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MINUTES OF THE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SELECT COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 1 July 2014 at 7.30 pm

PRESENT: Councillors John Paschoud (Chair), Brenda Dacres (Vice-Chair), Chris Barnham, David Britton, Liz Johnston-Franklin, Hilary Moore, Jacq Paschoud, Joan Reid, Luke Sorba, Alan Till, Sharon Archibald (Parent Governor Representative), Lisa Palin (Parent Governor Representative) and Mark Saunders (Parent Governor Representative), Gail Exon (Church Governor Representative) and Monsignor Nick Rotheron (Church Governor Representative)

ALSO PRESENT: Alan Docksey (Head of Resources & Performance, CYP), Andrew Hagger (Scrutiny Manager), Salena Mulhere (Overview and Scrutiny Manager), Ian Smith (Director Children's Social Care) (Directorate for Children & Young People, LBL), Frankie Sulke (Executive Director for Children and Young People) and Warwick Tomsett (Head of Targeted Services and Joint Commissioning)

1. Confirmation of Chair and Vice-Chair

Resolved:

The Committee confirmed the appointment of Cllr John Paschoud as Chair and Councillor Brenda Dacres as Vice-Chair of the Committee.

2. Minutes of the meeting held on 19 March 2014

Resolved:

The Committee approved the minutes of the meeting held on 19 March 2014

3. Declarations of interest

3.1 There were none.

4. Select Committee work programme

4.1 Andrew Hagger, Scrutiny Manager, introduced the work programme report, highlighting the terms of reference of the Committee, the different types of scrutiny available, suggested topics for the work programme and the draft work programme.

4.2 Councillor Paul Maslin, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People, addressed the Committee, highlighting the following key points:

- Three of the main priorities for Children and Young People outlined in the Lewisham Labour Party manifesto for 2014 were:
 - Improving secondary schools performance by 10%
 - Making sure that schools ensure our disadvantaged pupils get the most out of their education
 - Increasing primary school places
- Lewisham has met the challenges provided by the need for places so far; however it is now more difficult as some of the easier solutions have been pursued. There are limited sites for expanding schools, especially at sites

where there is high demand. Additionally there is a funding gap of around £20m.

- A key pressure is the current overspend in the budget, with increasing budget pressure from people with no recourse to public funds presenting themselves in the borough.
- The Council's role as corporate parent continues to be of high importance.

4.3 In response to questions from the Committee, Cllr Maslin and Frankie Sulke, Executive Director for Children and Young People, provided the following information:

- Further details on how the 10% increase in achievement will be delivered and measured will be developed. The approach will be to improve performance across the board, and improving results for those on the pupil premium will form an important part of improving results.
- The Mayor is committed to apprenticeships and recognises that there is a need for high quality vocational routes and qualifications.
- The focus of the pupil premium is on those with the biggest disadvantage. OfSTED holds schools to account for how pupil premium money is spent, and this is a key part of the Local Authority's challenge to schools.
- Schools are autonomous and it is not the Council's role to second guess how schools spend their money. However the Council does hold schools to account for their performance, including achievement gaps with pupil premium children. The Council is able to influence schools through strong leadership.
- Raising the Participation Age is a very important issue. From last September, all 17 year olds had to be in education or training and Lewisham has done well. The challenge now is for all 18 year olds to be in education or training by September 2015, which is a much harder challenge.
- Support is given to parents where it is needed, such as through early intervention and family support.
- Lewisham's primary school results were the 4th best in the country last year. Part of Lewisham's success has been through changing the levels of aspirations that people, whether parents or teachers, have for their children.

4.4 Frankie Sulke then addressed the Committee, providing some background to the Children and Young People's Directorate:

- The directorate deals with matters concerning those aged 0-19 in the borough and its aim is to radically improve the life chances of children in the borough.
- The quality of services provided is generally high and there is good integration across services, as well as good partnerships with outside bodies.
- Services can be categorised as universal, targeted or specialist. Targeted services include early interventions, with specialist services providing for those most in need such as Looked After Children and those with severe disabilities. The aim is to stop children rising up the triangle from universal to specialist. Targeted services are built into universal services to enable early intervention.
- Current priorities for the directorate include:
 - Improving standards, including in primary schools at the higher achievement levels. The gaps between those on the pupil premium achieving higher level results (level 5) and those not on the pupil premium achieving higher level results (level 5) are too large and the aim is to close these.

- Rapidly improving standards and closing gaps in achievement at secondary school level.
- Ensuring that those achieving at the highest level go on to achieve very highly in secondary school.
- Dealing with the bulge in numbers coming through primary to secondary schools in 2017.
- Safeguarding, which is a key responsibility.
- Developing vocational pathways.
- Families with no recourse to public funds, which represents a huge budget pressure.

4.5 In response to questions from the Committee, Frankie Sulke, Ian Smith, Director of Children’s Social Care, Alan Docksey, Head of Resources and Performance and Warwick Tomsett, Head of Targeted Services and Joint Commissioning, provided the following information:

- The underperformance of white, working class boys in schools is a national trend which also occurs in Lewisham. Previously Black Caribbean boys eligible for free school meals were the most underperforming group. Schools use a range of strategies to improve the performance of underachieving groups. The forthcoming Pupil Ambassador celebration began its life as one approach to tackling the Black Caribbean achievement gap.
- Special schools are for those with the most complex needs, with resource provision in mainstream schools for those with less complex needs but who still need more support than in mainstream. Lewisham has come a long way in improving capacity in schools for dealing with children with SEN and there is an on-going approach for supporting mainstream schooling for children. There is an acute need for more Autism Spectrum Disorder related resource support in secondary schools. As the population continues to increase, there will be a need for more special school places as well as for secondary school places. Schools places planning will take a comprehensive approach across all places, including Special Schools and places for 2 year olds.
- It is hard to pick one intervention in primary schools that has made the difference as there have been a number of interventions running at the same time. The use of performance data as well as leading and supporting schools to have higher aspirations and expectations about what their children can achieve has had a strong impact, alongside the outstanding leadership provided by Executive Headteachers.
- Lewisham is looking at how to close the gap between those achieving the higher levels in primary schools who are not on the pupil premium and those on the pupil premium by looking at good practice and how to share it. The London Mayor’s ‘Gold Club’ of schools is a group of schools across London that all buck the trend, with all their pupils achieving highly, including their pupil premium children. There are just over 100 Gold Club schools in London and 9 in Lewisham. The Mayor of London has also created the London Schools Excellence Fund which is funding a range of programmes designed to develop and spread effective practice.
- The highest achieving schools have the most enriched curriculums and are vibrant, creative places that offer opportunities for all children. Schools also ensure that children are not left out of opportunities due to the inability to meet the costs.

- Lewisham Council has a lot of engagement with schools, including half termly meetings by the Executive Director with primary headteachers, with secondary headteachers as well as termly meetings with all headteachers.

4.6 The Committee then discussed work programme items, agreeing to add:

- A rapid review looking at young people's mental health
- A rapid review looking at how best practice is shared between schools based around the Gold Club schools, including site visits to schools.
- A standard item about Raising the Participation Age
- A standard item examining schools capacity places planning
- A standard item examining secondary schools improvement and how this will be achieved
- A performance monitoring update on corporate parenting and Looked After Children at the same meeting as the safeguarding update

Resolved:

The Committee agreed the addition of the work programme items as listed above into the 2014/2015 work programme for the Committee, subject to the suitability of dates for these items.

5. Referrals to Mayor and Cabinet

5.1 There were none.

The meeting ended at 9.50 pm

Chair:

Date:
