

**MINUTES OF THE CHILDREN AND EDUCATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD AT 7.00PM ON
THURSDAY 20 JANUARY 2022
VENUE: SAND MARTIN HOUSE, PETERBOROUGH**

Committee Members Present: Councillors G Casey (Chair), I Ali, C Fenner (Vice Chair)
T Haynes, I Hussain, S Lane, N Moyo, L Robinson, B Rush, H Skibsted

Co-opted Members: Sameena Aziz, Peter Cantley, Al Kingsley, Mohammed Younis and Parish
Councillor June Bull

Officers Present: Lou Williams, Director, Children's Services
Nicola Curley Assistant Director Children's Services
Anna Jack, Head of Youth Support
Ricky Cooper, Assistant Director, Regional Adoption and Fostering
Joanne Procter, Head of Service Cambridgeshire & Peterborough
Safeguarding Partnership Boards
Paulina Ford, Senior Democratic Services Officer

Also Present: Councillor Lynn Ayres, Cabinet Member for Children's Services and
Education, Skills and University
Councillor Ray Bisby, Cabinet Advisor to Cabinet Member for
Children's Services and Education, Skills and University
John T Hill, Chief Officer, Business Board Director of Business &
Skills, CPCA

28. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Dowson.

Apologies for absence were also received from Co-opted Member, Flavio Vettese.

29. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND WHIPPING DECLARATIONS

Declarations of interest were received from the following:

Item 5: New University Of Peterborough

Co-opted Member Alistair Kingsley declared that he had a role on the Combined
Authority Business Board which was involved with the University project.

Co-opted Member Sameena Aziz declared that she was a Council Member for
University Centre Peterborough.

**30. MINUTES OF THE CHILDREN AND EDUCATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD ON 18 NOVEMBER 2021**

The minutes of the Children and Education Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 18 November 2021 were agreed as a true and accurate record.

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

There were no call-ins received at this meeting.

32. NEW UNIVERSITY OF PETERBOROUGH

The Cabinet Member for Children's Services and Education, Skills and University introduced the report accompanied by the Chief Officer, Business Board Director of Business & Skills, at the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority.

The purpose of the report was to provide the Committee with an overview on the progress of phases 1 to 3 and plans for phases 4 & 5 of the university.

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

- Members commented that Government were investing 2.4% GDP by 2027 and increasing public funding for research and development to £22bn a year by 2024/25 and wanted to know how much of this was coming to the new University over that period. Members were informed that without intervention very little of the funding would come to Peterborough. Peterborough was not a hotbed of innovation. Taking into account the whole area of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, over the last four years Cambridge had received £225m of Innovate UK grants for research and development, South Cambs received £181m and Peterborough received £28m. Fenland had received £1.3m. The north of the county was not classed as highly innovative, however there were some quite innovative firms. The idea behind the Phase 4 Innovation-Ecosystem was to support an increase in innovation-based business growth in the north of the county by attracting big innovative companies to Peterborough.
- Members were concerned that the examples provided within the report to show how the Innovation Ecosystem had worked in other cities were of cities with well-established universities and were concerned that this would not be the case with a new university. Members were informed that not all of the cities quoted had old established universities and some were relatively new which had provided the evidence that it could work with a new university. Anglian Ruskin University was not a brand-new university and was of the same level of research and excellence as Sunderland University.
- Members noted in the report that through this model the intention was to transplant a key player in the national AI, digital and/or advanced manufacturing innovation ecosystem, from an established UK innovation centre into Peterborough. How would this be achieved under the current challenges that the city faced. Members were informed that it would always be a challenge to attract the big research companies from the more established cities. The intention was to induce them to come by winning £20m through the Shared Prosperity Fund Bid, big organisations could then be approached with an offer to match their input of £20m with Peterborough's £20m if they relocated their Research and Development to Peterborough. The other inducement would be that they would receive a capital receipt if they relocated from Cambridge to Peterborough. Many of the research institutes were quite old and were sitting on lots of expensive property which could be sold and then relocate to Peterborough for a lower amount of money.

