

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD

At a meeting of the Children and Young People Policy and Performance Board on Monday, 23 February 2009 in the Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn

Present: Councillors Dennett (Chairman), Horabin (Vice-Chairman), Browne, Drakeley, Fraser, Gilligan, J. Lowe, Parker and Stockton

Apologies for Absence: Councillor Higginson

Absence declared on Council business: None

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

Also in attendance: 2 Members of the Youth Parliament, V. Shaw – Connexions, C. Pollard – Parent and Carers Forum representative and Councillor McInerney (in accordance with Standing Order 33)

ITEMS DEALT WITH UNDER DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD

CYP39 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 26th November 2008 and 5th January 2009 having been printed and circulated were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

CYP40 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

In relation to agenda item number 10 – Integrated Youth Support, it was reported that a public question had been received from Halton Youth Cabinet as follows:-

“As some of you may be aware the Youth Cabinet have been in full support of an ongoing national campaign known as “buzz off” aimed at removing all mosquito devices, a device to keep young people away from certain shops etc. from all public places. The Cabinet had been informed that there were still a number of these devices operating in the Borough. Is the Council aware of this and do we have the Council’s support to help us remove them?”

Action

In response, it was noted that the Council did not advocate the use of mosquitoes and the Community Safety Team were not aware of any devices on any of the Council's buildings or in the Borough.

Private enterprises may use the devices and the Council would not necessarily be aware of this. It would appear that there were no regulations around their use and there did not appear to be a requirement to have devices registered.

At present, the devices did not appear to be illegal and were not subject to regulations therefore the Council would not have any enforcement powers in terms of taking legal action to have them removed. The Board was informed that there was one device in the Windmill Hill area and allegedly one in Grangeway. The Youth Cabinet were asked to investigate further the exact locations of these mosquitoes and it was suggested that they e-mail the relevant Ward Councillors with an aim to approach the shops involved in order to discourage them.

RESOLVED: That the public question be noted.

CYP41 EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES

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

In respect of EXB83 Connexions Transition, clarity was sought in relation to Halton Borough Council becoming the Contract Holding Authority on behalf of the six Merseyside Local Authorities. In response, it was noted that Halton would lead the Contract with the providers and the five other local authorities would fund their part of the contract through Halton.

In relation to EXB97 Primary Organisation, it was reported that there were currently eight schools in the Borough with more than 25% surplus capacity which was above the Audit Commission's recommendation.

RESOLVED: That the minutes be noted.

CYP42 SPECIALIST STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP BOARD MINUTES

The Board considered the minutes of the meeting held on 26th November 2008.

RESOLVED: That the minutes be received.

CYP43 REGULATION 33 VISITS AND CLIMBIÉ AUDITS

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Young People which provided an update on the conduct of Regulation 33 Visits and Climbié Audits and set out proposals to strengthen reporting, scrutiny and Member involvement.

It was reported that Regulation 33 of the Children's Home Regulations 2001 required the Local Authority to carry out Children's Home Visits in order to:

- Interview with consent children, their parents and relatives and carers in the Children's Home;
- Inspect the premises;
- Review daily logs of events and records of any complaints; and
- Prepare a report on the conduct of the Home and the quality of care provided.

It was reported a large group of Members was required to carry out these visits and training would be offered on Regulation 33 Visits and Climbié Audits, to all PPB Members. The Board discussed the templates for visit report writing and agreed that it would be beneficial to have a field added to the forms with the title of "Previous Actions from Previous Visit".

It was also noted that it would be helpful if a plan of action was produced which set out what would happen within the next hours or days etc in the event of an issue arising.

