

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, 27 January 2020 in the Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn

Present: Councillors Dennett (Chair), Logan (Vice-Chair), M. Bradshaw, Carlin, Cassidy, Leck, P. Lloyd Jones, J. Stockton, Teeling and Whitley

Apologies for Absence: None

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: A. McIntyre, A. Jones, T. Coffey, D. Roberts, S. Williams, H. Bell and L. Davenport

Also in attendance: None

ITEMS DEALT WITH UNDER DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD

Action

CYP23 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 11 November 2019 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.

CYP24 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

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

CYP25 EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES

The minutes relating to the Children, Education and Social Care Portfolio, that had been considered by the Executive Board since the last meeting of this Board, were attached at Appendix 1 for information.

RESOLVED: That the minutes be noted.

CYP26 SSP MINUTES

The minutes relating to the Halton Children's Trust meetings held on 31 October 2019 and 3 December 2019 were presented to the Board for information.

RESOLVED: That the minutes be noted.

CYP27 ANNUAL REPORT - COMMENTS, COMPLAINTS AND COMPLIMENTS RELATING TO CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE SERVICES 1ST APRIL 2018 - 31ST MARCH 2019

The Board was presented with the Annual Reports for Comments, Complaints and Compliments relating to Children's Social Care Services from 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019. The report provided analysis on complaints processed under the *Children Act 1989 Representations Procedure*, and evidenced how feedback from service users had been used to improve service delivery.

It was reported that the aim of the Children Act 1989 Representations Procedure was for children and young people to have their concerns resolved swiftly and wherever possible, by the people who provided the service locally. It was noted that a complaint may generally be defined as an expression of dissatisfaction or disquiet in relation to an individual child or young person, which required a response.

Members were advised that there were four categories to the representation process: Statutory Complaints; Representations; Customer Care Issues; and Compliments. Commentary on these were provided in the report which also presented detailed information and data relating to the numbers of complaints received between 1 April 2018 and 31 March 2019.

Members queried:

- The meaning of partially upheld – when a complaint consisted of more than one part, for example if a complaint had 5 parts to it, 3 could be upheld and 2 could be not upheld;
- How does a young person actually make a complaint – there were the usual routes via telephone and email and more recently via text. Sometimes a relative or friend would do it for them. When a complaint was made the complainant was visited by a caseworker and every effort would be made to resolve the matter without engaging the formal process; and
- In 2016/17 the number of complaints was relatively low in comparison with 2018/19 – this could be due to having a more stable workforce in place at that time.

On behalf of the Board the Chair welcomed the

positive comments and compliments they had read in the annual report and passed on their thanks to all the staff involved in Children's Social Services for their hard work and dedication to their roles.

RESOLVED: That the reports be accepted as the mechanism by which Senior Management and Elected Members could monitor and scrutinise Children's Social Care complaints and compliments.

CYP28 ANNUAL HEADTEACHER'S REPORT OF THE ATTAINMENT AND PROGRESS OF HALTON'S CHILDREN IN CARE

The Board received the annual update of the education outcomes for Halton's Children in Care 2018-19. Appended to the report was the paper *End of Key Stage Attainment and Progress Report for Halton's Children in Care 2018-19*, which provided detailed data, analysis and impacts for the following groups; officers provided supporting commentary to explain the attainment results for each one:

- Reception;
- Phonics;
- Key Stage 1;
- Key Stage 2;
- Key Stage 4;
- Attendance and Exclusions; and
- Education, Employment and Training

Additionally, the Activity and Support Programme 2019-20 was attached for Members' information.

Members queried the status of the action plan referred to in paragraph 3.5 – this was being developed to improve overall outcomes for children in care and care leavers, with a particular focus on education, ensuring that there was full corporate ownership through this. It was reported that the action plan was in progress and the draft would be presented to Members of this Board as soon as it was ready.

The Board also discussed the importance of the PEP (Personal Education Plans) and frequency of them; the disparity between boys and girls attainment; the need for more mentors for children in care; the involvement of the educational psychologist service; training for foster carers; raising awareness via school governors and exclusions.

With regards to future reporting, the Chair requested more information on the cohort of Halton's children in care and information on any 'trends' at the time.

Director of
Children's
Services

RESOLVED: That the information is noted.

CYP29 HIGH NEEDS REVIEW

The Board received a presentation on the progress to date in reviewing, revising and redesigning High Needs processes and provision in Halton.

