

MINUTES OF THE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SELECT COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 11 January 2017 at 7.00 pm

PRESENT: Councillors Hilary Moore (Chair), Luke Sorba (Vice-Chair), Chris Barnham, Andre Bourne, David Britton, Simon Hooks, Liz Johnston-Franklin, Jacq Paschoud, Alan Till, Gail Exon (Church Representative) and Monsignor N Rotheron (Church Representative)

APOLOGIES: Councillors Helen Klier, Sharon Archibald and Kevin Mantle.

1. Minutes of the meeting held on 10 November 2016

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the meeting held on 10 November 2016 be agreed as a true and accurate record of the proceedings

2. Declarations of interest

Gail Exon declared a non-pecuniary interest as a Trustee on the Southwark Diocesan Board and as Governor of Trinity and Edmund Waller schools.

Councillor Sorba declared a non pecuniary interest as a governor of South London and Maudsley (SLaM) NHS Foundation Trust.

Councillor Paschoud declared a non pecuniary interest as Trust Governor of Watergate School.

3. Responses to Referrals to Mayor and Cabinet

None.

4. In-depth Review Transition from Primary to Secondary School - second evidence session

The Committee heard evidence from Dr Frances Rice, Senior Lecturer at Cardiff University and co-author of the School Transition and Adjustment Research Study (STARS).

She highlighted that the pastoral and academic aspects of school are linked and therefore support during the transition process is beneficial to both. The study found that *how* transition activities were carried out was more important than *what* was done.

A discussion followed in which the following was noted:

- There was no clear evidence either way to suggest whether transition would be better at 11 or 13. The research was clear, however, that fewer transitions led to better academic outcomes
- The all-through school model could potentially be beneficial to pupils

- Pastoral needs must be met in order to achieve academic success, but the Chief Inspector of Schools had said there was too much emphasis on pastoral support at the cost of academic learning.

The Chair thanked Dr Rice for her participation.

The Chair invited Members that had been on the recent visits to local primary and secondary schools to present their key findings.

The following was noted:

- The level of contact between primary and secondary staff was good
- Primary school children were anxious about what secondary school children are like. One school takes Year 7 pupils to visit Year 6 children which Members felt was beneficial for the primary children to dispel the myths and for the secondary children as a skills building exercise
- There is a huge time burden in dealing with transition, with primary schools wanting secondary schools to do more. Schools had a difficult task in balancing classroom teaching with transition. Schools were concerned about budget pressures impacting on their capacity to support transition.
- Prompt exchange of information from primary to secondary, in a standard format and on time, was necessary but not always happening
- Primary children were fearful of secondary children but with good support that fear quickly evaporated and rarely materialised
- The most talented children were going out of borough for secondary school. Lewisham needed to offer a high standard of secondary education to stop this from happening.
- The visits had revealed a lot of anxiety among both Y6 and Y7 children around the journey to and from school, which was a particular concern for children facing long journeys, often without local friends to travel with. This was particularly so for children travelling longer distance, for example to grammar school
- Members had been impressed that children between the ages of 10 and 12 had such clear ideas about their life and career plans
- Children considered community links an important factor in their school choice, such as being at the same school as cousins and other family members
- Thought was to be given to whether specific responsibility for transition should fall to a nominated school governor
- Thought was also to be given to whether Pupil Premium could be specifically allocated to transition work.

Officers informed the Committee that the back page advert of Lewisham Life would now be used to advertise Lewisham schools.

Jackie Jones, Service Manager – School Improvement, provided an update on the Transition Working Group (TWG) which had met earlier in the day. Key points to note were:

- Officers advised that to the draft Pupil Information Form the TWG proposed to add:
 - Language spoken at home
 - Secondary school the child is going to
 - How they like to learn
 - Embolden “**if possible**” so as to avoid raising hopes
- It was also planned to change the order of questions so “what are you looking forward to at secondary school?” came ahead of “what worries do you have”.
- The TWG had ascertained that the best time for Y6 to complete the leaflet was just before the May half term once SATS were completed as this was when primary schools tended to turn their focus to transition.
- Secondary schools would benefit from receiving the leaflets ahead of the Induction Day in July.
- The self-evaluation document had not been tested as there was a reluctance among secondary schools to engage given the size of the task. Work would continue to get secondary schools to test the document.
- Consideration was being given to creating an additional day, along the lines of the SEN day in March, for Children in Need (CIN) and children subject to a Care Order.
- The purpose of the day would be to enhance information sharing.

Officers were pleased to inform the Committee that there had been an approach made by the Globe Theatre to run a free transition activity around A Midsummer Night’s Dream for one Lewisham secondary and primary school.

RESOLVED: that the evidence of Dr Rice and Jackie Jones and the contents of the report be noted.

5. Safeguarding Services 6-monthly report

Stephen Kitchman (Director for Children’s Social Care) and Karen Neil (Service Manager – Qualitative Assurance) introduced the report.

