

COUNCIL
25 APRIL 2019

OVERVIEW OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

1. Since the last meeting of the Council, the following are the main areas of work the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee has undertaken.

Work Programme

2. We continue to give consideration to the Work Programme for this Committee and taking into account the ambitious programme of change across the Council and the key role of Scrutiny in ensuring that the programme is able to deliver the service improvements and the budget savings necessary.
3. Following discussion and questions raised at the meeting with the Head of Planning Development, Management and Environmental Health in relation to private residential children's homes, Members agreed to include in the work programme for 2019/20 an item to monitor the number of private children's homes in the Borough.
4. With regard to the Review Group on Childhood Obesity it was acknowledged that the work on dental health care had been completed and that Members will progress childhood obesity and mental health links by monitoring the effectiveness of the Childhood Healthy Weight Plan and the item to remain on the work programme.

Quarter 3 Performance Indicators 2018/19

5. Members examined performance against key performance indicators for Quarter 3 (October to December 2018).
6. Areas that were performing well were contacts completed within 24 working hours at 98.1 per cent, 97.3 per cent of Initial Child Protection Conferences (ICPC) had been held within 15 working days from the Strategy meeting held/Section 47 being initiated, 100 per cent Child Protection reviews had been completed within the required timescales, 100 per cent of children with a Child Protection Plan and 100 per cent of Children Looked After had an allocated social worker, 99.2 per cent of Looked After Reviews had been completed within timescale, 89.6 per cent of statutory visits to Looked After Children had been completed in timescale, 93.8 per cent who had a review health assessment due had received their assessment within the required timescale and 19.3 per cent of Care Leavers were not in employment, education or training (NEET).
7. Areas where there was a need for continued improvement included the timeliness of assessments which was slightly below the target of 90 per cent, 94.2 per cent statutory child protection visits had been completed within 15 working days with 77.8 completed within 10 working days, which was slightly behind Quarters 1 and 2, missing from home interviews had been offered within 72 hours in 91.3 per cent

of the cases and the rate of Looked After Children was 111.6 per 10,000 population which was above statistical regional and national benchmarks.

8. We noted in particular the increase in Section 47 enquiries and increase in the number of Looked After Children and the Assistant Director of Children's Services advised Members of the rationale for this increase, inclusive of regional and national changes in legislation and gave assurance of the continual monitoring of the situation.

Update Regarding 'Staying Put' Arrangements for Young People Previously in Foster Care Placements

9. We continue to receive information regarding the cost of funding to age 21 for young people in previous foster care placements in line with our legal obligation to provide 'Staying Put' arrangements.
10. As of 21 January 2019 there were 10 'Staying Put' arrangements in place and the cost of internal provision ranged from £160 to £350 per week dependent upon age and individual circumstances. The cost of Independent Fostering Agency (IFA) provision agreed as part of the Tees Valley Framework was £340 per week.
11. The projected expenditure for the period 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019 for 'Staying Put' including in house and IFA arrangements was £151,525.47.
12. We also received an update on the monitoring and evaluation of 'Staying Put' arrangements via regular support meetings following the young person reaching the age of 18 years; the benefits of 'Staying Put' for young people and the Service; and the priorities for 2019/20 to promote the importance of 'Staying Put'.

Adoption Tees Valley Bi-Annual Summary Report 2018

13. Vicky Davidson-Boyd, Service Manager, Adoption Tees Valley, presented to Members the Adoption Tees Valley Bi Annual Summary Report 1 May 2018 to 30 September 2018 and outlined the work that had been undertaken across the Tees Valley between 1 May 2018 and 30 September 2018.
14. The submitted report reviewed the adoption activity, as defined by the Adoption Leadership Scorecard (ALB) measures for the first 5 months of operation; outlined the key aim of the Regional Adoption Agency (RAA) on the impact of timeliness of children waiting for adoption and on the time that adopters wait for a match; detailed the support offered for adopted children and their families and adopters; and highlighted the future challenges faced by the RAA.
15. We were particularly interested to know about the working relationship between Darlington and Teesside which the Service Manager advised us was good; and how Members could scrutinise timeliness; support available for children into early adulthood, especially if they decide to seek their birth parents; and adoption within the black and minority ethnic community.
16. The Head of Transformation and Performance advised us that adoption performance data was currently reported and the Tees Valley data will also feed into this authority's reporting mechanism in future.

Meetings

17. Since the last meeting of Council, I have attended a meeting of the Standard Advisory Council on Religious Education.

Councillor Chris Taylor
Chair of Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee