

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, 6 September 2010 in the Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn

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

Apologies for Absence: Councillors M. Hodge

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: G. Bennett, M. Simpson, V. Buchanan, H. Coen, A. McIntyre, N. Moorhouse, C. Taylor, A. Villiers, L Wilson, P. St Aubyn and K. Kerfoot

Also in attendance: None

ITEMS DEALT WITH UNDER DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD

Action

CYP12 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 24 May 2010, having been printed and circulated were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

In relation to training for Levels of Need / Thresholds for referrals and Climbie Visits, Members were given two dates of scheduled training sessions being 11th October at 12:00 or 13th October at 18:00. Members were asked to contact Nigel Moorhouse / Vicky Buchannan with their preferences.

It was also noted that the sessions would provide a general overview of Levels of Need and the role of Children's Social Care.

RESOLVED: That the minutes be noted and Members contact Nigel Moorhouse with their preferred training session.

CYP13 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

It was reported 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.*

CYP14 EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES

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

Arising from Minute No. EXB9 it was noted that there was one final piece of legal paperwork to be completed for the transfer from Halton High to the Academy and the company had reserved the right until 1st February 2011 to re-consider their position.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes be noted.

CYP15 FOSTER CARE RECRUITMENT

The Board considered a report which provided information on the progress of the revised recruitment and retention campaign for carers.

It was noted that a Placement Strategy Review in respect of children in care was presented to the Executive Board on 5 November 2009.

It was reported that the review focussed initially on the borough's situation in relation to foster care and it identified barriers to the recruitment of carers that needed to be overcome in order to address a severe shortage of carers and the resulting high cost of placing a significant number of children in external provision.

The Executive Board agreed to support an Invest to Save Bid to improve recruitment and retention of foster carers as a result of the first stage of the review. The increased allowances would be introduced on 7 September 2010, and a summary of activity between January and July 2010 was outlined in the report for information.

The report also detailed advertising and marketing activities, the role of Family Support Assistants and noted that some carers who were previously registered by other

agencies had now joined Halton.

Members discussed training the Family Support Assistants received, various reasons carers de-register, the percentage of interested calls and actual take up figures, the number of children in care that currently require fostering, the stringent process undertaken to be a carer and the cost of buying in foster care from outside the authority. It was suggested that help be provided during the application progress as people could lose confidence when dealing with complicated forms.

Arising from the discussion the Board felt that, in relation to current spend information and short falls of funding, it would be beneficial to receive an updated report after quarter 4.

RESOLVED:

- 1) the report be noted; and
- 2) an updated funding report regarding foster care expenditure be brought back to a future meeting after Quarter 4 information has been received.

Strategic Director
- Children &
Young People

CYP16 CHILDREN YOUNG PEOPLE PLAN REVIEW

The Board considered a report which provided an overview of the review that had been undertaken of Halton's Children & Young People's Plan 2009-2011.

It was reported that Halton's second Children and Young People Plan (CYPP) was published in 2009 to provide strategic direction for all services within the Children's Trust in Halton.

It was further noted that the CYPP was the agreed joint strategy of the partners in the Children's Trust, and detailed how they would co-operate to improve children's wellbeing over the five Every Child Matters Outcomes. In addition it determined how the Children's Trust Board would work together to commission services to address locally identified needs and better integrated provision.

The Board was advised that a multi agency task group had been established in April 2010 and focussed on a number of developments outlined in 3.7 of the report. Also detailed in the report were achievements gained so far and the areas where more work was needed.

Members discussed the indicators listed on page 31 of the report as to whether there should be target numbers listed. In response it was noted that this information related only to instances of consultation for each indicator and that this information was shown in the performance monitoring section on pages 43 to 53.

The Board also discussed possible effects the in year cuts would have on the Trust as a whole and how work would continue with partners. Members were informed that project meetings were being held across all specialist strategic partnerships to examine outcomes of projects.

The Board referred to Section 11 of the set out actions required to improve areas that had been identified as a result of the review. An overview of a number of areas where more work was required in order to achieve the objectives by March 2011 was set out in the report.

Members requested that a report be brought back to the January PPB in order to see progress made.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the Children and Young People's Plan Review 2010 be endorsed;
- 2) the actions detailed in Section of 11 of the Children and Young People's Plan Review 2010, and summarised in 3.9 of this report to be taken into consideration in terms of meeting the Children and Young People's Plan 2009-2011 be approved; and
- 3) a report be submitted to the January PPB providing an update of progress.

