

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

2nd September, 2013

PRESENT – Councillor Lister (in the Chair); Councillors Crudass, Crumbie, Galletley, L. Hughes, Kelley, E.A. Richmond, C. Taylor, L. Vasey and Wright. (10)

APOLOGIES – Councillor Hutchinson; Mr. J. Fitt, Mr. M. Frank; and Councillor C. Hughes. (5)

STATUTORY CO-OPTees – None (0)

NON-STATUTORY CO-OPTees – Mr. T. Fisher and Mr. D. Moyes. (2)

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE – Jenni Cooke, Assistant Director, Children, Families and Learning; Sandra Dashwood, Care Co-ordinator, Family Intervention; Janet Pickersgill, Sexual Exploitation Worker, Barnardo's; and Detective Superintendent Paul Groundry and Helen Murphy, Durham Constabulary.

CYP10. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS – There were no declarations of interested reported at the meeting.

CYP11. MINUTES – Submitted - The Minutes (previously circulated) of the meeting of this Scrutiny Committee held on 24 June 2013.

RESOLVED – That the Minutes be approved as a correct record.

CYP12. WORK PROGRAMME FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR 2012/13 – The Director of Resources submitted a report (previously circulated) to give consideration to the work programme items scheduled to be considered by this Scrutiny Committee and to consider any additional areas which Members suggest should be added to the previously approved work programme.

It was reported that the Review Group established to look at Child Poverty was on going and that the commencement of the Review of Young Carers is to be postponed until the young Carers Service (which transferred from the YMCA to DISC on 1st September 2013) has had chance for the new service providers to familiarise themselves with the Young Carers Action Plan.

It was also reported that, following the request by the Monitoring and Co-ordination Group, the Chair and Vice-Chair had met with the relevant officers to discuss the Financial Sustainability of Local Authorities report from the National Audit Office. Officers and Members examined in particular the spend for Children's Social Care which had shown an increased spend and discussed in detail the reasons for this. The situation will continue to be monitored through the Budget Consultation Process.

With regard to future items for the work programme, the Assistant Director, Children, Families and Learning proposed to bring a report to Scrutiny on Pupil Premium Issues and Wider Support; and a report on SEN funding formula.

A question was raised by a Member with regard to Academies and the Assistant Director, Children, Families and Learning agreed to present an update report to Scrutiny in Spring 2014.

RESOLVED –(a) That the current status of the work programme be noted.

(b) That Monitoring and Co-ordination Group be consulted on the proposal to include Pupil Premium and SEN Funding Formula on to the work programme for this Scrutiny Committee.

(c) That an update report on Academies be presented to the Scrutiny Meeting in Spring 2014.

CYP13. SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND MISSING FROM HOME – Members received two presentations in relation to Tackling Child Sexual Exploitation in Darlington and Safeguarding Children from Sexual Exploitation and also viewed a Dvd, produced by Barnardo's to highlight the issue of Child Sexual Exploitation.

(1) Safeguarding Children from Sexual Exploitation – Janet Pickersgill, Sexual Exploitation Worker, Barnardo's gave a presentation on Safeguarding Children from Sexual Exploitation.

The presentation gave the background to sexual exploitation, which is a national problem and the Tackling Child Exploitation Action Plan and the multi-agency working which is being undertaken to erase sexual exploitation of young people. During the presentation a Dvd was played entitled 'Innocence', produced by Barnardo's to highlight the grooming process and stages of sexual exploitation i.e. targeting stage, friendship forming stage, loving relationship stage and finally the abusive relationship stage.

The presentation also highlighted the vulnerabilities in children prior to abuse i.e. domestic violence, living in chaotic or dysfunctional households, low self-esteem, young carers, history of abuse, recent bereavement or loss and other reasons; and also highlighted the signs and behaviour in young people already involved in Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) i.e missing from home or care, thoughts of or attempts at suicide, drug or alcohol abuse, self harm, poor mental health, absence from school, offending and many other signs.

Janet Pickersgill also referred to recent findings from serious case reviews referrals from schools, the Police and Social Care; work with the Crime Prosecution Service and the ERASE Exploitation brand and literature that had been produced.

Discussion also ensued on the funding position with regard to the Barnardo's Post on Darlington and the likelihood that this post may be lost in the near future.

A Member raised a question with regard to the various social medial sites and educational material and how this information was being distributed to parents, who she felt were still not fully aware of the dangers of the social media sites available to young people. It was suggested that School Governor training in this subject may be useful.

RESOLVED – That Janet Pickersgill be thanked for her interesting and informative presentation.

(2) Tackling Child Sexual Exploitation in Darlington – Helen Murphy and Detective Superintendent Paul Goundry, Durham Constabulary gave a presentation on Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and what is being done in Darlington to tackle CSE.

The Presentation outlined what is CSE; the Sexual Violence Strategy launched in 2011; the multi agencies involved in CSE and ways to prevent CSE using local analysis and the development of Teacher Training Packs, SRE toolkit and community engagement; the purpose of the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH); how perpetrators are tackled in Darlington including the use of experienced safeguarding detectives and problem solving techniques CSE Events; information sharing and the promotion of information sharing; and raising awareness and training to include educational school packs, promotion in the community including parents, raising awareness with professionals and sustainability of funding.

Discussion ensued on the emerging trends in Darlington and the Models which included sexual activity exchanged for alcohol and drugs; street based grooming links to alcohol; inappropriate relationships with teens and older males; and internet, social media, mobile phones.

Following a question by a Member, Detective Superintendent Paul Goundry advised Members of this Scrutiny that in Darlington there was nothing to suggest that there are any organisations behind grooming or gangs within the Asian community.

RESOLVED – That Helen Murphy and Detective Superintendent Paul Goundry be thanked for their interesting and informative presentation.

CYP14. Co-Opted Members – Community Representatives – With the prior approval of the Chair to the matter being treated as urgent to enable the Scrutiny Committee to consider the proposal at the earliest opportunity, the Director of Resources submitted a report (previously circulated) to advise Members of the newly appointed Community Representatives on the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee.

Councillors Taylor, Kelley and Wright met on 30 August, 2013 to consider the five applications for the position of Community Representative and agreed to appoint Emma Coltman and Sanja Miah.

Emma Coltman was welcomed to the meeting and introduced herself to the Members and officers.

During discussion on the appointment of the Co-opted Community Representatives it was proposed that a Task and Finish Review Group be undertaken to review the position with statutory and non-statutory co-optees on this Scrutiny Committee.

RESOLVED – (a) That the appointment of Emma Coltman and Sanja Miah as Co-opted Community Representatives on the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee be noted.

(b) That a Quad of Aims for the Task and Finish Review be submitted to Monitoring and Co-ordination Group for their consideration.