

**MINUTES OF THE CHILDREN AND EDUCATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD AT 7PM ON
7 SEPTEMBER 2017
BOURGES/VIERSEN ROOM, TOWN HALL, PETERBOROUGH**

Committee Members Present: Councillors J Goodwin (Chairman), D Over (Vice Chairman), S Barkham, R Bisby, G Casey, A Dowson, B Rush, A Iqbal, J Johnson, M Mahabadi, B Saltmarsh
Liz Youngman, Education Co-opted Member
Alistair Kingsley, Co-opted Member
Rizwan Rehmatullah – Co-opted Member

Officers Present: Gary Perkins, Assistant Director, Education
Terry Reynolds, Service Director, Education
Lou Williams, Service Director for Children’s Services and Safeguarding
Belinda Evans, Customer Services Manager
Paulina Ford, Senior Democratic Services Officer

Also Present: Councillor Lynn Ayres, Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and University
John Harris of John Harris Consultancy Ltd

13. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Fower and Councillor Barkham attended as substitute. Parish Councillor, Co-opted Member Susie Lucas and Co-opted Member Flavio Vetesse also submitted apologies.

14. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND WHIPPING DECLARATIONS

Item 6. Education Review

Councillor Over declared an interest in that his wife was a teacher at a local academy Primary School. Councillor Casey declared an interest in that his daughter was a teacher at a Local Authority Primary School. There were no other declarations of interest or whipping declarations.

15. MINUTES OF THE CHILDREN AND EDUCATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON 3 JULY 2017

The minutes of the meeting held on 3 July 2017 were approved subject to the following amendment which was to remove Councillor Sam Smith’s name from the list of attendees as Councillor Smith had not attended the meeting.

16. CALL IN OF ANY CABINET, CABINET MEMBER OR KEY OFFICER DECISIONS

There were no requests for call-in to consider.

17. ANNUAL CHILDREN’S SOCIAL CARE STATUTORY COMPLAINTS REPORT 2016-17

The Customer Services Manager introduced the report. The report was an annual report which allowed the Committee to scrutinise complaints received under the Children's (Social Care) Services statutory complaints process.

The Committee debated the report and in summary, key points raised and responses to questions included:

- The Committee were pleased to see that compliments were also included in the report and how many were recorded.
- A statutory process was in place which laid down a criteria under which complaints could be accepted. The Customer Services team took over the Children's Complaints process in 2011. As the team had developed and improved relations with the Ombudsman they had become better at assessing complaints against the given criteria. One of the main criteria was that the complainant needed to demonstrate a sufficient interest in the child.
- Several complaints had been received with regard to the legal process and complainants were not happy with matters which could only be considered by the courts. In these instances they were referred back to the courts for their jurisdiction.
- Some complaints were received from parents that were not about a child or were not on behalf of a child and therefore could not be included within this complaints process. The complaint might still be accepted but would be referred to the Corporate Complaints process.
- Members were concerned about the number of complaints which fell under the category of delay/failed service and staff attitude/conduct and sought clarification that steps were being taken to reduce this number. Members were informed that the number of staff conduct/attitude rates had reduced significantly over the last couple of years due to departments working with their staff on their attitude to ensure they were conducting themselves correctly. The uphold rate had not been significant. The staff complaint element was often contained within complaints regarding other aspects and it was usually these other aspects that were upheld. The complexity and number of individual elements submitted within one complaint made it difficult to illustrate in the report how many complaints had been upheld as in some cases only certain elements were upheld.
- Members referred to table 6 Complaint Categories and felt that further context was required and requested that in future reports the percentage of complaints versus the total number of users of the service should be included.
- Members also felt that it would be useful to show if the complaints were unique or were coming from the same user. Members were informed that complaints were not generally received from the same user although one user had made more than one complaint and it was acknowledged that it would be useful to see if the complaints were unique and/or the same user in the report.

AGREED ACTIONS

1. The Children and Education Scrutiny Committee considered the report and **RESOLVED** to note the report.
2. The Children and Education Scrutiny Committee requested that the Customer Services Manager include in future reports the percentage of complaints versus the total number of users of the service and if the complaints were unique or from the same user.

