

Minutes

of the Meeting of the

Children & Young People Services Policy & Scrutiny Panel

Friday, 23rd March 2018

held at the Town Hall, Weston-super-Mare, Somerset.

Meeting Commenced: 10.00 am Meeting Concluded: 12.15pm

Councillors:

P Ann Harley (Chairman)

P David Oyns(Vice-Chairman)

A Karen Barclay

P Ericka Blades

A Donald Davies

- Judith Hadley

P Denise Hunt

P Liz Wells

P Roz Willis

P James Tonkin (substituting for Donald Davies)

- Michael Bell

- Mary Blatchford

- Bob Garner

P David Hitchins

P Kate Stowey

P Martin Williams

P Deborah Yamanaka

P: Present

A: Apologies for absence submitted

Other Councillors in attendance: Felicity Baker, Jan Barber, Jill Iles, Ruth Jacobs, Reyna Knight, Lisa Pilgrim

Officers in attendance: Steve Devine, Jackie Milton, Philippa Penney, Eifion Price, Sheila Smith, Samantha Usher, Sally Varley

CAY Declarations of Interest by Members

21

None

CAY Minutes of the Meeting held on 17th November 2017 (Agenda Item 4.1)

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Resolved: that the minutes of the meeting be approved as a correct record.

CAY Minutes of the Meeting held on 23rd January 2018 (Agenda Item 4.2)

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Resolved: that the minutes of the meeting be approved as a correct record.

CAY 24 Report of the Assistant Executive Member (Agenda Item 12)

The Assistant Executive Member presented the report. In response to a question on Adoption West, it was confirmed that there had been a delay to the launch date until July 2018 to allow for completion of the tender process, but that the scheme remained in budget.

Concluded: that the Panel receive the report

CAY 25 Welfare Provision Scheme (Agenda Item 6)

The Head of Support Services Partnership & Customer Services outlined the issues raised by the Children & Young People Services Policy & Scrutiny Panel on 23rd January 2018 in its consideration of the changes proposed in the council's Welfare Provision Scheme (CSD Decision 109) and provided the further information and clarification sought by the Panel.

The decision to amend the scheme had been reviewed by the Executive Member, following further advice and information from officers, who had concluded that the decision was not to be implemented at this stage. Taking account of the matters raised by the Panel, it was proposed to defer the decision to allow consideration for a redesign of the scheme, and a new decision would be presented later in the year.

Concluded: that the Panel thanked officers for their work and engagement with the Members.

CAY 26 Draft Education Provision in North Somerset – A Commissioning Strategy 2018-2021 (Agenda Item 7)

The Service Leader, Strategic Planning and Governance, presented the report and gave a presentation, a copy of which is filed on the minute book. Part 1 of the strategy detailed the operational principles and procedures to be adopted by the Council when carrying out its statutory duties. Part 2 included the plans for the district for mainstream and local SEND schools, and noted the latest projections with suggested delivery options for the new and existing primary and secondary aged school places across the district (via clusters). It also looked at the provision of services for vulnerable learners, and provided a summary of the need for early years places across the district.

The strategy covered the immediate three year period due to the rapidly developing landscape of change. The document gave narrative to explain the power balance and relationships between schools and local authorities, outlining what we would do as a council, what we would expect from our partners, and also what we would not do.

In asking questions about the robustness of the strategy, Members were reassured as to the importance of partnership working. Co-equal partnership was key with the Education Excellence Partnership Board assisting in overseeing school-based activity, alongside Funding Agreements with

Academies. Whilst the Council remained the decision maker for local authority maintained schools, the Regional Schools Commissioner was the final decision maker for all academy changes. The Secretary of State/Regional Schools Commissioner made all decisions when opening new schools. Resources remained a challenge.

