasing down the numbers incomplete out of timescale.
- There had been significant improvement in the recording of visits to children with a plan with 94% on time and statutory visits to looked after children with 97% on time.
- The Head and Heart recruitment advertising campaign continued to be successful. The current social work vacancy rate was 10.7. The campaign was being refreshed with regard to the recruitment of team managers.
- Quality and timeliness needed to continue.

Observations and questions were raised and discussed including:

- Members sought assurance that the timeliness of core assessments would continue despite the dip in October. *Members were informed that the dip in timeliness had been due to several factors like concentrating on getting the quality right and also there had been some churn in the team managers. The Executive Director of Children's Services advised that she was looking into this. Members were also advised that whilst progress had been good there was still a long way to go with the improvement plan.*
- Members sought assurance that there would be no cuts in funding for the improvement programme. *The Executive Director of Children's Services assured members that although Children's Services would have to consider budget cuts along with other service areas the Council were committed to the improvement programme and no cuts would be made if it jeopardised the programme.*

ACTION AGREED

The Committee noted the Safeguarding Improvement Plan and the progress that had been made since the last report in November 2012.

10. Notice of Intention to Take Key Decisions

The Committee received the latest version of the Council's Notice of Intention to Take Key Decisions, containing key decisions that the Leader of the Council anticipated the Cabinet or individual Cabinet Members would make during the course of the following four months. Members were invited to comment on the Plan and, where appropriate, identify any relevant areas for inclusion in the Committee's work programme.

ACTION AGREED

The Committee noted the Notice of Intention to Take Key Decisions

11. Work Programme

Members considered the Committee's Work Programme for 2012/13 and discussed possible items for inclusion.

ACTION AGREED

To confirm the work programme for 2012/13 and the Senior Governance Officer to include any additional items as requested during the meeting.

- Refreshed priorities and Children's Services Improvement Plan to be presented at the March 2013 meeting.

12. Date of Next Meeting

Monday 11 March 2013

The meeting began at 7.00pm and ended at 9.30pm

CHAIRMAN

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