

# MINUTES OF THE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SELECT COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 12 January 2016 at 7.30 pm

PRESENT: Councillors Hilary Moore (Chair), Luke Sorba (Vice-Chair), Chris Barnham, Liz Johnston-Franklin, Jacq Paschoud, John Paschoud, Jonathan Slater, Alan Till, Sharon Archibald (Parent Governor Representative), Gail Exon (Church of England), Kevin Mantle (Parent Governor representative for special schools) and Monsignor N Rotheron (Roman Catholic Church)

APOLOGIES: Councillors Andre Bourne

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor Paul Maslin (Cabinet Member for Children and Young People), Margaret Brightman (Pupil Places Manager), Katy Brown (Advisor to the Young Mayor), Yolande Burgess (Strategy Director, London Councils) (London Councils), Tony Cisse (Youth Engagement Coordinator, Youth Engagement Lewisham) (Youth Engagement Lewisham), Judith Denyer (Operations Director, Prospects) (Prospects), Alan Docksey (Head of Resources & Performance, CYP), Wendy Geraghty (Lead Clinician) (Lewisham CAMHS, South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust), Tyreese Hines (Young Advisor), Caroline Hirst (Joint Commissioner, Children and Young People's Services), Janice Pigott (Regional Director, London, National Careers Service) (National Careers Service), Nathan Pritchard (Interim Service Manager, Early Intervention Services), Chris Threlfall (Head of Education Infrastructure), Patrick Ward (Virtual Schools Headteacher), Sara Williams (Executive Director, Children and Young People), Saffron Worrell (Lewisham Young Advisers) and Katie Wood (Scrutiny Manager)

## 1. Minutes of the meeting held on 18th November

**RESOLVED:** That

- 1) The minutes of the Select Committee meeting held on 18 November 2015 be agreed as accurate record of proceedings subject to the following amendment:

Monsignor Nick Rotheron be included on the attendance list as present.

- 2) That following the item on the Future the Youth Service at the Committee meeting on 18 November 2016; the Committee recommends that the Youth Service continue to consult and work with voluntary organisations that deliver youth activities in the borough. In particular, in areas where there is currently no direct Council youth provision, such as the seven wards in Lewisham East, to ensure that the current provision is not reduced or ended when the Mutual comes into operation.

## **2. Declarations of interest**

Councillor John Paschoud declared a personal interest in item 3 as he was a STEM Ambassador (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) through STEMNET and in item 7 as he as a member of Voluntary Action Lewisham and on their Children and Young People Steering Group.

Councillor Jacq Paschoud declared a personal interest in item 3 as her husband was a STEM Ambassador through STEMNET and in item 7 as her husband was a member of Voluntary Action Lewisham and on their Children and Young People Steering Group.

Councillor Jonathan Slater declared a personal interest in item 4 as he was the London Borough of Lewisham Mental Health Champion.

## **3. Independent Advice and Guidance in Schools - evidence session 2**

3.1 Yolande Burgess, Strategy Director at London Councils, gave a presentation to the Committee highlighting the following key points:

- London Council's, the Mayor of London's Office and the London Enterprise Panel had worked with London Boroughs and Doctor Deirdre Hughes OBE to produce the report "London Ambitions – Shaping successful careers offer for all young Londoners".
- The report made seven key recommendations
  - 1) That every young Londoner should have impartial independent and personalised careers advice including face to face guidance;
  - 2) That every young Londoner should have 100 hours experience of the world of work;
  - 3) That every Secondary School and College should have in place an explicit publicised careers policy and curriculum;
  - 4) That Schools and Colleges have a Governor with oversight for ensuring the organisation supports all students to relate their learning to careers and the world of work from an early age.
  - 5) All Schools and Colleges have up to date labour market intelligence and information available for students and parents.
  - 6) "Careers Clusters" should be developed to share resources and intelligence.
  - 7) The development of the London Ambitions portal for schools and colleges to easily find high-quality careers provision.
- It was essential that employers were involved in careers guidance and in intelligence gathering on labour market trends.
- There was £13 million of European Social Fund money available through the London Enterprise Panel which local authorities could bid for to work with young people in particular those who were NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) or at risk of NEET to form cluster groups.

- There were examples of good practice across London but the aim was that every young person in London got a good careers offer irrespective of location or any other factor.
- The Information, Advice and Guidance network in Lewisham was strong and robust.