- Members referred to the progress on the establishment of the phase 2 research building and noted that the council would contribute up to £500k of borrowings to part fund increased car parking capacity. Clarification was sought as to where the money would come from. Members were informed that money from rental income of another car park would cover the borrowing.
- Members sought clarification on student accommodation and whether Peterborough had the capacity to house them. Members were informed that there were two considerations; the provision of student accommodation and how much accommodation would be needed for 4500 students. There was no intention to replicated standard university accommodation where it was usual for most students to attend the university from outside the city, and once their degree had finished would leave the city. The vast majority of students in the first two buildings of the university would be targeted towards the local community so the amount of student accommodation required would be for around 1500 to 1700 students. The university would not be financing accommodation. It was usual for the private sector to create the student accommodation and a number of developers had already made contact.
- Members commented and were concerned that until the student accommodation had been built private landlords may decide to rent any current rental properties to students rather than families causing more homelessness in Peterborough. Members were informed that in all large student university towns this did happen, but the officer could not comment on whether it would increase homelessness.
- Members sought clarification on whether the courses being offered at the university were limited to the eight thematic areas listed in the report, or if there would be scope to offer more of a variety of courses in the future. Members felt that there was merit in offering as wide a range of courses as possible to not only upskill people in the city but to enable more students from Peterborough to be able to stay in their hometown whilst studying. Members were informed that the courses that would be run at any one time would be a balance of the following things; market demand and popularist take up to ensure that the university was sustainable; making sure that the university blended the courses to ensure that they provided courses that the local businesses required to upskill the local workforce and drive the local economy; and thirdly how diverse and broad the offering could be from a fledgling university. The third building would offer a diverse portfolio of courses including law.
- Members sought clarification on what the vision was for the extracurricular life of the university and if it included sport, chaplaincy provision, pastoral support and how the university envisaged it would benefit the quality of secondary education in the city. What would the role of the incoming Vice Chancellor be in shaping all of these things and the design of the curriculum? Members were informed that creative and the arts would be embedded from the early stages and the second building had a whole floor devoted to the arts and culture and was part of the living lab. There would also be a performing arts area in the first building. There had already been talks with the Cathedral about an open-air theatre and the museum to see how they could link into the university, and it was anticipated linking with the Key Theatre. Professor Ross Renton who would run the university had advised that pastoral care would be a top priority.
- The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority had business ambassadors who went into schools to do talks and they would also be encouraging more children to think about going to university. The plan was to encourage local students to go to the local university to learn skills that were needed for local businesses and therefore bridge the skills gap locally. Secondary education was a massive opportunity and challenge for the university.
- The university provided a real opportunity to grow the city.

The Chair thanked the Chief Officer, Business Board Director of Business & Skills, at the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority for an informative report and for attending to answer the many questions.

ACTIONS AGREED

The Children and Education Scrutiny Committee **RESOLVED** to note and comment on the progress of the establishment of the Phase 1 Teaching Building, Phase 2 Research Building, Phase 3 Teaching Building and the outline plans for Phases 4 & 5.

The Committee requested that the Chief Officer, Business Board Director of Business & Skills provide the committee with a briefing note containing further details of the curriculum and what courses would be running from September 2022 and information on the take up of those courses so far, and details of additional courses that would be introduced in the future and when.

33. YOUTH OFFENDING SERVICE

The Head of Youth Support introduced the report accompanied by the Director of Children's Services. The report provided the committee with an annual overview of the activity and achievements of the Youth Offending Service (YOS) and the wider Targeted Youth Support Service (TYSS) including the Safer Relationships Team during 2020/21.

The Head of Youth Support gave the committee a general overview of the services highlighted in the report and advised that there had been a very positive report from the recent November 2020 HMIP Youth Offending Team Inspection where the service was rated overall as Good.