Strategic Director
- Children &
Young People

CYP17 ANNOUNCED INTEGRATED INSPECTIONS OF SAFEGUARDING AND LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN'S SERVICES.

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Young People which provided information regarding the process and preparation required for the Ofsted announced inspection of safeguarding and looked after children services.

It was noted that the inspections examine the arrangements for safeguarding children, and the outcomes for children and young people who were looked after.

The Board was advised that in terms of safeguarding the inspection would assess the effectiveness of the Children's trust, the Safeguarding board, local services and would assess how well partners work together to identify, safeguard and promote the welfare of potentially vulnerable groups of children and young people that live in Halton. Members were reminded that the inspection covered all agencies and services who worked with children and young people.

Set out in the report for information was the level of preparation required for the inspection, the grading of inspection findings, the process and inspection activity, preparation in Halton and the Timeline for the Inspection was embedded in the report for consideration.

The inspection identified areas of strength, satisfactory practice and areas for development.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the focus of the inspection and the associated timelines are noted;
- 2) appropriate staffing and resources are released when the inspection is notified; and
- 3) the Lead Member and Chair of the PPB attends the 'set up' meeting with inspectors.

Strategic Director
- Children &
Young People

CYP18 OFSTED'S UNANNOUNCED INSPECTION OF CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE CONTACT, REFERRAL & ASSESSMENT SERVICE

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Young People which provided information of the outcome of Ofsted's first unannounced inspection of Children's Social Care Contact Referral and Assessment Services, which took place on 5th and 6th of May 2010.

It was reported that the purpose of the inspection was to assess the effectiveness of frontline social work practice in managing potential risk to children, and minimising the incidence of abuse and neglect of children. The focus was primarily on the Local Authority as lead agency for child protection.

It was noted that the inspection would inform the content of future inspections, in particular the 10 day announced Ofsted inspection of Safeguarding and Looked

After Children.

It was further noted that the inspection did not identify grades but aspects of satisfactory practice, strengths and areas for development. Members were advised that no areas for 'priority action' were identified during Ofsted's inspection.

Appended to the report for information was the final letter from Ofsted confirming their judgement following the inspection which was extremely positive.

There were a number of strengths identified which were detailed in the report for information in addition to satisfactory areas. With regard to areas for development that had been identified Members considered an action plan to address the issues which was appended to the report.

Members were informed that staff were attending "back to basics" training and once the Care First 6 system was operational, there would be less duplication, delays and frustrations for staff. Members expressed an interest in viewing the system once it had been established.

The Board congratulated Children's Services for the extremely positive results from the inspection.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the result of Ofsted's inspection of Contact, Referral and Assessment Services be noted including areas of strengths and satisfactory practice; and
- 2) the Action Plan to address the areas for development arising from the inspection be noted.

Strategic Director
- Children &
Young People

CYP19 DIOCESAN REPRESENTATIVE NOMINATION

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Young People which informed Members of the requirement to appoint diocesan representatives to Scrutiny Committees and advised Members to recommend to Executive Board and Full Council the appointment of a Diocesan representative for Shrewsbury and Liverpool as a voting co-optee on the Children, Young People and Families Policy and Performance Board for a period of 4 years.

It was reported that under a Direction issued by the Secretary of State authorities must appoint diocesan representatives to Scrutiny Committees under s499

Education Act 1996 and DfE circular 19/99 all as amended. The representatives would have voting rights in relation to any decision relating to the following:

- Schools maintained by the Local Authority (LA);
- Pupils who attend school maintained by the LA or are educated in some way but not the other business of the Committee.

Members were informed that Elizabeth Lawler who was the Diocesan representative for Shrewsbury and Liverpool be appointed as a voting co-optee on the Children, Young People and Families Policy and Performance Board for a period of four years commencing from the date approval is given.

RESOLVED: That the Executive Board and Full Council be requested to agree the appointment of a Diocesan representative for Shrewsbury and Liverpool, as a voting co-optee on the Policy and Performance Board for a period of four years, commencing from the date approval is given.

Strategic Director
- Children &
Young People

CYP20 UPDATE ON BSF

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Young People which updated Members on the Building Schools for Future (BSF) programme.

