

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

22 June 2015

PRESENT – Councillor Lister (in the Chair); Councillors Crudass, Crumbie, Curry, KE Kelly, Mills, Storr, C. Taylor and Wright. (9)

APOLOGIES – Councillors L. Hughes and Mrs. D. Jones; Miss M Regan and Mr. F. Fisher. (4)

STATUTORY CO-OPTees – None (0)

NON-STATUTORY CO-OPTees – None (0)

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE – Deborah Spence, Business Manager; Rachel Kershaw, Head of School and Pupil Support Services; and Allison Hill, Democratic Support.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE – Julia Newton, Parent Carer Forum.

CYP1. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS – There were no declarations of interested reported at the meeting.

CYP2. TIMES OF MEETINGS – RESOLVED – That for the remainder of this Municipal Year the timings of meetings of this Scrutiny Committee be held at 4.00 pm.

CYP3. MINUTES – Submitted - The Minutes (previously circulated) of the meeting of this Scrutiny Committee held on 13 April 2015.

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

CYP4. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK – QUARTER 4 PERFORMANCE – Pursuant to CYP39/Apr/15, the Head of Organisational Planning gave a presentation to give Members graphical information on Quarter 4 performance relating to those strategic indicators for areas under the remit of this Scrutiny Committee ‘giving children and young people the best start in life’ and ‘enough support for people when needed’

Members were advised that they will continue to receive quarterly overviews of the strategic indicators and shorter term indicators including costs of service to enable them to monitor and understand more clearly the services being delivered and outlining the desired outcomes.

Members considered various graphical data and in particular reference was made to information on the rate of first time entrants to the youth justice system which was showing positive performance; the percentage of young people leaving care aged 16 or over with one or more GCSE at grade A*-G or a GNVQ; the percentage of children looked after place more than 20 miles from home which was below the North East and England average; N162 - the stability of placements for looked after

children which was slightly above the England average; N164 – child protection plans lasting two years or more which was positive; N165 – children becoming subject of CP plan for second or subsequent time which was positive; NI066 – Looked after children cases which were reviewed within required timescales which had reduced, however this was due to staff vacancies which had now been resolved so hopefully figures will improve; N167 – reviews of child protection cases which was at the England average; LI1506 Children Looked After absent from school which had shown a sharp rise but this was being monitored; LI1509 – children looked after for 4 years or more who were in a foster care placement for two years or more which had also shown a slight dip due to a placement breakdown; 2016 – percentage of repeat referrals which was slightly higher than last year and was being monitored; 2052 – the percentage of children looked after in residential accommodation which was just above the England average; 2068 – of the children looked after aged at least 10 years and under 16 at end of month (excluding placed with parents) the percentage who were in foster placements or placed for adoption which was showing an improvement on 2013/14; NI147 Percentage of care leavers at age 19 who are living in suitable accommodation which was at 100 per cent; NI148 the percentage of care leavers aged 19 in employment, education and training for care leavers which was 62 per cent, an improvement on last year; and LI 1302 children subject to child protection plans – under 5 per 10,000 population under 5 which was 42 per cent compared to 72 per cent last year which was very positive.

RESOLVED – That the performance management data be noted.

CYP5. CO-OPTED MEMBERS – COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVE – The Assistant Chief Executive submitted a report (previously circulated) for Members to consider the establishment of a Panel of Members to appoint to the two vacant Community Representative positions on the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee.

It was reported that six applications had been received to become a Community Representative following an advertisement in the Darlington Together Magazine in April.

RESOLVED – (a) That approval be given to the establishment of a Panel to consider the applications for two Community Representatives and agree an appointment.

(b) That Councillors Crudass, Crumbie and Wright be appointed onto the Panel.

CYP6. CHILD POVERTY REVIEW GROUP – FINAL REPORT – The Assistant Chief Executive submitted a report to present the outcome and findings of the Review Group which was established by this Scrutiny Committee to examine child poverty and vulnerable children.

The Review Group met on six occasions and all Members of the Scrutiny Committee were invited to attend the meetings of the Review Group and Members also received a presentation from the Regional Child Poverty Action Plan Co-ordinator on the North East Child Poverty Commission Report: Local Authorities, Local Duties and Local Action.

