

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CHILDREN AND LIFELONG LEARNING SCRUTINY
PANEL HELD ON WEDNESDAY 3 DECEMBER 2008 AT THE BOURGES/VIERSEN ROOM -
TOWN HALL**

Present: Councillors I Walsh (Chairman), S Day (Vice-Chairman), S Allen, N Khan,
B Saltmarsh, J Wilkinson and Kirkbride

**Co-opted
Members:** Maggie Kirkbride, Parent Governor Representative

Also Present: Councillor Peach, Leader of the Council
Councillor Goldspink, Cabinet Member for Education and Children's
Services

Officers Present:

John Richards	Executive Director, Children's Services
Elaine Fulton	Assistant Director, Commissioning and Performance
Maureen Phillips	Assistant Director, Families and Communities
Stephen Sutherland	Head of Strategy and Planning
Marcus Richardson	Head of Performance Management & Information
Gaynor Mansell	PSHE Manager
Prity Patel	Principal Lawyer
Ruth Griffiths	Lawyer
Paulina Ford	Performance Scrutiny and Research Officer
Lindsay Tomlinson	Governance Support Officer

1. Apologies for Absence

An apology was received from Councillor Benton. Councillor C Burton attended as substitute.

Apologies were also received from Councillors Rush and Fower, members of the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Panel who had been invited to attend for agenda item 5.

2. Declarations of Interest and Whipping Declarations

Councillor Walsh declared a non-prejudicial interest in item 5, National Healthy Schools Programme, as she had been asked to chair the Healthy Schools Steering Committee.

3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 22 October 2008

The minutes of the meeting held on 22 October 2008 were approved subject to them being amended to show Maggie Kirkbride as not present.

4. Werrington Primary School Council

The Panel met with members of the Werrington Primary School Council who told them how the council was structured, how they became representatives and about the work the council had undertaken within the school. Members of the school council asked the Panel members questions about how the Council operates and about their work as councillors, democracy and about how they could help with specific issues affecting their school.

The Panel congratulated the school council on their work and thanked them for their presentation. They agreed that other schools should be encouraged to set up school councils and that this could be promoted through information sharing.

ACTION AGREED

The Panel noted the report.

5. National Healthy Schools Programme

The Panel received a report and a presentation informing them of the proposed statutory nature of Personal, Social, Health and Emotional programmes (PSHE) and describing the programme for Sex and Relationships Education (SRE) already within Peterborough Primary schools' curriculum. It was expected that statutory PSHE programmes would help to tackle important public health concerns, such as high teenage pregnancy rates and increasing Sexually Transmitted Infection (STI) rates. Embedding SRE from an early age was seen as crucial to the success of the Teenage Pregnancy strategy.

Key issues of the proposals were as follows:

- There was a need, both nationally and locally, for PSHE, and particularly school-based SRE, to be given priority within the school curriculum.
- SRE should be delivered by adequately trained staff.
- There were concerns nationally about the possible content of SRE for young children.
- Peterborough schools were well placed to work confidently, within a statutory framework, as a robust PSHE programme was already in place.
- Peterborough was currently embarking on training the sixth cohort of teachers and nurses within the national PSHE Continual Professional Development (CPD) programme.

Observations and questions were raised and discussed including:

- How much information will parents be given about this? They need to be aware of what schools are teaching their children.
- Agreed – the programme is only valuable if it is done in partnership with parents. We explain PSHE in meetings with parents and ask Year 5 and 6 pupils to share resources with their parents. There is certainly a case for encouraging parents to be invited into school at an earlier stage of their child's education to be made aware of this.
- Some primary schools opted out of providing PSHE – how do you see them reversing this?
- Only a number of PSHE elements could be opted out of, for example the relationship elements. The government is currently looking at how to guide schools, for example on allowing parents to withdraw their children from lessons.
- The programme includes, for children aged 3-5, when to say no – is that designed to stop bullying and abuse?
- Yes – the transferable skills of assertiveness and confidence can help stop abuse in younger children and this leads onto the ability as a teenager to prevent unwanted sex or taking drugs etc.
- What criteria will be used to decide which aspects of the programme parents can withdraw their children from?
- There has been wide consultation. There is no intention to exclude parents, instead more parental involvement will be promoted. We are assured that it will be carefully looked at.
- Has training within schools been completed?
- No, all but 2 secondary schools have an accredited PSHE teacher as do 30-40% of primary schools. We are well on target to having an accredited teacher in all schools.

- How confident are officers that the programme will be delivered to the highest standards?
- Our job is to monitor to ensure all schools deliver high standards. We carry out regular audits and have a named co-ordinator in each school.

ACTION AGREED

The Panel noted the report and agreed to a further presentation at a later date to discuss the new PSHE curriculum and its effectiveness.

6. The Annual Review of Peterborough's Children and Young People Plan

The Panel received a report appraising them of the review process for Peterborough's Children and Young People Plan (CYPP). The first statutory CYPP had been published in April 2006 by Peterborough City Council Children's Services department and its partners in the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership. The three-year rolling plan had undergone two subsequent reviews and had been approved by the Children's Trust, Full Council and PCT Board in April of each year.

There was a statutory requirement to conduct an annual review of the CYPP in order to assess progress and consider whether needs had changed. The objectives for the 2009 annual review of the CYPP were as follows:

- To develop and review the needs assessment, ensuring that priorities identified within the CYPP were appropriate and reflected the vision for children and young people in Peterborough
- To ensure that the CYPP was delivered effectively, with links to clear action plans
- To evaluate the impact of the delivery against the 2008 CYPP
- To support planning at a locality level by providing clear locality-based information
- To identify and detail the developments necessary in delivering truly integrated working within Peterborough
- To improve the communication of the CYPP to all stakeholders and, in particular, to children, young people and families.

The DCSF had sought consultation on legislative options for strengthening children's trusts. These included proposals to extend the ownership of the CYPP to all statutory partners who had a duty to co-operate under the Children Act 2004. All partners would be legally required to 'have regard' to the CYPP. Proposals were also being put forward to strengthen the statutory framework for CYPPs through secondary legislation.

Ofsted had released a consultation on the development of the new inspection framework for Children's Services under the Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA), which would begin from April 2009. Initial indications were that the CYPP would no longer be required to have the additional purpose of acting as a self-assessment for Children's Services.

Plans for the review process were currently in development. As part of this process, a 'lessons learnt' document was being produced and feedback was being sought on the existing plan. As a result of the developing national policy framework and feedback received to date, a number of developments to the CYPP were being considered.

Observations and questions were raised and discussed including:

- With the ownership of the CYPP being extended to statutory partners how do we keep control?
- The partnership is responsible for each outcome, and the Children's Trust Partnership Board has mechanisms in place to ensure delivery of the plan.

- Are this panel and the council's decision making processes built into the process for ensuring the plan is delivered?
- The plan needs to be signed off by full Council and this Panel has an important role in scrutinising the document.
- Do all the partners need to sign off the plan?
- It has always been taken to the PCT Board each year; now that it is a statutory plan for all partners we need to build in sign-off by all authorities.

ACTION AGREED

The Panel noted the report and agreed to receive a further report once the new version of the Children and Young People Plan has been drafted.

7. Children's Trust - Overview of Performance

The Panel were presented with a report informing them of the review process for Performance Management and reporting within Children's Services and identifying the critical issues identified by this process. The development of an integrated Performance Management Framework was a key activity to support the role of the Children's Trust in monitoring and delivering against key National Indicators of performance across the five Every Child Matters outcomes for children and aspects of organisational working.

The framework was developing as a layered approach which met several needs, including the day to day business requirements of Children's Services, the department's corporate reporting responsibilities and Children's Trust Partnership (and Greater Peterborough Partnership) requirements. Performance was determined by a range of national indicators which were monitored by both the city council's Children's Services department and Children's Trust Partnership Board using a Performance Dashboard. Outputs from a monthly data collection process were used to populate the Dashboard across all indicators.

The Dashboard provides a mechanism to inform and shape a regular performance management review. Outputs from the monthly data collection process were also used to inform the Greater Peterborough Partnership's (GPP) Performance Hub.

The Panel were advised of a number of critical issues identified through the regular performance management review.

Observations and questions were raised and discussed including:

- Are we confident we have secure procedures in place to deal with the safeguarding issues which are included in the list of identified critical issues?
- No director can ever give assurances that there will not be a serious abuse case as much abuse is hidden from authorities. We have been working on improving areas that were highlighted in the Joint Area Review (JAR) such as response to referrals, the recruitment of social workers and scrutiny of management. We are confident that a situation such as that seen recently in Haringey, whereby an authority was actively involved in a case where a child died, would not happen here. We have strong inter-agency working, good supervisors and a strong Safeguarding Board. However we can never be complacent and we recognise the need to continue to recruit and retain good social workers. The recent high profile Haringey case may have a detrimental effect on morale so we will need to manage this.
- What actions do we put in place when we get early indications that we are not performing well? We need to see regular reports and need to be assured that we are prepared for all eventualities.
- The Scrutiny Panel needs to decide what issues it wants to focus on but we can't do that without the relevant data. We will need to have prior discussions, perhaps in the group representatives process with the whole Panel present, along with other invited parties where necessary.

ACTION AGREED

The Panel noted the report.

8. Feedback and Update Report

The Panel received feedback and updates on the following:

- Recruitment and Retention in Schools
- Total Respect Training
- Children's Trust Board Minutes

ACTION AGREED

The Panel noted the report and it was agreed that the Performance Scrutiny and Research Officer would send an e-mail to members advising them of the details of the Total Respect Training session.

9. Executive Decisions

The Panel considered the following Executive Decisions made since the last meeting:

- Appointment of LEA Governor to Woodston Primary School
- Appointment of LEA Governor to West Town Primary School
- Appointment of LEA Governor to Discovery Primary School
- Promotion of Play
- Schools Broadband Contract

The Panel were advised that as a result of concerns raised around the School Broadband Contract in future minutes of the Schools Forum would be circulated to Panel members.

ACTION AGREED

The Panel noted the report.

10. Forward Plan of Key Decisions

The Panel received the latest version of the Council's Forward Plan, 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 Panel's work programme.

ACTION AGREED

The Panel noted the Forward Plan.

11. Work Programme

Members considered the Panel's Work Programme for 2008/2009.

ACTION AGREED

The Panel approved the current work programme.

12. Date of next meeting

Wednesday 14 January 2009 at 7pm in the Bourges and Viersen Room.

The meeting began at 7.00 pm and ended at 8.44 pm

CHAIRMAN