It was reported that the second round of the Competitive Dialogue process commenced on 23 February 2010 and formal meetings were completed on 30 April 2010. Close of Dialogue was achieved on Friday 11 June 2010, by ensuring that enough documentation had been reviewed by all agencies involved to ensure that all Legal, Financial and Commercial issues had been agreed.

Members were advised that each of the four designs produced by the bidders for the sample schools were formally assessed by the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) in London on 27 May 2010. It was further noted that the comments made by CABE at the meeting were of such nature that both the LA and Partnership for Schools felt that at the next review each design would achieve an overall pass.

The report also set out details of the final bidders presentation, the final bid submissions, BSF announcement 5 July and progress to date. In particular it was noted that

the Secretary of State announced on 5 July 2010 the end of the BSF Programme with immediate effect. All LA's currently within the Programme were put into 3 categories outlined in the report. The Board was informed that Halton had two sample schools which were under review being Wade Deacon and The Grange. The only exception was with the Academies which were being reviewed on a case by case basis alongside the sample schools.

Members discussed other provisions which BSF would have covered such as ICT equipment and whether schools not in receipt of any funding would be left at a disadvantage in terms of performance tables. It was recognised that there was a challenge ahead and once results of the James Review were received other options could be explored.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the report be noted; and
- 2) a further report be presented to the Board on the school capital once the outcome of the James review has been completed.

Strategic Director
- Children &
Young People

CYP21 SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY 2011 - 2026

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Resources which updated Members on the progress of the new Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) 2011-2026 and presented the emerging vision, key objectives and long term priorities that the plan sought to deliver upon.

Members received a presentation which outlined the following:

- Implementation date was from April 2011;
- Overarching priorities for Children and Young People;
- Amendments to the priorities to align with the five Every Child Matters outcomes;
- Develop new priorities that reflect the new areas of focus within Halton's Children's Trust and the evolving Government policy framework for children's services; and
- Next steps.

Arsing from presentation Members noted the following:

- Locality working, for example employees working with families through early intervention and family framework;
- Continuation of provision for special educational needs within the new academy school;
- Procedures if parents or carers refuse to engage in family support programmes; and
- Provision of careers advice.

The report sought endorsement of the proposed emerging issues / themes and long term challenges that Halton needed to tackle. Once these had been agreed, detailed policy options would be worked upon to provide a range of potential interventions to deal with challenges that Halton faced.

Members also considered the strategic objectives and challenges contained in section 6.0 of the report and their alignment with their knowledge of local needs.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the five overarching priorities for the emerging Sustainable Community Strategy 2011-2026 be noted; and
- 2) the suggested vision, strategic objectives and challenges contained in Section 6.0 and their alignment with their knowledge of local needs be noted.

Strategic Director
- Children &
Young People

CYP22 SSP MINUTES

The minutes from the Halton Children's Trust meetings held on 4 May, and 27 July 2010 were presented to the Board for information.

RESOLVED: That the minutes be noted.

CYP23 1ST QUARTER MONITORING REPORT -

The Board received a report of the Chief Executive on the Performance Management reports for quarter one, 2010/11.

Members were requested to consider and raise any questions or points of clarification in respect of the 1st quarter performance management reports on progress

against service plan objectives and performance targets, performance trends/comparisons, factors affecting the services etc. for;

- Children and Families;
- Children's Organisation Provision; and
- Learning and Achievement.

An overview report was tabled at the meeting, which provided an outline of issues and progress within the directorate for the period ending 30 June 2010. Members attention was drawn to Appendix 1, which explained how red, amber and green (RAG) symbols had been used to reflect progress for both objectives and performance indicators in the Departmental Reports.

For 2010/2011 direction of travel indicators had also been added where possible, to reflect progress for performance measures compared to the same period last year.

Arising from the reports the Board noted the following:

- In relation to page 129, the principal fostering managers post had been filled. In addition there were more front-line managers in place now;
- Dialogue was taking place with Human Resources in relation to improving employment opportunities for care leavers within the authority;
- Concerns were noted regarding an incident with the Vroomz outreach bus and anti-social behaviour – officers were unaware of this and would investigate further, however overall it was reported that its use had been effective and was well used;
- Effects on services and maintaining standards, if grant funding if was no longer available to fund staff; and
- With regard to the pupil referral unit Members discussed, alternative provisions in schools, and sharing good practice and resources.

RESOLVED: That the 1st quarter performance management reports be received.

Meeting ended at 8.45 p.m.