Members of this Scrutiny agreed with the findings and recommendations of the Child Poverty Review Group.

RESOLVED – (a) That this Scrutiny Committee approves the following recommendations of the Child Poverty Review Group for consideration by Cabinet:

- (i) To continue to publicise existing services and raise awareness through Schools@one Darlington and Councillors Ward Newsletters.
- (ii) Members to continue to work with the Darlington Partnership on the wider Inclusion Strategy to reduce child poverty.
- (iii) To seek ways that this authority can 'poverty proof' strategies and policies and encourage all agencies and services to identify poverty issues at an early stage and direct to the appropriate support services.
- (iv) That plans and strategies focus on those wards with the highest level of child poverty and that resources and joint working be targeted at the clear 'hot spot' areas.
- (v) To ensure that all organisations working for families in the local authority area are involved in the development of the Inclusion Strategy.
- (vi) To encourage support for parents and carers of children living in poverty to develop skills and qualifications; to encourage participation in parenting programmes; and to encourage the take up of free school meals by continued communication within schools
- (vii) That the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee continue to monitor child poverty and the work being undertaken by the Partnership in relation to child poverty.
- (viii) To investigate ways of collating relevant data and to use this data to show correlations within wards to other data collected to show if interventions are working and improvements are being made.

(b) That this Scrutiny Committee continue to monitor child poverty and receive updates on the work of the Darlington Partnership on the Inclusion Strategy.

CYP7. WORK PROGRAMME – The Assistant Chief Executive 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.

Members discussed the possibility of a Special Meeting in Autumn to discuss the Work Programme in more detail; Members to receive a report on the outcomes of the Ofsted Inspection of services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers in Darlington being undertaken between 23 June and 17 July 2015; and the impact of development in Middleton St. George on Primary

School Places to be included in the report scheduled for November on the School Organisation Plan.

Members also referred to items that were still to be programmed in relation to budgetary implications for Health Visitors and the Family Nurse Partnership and the extension of funding to 21 in Children in Foster Care.

RESOLVED – That the current status of the work programme be noted and any additional items be programmed for future meetings.

CYP8. SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITY: 0 TO 25 YEARS – Pursuant to Minute CYP16/Nov/14 the Service Director for Children, Families and Learning submitted a report (previously circulated) to provide Members with an update on the implementation of the national reforms associated with 0-25 Special Education Needs (SEN) System.

The Children and Families Act which came into force on 1 September 2014 provides the legislation for organisations who work with and support children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities.

As a national pathfinder and regional champion providing a role of support for other Local Authorities, Darlington has been testing the reforms and identifying new ways of working since early 2012.

The submitted report also referred to the government target for local authorities to ensure that all existing Statements of SEN are reviewed and if appropriate transferred to a new Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) by April 2018; school based High Needs Funding and the changes to funding arrangements to be child led; Multi-Agency Working across the three agencies, Education, Health and Social Care and their continued involvement in the development of individual EHCP's; the Ofsted inspection which was carried out in December, 2014; and the outcome of a significant consultation and engagement programme which has been undertaken throughout all stages of the pathfinder programme and the implementation of the reforms.

Julia Newton outlined the work of the Parent-Carer Forum, which is hosted by Darlington Association on Disability and aim is to listen to the views of parents and carers. It was highlighted that the Parent-Carer Forum had, over the last twelve months, carried out work on speech and therapy services; and preparing young people for adulthood by exploring housing options to development and meet their needs.

It was also emphasised that the Forum were keen to hear the comments from Members which may have been received from families within their wards.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

CYP9. MEMBERS TOOLKIT – With the prior approval of the Chair to the matter being treated as urgent to advise Members at the earliest opportunity, Neil Bowerbank, Engagement Manager discussed with Members the establishment of the

Members Toolkit which is being developed as a web based tool to support Members in their community roles.

It is intended to include in the Toolkit induction information, Council Strategies and working with the Council. The Engagement Manager also advised Members that the next stage was to establish a working group, comprising a mix of Scrutiny, Cabinet, new, existing and rural Members to develop the Toolkit on Members requirements and was seeking a Member from this Scrutiny Committee.

RESOLVED – It was agreed that Councillor Crudass, as a rural Ward Councillor, be nominated to sit on the Members Toolkit Working Group.