3.2 In response to questions from the Committee, the following key points were raised:

- The 100 hours of experience of the world of work could include a range of experiences and was not limited to work experience placements. These experiences could start from the age of seven years old.
- There was evidence that some young people were closing off options to themselves from a very young age and in particular many girls were closing off STEM subjects (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) from as young as 5 years old due to perceptions of what was gender appropriateness.
- In terms of involvement of employers in careers offers to young people it was important to consider all types of employers including sole traders and micro businesses as well as larger employers. It was important to uncomplicate the requests to Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) to reduce barriers to their involvement.
- London Councils was consistently lobbying for schools to have funding for careers guidance. Once processes were imbedded the resources needed to maintain them would reduce but at first it could be more resource intensive to embed a successful careers offer in the first instance.
- The London Ambitions Portal was due to be available from March and would help local authorities and schools to navigate the information and offers available around information and careers guidance.
- It was important to ensure that there was a good offer for young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. They were statistically more likely to be NEET than other young people and the offer to those with SEND needed to be tailored to their particular needs. Some employers were closing off a talent pool by not adapting to support young people with SEND.

3.3 Patrick Ward, Virtual Headteacher, London Borough of Lewisham gave a presentation to the Committee regarding young people in care in Lewisham, highlighting the following key points:

- For looked after children, the team knew a lot about the individual young people. They had a Personal Education Plan (PEP) and a named professional so interests and talents could be understood and noted.
- Support started from KS2 (Key Stage 2) as research indicated more success if young people had support from a younger age.

- From KS2 every child in care in Lewisham received careers advice and by 18 years old every child in care had had 100 hours experience of the world of work.
- The team agree targets with the young people to ensure support is appropriate and targeted to their interests/talents and abilities.
- Only 50% of Lewisham looked after children attend mainstream schools in Lewisham – of those that do, 100% have received two weeks work experience by the age of 18 years.
- A priority of the team was ensuring that those young people educated outside the borough also received the same offer.
- Currently the team had not seen the same level of uptake of work experience and employer engagement for those with SEND and this was a priority for improvement.
- Young people in care were arguably more engaged about thinking about adulthood due to their backgrounds.

3.4 In the discussion that followed, the following key points were raised:

- Some Looked After Children were educated outside the borough for a number of reasons. Reasons included the need for a specific educational offer that was not available within Lewisham or if a young person was at risk in a particular locality and therefore needed to be educated outside the borough.
- For the Looked After Children Team and Virtual School to improve the amount of oversight of these young people it would be important to strengthen partnership working with neighbouring boroughs.

3.5 Janice Pigott, Regional Director, National Careers Service, Prospects gave a presentation to the Committee highlighting the following key points:

- The service provided careers information, advice and guidance and was funded by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills. The service was contracted out and in London provided by Prospects.
- There was a national contact number that people could access to receive advice and guidance.
- Between April to December 2015, 2500 Lewisham residents contacted the National Careers Service, of those 400 were aged 18-24 years old. This provides an indication of usage levels by those just outside the age range for the statutory offer.
- The National Careers Service website contained lots of information to support people of all ages.
- Brokering deals with employers for them to provide information on the world of work was important.
- Resources were focussed on schools that didn't have employer links already.
- In 2015, Prospects on behalf of the National Careers Service, worked with 3000 young people across London, work included mock interviews, inspirational talks and providing information on labour market trends etc.

- The National Careers Service supported the principal of young people having a minimum of 100 hours of experience of the world of work.

3.6 In response to questions from Members of the Committee, the following key points were raised:

- It could be challenging to get the information to the young people. Working with lots of partners was key. The Careers Service had used marketing approaches such as giving out Oyster card holders with QR codes on to generate interest and awareness of the website.
- Working with partner organisations such as the London Enterprise Panel, London Councils and the Institute of Education Post 14 network was important.
- Concerns were raised that some organisations such as the Skills Funding Agency and the New Careers Enterprise Company were not sufficiently focussed on those groups who currently had a higher statistical probability of having poor outcomes in terms of likelihood of becoming NEET.

3.7 Judith Denyer, Operations Director, Prospects presented to the Committee highlighting the following key points:

- Prospects worked across ten local authorities in London.
- Examples of good practice of Careers, Advice, Information and guidance included to following examples from a policy point of view: The Gatsby Report; London Ambitions; and the Parliamentary Education Select Committee Review on Careers Guidance for Young People.
- There were consistent themes across the guidance including: the importance of ensuring guidance was personalised for the individual young person; there was an opportunity for one to one, face to face consultations; the strategy adopted by the school or educational establishment had sufficient knowledge about and access to employers and higher education establishments; the importance of drawing on the expertise and networking opportunities from alumni networks; and that there was access to mentors.
- A summary of examples of good practice was tabled at the meeting a copy of which will be interleaved with the agenda.
- Prospects were running a mentoring programme called “Youth Contract” which was supporting 16-17 year olds with no or few GCSEs. Experience from working with young people and listening to their feedback had showed that persistence was very important in terms of contact from the mentor and that this was particularly the case with the most vulnerable young people.
- Mentoring also needed to include resilience mentoring – helping young people understand and learn from set-backs and rejections and seeing this as part of the process and thinking about how to learn from it and not as a failure.