Members were advised that training would be provided before the next two consecutive Children and Young People PPB meetings on both Regulation 33 Visits and Climbié Audits - being June and September and all Policy and PBB Members would be notified nearer the time.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) training was provided to all PPB Members on Regulation 33 Visits and Climbié Audits. This training should take place in a Pre-Meeting, dates would be

Strategic Director-
Children & Young
People

agreed and circulated;

- 2) following training and CRB checks a new and extended list of Members available to carry out visits and audits should be put together and a rota be agreed;
- 3) following all visits, reports provided and the responses made by relevant Managers should be reported to PPB and scrutinised twice a year;
- 4) this reporting and scrutiny be lead by the relevant Managers in Children and Young People's Directorate to strengthen accountability;
- 5) all templates for auditing should be made available to Members electronically – with the additional field added providing an update from previous visits - and responses to the audit should be recorded electronically;
- 6) the Board receives a regular monitoring report on the progress made in respect of recommendations 2.3 and 2.5 above; and
- 7) all the Chairs of the other PPBs be contacted in order to advise their Members of the training opportunities available and training be held before the next two scheduled PPB meetings.

CYP44 WORK PROGRAMME 2009/10

The Board considered a report from the Strategic Director, Corporate and Policy regarding the Work Programme for 2009/10 regarding possible topics for inclusion in the next Municipal Year. It was advised that the Board would consider children's health, starting with a special PPB session designed to provide an overview and initial audit of the state of health of children in the Borough. From this, several priority areas for consideration could be identified that would form the focus of Topic work for the remainder of the year and several areas could be formed from for this to focus on. The June PPB meeting would consider issues around narrowing the gap.

RESOLVED: That the Policy and Performance Board's work programme would comprise an overview of children's health and more focussed Topic work on priority areas identified from the overview's conclusions.

CYP45 EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR CARE LEAVERS

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Young People which provided Members with an update on the current employment situation for Care Leavers and information about proposals for the future.

It was advised that there had been some improvement in this area, however, it had been known for some time that young people who left care were over represented in the NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) figures in Halton.

Connexions data showed that in November 2006 only 20% of 19 year old care leavers were in some form of education, employment or training. In November 2007 the figure was 39% and by November 2008 it was almost 45%. It was advised that in the past 12 months 7 care leavers had received employment training experience. One of those went on to become an Administration Apprentice with the Children and Young People Directorate.

The Board was advised that in order to improve the situation in Halton, a dedicated Apprenticeship scheme for care leavers had been agreed. It was reported that this would involve 10 apprenticeships being made available within the Council and partner agencies involving a range of employment areas. Members considered that care leavers required additional support: emotional support and mentoring being the key elements called for.

Arising from the discussion it was noted that job opportunities could be made available through various departments in the Council. As a corporate parent Halton Borough Council would respond and provide support to care leavers. Members suggested that a performance indicator be established in order to prioritise this target and some form of monitoring would help in terms of delivering the outcomes.

It was also noted that this item would feed into the Corporate Services PPB and the Employment Learning and Skills PPB in the June cycle of meetings.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the Board provide support for the proposals regarding apprenticeships and other job opportunities and

Strategic Director-
Children & Young

additional support for care leavers entering work;

People

2) the item be submitted to the Corporate Services and Employment Learning and Skills PPBs for consideration in the June cycle of meetings; and

3) a performance indicator be established to prioritise the career opportunities made available to children leaving care and be monitored regularly by the CYP and Corporate Services PPB.

CYP46 STANDING ADVISORY COUNCIL ON RELIGIOUS EDUCATION (SACRE) ANNUAL REPORT

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director Children and Young People which detailed the Annual Report of the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) 2007/08.

It was advised that it was a requirement of each SACRE to submit an Annual Report to The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA). The report detailed findings of the 2007/08 Annual Return from Halton's schools. The hard work and dedication of all our schools in Halton to maintain and further the high standards reached in Religious Education was acknowledged by the Board.

The report outlined and examined the findings by which Halton and their partners met the needs of young people in the Borough for Religious Education during 2007/2008.

RESOLVED: That the report be received.

(NB: COUNCILLORS BROWNE, HORABIN AND LOWE DECLARED A PERSONAL INTEREST DUE TO BEING GOVERNORS AT THE SCHOOLS MENTIONED UNDER N189)

CYP47 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORTS FOR 2008/09

The Board considered a report of the Chief Executive on progress against service plan objectives and performance targets, performance trends/comparisons and factors affecting the services for:

- Specialist Services;
- Universal and Learning Services;
- Preventative Services; and

- Business Planning and Resources.

RESOLVED: That the 3rd quarter performance monitoring reports be received.

Meeting ended at 8.55 p.m.