

CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the meeting held on Tuesday, 27 September 2011 commencing at 10.00 am and finishing at 12.50 pm

Present:

Voting Members: Councillor Ann Bonner – in the Chair

Councillor Dave Sexon (Deputy Chairman)
Councillor Neil Owen
Councillor M. Altaf-Khan
Councillor Marilyn Badcock
Councillor Mrs Anda Fitzgerald-O'Connor
Councillor Don Seale
Councillor Nicholas P. Turner
Councillor Michael Waine

Other Members in Attendance:

Co-opted Members: Mr Chris Bevan
Mrs Sue Matthew

By Invitation:

Officers:

Whole of meeting Jan Paine, Deputy Director, Children's Services -
Education and Early Intervention
Roger Edwards, Scrutiny Officer

Part of meeting

Agenda Item

6

Officer Attending

Creighton Muirhead, 5-11 Standards & Progress
Manager CEF

7

Jim Leivers, Deputy Director for Children's Social Care

The Scrutiny Committee considered the matters, reports and recommendations contained or referred to in the agenda for the meeting [, together with a schedule of addenda tabled at the meeting/the following additional documents:] and agreed as set out below. Copies of the agenda and reports [agenda, reports and schedule/additional documents] are attached to the signed Minutes.

151/11 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND TEMPORARY APPOINTMENTS

(Agenda No. 1)

Apologies were received from Councillor Janet Godden who was replaced by Councillor Jenny Hannaby.

152/11 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST - SEE GUIDANCE NOTE ON THE BACK PAGE

(Agenda No. 2)

There were no declarations of interest.

153/11 MINUTES

(Agenda No. 3)

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 12 July 2011 were approved and signed with one amendment: the addition of Councillor M. Altaf-Khan to the list of attendees at the meeting.

154/11 SPEAKING TO OR PETITIONING THE COMMITTEE

(Agenda No. 4)

There were no speakers or petitions.

155/11 DIRECTOR'S UPDATE

(Agenda No. 5)

The Director's update was presented by the Deputy Director, Children's Services - Education and Early Intervention. The presentation was followed by questions from the Committee members primarily around issues of funding and early intervention. The Chairman asked that the following information should be provided in a written report to members:

- More information on the Local Authority Central Spend Equivalent Grant (LACSEG) funding methodology
- More information on the items described as "unsure" in the savings programme
- Updates on Early Intervention; Academies, Free Schools and University Technical Colleges (UTCs); the Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) residential unit and 25 hour provision for children out of school due to illness.

156/11 SELECT COMMITTEE OUTCOME AND KS1 REPORT

(Agenda No. 6)

The Committee received a draft report on the outcomes resulting from the select committee style review of Key Stage 1 attainment that had taken place in July. A number of amendments to the report were suggested. They will be incorporated into an amended draft that will be returned to the November meeting of the Committee for further discussion.

During the discussion on KS1 attainment reference was made to a new strategy being developed by the Children, Education and Families Directorate that would incorporate recommendations from the Committee's report and also from a recent seminar held by the City Council. It was agreed that the strategy should be brought to the November 8th meeting of the Committee.

157/11 SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN

(Agenda No. 7)

The Deputy Director for Children's Social Care provided presentation and an update on referrals, assessments and admissions to care etc. and further developments since November 2010. The Deputy Director reported that the budget and performance were both being managed well.

Data showed that there had been improvements in most safeguarding indicators and year-on-year increases in the numbers of contacts, referrals, initial assessments and core assessments since 2007/08. Oxfordshire was performing above the national average for the number of initial assessments completed within 7 working days and core assessments within 35 working days. The number of Oxfordshire children subject to a Child Protection Plan is forecast to have increased by almost 60% between 2006 and the end of 2011.

The number of Child Protection Reviews held on time had reduced slightly (to 98.5%) as had the proportion of initial case conferences held within 15 working days. The number of CP enquiries continued to increase while the numbers of Looked After Children (LAC) remained fairly static.

Timeliness of LAC reviews is slightly below target and numbers of adoptions had fallen since 2006. The number of care leavers in suitable accommodation had fallen below the target level.

The number of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeker Children arriving in Oxfordshire had fallen markedly since 2007 (down from 86 to 20).

Members congratulated the division on the good work being done.

Members asked for more information on what schools Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children were placed in.

158/11 WORK PROGRAMME REFRESH DISCUSSION

(Agenda No. 8)

It was agreed that a briefing on schools admissions policy should be added to the item on Free Schools and Academies that is already in the work programme.

It was also agreed to hold a seminar on NEETS and Apprenticeships in the Spring of 2012 with emphasis on Sciences and the Business and Skills Team.

Finally, it was agreed that Special Schools and Admissions should be added to the work programme once the Hubs have been functioning for a few months.

159/11 FORWARD PLAN

(Agenda No. 9)

There were no items on the Forward Plan.

160/11 CLOSE OF MEETING

(Agenda No. 10)

The meeting closed at 12.50.

..... in the Chair

Date of signing