

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD

At a meeting of the Children and Young People Policy and Performance Board on Monday, 7 January 2008 in the Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn

Present: Councillors Dennett (Chairman), Drakeley, Gilligan, D Inch, J. Lowe, Parker, M. Ratcliffe, Stockton, Mr. C. Chorley, McInerney and Wright.

Apologies for Absence: Councillors Horabin, Fraser and Higginson

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: L. Butcher, J. Kirk, A. McIntyre, J. Pearce and M. Simpson

Also in attendance: Cllr McInerney in accordance with Standing Order 33.

ITEMS DEALT WITH UNDER DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD

Action

CYP33 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 27th November 2007 having been printed and circulated were signed as a correct record.

CYP34 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

It was confirmed that no public questions had been received.

CYP35 EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES

The minutes of the Executive Board and the Executive Board Sub-Committee relating to the work of the Children and Young People Policy and Performance Board were submitted for information.

The Board discussed EXB61: School Travel Pathfinder Bid and Sustainable School Transport Policy. Members asked whether the figures in the report were new figures and what was defined as low income. In reply it was noted that the Minute did refer to new figures and low income covered a lot of issues such as free school meals and receipt of various other benefits. Members requested a more detailed clarification be provided.

Members also queried whether travel expenses would be paid, for students from the Borough attending Thomas Boteler School in Warrington. In response, it was noted that the Council was paying fees to transport some children to Thomas Boteler as it was a Church of England secondary school. It was noted that this policy would be reviewed and would be looked into further in the near future.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes be noted.

CYP36 QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION - COUNCILLOR WRIGHT

Councillor Marie Wright – Community Portfolio holder, updated the Committee of the activities and achievements of the Youth Service.

Members were informed of the following:

- the Youth Service received the National Youth Quality Mark;
- there were 11 new members on the Youth Forum;
- during November there was a “Voice” weekend which attracted 200 attendees; and
- the Youth Bank had proved very successful and the young people provided a presentation at an Executive Board meeting.

Members discussed various issues as detailed below:

- whether Youths from both sides of the River Mersey were informed and involved of all the Youth Services available;
- the idea of having mentor schemes that could link young people to Connexions and other agencies;
- where there many youth clubs open;
- the need to utilise different strategies and engage with other agencies;
- the 14-19 agenda and NEETS; and
- the need to tackle hot-spot areas of anti-social behaviour in conjunction with the attainment agenda.

Councillor Marie Wright wished to thank all the officers and young people involved in the successes achieved so far.

RESOLVED: That the information be noted.

CYP37 HALTON SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN'S BOARD

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director Children and Young People which provided an overview of the role and work of the Local Safeguarding Children's Board in Halton (HSCB).

It was reported that following the death of Victoria Climbe and the publication of the Children's Act 2004 and Working Together to Safeguard Children, the Local Authority was responsible for establishing a Local Safeguarding Children's Board. The role of the Board was to establish new structures to more effectively safeguard children and promote their welfare.

The Board received an executive summary, which set out the following:

- The structure of the Board in Halton,
- The links the Board has with other planning and commissioning agencies,
- The key responsibilities of the Board,
- Key areas of activity,
- The performance reporting process, and
- The Board's achievements.

Members held a wide-ranging discussion in relation to the monitoring of privately-run care homes, support for staff working in care homes and the achievements of partner agencies within the HSCB.

RESOLVED: That the Board note the work of the Halton Safeguarding Children's Board and progress it has made in implementing government requirements and delivering agreed priorities.

Strategic Director-
Children & Young
People

CYP38 CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE PRIORITIES

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director Children and Young People, which detailed information on the priorities for children and young people services in Halton, agreed with Government Office North West GONW. It was reported that there was a formal process for setting priorities for children's services at the Autumn Strategic Engagement Meeting with (GONW) and their field force. This meeting was held on 26th November 2007 and agreed eight priorities to focus the work of the Children and Young People Alliance Board for the next year. In addition, support from GONW to achieve the priorities was identified and agreed.