- Prospects employed eight young people per year through its apprenticeship scheme who had previously been NEET.
- Other groups worked with included young people from Pupil Referral Units, Youth Offending Services, and Looked After Children.
- In terms of quantifying the success of Careers Information Advice and Guidance, analysing NEET figures and “Unknown” figures was important. Some boroughs had low NEET levels but very high levels of “unknown” young people and it was important to focus on improving tracking in these instances.

3.8 Following questions from Members of the Committee, the following key points were raised:

- LB Lewisham had been involved in the Youth Contract project. The project was finishing in May 2016.
- There was a new round of European Social Fund funding which was focussing on NEET young people and local authorities and other organisations would be eligible to bid for this.

3.9 Tony Cisse, Youth Engagement Lewisham gave a presentation to the Committee, a copy of which will be interleaved with the agenda. During the presentation, the following key points were highlighted:

- Youth Engagement Lewisham provided Information, advice and guidance to young people who were: Looked After or Care Leavers; in the Youth Offending System; Young Carers; Homeless; Teenage Parents; and those who were NEET or at risk of becoming NEET.
- In terms of good practice, their experience was that it was important to have open ended support for vulnerable young people and those with complex needs. One session would not be enough and it was important to be available for young people when the timing was right for them through drop-in sessions and following up with them.
- Youth Engagement Lewisham provided a weekly jobs and opportunities bulletin for young people in Lewisham which had 500 subscribers and included apprenticeships, volunteering opportunities, part-time work and details of how to access information.
- The experience of Youth Engagement Lewisham was that it was very important to liaise with parents and carers. Some had limited understanding of the UK systems with language barriers and lack of experience themselves often limiting the support they could offer and their understanding of what decisions the young person needed to make.
- Many of the young people supported had problematic schooling, some with no GCSEs. Youth Engagement Lewisham provided intensive surgeries for those most at risk.
- When considering apprenticeships and traineeships it was important for advisors and young people to be aware that these were not always uniform in quality. Some offered excellent development and career experience whereas others were of very poor quality.

- One of the problems faced was a lack of robust labour market information both currently and predicting future trends.
- It was important to take time to talk to young people about their experiences and interests to help them understand how to choose a career or progression path with the greatest relevance to their skills and interests.
- There were still perceptions about how to get a job that were not always reflective of the reality for young people. Many employers now use questionnaires rather than interviews to select candidates and young people had to understand how to read applications to understand how to tailor CVs accordingly.
- It was important to consider volunteering as a possible route for some young people and this could be very beneficial to improving job prospects and motivation.
- 100 hours of experience of the world of work was a positive step and evidence had shown that young people who had visited three or more work places were less likely to become NEET.

3.10 In the discussion that followed the following key points were raised:

- Monitoring of apprenticeships was done on a National level and LB Lewisham was only able to monitor its own apprenticeships. Some positions being advertised as apprenticeships appeared to not meet criteria and were likely to offer poor opportunities for young people. It was important to educate young people to look for the signs to indicate whether the opportunities were as good as they first appeared. The NEET and EET statistics masked the fact that some of those in employment were in poor apprenticeships.
- Lewisham Young Women's Resource Project provided support for young mothers in Lewisham.
- Planning policy in Lewisham encouraged contractors to use apprenticeships where possible yet the experience of Youth Engagement Lewisham was that there was not many opportunities coming forward. This could be further looked into to see if there were any more possibilities to encourage apprenticeships in the construction industry for Lewisham young people.

3.11 Saffron Worrell and Tyreese Hines, Young Advisors, addressed the Committee highlighting the following key points:

- Young people's mental health was an important issue that was relevant in the IAG context and often appeared to be neglected from the discussions. There was very little support and preparation for the stresses of work and how to deal with them and what to do if something did go wrong. An example of this included panic attacks which many young people suffer from. Starting a new job was very scary and having no awareness or guidance on how to act if you should have a panic attack meant there was an extra stress.
- Another issue on which appeared to have been neglected was on budgeting and finance. This couldn't be seen in isolation and young

people needed to have a clear understanding of the link between money and career and how to manage their money once they were working. If young people failed to manage their money successfully they often experienced stress and drop-out rates would be likely to increase.

