

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
CREATING OPPORTUNITIES AND TACKLING INEQUALITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
HELD IN THE
BOURGES & VIERSEN ROOMS, TOWN HALL, PETERBOROUGH
ON**

19 JANUARY 2010

Present: Councillors Thacker MBE (Chairman), Wilkinson, Lowndes, S Day, Saltmarsh and Khan

Also present Prity Patel Interim Chair of Peterborough Safeguarding Board
Bedrea Laftah Representative of Peterborough Youth Council and
Deputy Member of UK Youth Parliament

Officers in Attendance: John Richards Executive Director, Children's Services
Stephen Sutherland Head of Strategy and Planning
Mel Collins Assistant Director, Learning & Skills
Mark Wheeler Interim Head of Children's Social Care
Paulina Ford Performance Scrutiny and Research Officer
Marie Southgate Lawyer

1. Apologies

Apologies had been received from Councillor Allen. Councillor Sue Day was acting as substitute for Councillor Allen.

2. Declarations

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Minutes of the meeting held on 17 November 2009

The minutes of the meeting held on 17 November 2009 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. Peterborough Safeguarding Children Board (PSCB)

The Executive Director for Children's Services introduced the new Interim Head of Children's Social Care and the Interim Chair of the PSCB. He explained that the PSCB was a statutory Board established under section 13 of the Children Act 2004. He advised members that the Lord Laming report published in March 2009 commented on the effectiveness of Children's Trusts and Safeguarding Boards and reflected on the need for Children's Trusts to effectively discharge their section 10 and section 11 responsibilities of the Children's Act. The report also recommended that the safeguarding Board should scrutinise the delivery of those services and report to the Trust on how well it was doing through an annual report.

A short presentation was given explaining the key safeguarding issues, the "Journey to Safeguarding Excellence" temple and the governance and accountability framework for safeguarding children. The key issues were described as:

- The changing landscape of safeguarding
- The development of Peterborough Safeguarding Children Board (PSCB).
- The Journey to Excellence
- The new governance arrangements between PSCB and The Children's Trust

An explanation of what a good service for safeguarding children would be was described as achieving the best outcomes for all children; that all children were safe from harm; that agencies met the safeguarding standards; that there was strong Board leadership and public visibility. The support and protection of children would not be achieved through a single agency and performance priorities ensured that agencies met their section 11 arrangements. Under the new governance and accountability framework the PSCB and the Children's Trust would work together to form a Stay Safe Partnership. There would be a requirement for Scrutiny to oversee this. An overarching Safeguarding Strategy would be in place in a few months and the PSCB would produce an Annual Report which would need to be scrutinised by this Committee. The governance and accountability framework had been signed off by the PSCB and would soon be signed off by the Children's Trust. Scrutiny's role was to ensure that it was fit for purpose.

Observations and questions were raised and discussed including:

- Members asked what the section 10 and 11 responsibilities were. The Executive Director for Children's Services advised members that he would send a copy of the details of these to the committee members.
- Members asked if there were sufficient resources to deliver the PSCB. The Executive Director for Children's Services responded that sufficient resources had been put aside to run the PSCB. The PSCB conducted regular reviews to see if there were adequate resources.
- Members wanted to know when there would be a permanent Chair of the PSCB. Members were advised that the filling of this position had been delayed as the current interim Chair had done a good job and had been asked to stay on until March 2010. The post was being advertised this month.
- Members asked who the members of the PSCB were. Members were advised that there were officers from all of the different agencies on the Board, the Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Police, Probation, Youth Offending, Learning and Skills Council, CAFCA, NSPCC plus others.
- Members wanted to know if there was pooled budget. Members were advised that there was a pooled budget for the Board but individual budgets to deliver the services.
- Members wanted to know that if one partner was not co-operating what sort of powers would the Board have to address this. The Interim Chair of the PSCB advised the Committee that it was her role to ensure that all partners were accountable and if any partner was not co-operating then it was the Chair's role to escalate this to the Executive Director for Children's Services.
- Members noted that in 2006 the Joint Area Review (JAR) had rated safeguarding as inadequate and it had taken three years to gain a rating of performing adequately under the annual Ofsted rating in December 2009. Who was responsible for improving this? Members were advised that it had actually taken two years but it was still too long. It was the responsibility of the Executive Director for Children's Services to achieve a rating of good by September 2010. To achieve this every aspect of the service had to be good and this was going to be a difficult task. The PSCB and colleagues in Children's Services would help to achieve this.
- Members were concerned that receiving the PSCB Report Annually was too long to wait to scrutinise the performance of the Board. Members were advised that a quarterly report on the key National Indicators for Safeguarding could be provided to the Committee, also the outcomes of any audits or reviews to show the direction of travel.
- Members noted that there were still vulnerabilities remaining in the referral and assessment service because of the inability to appoint permanent managers and staff.