A number of priorities had already been agreed as part of the refresh of the Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP), completed in June. They were formulated from a wide evidence base including a strategic needs analysis, the views of children and young people, performance information, and feedback from external inspection and assessment. The CYPP priorities covered the five Every Child Matters outcomes and cross-cutting services management themes.

It was noted that in preparation for the meeting a long list of priorities was drawn up using all the available information and these were distilled down to the eight priorities put forward for negotiation at the meeting. The agreed priorities were noted as follows:

- CYPP BH1: Reducing health inequalities
- CYPP BH2: Improve sexual health
- CYPP BH3: Enhance emotional and psychological well-being.
- CYPP SS4: Improve quality of care for Children in Care.
- CYPP EA1: Improve educational outcomes for all children.
- CYPP EA2: Improve attendance at school of all children.
- CYPP EA3: Narrow the gap in educational outcomes for vulnerable children; and
- CYPP AEW1: Improved learning opportunities 14 – 19 and participation post 16.

The Board was advised that cross cutting services management themes such as workforce, finance and commissioning were not identified as priorities in their own right but were highlighted as enablers and risks. The priorities template listing the priorities mapped against the performance measures from the National Indicator Set and the risks and enablers was detailed in the report.

Members held a discussion regarding the significant enablers and the significant delivery risks and noted that various issues from the plan could be dealt with through the scrutiny topic group.

RESOLVED: That

1. the report, and the agreed priorities, be noted; and
2. the progress against the identified priorities be supported.

Strategic Director-
Children & Young
People

CYP39 STRATEGY FOR THE INCLUSION OF PUPILS WITH SEN - REVIEW

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Young People, which noted that in 2003 the Executive Board supported the development of a Strategy for the Inclusion of Pupils with SEN. It was reported that the strategy sought to realign the development of SEN resources across the infrastructure of funding formula, structural arrangements, service structures and critical identification and assessment processes to ensure that those children and young people with special educational needs had their needs identified and addressed earlier.

The Board was advised of the significant progress that had been made in implementing the Strategy and that the implementation of the strategy posed significant challenges, not least in addressing long standing practices across agencies, within schools and within local authority services also.

Outlined in the report was a review of the Strategy that summarised progress to date and set out the strategic direction for the next three years. Key achievements over the preceding three years were noted as follows:-

- A reduction in the reliance upon Statements of SEN as the means to securing additional resources for children;
- A reduction in the % of children with Statements of SEN;
- Release of resources earlier without the need to recourse to a Statement;
- Performance in the top quartile in the issuing of proposed statements within 18 weeks;
- A reduction in the number of children being educated in special provision out of the Borough;
- A re-cycling of fees saved from out of Borough placements to schools to meet the needs of pupils with SEN earlier; and
- Continued evidence of narrowing the gap in attainment for the most vulnerable learners, particularly at Key Stages 2, 3 and 4.

Members were advised that Halton Borough Council was in the top quartile in the country for completion of draft statements within specified timescales. Detailed within the report was the progress Halton had made to deliver the programme. In particular it was noted that Halton had

ensured the saving of £427,645 had been re-cycled to meet the needs of pupils with SEN earlier. Moreover, this money had been distributed to those schools identified as having the greatest need. It was also noted that Halton Borough Council had signed up to the Every Disabled Child Matters pledge and, furthermore, from a recent Ofsted inspection praise was given for the support provided to pupils with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities (LDD) in the majority of schools in Halton. Some had been described as outstanding. A high percentage of schools graded as good or outstanding by Ofsted for progress of pupils with LDD.

Members discussed various issues such as whether the funding would be allocated on a termly basis, whether funding would cease once the child had made good progress and was there any information available on a ward by ward basis in relation to teenage pregnancies and alcohol consumption.

RESOLVED: That

1. the Board considers progress made to-date; and
2. the Board supports the continued direction of the Strategy as a key lever to narrowing the gap in learning outcomes for children and young people with learning difficulties and disabilities.

Strategic Director-
Children & Young
People

CYP40 PROGRESS OF EXTENDED SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT IN HALTON

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Young People, which provided information on the progress towards the achievement of the Extended Schools Core Offer in Halton and the delivery of extended services through Children and Young People's Area Networks.

