

MINUTES OF THE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SELECT COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 30 April 2019 at 7.00 pm

PRESENT: Councillors Luke Sorba (Chair), Caroline Kalu (Vice-Chair), Colin Elliott, Octavia Holland, Coral Howard, Liz Johnston-Franklin, Hilary Moore, Jacq Paschoud, John Paschoud, Brooks (Parent Governor Representative - Primary Schools), Ward (Parent Governor Representative - Secondary Schools) and Monsignor N Rotheron (Church Representative) and

APOLOGIES: Kevin Mantle and Gail Exon

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor Chris Barnham (Cabinet Member for School Performance and Children's Services), Sara Williams (Executive Director, Children and Young People) (London Borough of Lewisham), Emma Aye-Kumi (Scrutiny Manager), Brenda Bartlett (Service Manager, CAMHS) (SLaM), Ruth Griffiths (Service Manager for Access Inclusion and Participation), Caroline Hirst (Joint Commissioner for Children and Young People's Services), Dr Omer Moghraby (Clinical Lead and Consultant Psychiatrist, CAMHS) and Angela Scattergood (Assistant Director, Education Services)

1. Confirmation of Chair and Vice Chair

- 1.1. The Scrutiny Manager opened the meeting and invited the committee to confirm the election of Cllr Luke Sorba as Chair and Cllr Caroline Kalu as Vice Chair.
- 1.2. It was RESOLVED that the Chair and Vice Chair be confirmed as Cllr Luke Sorba and Cllr Caroline Kalu respectively.

2. Minutes of the meeting held on 13 March 2019

- 2.1 Cllr Sorba chaired the meeting. Apologies were received from Gail Exon and Kevin Mantle. The Chair extended a welcome to Cllr Elliott, who was new to the committee.
- 2.2 The Chair proposed and it was RESOLVED that the order of the meeting be changed to take the remaining items in the following order:
 - Item 3 – Declarations of Interest
 - Item 4 – Responses to Referrals
 - Item 7 – CAMHS waiting times
 - Item 6 – In-depth review: exclusions from school
 - Item 8 – Children and Young People's Plan
 - Item 5 – Select Committee Work Programme
 - Item 9 – Referrals to Mayor and Cabinet

3. Declarations of Interest

3.1 Councillor Sorba declared an interest in respect of Item 7 – CAMHS waiting times. He is the Council's appointee to the Council of SLaM Governors. He also delivers workshops to the SLaM Recovery College.

4. Responses to Referrals to Mayor and Cabinet

4.1 None due.

5. Select Committee Work Programme

5.1 The Scrutiny Manager presented a suggested draft work programme and advised that the date for the Budget Cuts item had been confirmed as September rather than October as indicated in the report.

5.2 The Scrutiny Manager advised the Committee to retain sufficient capacity in the work programme to add any items that may arise throughout the course of the year, and to aim to scrutinise not more than three items per meeting.

5.3 The Chair shared his priorities as follows (in no particular order):

1. Following up on the exclusions review
2. CAMHS waiting list updates and follow up on Cllr Holland's review
3. Lewisham Learning – especially looking at underperforming groups of pupils
4. Data on attendance and results
5. SEND strategy
6. Children's Social Care
7. Budget
8. Early Help Review, including the Youth Service.

5.4 The Chair also proposed that the committee focus on feeding into the Early Help Review instead of carrying out an in-depth review.

5.5 Members of the Committee suggested the following items for scrutiny or in-depth review:

1. Maximising use of school buildings for the benefit of the community
2. Effects of temporary housing on children, especially education and 'under-schooling'
3. Children being educated in unregulated settings
4. Overcrowded housing
5. Domestic Violence

5.6 It was suggested that overcrowding and domestic violence would be better dealt with by the Housing and Safer Stronger Communities Select Committees, respectively.

5.7 It was agreed that the committee would be provided with a briefing note in respect of unregulated alternative provision.

5.8 There were concerns that scrutinising use of school buildings for the benefit of the community would come with some risk regarding schools becoming commercially competitive with each other, and a conflict between schools and the local authority

regarding the rightful recipient of the potential proceeds arising from community use of school buildings.

