

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

10 April 2017

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

APOLOGIES – Councillors Crudass and Wright; M Frank and T. Fisher.

ABSENT – None (0)

STATUTORY CO-OPTees – None. (0)

NON-STATUTORY CO-OPTees – Mrs G Harrison (1)

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE – Jane Kochanowski, Assistant Director Children’s Services; Christine Shields, Assistant Director Commissioning Performance and Transformation; Rosie Banks, Programme Manager; Steve Nyakatawa, Head of Education; Paul Richardson, Head of 16-19 Learning and Skills; and Allison Hill, Democratic Officer.

CYP35. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS – There were no declarations of interest reported at the meeting.

CYP36. MINUTES – Submitted - The Minutes (previously circulated) of the meeting of this Scrutiny Committee held on 20 February 2017.

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

CYP37. EDUCATIONAL PERFORMANCE IN DARLINGTON – Further to Minute CYP42/Apr/16, the Director of Children and Adults Services submitted a report (previously circulated) to provide Members with an analysis of educational performance in Darlington and to outline the new performance measures that were introduced in Summer 2016.

It was reported that in Darlington the majority of schools were academies or Free schools and that there were only four primary schools, two nursery schools and a Pupil Referral Unit maintained by the local authority; however, the local authority does have oversight of and responsibility for promoting high educational standards in line with the Education Act 1996 in all schools in Darlington.

The Regional Schools Commissioners have responsibility for addressing underperformance in academies and the local authority has a positive working relationship with the Regional School Commissioner in relation to the academies within the authority.

It was noted that the Department for Education (DfE) introduced new performance measures in 2016, therefore it is not possible to compare Darlington's performance with previous years in key stages 1, 2 and 4.

The submitted report contained data from the DfE's Local Authority Interactive Tool and based on 2016 validated data for Early Years Foundation Stage; Key Stage 1 (Teacher Assessment); Key Stage 2 (Tests); Key Stage 4; Pupils with Special Educational Needs and/or Disability; Post-16 Learning and Skills; 16-18 Advanced Level; and Attainment by age 19.

It was reported that in Early Years the proportion of children were achieving a Good Level of Development and this had increased year on year since 2014 and was now above the national average. In Key Stage 1 teacher assessments, Darlington is above the national average in all subjects; and in Key Stage 2 Darlington's performance is above the national average with the exception of writing which was in line with the national average. GCSE results were above the national average for 5+A*-C including mathematics and English. The proportion of 16 and 17 year olds participation in education and training remained above the national and regional averages and the average point score per A Level entry was less than a percentage point of the national average and above the regional average.

The submitted report also included analysis on narrowing the attainment gaps which showed that from Early Years to the end of Key Stage 2 girls outperformed boys in all subjects with the largest performance gap in writing; the gap between pupils with Special Educational Needs and/or Disability (SEND) with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP) compared to other pupils was wide although for pupils on SEN support the gap was not as wide.

It was also reported that the impact of the new assessment and accountability measures for General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) Progress 8, Attainment 8 and attainment in English and Mathematics and the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) had yet to be evaluated.

The Chair advised Members that he had arranged to meet with the Regional Schools Commissioner to discuss school improvement and their role with the academies in Darlington with the intention of undertaking a Task and Finish Review.

Following discussion on the submitted report Members agreed that the data submitted within the report would be more useful to Members if it was broken down by school; a Member expressed their concern at the performance gap between pupils and pupils with a Statement/EHCP and that Members should continue to monitor this; and how the overall positive improved performance across all key stages had been achieved.

Members also questioned the Head of Education on what influence the authority had over academies; how the demographics of schools impact on results; and general attendance levels within the schools; and information on the retention of teachers, especially for science subjects.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

CYP38. PARTICIPATION IN EDUCATION AND TRAINING UP TO 18 YEARS – Further to Minute CYP43/Apr/16, the Director of Children and Adult Services submitted a report (previously circulated) to provide Members with a further update on full participation in education and training up to age 18, in line with the requirements of the Raising of the Participation Age (RPA); look at the impact locally; and detailing the work being undertaken to meet the local authority's responsibilities.

It was reported that participation in Darlington based on latest national data (June 2016) was 94.6 per cent and was above the national average at 94.2 per cent and the North East average at 94.0 per cent. Provisional data for January 2017 showed an increase to 95.5 per cent of 16 years and 90.1 per cent of 17 year olds who were participating.

The submitted report outlined a number of issues that impacted on full participation; and the responsibility to promote RPA through the Council's 11-19 Learning and Skills Team and the Early Intervention Teams who have the responsibility for engaging those at risk of becoming NEET (Not in Education Employment or Training).

The submitted report also provided data in relation to Darlington's NEET figures which remain relatively high compared with the England average but has reduced over the last few years; and referred to the Youth Employment Initiative which had been launched in the middle of 2016 and supports 16-29 year olds living in Tees Valley into education, employment and training. The project has approximately 25 delivery partners across the Tees Valley and is managed by the five local authorities, with Hartlepool as the lead and since its commencement has supported 220 young people in Darlington to improve their employability skills.

Discussion ensued on the number of employers in Darlington that were subject to the introduction of the apprenticeship levy; and a Member requested a future report to this Scrutiny Committee on the position regarding youth unemployment in Darlington

RESOLVED – (a) That the report be noted.

(b) That the annual report to this Scrutiny ceases now that RPA is embedded and that Participation in Education and Training and NEET data continue to be reported as part of the Children's Services performance indicators.

CYP39. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLES PLAN 2017-22 – The Programme Manager gave a presentation on the development of the Children and Young People’s Plan for 2017-2022 which was a partnerships document.

The Programme Manager advised Members that engagement activity had been carried out to gather information and 22 emerging priorities had been identified for the draft 2017-22 plan; outlined what had been achieved through the 2014-17 plan; identified where there needs to be improvement; outlined the plans aims for all children and young people to be safe from harm, enjoy a healthy life, do well at all levels of learning and have the relevant skills to be prepared for life, enjoy growing up and are listened to.

The presentation also outlined how it was intended to achieve the priorities and advised the timetable for the draft plan which will be in consultation phase between April and May and the Final Plan will be produced for formal approval by Cabinet in June and July 2017. An Annual Review of the action plan will also be undertaken.

Members discussed how the outcomes of the plan can be measured and the aims of the plan achieved. The Chair referred to the geographical spread across Darlington and proposed that ‘hot spot’ areas of deprivation be identified to focus work on and that schools would be a good way of gauging information on deprivation along with information from general practitioners . It was also suggested that Ward Councillors would be a good source of local information and to involve them in the consultation process.

RESOLVED – That the thanks of this Scrutiny Committee be extended to the Programme Manager for interesting and informative presentation on the Children and Young People’s Plan 2017-22.

CYP40. SERVICES FOR FAMILIES OF DISABLED CHILDREN AGED 0-3 YEARS REVIEW GROUP – FINAL REPORT – The Chair of the Review Group submitted the final report of the Review Group to present the outcome and findings of the review into the provision of services for families with children with disabilities aged 0-3 years following the removal of the Early Support Service (part of the Life Stages 0-25 Team) as part of the Medium Term Financial Plan budget cuts in June 2016.

RESOLVED – That the final report and recommendations of the Services for Families of Disabled Children Aged 0-3 Years Review Group be approved.

CYP41. WORK PROGRAMME - The Director of Neighbourhood Services and Resources submitted a report (previously circulated) to provide an update on the current work programme for this Scrutiny Committee.

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