18. EDUCATION REVIEW

The Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and University introduced the report. The report provided an overview of the recent review of education in Peterborough which had been requested by Councillor John Holdich, Leader of the Council. The review had been requested in response to the contrasting picture of 91% of Primary Schools and 92% of Secondary Schools being rated good or outstanding by Ofsted and Key Stage 2 results being one of the

lowest in the country. The Cabinet Member provided the Committee with context as to how the review had been undertaken and next steps which included taking forward the 15 recommendations made within the report which comprised of the following:

1. Introduce a more systematic arrangement for collecting, analysing and using data to enable targeting of school improvement activity
2. Work together as a system to tackle the challenges (local authority, schools, teaching schools, Regional Schools Commissioner's office, Ofsted, wider children and adult services and other education providers)
3. Introduce a more transparent process for setting school based targets that are owned by the system
4. Schools demonstrate a strong commitment to the Peterborough Self-Improving Network; look to remodel this to more effectively respond to the challenges that have been identified; drawing on best practice from elsewhere, Teaching Schools and the wider system
5. Increase the number of Teaching Schools in the city. These are strong schools that offer support and training to other local schools
6. Identify leading head teachers from the primary and secondary sectors to work closely with the Local Authority and Regional Schools Commissioner's Office
7. Focus attention on improving recruitment and retention of teachers
8. Focus attention on narrowing the gap between free school meal and SEN students and students in all primary schools
9. Focus attention on where churn is having the most impact and agree as a whole education system what to do about this
10. Embark on a high profile campaign to raise public awareness about the importance of education achievement
11. Working together to address the issues and establish a Strategic Board for Education, Further Education and Skills
12. Develop a clear vision and mission for education locally
13. Have a close working relationship between the City Councils Education Department and the Regional Schools Commissioner's Office
14. The Council Officers and schools to have transparent targets and plans.
15. The Council along with the Regional Schools Commissioner promotes the establishment of additional Teaching Schools in Peterborough to support new and experienced school staff with high quality training and development and schools to be involved in the Teach East Programme or another programme of the same ilk

The Committee debated the report and in summary, key points raised and responses to questions included:

- Members commented that to be placed 149 out of 150 Local Authorities was shameful and the Council had let down the children of the city. Students with English as a second language performed better at GCSE level than those with English as a first language.
- Other authorities had similar challenges to Peterborough however Peterborough had a combined unique set of challenges all going on at the same time.
- The Leader had sent an email to all parties advising them of the review and the terms of reference. The Cabinet Member emphasised that the invitation to meet with her was extended to all parties and that invitation still stood.
- Members commented that new families moving to Peterborough often experienced long delays in obtaining school places and difficulties obtaining places locally to where they lived and this affected their education.
- A Strategic Board of Education, Further Education and Skills would need to be set up to

ensure there was a strong educational strategy across the whole authority.