- 5.9 It was **MOVED**, **SECONDED** and **RESOLVED** that the time being 9:29pm, Standing Orders be suspended to allow for the completion of committee business.
- 5.10 It was agreed that the effects of temporary housing on children would be scrutinised in a single meeting on 16 October.
- 5.11 Members were in agreement that the committee should contribute to the Early Help Review and requested an additional opportunity to discuss Early Help at the meeting scheduled for 11 July.
- 5.12 Members were reminded that they had been invited to attend a meeting of the Healthier Communities Select Committee on 14 May for joint consideration of an item on BAME Mental Health. They were also reminded of a training session on Early Help on 16 May.
- 5.13 It was **RESOLVED** that:
1. The exclusions from school in-depth review and draft recommendations be considered on 12 June.
 2. Members receive a briefing on children being educated in unregulated settings
 3. An item on the effects of temporary accommodation on children be added to the work programme for consideration at 16 October meeting
 4. An additional item on the Early Help Review be added to the work programme for consideration at 11 July meeting.

6. In-depth review: Exclusions From School

- 6.1 The Scrutiny Manager introduced the item.
- 6.2 The Chair had prepared a draft set of recommendations for the Committee to consider and comment on.
- 6.3 The following was noted in discussion:
1. Members felt an Executive Summary would be helpful
 2. They also felt it would be helpful to group the recommendations by who they are for eg schools, local authority, etc
 3. Where a recommendation refers to lobbying, it should say who is to lobby whom
 4. Lewisham schools do not exclude children that have an EHCP, but children receiving SEN Support can be excluded. SEN Support was described as being 'a good step down' from an EHCP. In cases where an EHCP application had been rejected, schools would be expected to reapply. In most cases, SEN Support was in place because an application for EHCP had not met the threshold.
 5. Efforts were being made to build relationships with out of borough schools, particularly where trends were emerging.
 6. There was no 'Asian' category in the breakdown of excluded children because no child in that category had been excluded

7. One member felt it was important to look at any increase in permanent exclusions by an individual school in the context of the school's history. A change of head could explain a temporary increase in exclusions.
8. One member felt it should be noted that prior to the public health approach to reducing violence being implemented in Glasgow, the 'ground had been cleared' by an extremely tough police response to violent crime.
9. It was suggested that the report be published as a booklet and made available to the public to show that the local authority is committed to reducing exclusions.
10. Some members felt the recommendations needed to be more powerful so as not to underplay the report.
11. One member asked for a recommendation aimed at helping people to understand the process, including accessing independent support systems. Also a recommendation challenging Lewisham schools to do more to support the inclusion of Black children.
12. Having a recommendation around equalities training during Initial Teacher Training was important, and such training should be part of a training provider's contractual obligations.
13. Any recommendation to include reducing school exclusions as an explicit element of Lewisham's Children and Young People's Plan 2019-22 should have a tangible target attached.
14. It may be unlawful to require schools to prevent exclusion, rather any recommendation should be to require efforts to reduce exclusion.
15. A recommendation for CAMHS may be in order, that they take steps to ensure that all children and young people receive whatever help they need at the point that they need it.
16. Abbey Manor College has a lack of facilities and outside space. There should be a recommendation around improving the premises, even if this is a medium-long term aspiration owing to financing restraints.
17. The Cabinet Member gave assurances that this report was an important contribution to the aims set out in the Corporate Strategy.
18. There was an error at 7.4. The year 2015/16 was the worst year for exclusions.
19. It was requested that the recommendations be reviewed at the next meeting to allow the committee time to properly consider the report.

6.4 It was RESOLVED that:

1. Consideration of the report and recommendations be deferred until the next meeting on 12 June
2. An amended draft of the recommendations, incorporating the comments raised, be shared with the committee ahead of the next meeting.