The committee were informed that one off funding had been received in 2019 for a period of 12 months to set up a Safer Relationships Team to work with young people at risk of exploitation and in particular criminal exploitation. Following a robust monitoring process the service had proven to have had some very positive outcomes as a result of the work that the team had delivered. Criminal incidents for young people had reduced in respect of them being victims, perpetrators and also witnesses of crime. Missing episodes of young people had also declined and there had been a positive impact in respect of their engagement with professionals and a reduction in social care thresholds. It had therefore been confirmed that permanent funding has been put in place from the council for this service to continue.

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

- Members congratulated the Head of Youth Support on the positive feedback from the HMIP Youth Offending Team Inspection.
- Members noted that the inspection had identified some inconsistent practice in the assessment of cases to support decision making and in delivering youth cautions and other community resolutions, and too few of these cases had a good written plan. Members wanted to know what action had been taken to address this. Members were informed that timeliness was important and was monitored on a weekly basis. Quality was essential and in addition to monitoring timeliness there was a very robust audit process in place and a deep dive audit was conducted on a monthly basis to ensure cases were of a good quality as well as being timely. Any areas identified for improvement would be responded to with training.

- Out of court disposals were when young people had received a warning from the police. They would then have to appear before a Youth Offending Panel and a proposed course of action would be put in place and intervention as part of the warning. This ensured that the young person is engaged and helped to prevent them from entering into the justice system at an early age for minor offences.
- Members referred to the Inspection Improvement plan and wanted to know if the six areas of improvement identified could be sustained long term. Members were particularly concerned about the court waiting time and delays for youth offending and the impact of the delays in causing an escalation of risk and harm. Members were informed that whilst there was a court delay in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough that for the youth justice system it was much less than the adult population. The delays had been worked through and were now working to timescale in respect of processing young people through the youth justice system. There were very few young people that commit serious offences that have to go to trial and this is where the real challenge was in respect of court delays.
- The youth offending support team were working closely with the courts to address the delays so that there was no significant waiting time. There were some young people who were being bailed and waiting to go to Crown court, but it was not a significant wait and bail packages were in place. If there was a young person where the risk appeared to be significant then a very robust risk management plan would be put in place with the partnership. If the risk to the young person was considered not safe to manage within the community, then a bail package would not be recommended.
- Members referred to the Youth Offending Indicator Performance table on page 25 of the report. Members noted that there had been a shift in the percentage of Young people above school age who were Not in Education, Training and Employment (NEET) (60.9% in 2020/21 to 28.6% in 2021/22) and Young people of school age who were Not in Appropriate Education Provision (NIAP) (24.2% in 2020/21 to 65% in 2021/22) and sought clarification as to why this had happened. Members were informed that the reason the percentage had fluctuated so significantly was because the cohort was very small and therefore one young person would hold a high percentage causing any fluctuation to be high. A new dashboard was being produced to amend the way the cohort would be monitored which would include month by month monitoring.
- Members noted that one of the recommendations in the action plan was that the YOS needed to re-engage fully with the voluntary sector in Peterborough following reduced financial support for Volunteer Programmes within the service. Members sought further detail on what the voluntary sector options were. The Officer advised that she was working with the Head of Service for Think Communities to progress this which involved becoming much more engaged with the community sector and such organisations such as Youth Inspired. It would involve working much more closely with them to access the support and interventions that they already had in place for young people and to work in partnership.
- Assurance was given to Members that despite any leadership changes there was a clear commitment to continuing the work that was already in place.
- Members requested that they have an opportunity to review the new performance dashboard to provide feedback and input. The Director of Children's Services advised that he would have to speak to the Business Intelligence team to see if this was feasible.
- Members wanted to know if there was any data available on age, gender and ethnicity for first time entrants into the Youth Offending Service and the same for reoffenders and if this was analysed and used to set the programmes for them. Members were informed that monitoring and analysis of age, ethnicity, gender and the area they lived in would be recorded for first time entrants who received a police warning or court appearance. This information was logged on a Live Tracker Reoffending Tool Kit that

enabled the partnership to drill down and understand the cohort and put in place appropriate interventions based on the information.

