

Minutes

of the Meeting of

The Children and Young People's Policy and Scrutiny Panel

Thursday, 20 October 2022

New Council Chamber - Town Hall

Meeting Commenced: 10.05 am

Meeting Concluded: 12.10 pm

Councillors:

Wendy Griggs (Chairman)
Don Davies (Vice-chairman)

Marc Aplin
Caroline Cherry
Hugh Gregor
Ann Harley
Timothy Snaden

Karin Haverson (substitute)
Ian Parker (substitute)
Richard Tucker (substitute)

Apologies: Councillors: Ciaran Cronnelly, Mark Crosby, Nicola Holland, Ruth Jacobs, Huw James, Lisa Pilgrim and Richard Westwood.

Officers in attendance: Sheila Smith, Becky Hopkins, Sally Varley, Katherine Webb, Simon Lock (Children's Services); Sindy Dube, Brent Cross (Corporate Services).

CAY Public Discussion (Standing Order SSO 9)

1

None.

CAY Election of the Vice-Chairman for the 2022-23 municipal year

2

Resolved: that the election of Councillor Donald Davies as Vice-chairman at the informal meeting of 10 June 2022 be endorsed.

CAY Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (Standing Order 37)

3

None.

CAY Minutes

4

Minutes of the Panel meeting held on 10 March 2022 – to approve as a correct record.

Notes of the informal panel meeting held on 16 June 2022 – for noting.

Resolved: that

i) the minutes of the meeting of 10 March 2022 be approved as a correct record; and that

ii) the notes of the informal meeting of 16 June 2022 be noted.

CAY 5 Matters referred by Council, the Executive, other Committees and Panels (if any)

None.

CAY 6 Children's Improvement Progress

The Director of Children's Services presented the report, which updated the Panel on the Ofsted visit to the Front Door service, and the follow-up visit by Mark Riddell (the DfE's national advisor on care leavers) to the Care Leavers' Service.

Attention was drawn to the key performance indicators, which compared with statistical neighbours and national comparators. Ofsted had suggested that the practice framework of 'curiosity and openness' was not yet consistent, although the Front Door Service had been on a positive journey since the Ofsted ILACS inspection in March 2020.

Mark Riddell's visit focused on the 13 recommendations for improvement after his last visit, and the report reflected that these had been worked on.

In discussion, the following points were raised (officer responses in italics):

- How many positions were open in the service, and how many agency staff were being employed to fill in the gaps? *There was an increase in the number of vacancies which were being filled in by locum staff. The workforce strategy had been refreshed and a rolling employment campaign had been implemented. Early intervention had been focused on to prevent the need for statutory intervention later on, which ameliorated the staffing need.*
- Was there an update on home-educated children? *The numbers of these were slowly reducing, although there was a concern that these children showed an increase in anxiety post-Covid.*

Concluded: that the report be received and that Members' comments be forwarded to officers in the form of minutes.

CAY 7 CYPS task-and-finish groups update

The Chairman of the Children and Young People's Policy and Scrutiny Panel presented the report, which updated the Panel on the activities of the three task-and-finish groups set up by the Panel, as well as the activity of the School Organisation Standing Group. The work of the Care Leavers NEET working group was now complete, and a report would be sent to Members in due course.

Concluded: that the report be received and that Members' comments be forwarded to officers in the form of minutes.

CAY 8 Schools Capital Programme

The Head of Strategic Planning & Governance updated the Panel on the details of the Basic Need allocations, the Special Provision High Needs grant, and the School Condition allocation announced by the Department for Education in March.

In discussion, Members raised the following: the works required at Banwell School; discussion with the young people on the SEND Council about what they needed from Nurture Groups; that traffic enforcement of the pedestrian crossing outside Banwell School was needed; whether the funding would meet the need for future SEN provision; and projections of demographics for SEND.

Concluded: that the report be received, and the Members' comments forwarded to officers in the form of minutes.

CAY 9 Adoption West Annual Report

The Assistant Director of Children's Services presented the 2021/22 Annual Report from Adoption West, the Regional Adoption Agency commissioned by six local authorities including North Somerset.

Members then discussed disruptions to adoptions caused by the needs of children and the refresh of the Adoption Protocol that was due later in the year.

Concluded: that the report be received, and Members' comments be forwarded to officers in the form of minutes.

CAY 10 Month 5 Children's Services Budget Monitor

The report was presented by the Principal Accountant (Children's Services), and focused on the forecast spend against budget, and the risks and opportunities associated with the medium-term position.

Concluded: that the report be received, and Members' comments be forwarded to officers in the form of minutes.

CAY 11 North Somerset Annual Children's Social Care Complaints and Compliments report for the 2021-22 financial year

The Interim Directorate Governance and Complaints Manager presented the report, which covered the Council's actions and responses to complaints and compliments about Children's Social Care. There had been 43 complaints and 19 compliments in the 2021/22 financial year.

The new Directorate Governance & Complaints Manager would begin in post on 1 November 2022 and would start investigating ways to capture and implement lessons learned as a result of complaints.

Concluded: that the report be received, and Members' comments be forwarded to officers in the form of minutes.

CAY 12 **Future Governance of the Music Service**

The Head of North Somerset and South Gloucestershire Music Services, and Strategic Consultant: B&NES Music Service presented the report which proposed actions to protect the music offer for young people and build a robust music education future for young people in North Somerset. The proposal was for North Somerset Music Service to merge with Bath and North East Somerset and South Gloucestershire Music Services and spin out of the local authority into an independent company.

Discussion by Members focused on the overall funding of Music Services by the government, the new funding model brought in by the Department for Education, and whether the Music Service would continue to be able to reach all those who would benefit from it.

Concluded: that

- i) the Panel recommend approval to the Executive of the proposal that the Music Service form a tri-LA shared service with B&NES and South Gloucestershire; and that
- ii) the Panel recommend approval to the Executive of the shared service being established as an independent organisation outside the three Councils, taking forward and expanding a broader, universal youth music education offer on behalf of the three Councils.

CAY 13 **The Panel's Work Plan**

The Scrutiny Officer discussed the Panel's work plan and invited discussion with Members for additional items to add to it, as well as picking up any actions from the meeting. Members were reminded that as invitations to the working group meetings were sent to all Panel Members, they could attend these even if they had not previously been involved with a specific working group.

Concluded: that the work plan be updated.

Chairman