Officers presented the five recommendations made as a result of Phase 1 of the review. Members were advised that further to approval at Executive Board, Phase 2 of the project was commissioned and had begun and that this would concentrate on revising/redesigning the following:

- Inclusion within schools;
- Education Health Care Plans (EHCP);
- The Pupil Referral Unit (PRU); and
- Special schools and resource provision.

Members discussed the review's recommendations and welcomed the revisions going forward. They noted the next steps as follows:

- 29 January 2020 – parent and carer consultation on EHCP process;
- 13 February 2020 – PRU model to be considered at Halton Secondary Partnership meeting;
- 26 February 2020 – PRU model to be considered at the Education Strategic Board and Schools Forum;
- The development and finalisation of the plan for specialist provision for Executive Board approval; and
- Consultation with stakeholders.

Operational
Director -
Education,
Inclusion and
Provision

RESOLVED: That the presentation and information be noted and a further update be provided to the Board at the next meeting.

CYP30 UPDATE ON RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE 2017/18 SCRUTINY TOPIC 'FURTHER DEVELOPING LINKS BETWEEN HALTON'S BUSINESSES AND SCHOOLS'

A report was presented to the Board from the Strategic Director – People, which provided an update on recommendations that were made in June 2018, as a

conclusion to the 2017-18 scrutiny topic '*Further developing links between Halton's Businesses and Schools*'.

The report outlined those recommendations and provided an update on the status of each, since they were made. Appended to the report were the online careers programmes (updated Autumn 2019) for each of the Borough's secondary schools; as discussed in paragraph 3.6.

In response to Members' queries on the update, the following additional information was provided:

- The *Gatesby Benchmarks* had been adopted by secondary schools and were now being used;
- There was no statutory duty on the Local Authority to enforce careers guidance in schools; Ofsted would be the body to provide recommendations if it was lacking;
- Ofsted would also inspect how inclusive careers guidance was within schools; and
- Pupils at The Bridge School (Pupil Referral Unit) each worked with their own case worker with regards to career guidance. The PRU also has good quality outcomes in relation to young people progressing into Post 16 Education or Training.

RESOLVED: That the Board notes the information provided.

CYP31 CHILDREN IN CARE PLEDGE

The Board received an update on the implementation of the *Pledge to Children in Care* and were asked to approve this. Appended to the report was a leaflet '*The Pledge*' containing The Pledge statements and a leaflet titled '*Coffee Drop*' which introduces drop in sessions at Macy's Café in Grangeway.

It was reported that corporate parents were the officers and Members of the Council, members of the Children's Trust and other partner agencies and that a good corporate parent must offer everything that a good parent would, including stability. It must address both the difficulties which children in care experienced and the challenges of parenting within a complex system of different services. This meant that children in care and care leavers should be cared about, not just cared for, and that all aspects of their development should be nurtured, requiring a corporate approach across all of the agencies involved in

the Children's Trust.

The report discussed the statutory roles of the Director of Children's Services and the Lead Member for Children's Services and the expectations of the improvements to be made to the role of corporate parents, as announced recently by the Government (described in paragraph 3.5).

The Board continued to recognise the importance of the Children in Care Pledge and Members' responsibilities as Corporate Parents. They agreed that the actions to support the Pledge be referred to Executive Board and then to Council for endorsement.

The Chair suggested that all Members of the Council be reminded of these commitments by way of a refreshed presentation at a full Council meeting.

RESOLVED: That the Board

- 1) endorse the Pledge;
- 2) endorse action to promote the Pledge so it is known to the Council, Children's Trust and other partners;
- 3) identify further actions to support the commitments to Children in Care; and
- 4) agree that the Pledge and actions to support the Pledge are referred to Executive Board and then to Council for endorsement.

Director of
Children's
Services

WAIVER OF STANDING ORDER NUMBER 50

The Chair requested the waiver of Standing Order number 50 so all agenda items could be presented. This was agreed by the Board and the meeting continued.

CYP32 CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE PERFORMANCE

The Board received a report from the Strategic Director – People, informing them of the key areas of Children's Social Care performance; how this was monitored and how Halton compared regionally and nationally.

The report provided details in the following key areas:

- The demand for contacts and referrals;
- Numbers of assessments and re-referrals;

- Children in Need (CIN);
- Child Protection;
- Children in Care; and
- Care Leavers.

Officers advised that overall the service was still under pressure as the level of work had continued to increase.

It was noted that the report provided Members with a basic summary of some of the key performance areas, as there were others not covered in the report. Members agreed that they would like to see those areas as well, so requested that for future reporting all the performance areas be included.

RESOLVED: That the report is noted.

Director of
Children's
Services

Meeting ended at 9.10 p.m.