

## CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD

*At a meeting of the Children, Young People and Families Policy and Performance Board on Monday, 24 May 2010 in the Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn*

Present: Councillors Dennett (Chairman), Horabin (Vice-Chairman), Browne, Findon, M. Fry, Gilligan, M. Hodge, P. Lloyd Jones, Loftus, J. Lowe, M. Ratcliffe and J. Dipnall

Apologies for Absence: Councillors None

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: A. Scott, G. Bennett and G. Meehan

Also in attendance: V. Buchanan, C. Johnson, J. Kirk, R. Mackenzie, A. McIntyre, N. Moorhouse and J. Potter

### ITEMS DEALT WITH UNDER DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD

#### CYP1 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 22 February 2010 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

#### CYP2 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

It was confirmed that no public questions had been received.

*(NB: Councillor Fry declared a personal interest in all items on the agenda as Chair of the Halton Autistic Family Support Group.*

*Councillor P Lloyd Jones declared a personal interest in all items on the agenda as a Non-Executive Director of Halton and St Helens PCT.*

*Councillor Loftus declared a personal and prejudicial interest in the item of business contained in minute EB 106, due to being an employee of Riverside College).*

*Action*

### CYP3 EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES

The Board received a report which contained the minutes relating to the Children and Young People Portfolio which had been considered by the Executive Board and the Executive Board Sub-Committee since the last meeting.

RESOLVED: That the minutes be noted.

### CYP4 SSP MINUTES

The Board received the minutes of the Halton Children's Trust Specialist Strategic Partnership held on 26 January 2010.

RESOLVED: That the minutes be noted.

### CYP5 ANNUAL REPORT 2009/10

The Board considered the report of the Strategic Director Children and Young People which outlined the Children and Young People's Policy and Performance Board's Annual Report for 2009/10. The Chairman thanked the Members of the Board for a successful 12 months and noted that in June 2009 Members of the Board were trained and encouraged to take part in the inspection of the Borough's care homes (Regulation 33 visits) and also to meet with Social Workers and their Managers (Climbie visits) to make sure they were fully supported in their work in protecting and helping children and young people.

In September 2009, Climbie visits were a specific focus and in January 2010 a full review of the placement strategy was conducted for Children in Care.

The full Board met five times during the year and the main initiatives that the Board had worked on during the year were as follows:

- Educational Attainment and Achievement 2009
- Services for Homeless Young People
- Placement Strategy Review
- Service Plans
- Developments for Young Carers
- Developments in Post 16 Provision

In terms of performance, the Board had raised its sights to focus attention on key strategic performance as set out in the Local Area Agreement (LAA), and in the Service's work with partners. Through the LAA, a suite of targets had

been agreed for Halton with Government and local partners. The LAA reflected the priorities in Halton's community strategy for improving quality of life in Halton, including the need to tackle high conception pregnancy rates in the Borough.

Members noted that the Council's efficiency programme had resulted in a restructuring of the Children and Young People Directorate, reducing the number of departments from four to three.

The Chair wished to place on record his thanks to all staff for their hard work in the past twelve months.

RESOLVED: That the Children and Young People Policy and Performance Board Annual Report for 2009/10 be received.

#### CYP6 SOCIAL WORK REFERRAL AND WORKLOAD ANALYSIS

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Young People which gave Members the opportunity to scrutinise the Referral and Assessment activity and advised them of issues that impacted on the current performance of the Children in Need (Child Protection) Service.

The Board noted that the completion of Initial Assessments within timescales was 76.2% and for Core Assessments the figure was 80.3%. However, at the time of writing the report, the data had not been quality assured and a verbal update was given at the meeting of 80% and 95% respectively.

A recent Common Assessment Framework (CAF) review had highlighted issues on the role of early intervention and of meeting the needs of children at the earliest possible point. The report also gave details of the services generally provided by Children's Social Care.

The report went on to provide an analysis of the processes involved in referrals, contacts, caseloads, court activity and capacity. In summary, the report referred to the considerable pressure within the various Children's Social Work teams, but although there had been problems in recording assessment procedures, all children had been seen within seven days of referral. Assessments were generally of a high standard, which had been confirmed by the Case File Audit process. The numbers of Children in Care and Children Subject to a Child Protection Plan had

remained stable and there was evidence of robust safeguarding and care planning processes. There were no Children in Care; Need or Protection unallocated cases.

The roll out of the “Team around the Family” (Locality Working -reported elsewhere on the agenda), with an emphasis on the “CAF Plus” model, would help to reduce the number of inappropriate referrals to Children’s Social Care. In addition, there was a commitment to provide experienced social workers for the Locality Teams to establish a ‘Triage’ approach to referrals.

The Chair commented on the developments of Carefirst 6 and Electronic Social Care Records designed to help avoid duplicity of data input and to the apparent delays in the roll-out of mobile working. The Board fully supported the report of the Strategic Director, Children and Young People to the Chief Executive’s Management Team which highlighted the need for adequate resources to ensure social workers had the IT tools and systems to support them in their work. This was the top priority for Children’s Social Care in 2010/2011.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the report be noted;
- (2) Halton Safeguarding Children Board continue to scrutinise and support the work of the Children’s Trust in relation to the development of Team Around the Family (Localities) and the progress of the CAF Action Plan;
- (3) Halton Safeguarding Children Board scrutinise the response to Domestic Violence across the levels of need within Halton; and
- (4) a further report be presented to the Board in six months.