Concluded: that the Panel:

1. Provided collective and individual comments during the period 5 March – 23 April 2018 on the draft Education Provision in North Somerset ~ A Commissioning Strategy - 2018 – 2021 as part of the public consultation on its contents; and
2. Authorised the CYPs Policy & Scrutiny Panel's School Organisation Steering Group to review the responses to the consultation and to make recommendations, on the Panel's behalf and with their agreement, to the Executive.

CAY 27 Presumption competition for a new 210-place primary school at North End, Yatton (Agenda Item 8)

The Service Leader, Strategic Planning and Governance, presented the report, highlighting the proposal to build a new school in response to the significant new housing developments being proposed and delivered at North End, Yatton.

Members received an overview and timeline for the process of running a Presumption Competition, to ensure that the Council could fulfil its statutory duty of providing sufficient school places.

Concluded: that the Panel supported a recommendation to be submitted to the Executive Member for Children and Young People's Services to approve the progression of a Presumption Route competition to deliver a new 210-place primary school at North End, Yatton to open in September 2020.

CAY 28 Child Sexual Exploitation (Agenda Item 9)

The Service Leader, Referral and Assessment Team, presented the report setting out the work currently being undertaken in respect of child sexual exploitation.

Members discussed the success of methods used to disrupt CSE activity, and asked for further information regarding the number of convictions locally, data currently held by the police.

In response to a question raised, the Executive Member for Licencing agreed to make enquiries with officers regarding awareness training for taxi drivers, and whether the undertaking of any such training could be flagged as a consideration in the granting of a licence.

Concluded: that the Panel received and commented on the progress being made in respect of child sexual exploitation.

CAY 29 North Somerset Annual Complaints Report 2016/17 (Agenda Item 10)

The Complaints and Customer Services Manager presented the annual report for 2016/17, covering the Council's actions and responses to complaints about Children's Social Care.

The Complaints Officer had dealt with 56 representations in the 12 month period, 30 of which proceeded to Stage One, 3 to Stage Two, and 1 to Stage three. Many of the complaints were based around timeliness of response and of meetings and, whilst it was recognised that there were work load issues, focus was to be on managing the expectations of the service user to help them understand these pressures.

The majority of complaints originated from parents and adults rather than the children themselves.

Concluded: that the Panel received the content of the Annual Report on Children and Young People's Services, which was referred to scrutiny for consideration and any further action.

CAY 30 Performance and Financial Monitoring (Agenda Item 11)

The Assistant Director of Children's Support and Safeguarding presented the report. In addition to the standard items, the report included an overview of trends in the numbers of Children in Need, children on a Child Protection Plan and Children Looked After (CLA).

The increase in CLA numbers was attributed to an increase in both asylum seeking children and 16-17 year olds. Whilst the Social Impact Bond team had supported some of the younger children, there had been an increase in severe cases locally and nationally.

Following discussion, Members requested regular sight of the financial cost and volume detail in a format that had previously been received by some, as this had provided helpful clarity.

Members also noted no improvement in the overspend due to a number of significant pressures

Concluded: that the Panel received the financial and performance information presented in this report and gave comment on both areas for improvement and areas of good performance.

CAY 31 The Panel's Work Plan (Agenda Item 13)

The Scrutiny Specialist Practitioner presented the Work Plan, highlighting progress with each of the work areas to date.

Members were reminded of the Young People in North Somerset Democracy project, although this remained in its early stages.

A group of Members had responded to the Green Paper: Transforming Children and Young People's Mental Health Provision, a copy of which accompanied the Work Plan as Appendix 1.

Further engagement for Members with the High Impact Families, troubled families programme was being arranged for May to provide information on progress, the DCLG national annual report, and progress with the self-assessment action plan.

The Chairman referred to successful foster carers' conference which had taken place recently, and also the current review of the strategy, which would be reviewed by the Panel in June.

The Ofsted Action Plan for the North Somerset Safeguarding Children Board was also presented as Appendix 2. Members agreed to consider this in more detail at the next Panel meeting.

Concluded: that the Panel discussed and updated the Work Plan accordingly.

Chairman
