

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, 13 June 2016 in the Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn

Present: Councillors Dennett (Chair), Logan (Vice-Chair), Cassidy, P. Hignett, Horabin, P. Lloyd Jones and Parker

Apologies for Absence: Councillor Rowe

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: A. McIntyre, A. Jones, T. Coffey and A. Parkinson

Also in attendance: M. Parkinson – Strategic Professional Partner (CWAC) and Mrs C. Alonso

ITEMS DEALT WITH UNDER DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD

Action

CYP1 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 22 February 2016 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

CYP4 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The Board was advised that no public questions had been received.

CYP3 EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES

The minutes relating to the Children, Young People and Families Portfolio which had been considered by the Executive Board since the last meeting of this Board were attached at Appendix 1 for information.

The following queries were made in relation to the minutes.

EXB106 – were academies keeping the existing admission arrangements that were already in place prior to their conversions?

Each academy was its own admission authority but it must

meet the mandatory requirements of the Admissions Code. Academies still needed to consult with the LA and other admissions authorities about their arrangements.

EXB131 – the regional adoption agency does not include the same areas as the Liverpool City Region (LCR), why is this?

Halton has historically benefitted from a successful working relationship with Warrington, Wigan, St Helens and Cheshire West and Cheshire in the adoption field and it was felt that this should continue and was considered the best arrangement to serve the people of Halton.

RESOLVED: That the minutes and comments made be noted.

CYP4 SSP MINUTES

The Minutes of the Halton Children's Trust meeting held on 17 December 2015 were attached for Members' information.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes be noted.

CYP5 PRESENTATION – WHITE PAPER “EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE EVERYWHERE” / “EDUCATION FOR ALL BILL”

The Board received a presentation on the White Paper March 2016 “*Educational Excellence Everywhere* and the proposed “*Education for All Bill*”.

The Operational Director for Education, Inclusion and Provision provided a summary of the Paper identifying implications for the Local Authority's role in Schools Improvement and wider services, and also the potential implications for schools in Halton. It was noted that the proposed reforms would radically reshape education and reduce and redefine the role of the Local Authority.

All schools within a local authority would not be compelled to convert to academy status except:

- 1) If the LA could no longer support the remaining schools because the critical mass had converted; and
- 2) Where the local authority consistently failed to meet a minimum performance threshold (yet to be determined) across its schools.

The presentation discussed:

- The 7 key areas of reform;
- The retention of good teachers; and the replacement of qualified teacher status with accreditation based on a teacher's effectiveness in the classroom – posing the question how would this be measured;
- Great leaders and governance;
- The conversion of inadequate or underperforming schools to academies and the continuation of encouraging high performing maintained schools to become academies;
- The role of the Local Authority in the academisation programme;
- Preventing underperformance;
- Accountability with regards to Multi Academy Trusts (MATs);
- Resources – such as funding being allocated directly to the schools; and
- The key issues for Halton.

Members raised concerns about Early Years provision and whether the 30 hours would be maintained. They also commented on the role of Governors and who would appoint them.

RESOLVED: That the presentation be received and comments made be noted.

CYP6 PRESENTATION – “THE CHANGING ROLE OF THE REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMISSIONER” AND “THE EDUCATION AND ADOPTION ACT, MARCH 2016

The Board received a presentation on the Education and Adoption Act 2016 and the *Changing Role of the Regional School Commissioner (RSC)*.

Officers advised that the *Education and Adoption Act* received Royal Assent in March 2016 and would:

- Make provision for schools in England that were causing concern, including provision about their conversion to academies;
- Provide new intervention powers for Regional School Commissioners;
- Make provision about joint arrangements for carrying out local authority adoption functions in England; and
- Outline 14 clauses including the changing role of the Regional School Commissioner.

The 14 Clauses of the Act were presented to the Board as were the implications of these for the Local

Authority. The presentation would be sent to Members for further scrutiny. It was noted that the RSC for Halton was Vicky Beer.

RESOLVED: That the presentation be received.

CYP7 PRESENTATION - LOCAL AREA'S EFFECTIVENESS IN IDENTIFYING AND MEETING THE NEEDS OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WHO HAVE SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND/OR DISABILITIES

The Board received a presentation which informed Members of the work of the Local Area in identifying and meeting the needs of children and young people who had a special education need or disability in Halton.

The Board was advised that the framework for the inspection of local areas' effectiveness in identifying and meeting the needs of children and young people who had special educational needs and/or disabilities had been published. The purpose of the inspection; to hold Local Areas to account and to offer assistance in developing processes and support systems to deliver better outcomes for children and young people, was noted by Members.

The following points were discussed from the presentation:

- On average a local area would only be inspected once every 5 years; it was anticipated that Halton would receive a visit before the summer;
- Each Local Area would have a nominated Officer Representative who would act as the single point of contact on behalf of all local agencies throughout the inspection – Halton's nominated Officer was Ann McIntyre;
- Inspectors would visit a range of providers of services to see how these services worked together;
- Included in the evidence the inspectors would seek the attainment and progress of children and young people with SEND; attendance and exclusion information and data relating to identification of SEND at school support and through EHC plans. Following Members queries, it was confirmed that nursery schools and the children of travellers were included in the information if they had SEN/D;

- Schools and nurseries published SEND information would be inspected;
- Evaluation would be received from service users e.g. parents, to determine how they had influenced commissioning and service delivery;

The presentation provided information with regards to how Halton compared with National and North West averages. Members were also provided with a breakdown of the primary and secondary schools SEN/D needs by types. The special school provision and the secondary and primary resource bases available in Halton were noted.