- Following approval of the recommendations the next steps would be:
 - to put an action plan in place
 - Meet with the Heads of the Self-Improving Schools Network
 - Bid for further funding from Government to help schools to raise attainment
 - Prepare a media campaign to let people know what action was being taken
 - Meet with MP's
- It was suggested that those with time to spare could volunteer to help in local schools.
- Educate Together was a term used to express the idea of everyone collaborating together to educate children as the Local Authority could no longer do this alone.
- The Cabinet Member advised that she had not met with parents and children as part of the review as it was a strategic review rather than an operational review.
- The Nullam Report gave background information on other local authorities with similar challenges which provided the evidence for further investigations.
- Members commented that there was a need to engage with parents to ensure a successful outcome.
- John Harris of John Harris Consultancy Ltd also in attendance with the Cabinet Member informed Members that there was nothing to show generically that Academies outperformed Local Authority schools in Peterborough or that Academies performed better than each other. There were examples of both who performed well. There had been various reasons why schools had become Academies. Some schools had chosen to convert to an Academy because they were rated good or outstanding and others were required to convert to an Academy due to poor performance.
- The Co-opted Member for Education representing Church of England Schools referred to page 38 of the report and commented that it was good to see a recommendation to work together as a system to tackle challenges but noted that there was no mention of the Diocese in the list. There was a small but significant number of Church Schools in Peterborough. The Diocesan Authorities wanted to work more closely with Local Authorities and expressed a wish to be involved with the review. The Cabinet Member duly noted the request.
- The Committee noted that there was a lack of reference in the report to Governors and Trustees who were the strategic leaders and should be consulted with. The Cabinet Member duly noted the request.
- Members commented that it had taken a long time to commission the report as areas that had been identified within the report as areas of challenge had already been identified some years ago. The Cabinet Member acknowledged that some of the challenges had been identified previously but the report had been commissioned now due to all of the challenges coming together at once, this was therefore a time to move forward and improve educational attainment in the future.
- Members commented that the review had highlighted the issue around attracting and retaining good teachers to the areas. Members suggested that there was a gap in the review in understanding the views of new and aspirational teachers in the area. The Cabinet Member advised that recommendation 15 would address this in that promoting the establishment of additional Teaching Schools would provide more home grown teachers who would be more likely to stay in the area. The current Teach East SCIT had already proved to be successful and the hope was to replicate this.
- Members commented that to influence meaningful change the Local Authority would need to be able to influence attainment and outcomes at Academies. The Cabinet Member advised that there was every intention to influence Academies going forward and this was already being addressed by calling a conference with schools and the Regional School Commissioner which would be held on 20 September 2017. John Harris advised Members that all 150 Local Authorities were now having to work in partnership to shape a new set of leadership and governance arrangements. New forms of partnerships were being created which involved the schools, governors and other parts of the system to agree a framework to move forward. One of the recommendations within the review focussed on creating this framework in Peterborough.

- The term Local Authority included everyone in the city as the responsibility for education included officers, Councillors and everyone in the city and it was suggested that Members should visit schools in their constituency to understand the challenges that were being faced.
- A clearer understanding was required as to what was needed to work better with local businesses and what employment skills were required. There should be a key partnership between local businesses and secondary schools in terms of preparing students for life in a working environment.

AGREED ACTIONS

The Children and Education Scrutiny Committee considered the report and **RESOLVED** to agree to note and comment on the Executive Summary and Education Review Report attached at Appendix 1 and 2.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The Children and Education Scrutiny Committee agreed to endorse the recommendations within the Executive Summary attached at Appendix 1 and **RECOMMEND** them to Cabinet for approval.
2. The Children and Education Scrutiny Committee also recommended that the Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and University report back to the Committee when the action plan has been put in place to update the Committee on progress made and include the following information:
 - a) How as a city we inspire teachers to inspire their pupils.
 - b) What the split across the city is between the number of Academies and Local Authority Schools.

19. RESTRUCTURE OF EDUCATION SERVICES

The Assistant Director, Education introduced the report which provided the Committee with an update on the restructure of Education Services which had now been completed since it was last reported to the Committee on 5 January 2017.

The Committee debated the report and in summary, key points raised and responses to questions included:

- Schools were now being offered a service level agreement with regard to the Educational Psychology service. Schools were now able to buy into a package which guaranteed a certain level of support. The income gained from this would allow reinvestment and growth of the service to allow more support in the future. There had been a very good take-up of the service.
- Members requested that a structure chart with names against posts be provided.

AGREED ACTIONS

The Children and Education Scrutiny Committee considered the report and **RESOLVED** to note the report and requested to be provided with a structure chart of the service with names against the posts.

20. SELF-ASSESSMENT OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES IN PETERBOROUGH

The Service Director Children's Services and Safeguarding accompanied by the Cabinet Member for Children's Services introduced the report which provided the Committee with information on the current self-assessment of the quality of children's services in

Peterborough. The Service Director provided context to the arrangements for the self-assessment and advised that there had been a recent Ofsted inspection which had referred to the self-assessment and the inspection had identified that leaders and managers knew their services well.