- Volunteering was very important but many schools did not support this and were often unhappy if students were spending too much time volunteering or doing paid work. The skills learnt through volunteering were often essential for securing further education or jobs and it was important that schools and education establishments understood this.
- The framework was a positive step and outside organisations coming into school was a definite advantage.
- Too many young people were only getting one week of work experience and not always of a high quality. Students had to do further work experience themselves in school holidays. This was easier for some students than others and meant that many missed out.

### 3.12 **RESOLVED:** That

The report and presentations be noted and that the speakers be thanked for attending.

## 4. **Update on Young People's Mental Health Review**

4.1 Caroline Hirst, Commissioner and Wendy Gerraghty, South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust (SLaM) introduced the update on the response to the Committee's recommendations from their review on Young People's Mental Health. In response to questions from the Committee, the following key points were raised:

- In recommendation 7 of the review, the Children and Young People Select Committee had recommended that it should carry out further work looking at incidences of self-harm amongst young people and why this had increased. This could be considered when looking at the 2016/17 work programme.
- Presentations of self-harm at Lewisham Hospital Accident and Emergency were monitored and were increasing. This mirrored National and London trends. There was still not full understanding of the reasons for these increases, but it was felt that young people were under increasing levels of pressure.
- To respond to the increased incidences of self-harm, Lewisham Council had secured resources through NHS England to work in partnership with University Hospital London, the Police and SLaM to create a crisis care service for Children and Young People. Work is being undertaken through the Headstart Lewisham programme to raise awareness on mental health.
- Young Advisors present, reported that they felt a lot of pressure came from schools themselves and it felt like many schools were



not always geared up to recognise signs of mental illness, stress and anxiety.

- Transition between young people with mental health issues to adult social care could be challenging due to the different threshold requirements to meet eligibility criteria for support. Some services such as those that supported young people with psychosis had smoother transition paths than young people who had more sporadic needs.
- The London Borough of Lewisham had been allocated £609k per year funding over the next five years through the “Future in Mind” programme. This funding would be for targeting specific issues surrounding access, workforce development, and support for vulnerable children.
- Analysis of demographics and data collection was important when planning services and LB Lewisham and the Lewisham Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) were in the process of recruiting for a specific data management post in the Child and Adult Mental Health Service to support this.
- The HeadStart Lewisham programme had a focus on support for parents and carers in addition to children and young people aged 10-16. This included an online resource called “Work it out Lewisham”. This could be linked to careers advice services.
- **Standing orders were suspended at 9.55pm.**

#### 4.2 **RESOLVED:** That

The report be noted.

### 5. **Schools Capacity Planning**

5.1 Chris Threlfall, Head of School Infrastructure and Margaret Brightman, Pupil Places Manager gave a presentation to the Committee, a copy of which is included in the agenda. Following questions from Members of the Committee, the following key points were highlighted:

- 23% of Children with Special Educational Needs or Disability were placed outside the borough or in independent schools. This was often through a lack of provision within the borough to cater for specific needs.
- There was potential for a temporary new provision on the vacated Brent Knoll site which would increase SEND provision in Lewisham.
- Schools would be facing increasing budgetary pressures with the continuing Government cuts to funding.
- Raising standards in secondary provision across Lewisham would mean less movement of children out of borough at the end of year 6 which would help ensure places in years 7 and above were filled.

#### 5.2 **RESOLVED:** That

The presentation be noted.

## **6. Update on Savings Proposals**

### **6.1 RESOLVED:** That

The report be noted.

## **7. Children's Centre Saving Proposal - implementation monitoring**

7.1 Nathan Pritchard, Interim Service Manager, Early Intervention Services gave a presentation to the Committee. During the presentation and in responses to questions from the Committee, the following key points were highlighted:

- A total of £1.9 million savings were being made between 2015/16 and 2016/17 from the Early Intervention Services Budget. This was divided evenly over the two years.
- All Children's Centres had remained open except for Heathside and Lethbridge which had been planned for closure previously as the building was being demolished.
- There were regular performance meetings with providers and they were meeting performance targets.
- School based centres had retained the same opening hours as previously but there was some reduction at sites covered by area providers. The reductions were largely down to now only being open when activities were taking place rather than having an administrator present and the centres being "open" even when there were no activities.
- The amendments to the number of targeted families providers were expected to work with in the children's centres was down to new more robust methodology in assessing the profile of the areas.
- There had been a problem at Clyde (Area 1) with the "Tribal Management System" which was now being resolved.

### **7.2 RESOLVED:** That

The report be noted.

## **8. Select Committee work programme**

8.1 Katie Wood Scrutiny Manager introduced the report to the Committee.

### **8.2 RESOLVED:** That

The report be noted.

## **9. Referrals to Mayor and Cabinet**

There were no referrals to Mayor and Cabinet.

The meeting ended at 10.40 pm

Chair:

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Date:

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