#### CYP7 SCRUTINY TOPICS FOR 2010/11

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Young People on Scrutiny Topics for 2010/11.

RESOLVED : That a Topic brief be circulated to all Board Members and offers of interest from Members be submitted to the Strategic Director, Children and Young People.

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## CYP8 CLIMBIE VISITS

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Young People on the conduct of, and outcomes from, Climbie Visits to front line Children in Need teams.

The Board were reminded of the purpose of Climbie Visits and it was reported that currently, five Members had received training which enabled them to carry out the required quarterly visits. Dates had been set for visits in 2009/10 in both Widnes and Runcorn. However, the Runcorn visits had proven problematic with one visit cancelled.

The report advised Members that Lord Laming's Inquiry following the death of Victoria Climbie recommended that "arrangements must be made for senior managers and councillors to regularly visit intake teams to report their findings to the Chief Executive and the Social Services Committee".

In order to strengthen the conduct of visits in Halton, the Board were advised that Members needed to engage in the process and attend appropriate training to ensure that there was increased scrutiny of Social Care Referral and Assessment processes. This would ensure that Members had a good understanding of the issues that impacted on front line Social Care services whilst continuing to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in the Borough.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the contents of the report be noted;
- 2) training be offered to Board Members and a rota for Climbie Visits agreed;
- 3) the Members' reports and Managers' responses following Climbie Visits be reported to the Board and scrutinised twice a year; and
- 4) the focus of Climbie Visits to give increased scrutiny to the core business of Contact, Referral and Assessment processes and performance data, should routinely be discussed and understood.

CYP9 TEAMS AROUND THE FAMILY (ALSO KNOWN AS C&YP LOCALITY WORK)

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Young People on the development of Locality Working (Teams Around the Family).

The report advised Members that Halton Children's Trust had developed a 'Levels of Need' Framework to help practitioners and managers in the various agencies in Halton to identify the needs of children and young people, and make decisions on how those needs could be met and by which agencies. The Framework operated at four levels, details of which were outlined in the report. In addition, a number of 'Strands' composed the locality working model, and these were detailed as follows:

Strand 1: Additional Support around the Common Assessment Framework Implementation;

Strand 2: Identifying Local Need and Informing Commissioning; and

The Board noted that Children's Centres were closely tied into the new 'Localities' structure and the development of localities would be looking at enhancing their role in working with more targeted families. This may lead to changing the menu of support they currently offered, as most if not all localities work would centre on the work of Children's Centres.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

*(NB: Councillor Hodge declared a personal and prejudicial interest in the following item of business due to being a childminder by profession in receipt of IT equipment).*

CYP10 SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY  
PERFORMANCE REPORT

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Resources on the progress towards meeting Halton's Sustainable Community Strategy targets 2009-10.

The revised Local Area Agreement (LAA) which comprised an element of Halton's Sustainable Community Strategy, was signed off by the Secretary of State in June 2008. The LAA contained a set of measures and targets agreed between the Council, local partner agencies and

Government. The Agreement was refreshed in March 2010 following a review by Government Office North West.

Attached at Appendix 1 to the report was a report on progress to the 2009-10 financial year –end and included those indicators and targets within the remit of the Board.

Members commented on the following indicators:

NI 116 – Proportion of Children in Poverty: The target for this measure was to narrow the gap between the Halton and the North West average from a baseline of 5.6% in 2007/08 to 4.6% by April 2011.

NI 87 – Secondary School Persistent Absence Rate: The Education Welfare Service worked alongside colleagues within the healthcare environment to ensure support was available for pupils with both physical and emotional health needs.

NI 56- Obesity Among Primary School Age Children in Year 6: This figure indicated that an increasing number of children in the ‘overweight’ category had now moved into the ‘obese’ category. Members requested further information on this indicator would be reported to the next meeting of the Board.

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RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

#### CYP11 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORTS FOR 2009/10

The Board received a report of the Chief Executive which contained performance management reports for 2009/10.

The report related to the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter, year-end on progress against service plan objectives and performance targets for

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

In receiving the fourth quarterly monitoring report the following points were noted:

- NI 111 – First time entrants to the Youth Justice System – a request was made to split the data to show the Halton/Warrington figures;

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- Review of the Role of the post of Principal Manager Fostering – following job evaluation, a more attractive package had been offered and Members commented on the need for stability in the post;
- Substance Misuse – the profile for Halton was consistent with the rest of the UK with research indicating that alcohol and cannabis being the drugs most used by young people in the Borough;
- NI 75 – Proportion achieving 5 A\*-C GCSE including English and Maths – the projected figure was provisionally 51% for 2010;
- School Organisation – The Heath - A Specialist Technology College – if approved, the expansion would increase pupil numbers from 1050 to 1350.

The Chair wished to place on record his thanks, on behalf of the Board, to Judith Kirk for her hard work and commitment during her time in post at Halton and wished her well in her new job.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

*Meeting ended at 8.15 p.m.*