

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD

At a meeting of the Children and Young People Policy and Performance Board on Monday, 26 February 2007 at the Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn

Present: Councillors Dennett (Chairman), Horabin (Vice-Chairman), Fraser, Gilligan, Lewis, Marlow, Parker, Philbin and M Ratcliffe

Apologies for Absence: Councillor Higginson and Mr A Brothers

Absence declared on Council business: Councillor Stockton

Officers present: L. Derbyshire, P. St. Aubyn, R. Bannigan, L. Butcher, A. McIntyre, A. Villiers and D Williams

Also in attendance: (none)

ITEMS DEALT WITH UNDER DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD

	<i>Action</i>
CYP45 MINUTES	
The minutes of the meeting held on 8 th January 2007 having been printed and circulated were signed as a correct record.	
CYP46 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME	
The Board was advised that no questions had been received.	
CYP47 EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES	
The minutes of the Executive Board relating to the work of the Children and Young People's Policy Performance Board were submitted for information.	
RESOLVED: That the minutes be noted.	
CYP48 PERFORMANCE MONITORING - QUARTER 3	
The Board considered a report of the Acting Strategic Director, Children and Young People which gave Members the opportunity to examine progress towards achieving the	

service objectives, milestones and performance targets contained in the 2006/07 service plans within the Boards remit.

The following points arose from the discussion:-

Children's Services (Social Care)

- The improvements in the ratio of employment, education and training for care leavers and action and activities undertaken to date was noted;
- The new indicator, which recorded the stability for children under 16 years of age was noted. It was also noted that performance in this area had improved significantly last year but was not performing so well this year. The reasons for this and actions to address this issue were outlined;
- That the Safe Parenting handbook, when finalised, would be distributed to all households with children in the Borough. The Chairman requested that they be informed of the completion date of the handbook;
- Capital – It was noted that the money had all been committed and would be spent by the end of the financial year. The money had been committed primarily to IT;
- The Children's Pooled budget – the projected underspend was noted and further detail requested by the Chairman. It was also noted that the authority would have the option to carry forward any underspend to the next financial year.

School Support and Advisory Service

- The financial implications of proposals from the national Learning and Skills review to end the 'preferred supplier' status for Education/Business Partnerships was noted. It was also noted that all eight high schools contributed to the Business Partnership. However, it was recognised that it was not mandatory for primary schools to make a contribution; and
- The actions that had been identified to address the implications of the performance indicator BV 181a being closely linked to the LSPA targets for the % of

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children achieving 5 or more A* - C GCSE's including English and Maths for 2008 was noted.

Student Services & Lifelong Learning

- The improvements in school attendance and the new set of standardised attendance codes that had been put in place to address this issue was noted;
- the 2005/06 permanent exclusion figures and the reasons that the numbers of young people who had been excluded had significantly reduced was noted. The guidelines and the authority's statutory duty to provide full time education for a young person who had been excluded more than six days was also acknowledged;
- the outcome of the visit by the Prime Minister's Delivery Unit was noted; and
- the number of young people not in education, employment or training (NEETS) and the challenges regarding reducing this number was noted.

RESOLVED: That the report and comments raised be noted.

(Note: The Board agreed to consider Item 9 on the agenda – Health of Looked After Children – Update as the next item of business).

CYP49 HEALTH OF LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN UPDATE

The Board considered a report of the Acting Strategic Director – Children and Young People which gave Members an update of the Health of Looked After Children Scrutiny Topic Action Plan.

The Board was advised that in March 2006, the Healthy Halton Policy and Performance Board had been presented with the findings of the health of looked after children (LAC) scrutiny group. An in depth audit of ninety LAC's case files had been carried out.

The action plan had been adopted by the Board and it was agreed that implementation of the plan be monitored. It was noted that Halton's performance in relation to the completion of health assessments was 91.2% compared to a national average of 77.3% and this year's performance currently stood at 94.7%..

The Board was also advised of activities and actions that had taken place since the publication of the report.

Arising from the discussion, the following points were noted:-

- That there was a legal requirement for LAC under the age of five to have a health assessment every six months and over five years to have an annual assessment;
- That the PCT were unable to agree to health assessments being typed and doctors had been advised to print clearly and would receive training in record keeping;
- That the ability to fast track a dental service was a remarkable achievement; and
- That the Board place on record its appreciation for the excellent work that had been undertaken by all staff to date.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the progress of the action plan and comments raised be noted; and
- (2) the continued progress of the Action Plan be monitored by the Healthy Halton Policy and Performance Board.

CYP50 YOUTH SERVICE ACTION PLAN

The Board considered a report of the Acting Strategic Director – Children and Young People which provided information on the detail of the improvement plan following the Youth Service Inspection and the presentation at the last meeting.