The Committee debated the report and in summary, key points raised and responses to questions included:

- Members referred to page 152, paragraph 6.3 which referred to the evidence of effectiveness of support for schools. Clarification was sought as to what evidence there was to support this. Members were informed that there was a range of evidence including the provision of Educational Psychology but acknowledged that this was an area for further development.
- One of the key focuses of the recent inspection was providing clear evidence of the voice of the child and how that informed individual plans for the child. The inspectors were complimentary in this regard and felt that it had improved since the last inspection. Within the Quality Assurance Service there was a group of parents whose children were subject to child protection plans who were consulted with about their experience to understand how the services could be improved. There was also a Children in Care Council that provided feedback on their experience of being in care. Consideration was being given to setting up a user group made up of young people who were subject to child protection plans but it was proving to be more difficult than envisaged.
- The Cabinet Member for Children's Services informed Members that children in care had access to a mobile app called MOMO (Mind Of My OWN) where they could record general comments and feedback on the service they were receiving.
- Members referred to page 212, section 18. Radicalisation and Extremism. Members sought clarification on what work was being undertaken and what communities were being engaged with. Members were advised that there was a broad piece of work being done across all schools to address these issues. There was also a programme that took place within local Mosques which was led by the Communities side of the Directorate. One area where there had been concerns was with the link between young people who went missing and were therefore at risk of being exploited in many ways. The Children's Safeguarding Board was also undertaking work with regard to radicalisation and extremism.
- The variable attendance of members at the Peterborough and Cambridgeshire Combined Channel Panel which had been noted in the report had now been resolved.

AGREED ACTIONS

1. The Children and Education Scrutiny Committee considered the report and **RESOLVED** to:
 - a) Note the content of the report including the areas where services were performing well as well as those where there was a continuing need for some development, and:
 - b) Note the actions being taken to ensure that services were working collectively together to improve outcomes for vulnerable children and young people.
2. The Committee also requested that the following areas identified as a need for some continuing development be monitored by the Committee and be updated on the progress of these areas within the next Service Directors report:
 - The consistency and quality of assessments and care planning – some of which is very good, outcome focused and 'SMART' – but this is not always the case;
 - The consistency and quality of management oversight and supervision, which links to the variable quality of assessments and care planning noted above;
 - The lack of up to date daily and weekly performance monitoring information for managers to support them in their work;

- The extent to which recording is in sufficient detail to ensure that the quality of direct work and the lived experience for the child is described.

21. MONITORING SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATIONS

The Senior Democratic Services Officer introduced the report which provided the Committee with a record of recommendations made at the previous meeting and the outcome of those recommendations to consider if further monitoring was required.

ACTIONS AGREED

The Children and Education Scrutiny Committee **RESOLVED** to consider the response from Cabinet Members and Officers to the recommendations made at the previous meeting, as attached in Appendix 1 of the report and agreed that no further monitoring of the recommendations was required.

22. FORWARD PLAN OF EXECUTIVE DECISIONS

The Committee received the latest version of the Council's Forward Plan of Executive 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 Forward Plan and where appropriate, identify any relevant areas for inclusion in the Committee's work programme.

ACTIONS AGREED:

The Committee noted the Forward Plan of Executive Decisions and requested further information on the following decisions:

- Oakdale Primary School Expansion – KEY/6FEB17/01 – Can the award of the contract be awarded if planning permission had not yet been obtained.
- Academy Conversion (Soke Educational Trust) of John Clare Primary School – KEY/07AUG17/09 – it was noted that this had been listed as being in the Bretton Ward which was an error and should have been Barnack Ward. The Senior Democratic Services Officer make sure it was corrected.

23. WORK PROGRAMME 2017/2018

Members considered the Committee's Work Programme for 2016/17 and discussed possible items for inclusion.

ACTION AGREED

The Children and Education Scrutiny Committee **RESOLVED** to note the work programme for 2017/2018.

24. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

- Thursday, 9 November 2017

The meeting began at 7.00pm and finished at 8.38pm.

CHAIRMAN

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