The Chair thanked the Head of Youth Support for a detailed presentation and informative report.

ACTIONS AGREED

1. The Children and Education Scrutiny Committee **RESOLVED to:**
 - Note the work of the Youth Offending Service (YOS), the wider Targeted Youth Support Service (TYSS) and Safer Relationships (SAFE) Team
 - Comment on the positive November 2020 HMIP Youth Offending Team Inspection Report (attached at appendix 1) findings and progress made against improvements
 - Note the ways in which vulnerable young people had continued to be supported by the TYSS throughout the pandemic
2. The Committee requested that the Head of Youth Support provide them with further information on the Reoffending Live Tracker.
3. Councillor I Ali to contact the Director of Children's Services to discuss the design of the new performance Dashboard.

34. REPORT ON WORK OF THE CORPORATE PARENTING COMMITTEE 2020-21

The Chair of the Corporate Parenting Committee Cllr Ray Bisby introduced the report accompanied by the Assistant Director Children's Services. The report provided the committee with an overview of activity carried out by the Corporate Parenting Committee during the municipal year 2020-2021.

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

- Members commented that the website for Children's and Families support groups did not provide any contact details on what support groups were available, it would be helpful if this was clearly signposted on the website. The Assistant Director apologised that the information had not been clear on the website and advised that it did need to be monitored closely to ensure it was constantly kept up to date. Members were invited to contact the Assistant Director directly for further information.
- Members were interested in the Corporate Parenting Champions and sought clarification on how they were helping officers support the relevant activities. Members were given an example with regard to the Effective Care Planning, Corporate Parent Champion. This position had not previously existed and a Councillor had made enquiries around the placement data and for more detail. This conversation led to the officer setting up a working group with the councillor to look more at sustainability of placements and sufficiency. The children also liked to hold Members to account which provided a valuable way of connecting with young people.
- Members wanted to know how placements for older children and young people was being managed locally and how many were having to be placed outside of the local area. Members were informed that it was a national challenge and there was a real difficulty in obtaining placements for good quality care, especially for older children and those with additional needs. For older young people who were 16years plus there was a strong placement sufficiency strategy in place and very good links with semi-independent providers. However, some of these young people did not necessarily

live in the area but when transitioning into adulthood consideration was given to whether those young people wished to stay in the area that they had been placed. They often wanted to stay as they may be nearer to extended family or may have built up friendship groups. Some young people were placed out of area due to complex and significant needs and therefore have to be placed with a specialist provider.

- Members requested information on the dental care provision for children in care. The officer did not have the information available at the meeting and would provide a briefing note.
- Members were pleased to note that Ofsted had described Peterborough City Council as “*a conscientious corporate parent*” and wanted to ask if there were any foreseeable ways that the service could be improved in the future given the resource limitations. Additionally, could the authority benefit from learning from other Corporate Parenting committees in other local authorities. The Officer responded that there was always room for improvement, however there were resource limitations and also placement availability was an issue. A big element of where we could continue to improve would be if the authority could grow more of our own foster carers as a much wider offer, especially for children with additional needs. There is a current fostering recruitment campaign underway, but it is difficult to attract carers at the moment. There had been a lot of success in care planning and stability in placement but equally, reunification could perhaps be looked at a bit earlier and there was a piece of work starting to look at this. As a Corporate Parenting Committee Peterborough was classed as a leader and a very good model. The Corporate Parenting Champions allowed the young people to talk to one person about a specific subject an example of which would be housing.
- All councillors were Corporate Parents and had a responsibility to do as much as possible to support Children in Care. The young people rigorously challenged the Corporate Parents in attendance at the Corporate Parenting Committee meetings.
- Members commented that there had been an Independent Review of Children’s Social Care and wanted to know if there would be any changes as a result of the review. Members were informed that it was a National Review which was classed as a once in a generation review of social care. The original idea was to look specifically at children in care placements, but it had now broadened out to all of children’s social care. Peterborough was asked as part of ten local authorities to feedback on how social work works on a day to day basis. The report could be brought back to the committee when available.