Members wanted to know what was being done to change this. Members were advised that officers were looking at a different approach with regard to recruitment and were now looking at recruiting internal staff more.

- The member of the Youth Council asked what the Safeguarding Board represented. The Chair of the PSCB responded that in law as a Board they had a duty to delivery safer outcomes for young people.

ACTION AGREED

The Executive Director for Children's Services to:

- I. Present the PSCB Annual report to the Committee for scrutiny by the end of June 2010 and thereafter on an annual basis.
- I. Provide details of the section 10 and 11 responsibilities to all members of the Committee.
- II. Provide the Committee with a quarterly report on the key National Indicators for Safeguarding.
- III. Report to the Committee, at the first available scheduled meeting, the outcomes of any audits or reviews of the PSCB as soon as they have taken place.
- IV. Provide the Committee with the current position on the key National Indicators for Safeguarding along with a comparison with the Council's benchmarking group before the next meeting.

6. Children's Trust Developments

The Head of Strategy and Planning for Children's Services gave a presentation on how the Children's Trust delivered its responsibilities. He explained that the Children's Trust Partnership Board was the statutory partnership responsible for ensuring the delivery of all outcomes for children and young people, with a particular focus upon those within the Sustainable Community Strategy, Local Area Agreement and the statutory Children and Young People Plan. Statutory duties in the Children Act 2004 required every local authority to work with partners, through Children's Trust arrangements and to devise and implement strategies to improve outcomes for children aged 0–19 years (25 for those with additional needs). The outcomes delivered under the Children's Trust were:

- Be Healthy
 - Key focus areas – teenage pregnancy, obesity, substance misuse, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) and emotional wellbeing.
- Stay Safe
 - Key focus areas – Domestic violence, safeguarding, young runaways, child protection and stability and security of children in care.
- Enjoy and Achieve
 - Key focus areas – Achievement and attainment, narrowing the gap, play and informal learning opportunities, bullying, cohesion.
- Make a positive contribution
 - Key focus areas – Transitions,
- Achieve Economic Wellbeing
 - Key focus areas – Young people not in education, employment or training (NEET), transport, poverty, housing
- 14 – 19 Education planning
 - Key focus areas – Delivery of the 14-19 reform agenda
- Infrastructure
 - Key focus areas – Equality and diversity, joint commissioning, workforce development, value for money, integrated processes

Observations and questions were raised and discussed including:

- Members felt that it was difficult to scrutinise the Children's Trust when the Committee were not aware of what was discussed at its meetings. The Executive Director for Children's Services acknowledged this and suggested that during the next municipal year the Committee scrutinised one outcome at each meeting therefore giving them the opportunity to take an in-depth look at the work of the Trust.
- Members wanted to know how the key issue of establishing a task group to review cohesion concerns amongst young people in Central ward came about and how it was being monitored. Officers advised that Jawaid Khan had put this idea forward to the Board and it was accepted as it had been highlighted that some agencies had not been working together. A responsibility was then given to each agency to put forward a person to work together to solve this issue. A report was due in February to see how the issues had been resolved.
- Members asked how the equality impact assessments for all Children's Trust decisions were being monitored. The officer advised the Committee that no decision came to the board without an equality impact assessment and that these were quality monitored. Members asked if the Equality Impact Assessments were evidence based and the officer advised that all agencies had worked together to produce one format for the impact equality assessment to ensure that everything was covered.

ACTION AGREED

That the Executive Director for Children's Services, Chair of the Committee and Group Representatives work together to identify a topic from the Children's Trust list of outcomes to bring to each meeting over the next municipal year to enable the Committee to scrutinise the Children's Trust in depth.

7. Validated KS2 and KS4 Examination Data

The Assistant Director, Learning and Skills gave a presentation to the Committee on the validated KS2 and KS4 examination results the headlines of which were:

- The 2009 results were the best ever for Peterborough in most areas although KS4 results were still causing concern as the rate of improvement was still not good enough
- The Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) 'achievement' and 'narrowing the gap' outcomes had put Peterborough 99 out of 153 Local Authorities. EYFS achievement outcomes had exceeded LAA targets but were 1.3% short of the narrowing the gap target. Peterborough were using the outcome-based accountability model to identify and support the 2010 cohort of children in order to reduce the gap in outcomes.
- KS1 outcomes had improved significantly in 33 out of 36 indicators and Peterborough was top in the country for improvement in KS1 between 2008 and 2009. The aim was to be in the top 100 for all indicators in 2009.
- KS2 outcomes had improved in maths (78 out of 153), and 'English and maths' combined (106 out of 153), although English declined (110 out of 153). The aim was to be in the top 100 in 2009.
- KS4 results for 5+A*-C with English and maths had improved by 4%, but less than expected, although ranked 140 out of 153 Peterborough in 2009 (138/150 in 2008) but was 3rd out of 10 statistical neighbours for improvement between 2008 and 2009.

