



Cllr. Mark
Dennett
Chairman
Children &
Young People
PPB

**ANNUAL REPORT
CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD
APRIL 2015 – MARCH 2016**

“I always like to start by looking back over the previous twelve months. The focus of the Board was very much around the scrutiny of our social care services, ensuring that we continue to provide the support for our children in care and families who come into contact with the social care system, ensuring that the systems and support are in place to protect our young people. The critical need for these services has been highlighted by the cases in Rotherham, and we continue to make sure they are fully supported, especially in these times of savage government cuts.

We have also examined how the education reforms have affected our schools. All of our primary schools are still wrestling with how they can assess our children's progress without levels of attainment to measure against. This is even more highlighted when Her Majesty's Chief Inspector singled out Halton for it's high performance in our schools notably, the proportion of disadvantaged pupils (pupils on Free School Meals (FSM) achieving 5+ A*- C including English and Mathematics at GCSE was the highest in the North West and in the top 10 nationally. Unfortunately, proving these kinds of successes will be even more difficult now with the educational reforms.

As I have done over the last few years, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate our students who did so well this year, and also thank the parents, carers and teachers who supported them in achieving these fantastic results. The results show Halton's continued commitment to drive up standards and improve the opportunities available to all of our young people as they move into adulthood.

Looking back I think it has been a good and varied ninth year for the board and I would like to thank all of the members of the board, as well as all of the officers involved for their continued support and contribution.

Going forward I intend to look further at the educational reforms and look at ways we can help our family of schools to come together and ensure that our children continue to get the best educational start in life. We will also continue to scrutinise our social care and safeguarding services, ensuring that we do everything we can to support our most vulnerable children and young people.

Finally, I would like to conclude this report by thanking all of the officers and members (of all parties) involved in all of the 'additional duties' that take place to make sure that the children and young people receive that best care and support. Duties such as being a school governor with all of the responsibilities that that entails, statutory inspections of our care homes (Regulation 44) or of our social worker teams (Climbié visits), membership of the Local Safeguarding Board, the Adoptions Panel, the Children and Young People's Trust, to name but a few of the 'extra duties' that both members and officers perform to support and improve the lives of the children and young people of our Borough.”

Councillor Mark Dennett

Chairman, Children, Young People and Families Policy and Performance Board

MEMBERSHIP AND RESPONSIBILITIES

During 2015/16 the Board comprised Eleven Councillors – Councillors M. Dennett (Chairman) Cllr G. Logan (Vice Chairman), L.Cassidy, P.Hignett, M. Horabin, K Loftus, A McInerney, J.Roberts, J. Stockton, A. Wall, B.Woolfall, and Co-optee E Lawler.

The Board is responsible for scrutinising performance and formulating policy in relation to the work of the Council (and its partner agencies within Children’s Trust Arrangements) in seeking: to ensure that children and young people in Halton have the best possible start in life and opportunities to fulfil their potential and succeed; and to scrutinise progress against the Corporate Plan and the Children and Young People’s Plan.

REVIEW OF THE YEAR

The full Board met five times during the year, and set out below are some of the main initiatives that the Board has worked on during the year.

Working with Our Family of Schools

The Board formed a topic group to see how the Authority could better support our family of schools, in light of reducing resources within the authority and increased autonomy of schools. The topic group met four times and made a number of recommendations back to the Board that it felt could improve our support to schools.

Early Years Review

The Board received a report which provided a summary of the school performance data for early years in Halton. The report identified the challenges the Borough faced and described the actions to be taken to raise standards. It also provided details on the progress the Borough was making in terms of the national child measurement programme and similarly the challenges faced in the early years development.

Education Structure

The Board supported a report on the development of Halton’s Education Service. Following the resignation of the Operational Director, Learning and Achievement, the departmental management arrangements were revisited and revised. The report set out the restructure of the roles within the newly named ‘*Education Division*’, which had now transferred to the Organisation and Provision Department, along with the *0-25 Inclusion*, to form the *Education Inclusion and Provision Department*. The restructure would be augmented by Halton’s existing Strategic System Leadership Group which was explained to the board.

Domestic Abuse Service

The board considered a report on a commissioned service from Core Assets Children's Services to deliver a new domestic abuse service for children, young people and families ensuring a co-ordinated approach to support offered. The service provides information, advice and direct support to families in a variety of ways and works directly with parents to reduce the impact of domestic abuse on parenting capacity. The service is supported by HBC Children's Social Care with the Cheshire and Merseyside Local Authority Pre-Proceedings Protocol.

Care Leavers Charter

Members endorsed a revised Care Leavers Charter that reflected their aspirations and expectations in their own words. The Charter had been produced by the young people through consultation with young people to fully reflect the issues that were important to them.

Transformation Plan For Mental Health Services

The Board received a presentation from the NHS Halton Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) which provided an update on the transformation of the Emotional Health and Wellbeing Services for the Young People of Halton. The presentation outlined the following areas:

- National Policy – '*Future in Mind*';
- What was currently in place in Halton;
- What had been achieved to date;
- What was hoped to be achieved by March 2016;
- The transformational Plan and links to the *All Age Mental Health Strategy*; this included areas for additional investment;
- Eating disorders services; and
- Future opportunities.

Further Developing Links Between Halton's Businesses And Schools

The Board received a report on the work being undertaken to further develop the relationship between the Education and Business sectors in Halton. It was noted that there were a number of interventions that already contributed to promoting strong links between schools and businesses and the report summarised some recent positive activities that had taken place to achieve this. The report also outlined some additional proposals which would inform and complement future design plans, particularly in regard to how schools were supported in engaging with and supporting local employers; but also how students were provided with effective and valuable careers information, advice and guidance.

The report also set out the Liverpool City Region devolution arrangements with Government on this agenda, the main asks are :

- Establish Liverpool City Region Careers Hub
- Government place a duty to co-operate on all nationally funded organisations delivering careers initiatives in the City
- Government to devolve the funding for the National Careers Service to the City Region.

The report concluded by setting out the restructuring of the Education Business Partnership to become the Careers Education and Employment Advice service that will be available to provide services to both schools and employers strengthening the links that already exist in the Halton.

Council Single Business Plan

The Board approved the final draft of the Children, Young People and Families elements of the Council's Single Business Plan for 2016-19. It was noted that since 2010 each Directorate had been required to produce a medium term Business Plan which covered a three year period however a Single Business Plan would now be constructed for the Authority as a whole.

To ensure the production of a Business Plan that enabled the Authority to meet the priorities identified within the Corporate Plan, the information from each Directorate would be set out under the Council's priority headings:

- Children and Young People;
- Employment, Learning and Skills;
- A Safer Halton;
- A Healthy Halton;
- Environment and Regeneration; and
- Corporate Effectiveness and Efficiency

Members regularly considered matters relating to Safeguarding in particular in the work of the Halton Children's Trust and Safeguarding Children's Board. Members received a presentation on Child Sex Exploitation and also reports on Inglefield's Short Break Service, Locality Early intervention, Special Educational Needs Reforms, Complaints and Compliments services and the learning from these. Reports were also received on Independent Living, Children and Families Service, Youth Council Priorities, Prevent Duty, The Education Outcomes for Children in Care and a Scrutiny Topic Update on how we are working with our family of schools.

Members of the Public are welcome at the meetings of the Board. If you would like to know where and when meetings are to be held or if you would like any more information about the Board or its work, please contact Ann McIntyre on 0151 511 7332 ann.mcintyre@halton.gov.uk