The Board was advised that the main findings of the review had identified that Halton Borough Council provided a good service which represented good value for money. The young people, at risk of exclusion had achieved well and made good progress. The resources available to the service were also sufficient and were being used efficiently.

The major improvements that had taken place within each section of the action plan were also highlighted to the

Board. In this respect, a list of the Youth Service Officers named in the action plan was circulated at the meeting.

Arising from the discussion, the following comments were noted:-

- That a monitoring report be presented to the autumn meeting of the Board. The report should also reflect the numbers of youths that were engaging in youth activities on a ward by ward basis;
- The number of young people accessing the youth activities was noted;
- That under the Education and Inspection Act 2006, the authority had a legal obligation to promote the full range of activities open to young people in the Borough;
- It was acknowledged that there was a small number of young people who would not participate in youth activities and would subsequently become involved in anti-social behaviour;
- The new 'on the streets team' whereby the authority worked in partnership with the fire and rescue service in a single team to address youth nuisance in problem areas in the Borough was noted. It was also noted that the Ditton area was being piloted on a six month basis. Chester college would be undertaking the analysis of the pilot;
- It was acknowledged that youth provision had greatly improved in the Borough; and
- That the Board place on record its appreciation for the excellent work that had been undertaken by all staff to date.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the information contained in the report and the comments raised be noted;
- (2) the improvement plan be agreed; and
- (3) an update report be presented to the Autumn meeting of the Board.

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CYP51 QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION

The Chairman of the Board, Councillor Dennett welcomed Councillor McInerney, the Portfolio Holder – Children and Young People to the meeting and invited Members to take part in a question and answer session with the portfolio holder.

Councillor McInerney highlighted some of the excellent achievements and activities that had taken place within the Children and Young People's Directorate during the last twelve months. He gave the Board Members a verbal update on the following service areas:-

- School attendance;
- The Safeguarding Board;
- The strong performance in health assessments relating to LAC;
- School improvement and attainment levels;
- The Youth Service inspection and OfSTED reports;
- The reduction in the number of young people with SEN statements;
- The strategies for addressing school balances;
- The activities and pressures within the fostering and adoption service;
- The opportunities and possible implications of the Building Schools for the Future Programme (BSF);
- The progress on the Children's Centres; and
- Changes that had taken place in school funding.

In closing, Councillor McInerney reported that he recognised the pressures and challenges that the staff had embraced during the last twelve months and took the opportunity to thank all staff within the service for their excellent work and achievements to date.

Arising from the discussion, the following comments were noted:-

- The interventions that had been put in place to

reduce the number of young people with SEN statements by 18% in the Borough;

- That the Authority would need to consider the implications relating to the changes in the criteria to the age range of the young people placed in Belvedere. It was agreed that this matter be passed to Councillor Wright – Portfolio Holder, Community for consideration;
- The number of faith schools in the Borough and the criteria for admission into such schools; and
- The importance of the Children’s Centres and the opportunity for extended schools in the community was acknowledged.

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In closing the Chairman thanked Councillor McInerney for his attendance and participation in the meetings to date.

RESOLVED: That the verbal report and comments raised be noted.

CYP52 STANDING ORDER 51

The Board was reminded that Standing Order 51 of the Council’s Constitution stated that meetings should not continue beyond 9.00 pm.

RESOLVED: That Standing Order 51 be waived for 20 minutes.

CYP53 ACTION PLAN REVIEW

The Board considered a report of the Acting Strategic Director – Children and Young People which provided Members with an update on two previous topics, Barriers to Learning – Excluding pupils and Healthy Eating. The report particularly related to the impact of the specific Action Plans on the outcomes for Children and Young People.

In this respect the Board received two presentations relating to the two Action Plans and the impact of the Action Plans on outcomes for Children and Young People.

Arising from the discussion, the following points were noted:-

- That a report be presented to the Board in the Autumn relating to the effectiveness of LA

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strategies to address the needs of the lowest performing (20%) of pupils in the Borough;

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- That schools meals were freshly prepared on the day but did not comprise of 'purely' fresh food as this would increase the cost of the meals;
- That there was high obesity rate within the Borough in young people up to the age of ten. A strategy for addressing obesity issues would need to be established. However, it was recognised that this would not be a solution to the issue as there were also cultural factors to consider; and
- The various factors that impacted on school budgets was noted.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the presentations be received;
- (2) the Action Plans and the outcome of the Action Plans on children and young people be noted;
- (3) the comments raised be noted; and
- (4) a report be presented to the Board in the Autumn relating to the effectiveness of LA strategies to address the needs of the lowest performing (20%) of pupils in the Borough.

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CYP54 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENT

As it was the last meeting of the Board in this municipal year, the Chairman took the opportunity to place on record a vote of thanks to Members and Officers for their participation and excellent work that had been undertaken during the year.

Meeting ended at 9.20 p.m.