The KS4 results were set against the following context:

- In 2007 40+% of our secondary schools were closed and two larger new schools, The Voyager School and Thomas Deacon Academy, were opened – this did have an impact on young people attending these 5 schools and school staff as different groups of young people with different cultural and social backgrounds were brought together.

- Between 2006-'09 there were a number of significant building and transformation programmes impacting on most other secondary schools through PFI and Targeted Capital Funding (except Orton Longueville, Bushfield and Stanground, involved in the BSF programme).
- In 2009-'10 the Strategy for Change (transformational vision and strategy for secondary education), to support the Building Schools for the Future programme, was being developed by the Local Authority and the three schools in the south. This also included a city-wide ICT transformation programme affecting all secondary schools.
- From 2004 onwards there had been a significant influx of new arrivals, 4% plus per year to the Year 11 cohort. On average since 2004, 200 secondary-aged new arrival pupils have come to the city (500 primary-age pupils).
- 2005-'09 – four secondary schools were in a Notice to Improve category and 1 in Special Measures. In 2010 (to date) there was one secondary school still in Special Measures although due to come out in 2009-10 academic year.
- Ofsted inspections during Nov-Dec 2009 had rated The Voyager School as making satisfactory progress with some good aspects and Arthur Mellows Village College as outstanding.

Observations and questions were raised and discussed including:

- Members observed that when problem areas were targeted the results improved but they wanted to know when an overall improvement in the schools would happen as only three secondary schools were really improving and Peterborough was still very low in the league tables. The Assistant Director said that there was a need to create sustainable school improvement and the programmes which had been put in place were long-term and sustainable. Peterborough was a small authority and had a small team which was regarded highly by school leaders for its strong challenge and intervention work. Some of the EYFS and primary results shown to the committee were transformational and were good building blocks for the future of secondary education. New arrivals were quick learners and were starting to have a positive impact, especially on maths. There was no doubt that English results had been impacted by New Arrivals and problems with the marking of English at KS2.
- Members commented that about £30million plus had been spent on the new Voyager School and yet the results were disturbing. Resources were being poured into the school but the results were not being achieved. The Executive Director for Children's Services advised the Committee that in September Mel Collins, Gary Perkins and himself had visited all secondary schools to look at the results and had looked at leadership, management, teaching etc. They looked at how the young people had reached their results and what could be done to improve these schools. There was now a plan in place for all of the schools and this was being monitored. The Voyager School was looked at to see what was needed to make a difference and the offer of a National Challenge Trust had been put forward to parents and the local community. It had been extremely difficult to manage the two former schools coming together. Ofsted had inspected the school in November 2008 and November 2009 and the result had been satisfactory with some good features; Ofsted had said that leadership was good and teaching was satisfactory. The Executive Director for Children's Services said he had every confidence that they would deliver in 2010 and they were receiving considerable support from the Local Authority.
- The Executive Director for Children's Services advised the Committee that every cohort in Year 11 was known along with how they were performing and what they were capable of achieving. Great support was being put into supporting young people who had difficulties other than learning. Those Heads who were excellent were offering their support to other Heads along with Heads from other local authorities. Examples of other approaches taken were:
 - An Interim Executive Board had been set up at Orton Longueville School as governance was considered inadequate by the Local Authority, impacting on standards and financial management

- An action group had been put in place at Ken Stimson around vulnerable year 11 learners
- An Interim Executive Board was working effectively to remove St John Fisher from Special Measures
- The Chair invited Karen McKay, a member of the Family Voice Steering Committee whose focus was Special Needs Schools, to address the Committee. Karen asked how Special Educational Needs performance in schools was being measured. The Assistant Director responded that each school had a School Improvement Partner (SIP) who supported and challenged schools to narrow the gap for vulnerable students, supported by the LA School Improvement Team and the Inclusion Team. Training and development was shared between mainstream schools and special schools and there were developing links between these two settings. Officers had recently attended a Family Voice event to talk about what was being done and listen to the views of parents of children with disabilities.
- The Committee commended all the work that was being undertaken to improve results and expected to see even better results next year.

ACTION AGREED

That the Assistant Director, Learning and Skills return to the Committee in six months time so that the Committee can scrutinise the progress that has been made with regard to the action plans that have been put in place to improve educational results and report on EYFS, KS1 and un-validated KS2 data.

8. Forward Plan of Key Decisions

The Committee 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 Committee's work programme.

ACTION AGREED

The Committee noted the Forward Plan and agreed that there were no items to bring to the Committee.

11. Work Programme

Members considered the Committee's Work Programme for 2009/2010 and discussed possible items for inclusion.

ACTION AGREED

To confirm the work programme 2009/10.

12. Date of Next Meeting

4 February 2010.

The meeting began at 7.00 and ended at 9.00pm

CHAIRMAN