The Committee noted that Lou Williams, Director of Children’s Services would be retiring in February and that this would be his last scrutiny meeting. The Committee wished to thank him for his commitment, dedication and support to the children in care in Peterborough.

AGREED ACTIONS

1. The Children and Education Scrutiny Committee **RESOLVED** to note the work of the Corporate Parenting Committee during the 2020/21 municipal year, and
 - a. Comment on the very positive contribution made by the Children in Care Council and care leavers through the care leaver drop-in, and;
 - b. Note the ways in which children and young people in care and care leavers had continued to be supported by our services throughout the pandemic
2. The Committee also requested that the Assistant Director, Children’s Services provide the committee with the following information:

- a. The number of out of area placements, and
 - b. A briefing note on dental care provision for children in care in Peterborough
3. The Committee requested that a copy of the Independent Review of Children's Social Care report be provided when published, highlighting any changes that may have been brought about by the review.

35. **CAMBRIDGESHIRE & PETERBOROUGH SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN PARTNERSHIP BOARD ANNUAL REPORT 2020-21**

The Head of Service Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Safeguarding Partnership Boards introduced the report.

The report provided the committee with the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Safeguarding Children Partnership Board Annual Report 2020-2021. There was a statutory requirement under the Children & Social Work Act 2017 that safeguarding partners publish an annual report detailing the work of the Board.

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

- Members commented on the recent Safeguarding adult review published by the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Safeguarding Partnership Board on the tragic death of a 'Miss Y' who had suffered from a range of mental health issues. Members wanted to know what specific partnerships had been forged to take forward the learning that had risen from safeguarding this individual child to adulthood. Members were advised that it was important to understand that some of the recent case reviews were historic and often went back to deaths that happened several years ago, and that things had often moved on quite significantly since they happened. Assurances were given to Members that the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough NHS Foundation Trust (CPFT) who provided the mental health services were working very closely with the partnership and were being held to account with regard to the learning and actions that had arisen from the cases. It was also important to recognise that there was a mental health crisis across the country and that nationally agencies were struggling to meet the demand. The mental health teams were now realigned and CPFT were now working in a 'Think Family' response whereas previously it had been children's and adults' services.
- Members referred to page 55 of the report and noted that "*The section 11 self-assessment audit that took place in 2019-2020 found that although the strategic leads of agencies felt that Child Criminal Exploitation was firmly embedded within practice, professionals surveyed reported that they were not aware of the CCE risk assessment tool*". Members sought assurance that further discrepancies were not appearing elsewhere in safeguarding. Members were informed that the Section 11 was a self-assessment which was sent out to all statutory agencies to self-assess themselves, but this was also accompanied by a practitioner's survey to ensure that what managers were reporting as embedded was actually embedded by the front-line staff. In terms of tools generally across the partnership it was noted that they were inconsistently embedded across the partnership. There were a range of reasons for this including, the ease of use, resources and some practitioners not finding the tools helpful. A lot of work had therefore gone into working with the partners to try and understand why they were not using the tools and then from the feedback received the tools had been amended and further training provided.
- Members sought further information on how the Partnership was addressing peer on peer abuse as identified as being prevalent by Ofsted across the education sector.

Members were informed that when the Government report was first published the education safeguarding team quickly produced self-assessment audits and worked with schools to identify any issues. The partnership worked with the young people to make sure they were aware of the processes and how they could make a referral, safe spaces and healthy relationships. The multi-agency sexual abuse training was also revised to ensure it included peer on peer abuse. The partnership was assured that every action was being taken to address the peer on peer abuse.