The areas for development were discussed by Members and it was suggested by one Member that in some cases attachment issues played a big part in influencing the first years of a child's life.

Were schools aware of attachment issues and the need to nurture?

- Psychologists were currently looking into the effects this may have in future years;
- Primary and secondary schools had been invited to take part in a nurture pilot programme, it was hoped that the schools community would be encouraged to participate once hearing about the pilot from colleagues.

Were schools able to cope when youngsters had been identified with issues relating to lack of nurture?

- Specialist teachers and psychologists played an important role in identifying and then supporting schools;
- Teacher training was available and was helping however schools needed to invest in the teacher training themselves.

Would the SEND training be ongoing?

- It was the schools responsibility to ensure training was in place to develop their children identified with SEND.

RESOLVED: That the presentation be received and comments made be noted.

CYP8 REGULATION 44 VISITS TO COUNCIL OWNED CHILDREN'S HOMES

A report was presented to the Board which outlined

the statutory basis for Regulation 44 visits, the role of Members in undertaking those visits and the training and support that was in place for that role.

The Board was informed that Regulation 44 of the *Children's Homes Regulations 2015* required each children's home to ensure that an 'independent' visitor visits the home at least once a month. The visitor was then required to compile a report of their findings which must be submitted to Ofsted within 4 weeks of the visit.

It was noted that the focus of the visit was to ensure that all children within the placement were being appropriately cared for and their individual needs were being met. This was achieved through a combination of examining appropriate written records within the home; viewing any complaints; and interviewing children, parents and staff as they felt necessary, to establish the standard of care being provided.

It was reported that Ofsted had recently inspected both of Halton's Children's Homes (Edinburgh Road and Inglefield) and following this it was recommended that the visits needed to offer a more rigorous and impartial assessment of the home's arrangements for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the children in the home.

It was noted by the Board that failure to act on the recommendations of Ofsted may affect subsequent Ofsted judgements. The report provided information on the steps that were required to be taken to adhere to the recommendations provided.

Members shared their experiences with each other of visits made previously to the children's homes and agreed that training was crucial to the success of the visits and were happy to receive this. The training would be provided by *Action for Children* who had agreed to accompany Members upon the conclusion of their training and in the initial visits, if this was requested.

Members understood the need for a rota to include all Members of the Board and the Chair suggested an email be compiled and sent to Members, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Children, Young People and Families, explaining the responsibility that lay within the Regulation 44 Visits and the importance of them being carried out as recommended by Ofsted.

In response to a Members query, it was noted that

Halton did have some privately owned children's homes and they made their own arrangements to carry out Regulation 44 Visits and reporting them to Ofsted.

RESOLVED: That the Board

Ann McIntyre

- 1) notes the reasons for Board Members undertaking Regulation 44 visits;
- 2) confirms their commitment to the training and support; and
- 3) confirms their commitment to undertake Regulation 44 visits via a rota.

CYP9 INDEPENDENT LIVING SKILLS

The Board received a summary of the review of provision for teaching and enhancing Independent Living Skills for Young People with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities in Halton. The review was recommended following the last update report in January 2016.

Members were advised that visits were arranged between 2013-2015 to each special school and two primary resource bases; and to Riverside College. It was reported that the settings were found to be providing opportunities and experiences to help shape the essential independent living skills required to support young people towards Independent Living. Furthermore, Members were advised that Ofsted had judged Halton's special schools as good or outstanding in their provision. The report went on to provide examples of feedback received from Ofsted following their visits.

It was noted that Halton had a higher proportion of young people in employment and training compared to the national figures of 6%. Members requested further details of the types of skills the young people were learning and also the types of skills that were in demand by employers. It was suggested that this could be reported at a future Board meeting.

With regards to the further review of the topic *Preparation for Adulthood* by the sub group, it was the consensus of the Board that this should now be wound up and a report prepared for the next Board meeting.

The Chair also requested that Members give some thought to future topic groups as this would be discussed at the next meeting.

RESOLVED: That the Board

- 1) notes the scrutiny of Independent Living Skills undertaken since 2013; and
- 2) supports continued scrutiny through the Preparation for Adulthood SEND Strategic Group.

CYP10 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORTS - QUARTER 4 2015-16

The Board received the performance management reports for quarter 4 of 2015-16 and were requested to consider and raise any questions or points of clarification, in respect of them.

It was noted that the key priorities for development or improvement in 2015-18 were agreed by Members and included in Directorate Plans for the various functional areas reporting to the Board, i.e. Children and Families services; and Education, Inclusion and Provision. The reports detailed progress against service objectives and milestones and performance targets and provided information relating to key developments and emerging issues that had arisen during the period.

The following was highlighted:

- The timeliness of assessments – 1075 out of 1320 children's social care single assessments were completed within timescales, demonstrating a significant improvement in the final quarter.
- Early years entitlement for vulnerable 2 year olds – the take up had increased from the same time last year.
- Teenage conceptions – had seen a reduction for the fourth consecutive year in Halton and since 1998 this had reduced by 42.9%.

RESOLVED: That the fourth quarter performance management reports be received and comments made be noted.

Meeting ended at 8.55 p.m.