The following points were made in discussion:

- Children cease to be subject to Child Protection Plans (CPP) for a range of reasons. Most ending of CPPs result in the child becoming categorised as a Child In Need (CIN), some become subject to care proceedings resulting in supervision or care orders.
- Referring to the table “CP Plans by Ethnicity”, Members noted that the combined total of Black children (Caribbean and African) subject to care plans was greater than the total number of White children (British and Other). However, a larger proportion of White children relative to the White population of the borough have CPPs than the proportion of Black children relative to the Black population.
- Members inquired about the ethnicity of parents of children in the “Mixed Ethnicity” category
- Neglect is the biggest issue for White British children with CPPs, but the reasons for this correlation are unknown. Stephen Kitchman outlined that

Neglect is a priority of the Lewisham Safeguarding Children Board and work is planned regarding patterns of need and response in the Borough.

- Sara Williams (Executive Director for Children and Young People) outlined her intention to approach Barking and Dagenham regarding tackling neglect..
- Reporting peaks in July and dips in August due to the school holidays. Summer holiday programmes cannot capture the same level of information as schools as there is no statutory obligation for children and young people to attend, and relationships take time to build.

RESOLVED:

1. that the report be noted
2. that Stephen Kitchman be requested to provide the number of children subject to supervision orders
3. that Stephen Kitchman be requested to provide a breakdown of Mixed Ethnicity by ethnicity of the parents

6. Child Sexual Exploitation Update

Stephen Kitchman, Director for Children's Social Care, and Geeta Subramaniam, Head of Service – Crime Reduction, introduced the item.

The Committee heard the progress update and the implementation of the Missing Exploited and Trafficked (MET) strategy and associated action plan. Officers updated regarding schools based awareness raising programmes.

RESOLVED:

1. that the report be noted

7. Update on Q11 Savings Proposal - Meliot Road

Stephen Kitchman presented the report, with Heather Brown (Development Manager).

In response to questions, the Committee heard that:

- The timetable had been devised to take account of the existing offering, and to fit around the core contact hours of 10am-5pm. Some flexibility had been built into the programme
- Meliot Road would be able to manage demand for court ordered assessments. The centre had capacity to deal with up to 120.
- The centre was currently offering support to Social Workers on Child Protection (CP) and Public Law Outline (PLO) which would with planned support be embedded into the work of field social workers.
- Work was underway to upskill the Social Work team.
- There was likely to be a savings gap of up to £134,000. It was hoped that this would be mitigated by other savings.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Committee agrees to review the full savings report to Mayor and Cabinet
2. That the Committee reviews this item after Meliot Road has been operational under the new arrangement for a full quarter.

8. Recommissioning School Nursing and Health Visiting

Under Section 100 (A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public were excluded from the meeting during discussion of this item because it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act as set out below and the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information:

Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

Warwick Tomsett, Head of Targeted Services and Joint Commissioning, introduced the item. Members were informed that there had been extensive consultation prior to procurement around what services should be provided. It was not possible to consult on who should provide the services as this would undermine the procurement process, nor was it possible to express a preference for a public or voluntary organisation over a profit-making organisation, for example.

Officers outlined how bids were evaluated for each contract, and gave an indication of the level of interest and profiles of organisations that had bid or expressed interest in bidding for the contracts.

RESOLVED:

- 1) that the content of the contract award report for the School Health Service be noted;
- 2) that progress on the tenders for the Young People's Health & Wellbeing Service and Health Visiting & Children's Centres tenders be noted.

9. School Place Planning Update - Draft Strategy and update on Free Schools

Councillor Paschoud declared a personal interest as Trust Governor of Watergate School.

Matthew Henaughan, Service Manager – School Place Planning, introduced the item.

The Committee heard that:

- officers were looking for potential sites for new schools
- greater special school provision is required within the borough
- Consideration had been given to part-funding schools with neighbouring boroughs for schools close to the border, but neighbouring boroughs were experiencing the same land constraints

The time being 9:20pm, it was MOVED, SECONDED and RESOLVED to suspend standing orders to allow the meeting to continue beyond two and a half hours.

- Some smaller schools were sharing resources. An example was sharing a member of staff or sharing IT services. In these cases one school would need to take the lead.
- 6 forms of entry were vital to the financial viability of Addey and Stanhope, and to any new secondary school.
- Reusing bulge classes was a cost-effective option as it attracted no additional capital cost. However, where children had left bulge classes midway through primary school, this impacted on the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) received by schools since schools received funding for the actual number of children on the roll, rather than the Published Admission Number (PAN).
- There were concerns regarding the availability of local teachers given the rising cost of living in London and school budgets tightening.
- Lewisham was in a good position to attract new talent, with Teaching School Alliances in the borough. Schools needed a range of staff for budgeting and affordability purposes.
- Lewisham was not unique in facing these issues – all London schools were in similar positions. The key would be to market the borough’s schools well.
- It was not known what impact Brexit would have on school roll projections.

RESOLVED: that the report be noted.

10. Select Committee work programme

Emma Aye-Kumi (Scrutiny Manager) summarised the work programme. Members were reminded that they were invited to attend the next meeting of Safer Stronger Select Committee on 17th January 2017 for the Youth Justice item.

RESOLVED: that the contents of the report be noted.

11. Referrals to Mayor and Cabinet

No referrals were made.

The meeting ended at 9:40pm

Chair: _____

Date: _____