- Members sought clarification on how prevalent Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) was in Peterborough and what action was being taken to reduce it. Members were advised that the Head of Service Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Safeguarding Partnership Boards sat on the National FGM Health Group. The partnership was a lot further forward than some other partnerships in what had been done locally. The FGM information was collated and held through Public Health and was considered at the Quality and Effectiveness Group on a regular basis and scrutinised. There was a clear FGM pathway and policies in place and agencies ensured professionals were asking the appropriate questions to identify if FGM was taking place. Early Years staff had also been upskilled to check for FGM in nursery settings, however, there was still further work that could be done to encourage local communities to feel comfortable in reporting FGM.
- Members wanted to know if any lessons had been learnt should there ever be another pandemic on how to deal with domestic abuse. Members were informed that domestic abuse did not sit underneath the Safeguarding Partnership and was governed through a Domestic Abuse Violence Partnership, however the Head of Service sat on the Domestic Abuse Partnership as did other members of the Safeguarding Partnership. Unfortunately, it was known that when people were locked down in positions of tension that there would be more risk of domestic abuse. Local communities had played an important part in these situations in that they were the ears and eyes when officers were unable to get into see people. The domestic abuse training had been strengthened to include older and elderly abuse, teenage peer on peer domestic abuse and male domestic abuse. No assurance could be given to say it could be prevented should another pandemic occur.
- Members noted on page 47 of the report that the county of Cambridgeshire's ethnic composition was primarily White (90.3%) and next largest ethnicity group being Asian (5.9%) and Black (1.3%). It was also noted that the prison population in Peterborough consisted of 51% of the prisoners coming from BAME backgrounds. Members wanted to know how much of that was related to early safeguarding issues. The officer present did not have the information available and would try and provide it after the meeting. She explained it was well recognised and researched that nationally a number of prisoners from all ethnic backgrounds had suffered adverse childhood experiences.

AGREED ACTIONS

The Children and Education Scrutiny Committee **RESOLVED** to note the content of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Safeguarding Children Partnership Board Annual Report 2020-2021

The Committee requested that the Head of Service Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Safeguarding Partnership Boards provide information on how many of the 51% of the BAME prison population had resulted due to safeguarding issues.

36.

CHILDREN AND EDUCATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING START TIME 2022-2023

The Chair introduced the report and sought the committees' views on what start time they would like going forward for the new municipal year 2022/2023.

Councillor Fenner, seconded by Councillor Hussain proposed that the committee start time remain at 7.00pm. The committee unanimously agreed that the start time should remain at 7.00pm for the municipal year 2022/2023.

AGREED ACTIONS

The Children and Education Scrutiny Committee **RESOLVED** to keep the start time for all Children and Education Scrutiny Committee meetings for the Municipal Year 2022-23 at 7.00pm.

37. FORWARD PLAN OF EXECUTIVE DECISIONS

The Committee received the latest version of the Council's Forward Plan of Executive Decisions, containing decisions which the Leader of the Council anticipated Cabinet or Cabinet Members would take over 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.

Members requested an update with regard to the Werrington Fields and Ken Stimpson Secondary School decision. Councillor Ayres, Cabinet Member for Children's Services, and Education, Skills and University was in attendance and advised that currently no date had been agreed for the decision to be made.

AGREED ACTIONS

The Children and Education Scrutiny Committee considered the report and **RESOLVED** to note the current Forward Plan of Executive Decisions which identified any relevant items for inclusion within their work programme.

38. WORK PROGRAMME 2021/2022

The Senior Democratic Services Officer introduced the report which considered the work programme for the municipal year 2021/22 and asked the committee if they had any further items that they would wish to be considered for the work programme. No items were suggested at the meeting. The officer therefore suggested that if items were forthcoming in between meetings that they could be directed to the Senior Democratic Services Officer who would add them to a list for discussion at the next Group Representatives / Agenda Setting meeting.

AGREED ACTIONS

The Children and Education Scrutiny Committee **RESOLVED** to note the work programme for 2021/2022.

39. The date of next meetings were noted as being:

- 9 February 2022 – Joint Scrutiny Meeting – Budget Phase Two
- 10 March 2022 – Children and Education Scrutiny Committee

The Chair thanked Lou Williams, Service Director for Children's Services for all of his support and expert knowledge of which he had provided to the committee whilst in his role as Service Director for Children's Services.

Chair

7.00pm to 8. 55pm

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