7. CAMHS waiting times for Lewisham Children

- 7.1 The report was introduced by Caroline Hirst, Service Manager – Children's Joint Commissioning and LAC Placements, who was accompanied by Brenda Bartlett, Service Manager – Lewisham CAMHS and Dr Omer Moghraby - Clinical Lead and Consultant Psychiatrist at Lewisham CAMHS.
- 7.2 The committee heard details of various efforts to reduce the number of children and young people waiting 52 weeks or more for an assessment. There remained just one

person (down from 96 in October 2018) on the 52 week+ waiting list. This person had been offered an appointment.

7.3 The following was noted in response to questions from the committee:

1. While the Committee was pleased that the 52 week waiting list had been dramatically reduced, there was concerns as to whether the results would be sustainable.
2. Referral pathways were being improved to help keep the waiting time for assessment to a minimum
3. Saturday clinics and staff overtime had been key to reducing the backlog. For now this would continue.
4. Staff retention rates are good, but recruitment could be challenging as there is a national shortage of trained mental health practitioners and boroughs were having to compete for the best staff.
5. Links with other local providers such as Compass and Core Assets had been improved, resulting in better service.
6. The Committee received assurances that as much effort was going into treatment as into reducing the waiting list.
7. In addition to reducing the 52 week list, those approaching the 52 week mark had also been prioritised.
8. Workforce development was a priority. Job descriptions were being updated to give teams the freedom to look at their skills mix to ensure any skills gaps could be recruited to, rather than applying a set formula of particular disciplines. Increasing staff training was also aiding retention rates.
9. The vacancy rate was around 10 out of a staff body of 50/60. Some of these 10 posts were unfilled, some filled with temporary staff and some with local staff. There had been recent success in recruiting to a very senior role.
10. Where appropriate, some fixed term employees were applying for permanent positions across all levels, from administrative staff to specialist positions. It was hoped this would continue.
11. NHS England had provided a one off injection of funds which had been necessary due to the pace of change. It was not anticipated that a further injection would be needed.
12. CAMHS was working with schools to seek expressions of interest to be involved in a pilot scheme which would see the creation of a CAMHS post specifically focused on supporting schools.
13. Members requested a report back to the committee in a few months, to include data trends across the different wait times eg 3 months, 6 months, 39 weeks, 52 weeks, as well as the times between assessment and treatment.
14. The role of the Children's Wellbeing Practitioner was clarified. There had been some confusion around what the purpose of this role was. It was for children and young people whose needs could be met without the need for CAMHS intervention, such as with 6 weeks of CBT.

7.4 It was RESOLVED that

1. the report be noted
2. a further update be considered in 6 months' time

8. Children and Young People's Plan

8.1 Sara Williams, Executive Director for Children and Young People, introduced the report and invited comments from the Committee.

8.2 Members made the following points:

1. Lewisham is a changing place and the Children and Young People’s Plan could highlight some of the changes such as academisation, new schools, new homes, homelessness, demographic change etc
2. There were concerns that the stated Council priority “ensuring everyone receives the health, mental health, social care and support services they need” could be seen as ‘overpromising’
3. The universal offer for Early Years should be drawn out.
4. Outcomes need to be clear and evidence based. Priority 1.2 in Appendix 1 was referenced, and it was suggested that in respect of increased funded take up of 2 year old 3 year old and 4 year old places, including 30 hours entitlements, it may be helpful to set a baseline (x) and an aim (y). This would be a clearer and more measureable target.
5. There should be mention of the Youth Service in the services for children and young people as it is currently funded as a mutual.
6. The CYP Plan should include a commitment to minimising exclusions.
7. Priority 3 - in addition to Caribbean young people, White children eligible for Free School Meals should be stated in the “focus on groups who are underachieving or at risk or doing so”
8. Priority 4 – there needed to be more ‘meat on the bones’ of how it was envisaged that parents would be involved in service design and delivery.

8.3 It was RESOLVED that the report be noted.

8.4 Councillor Holland had a number of specific points to make and, rather than take up time in the meeting, she would email them to the Executive Director following the meeting.

9. Referrals to Mayor and Cabinet

9.1 No referrals were made.

The meeting ended at 9.35 pm

Chair: _____

Date: _____