It was noted that evaluation of the Extended Schools Pathfinder Project (DFES April 2004) found that the provision of extended services delivered through clusters of schools could bring about a range of positive outcomes for children, young people, their families and local communities. The outcomes that were demonstrated through the project were detailed in the report as follows:

- Improvement in achievement and behaviour;
- Opportunities for children to develop new skills and widen their interests;
- Enhanced support for those children and young people who are vulnerable or at risk;
- Greater involvement of parents in their children's learning;
- Increased use by communities of sports, leisure and ICT facilities in schools;
- Support to parents to return to work, education or training; and
- Reduction in health inequalities through the provision of health promotion and support services.

The Board were advised that it was expected that by 2010 all secondary schools would be open from 8 am to 6 pm all year round to provide extended services. All children attending Halton primary schools would be able to access these services through their own school. These requirements in secondary schools were only applicable when a demand has been identified. Not all of these services would be free of charge although some may be free or subsidised when there was an agreement that attendance at an Extended School activity or service would have a positive impact on the child or young person's achievement.

Also detailed in the report was the targets towards the delivery of the Full Core Offer (FCO), that had been set by the Training and Development Agency (TDA). It was noted that by 2010 100% of Halton Schools should be delivering the FCO.

Arising from the discussion, reference was made for the need to tackle sickness and absence issues, the links that community centres had with schools in the area, and whether CYPAN Managers were working with schools to identify needs, ensure the provision of the Core Offer and the completion of the School Audit to ensure sound financial allocations were made.

RESOLVED: That the Board consider the progress made to date, and contribute any comments or observations as appropriate concerning the further development of this agenda.

Strategic Director-
Children & Young
People

CYP41 NARROWING THE ATTAINMENT AND ACHIEVEMENT GAP

The Board considered a report of the Strategic

Director, Children and Young People which detailed information about the complexities surrounding narrowing the achievement and attainment gap. The Board received a presentation from the Operational Director Universal Learning Services which outlined the following:

- Summary statement;
- Foundation Stage;
- Percentage of Pupils below Level 2 compared to national expectations in Key Stage 1;
- Percentage below Level 4 compared to national expectations in Key Stage 2;
- Strategies being used to narrow the gap in Key Stages 1 and 2 (including the use of SIPs to challenge schools);
- Percentage below Level 5 compared to national expectations in Key Stage 3;
- SEN pupils in mainstream settings Key Stages 1, 2 and 3; and
- Combined approach to the raising of standards Foundation Stage to Key Stage 4.

The Board were advised of some of the key questions which Halton Borough Council were asking as follows:

- Which children were under-performing and why;
- What was being done to improve performance;
- What actions were being taken to narrow the gap; and
- When would under-performance begin.

Members were provided with statistics in relation to Key Stage 2 English and Maths, Key Stage 3 English and Maths and an overall summary of how Halton compared to the national statistics.

The Chairman thanked the Operational Director Universal Learning Services for an informative presentation.

RESOLVED: That the Board consider the report and the actions that are being taken to narrow the gap.

Strategic Director-
Children & Young
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CYP42 SERVICE PLANS 2008-2011

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Young People that provided Members with the objectives and targets for services for the next three years. It was reported that the Departmental Service Plans were currently being reviewed and rolled forward. They would go

to Executive Board for approval on the 21st February 2008, at the same time as the draft budget. It was noted that this would ensure that decisions on Service Planning were linked to resource allocation.

Members were advised of the departments that reported to the Children and Young People's Policy and Performance Board were as follows:

- Universal and Learning
- Preventative Services
- Specialist Services
- Business Support and Commissioning

The Board discussed various issues such as, support for children with learning difficulties and the 14-19 agenda. It was noted that a report containing greater detail of the 14-19 agenda could be brought to a future Policy and Performance Board.

RESOLVED: That

1. the Board identify any objectives and targets for the next three years that it wishes to see included in Service Plans by passing on comments to the relevant Operational Director; and
2. a detailed report on the 14-19 agenda be brought to a future Policy and Performance Board meeting.

Strategic Director-
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Meeting ended at 9.09 p.m.