

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD

At a meeting of the Children and Young People Policy and Performance Board on Monday, 3 September 2007 in the Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn

Present: Councillors Dennett (Chairman), Horabin (Vice-Chairman), Drakeley, Fraser, Gilligan, Higginson, D Inch, J. Lowe, Parker, M Ratcliffe and Stockton

Apologies for Absence: None

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: L. Butcher, Y Corden, T. Crane, L. Derbyshire, L Gladwyn, A. McIntyre and A. Villiers

Also in attendance: Councillor McInerney (in accordance with Standing Order No. 33).

ITEMS DEALT WITH UNDER DUTIES EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD

Action

CYP14 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 4th June 2007, having been printed and circulated were signed as a correct record, subject to the questions raised under the various agenda items being recorded as questions from the young people and carers.

CYP15 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The Chairman of the Board, Councillor Dennett reported that he had attended a meeting with the young people since the last meeting and they had raised a number of questions and concerns in relation to various items on the agenda. It was agreed that these questions would be addressed during the relevant agenda item.

CYP16 EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES

The minutes of the Executive Board relating to the work of the Children and Young People's Policy and Performance Board were submitted for information.

RESOLVED: That the minutes be noted.

CYP17 MULTI AGENCY TRANSITION STRATEGY FOR YOUNG PEOPLE WITH COMPLEX NEEDS

The Board considered a joint report of the Strategic Director Health and Community and the Strategic Director Children and Young People which presented the Draft Multi Agency Transition Strategy for Young People with Complex Needs for consultation and endorsement to further consultation.

The Board was advised that the Transition Strategy would improve outcomes for disabled young people with complex needs. The strategy ensured that young people and their families had an improved experience of the transition through adult and children's services working closely together and providing a seamless service.

The Chairman reported that one of the young people had raised an issue relating to the use of wheelchairs for five a side football and the barriers to participating in such sports because of insurance costs. The young person had asked how the Authority could help to remove such barriers so that everyone could participate in various activities.

In response, it was reported that a special wheelchair was required to take part in sporting activities. In addition, the Authority could look at equipment that was available to enable disabled young people to participate in sporting activities, identify ways of overcoming the insurance costs and investigate if any adaptations could be made to the wheelchair to enable them to be used for such activities.

The Chairman also reported that the young people had requested that the Draft Multi Agency Transition Strategy be presented to the Youth Forum.

Strategic Director-
Children & Young
People

Arising from the discussion, the following comments were noted:-

- It was noted that young people involved in an assessment for a wheelchair at the Widnes clinic would very often be allocated a standard wheelchair which was unsuitable for sports. It was suggested that multi-agencies would need to be involved in the assessments;
- In relation to the wheelchairs, it was noted that the Primary Care Trust (PCT) was responsible for the provision of this equipment. The issue had also been raised at the Halton Health Partnership Board.

In addition, funding was being progressed and other Local Authorities had been contacted to identify how they were dealing with such issues.

It was reported, that in the first instance, the Authority would work with the PCT to obtain funding for all sporting activities. It was acknowledged that there were significant insurance costs involved and various issues would need to be addressed, such as who would be responsible for the repair of a wheelchair and who would be responsible for any accidents? It was also noted that guards could not be fixed onto existing wheelchairs and that each individual concerned would require a separate wheelchair for sport.

It was noted that the Authority would look at obtaining funding to address these issues and the process for allocating such funding to ensure that all young people had an equal opportunity to take part in sporting activities;

- It was noted that parents and young people would be working towards transition from when the young person was 14 years of age. This was reviewed and was ongoing for a considerable time after that;
- The promotion and process of direct payments were monitored on a regular basis;
- Person Centre Planning (PCP) – Clarity was sought on this as a member suggested that she undertook PCP fourteen years ago.

The Board was advised that PCP was not a new concept but the Government had put a new emphasis on it.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the consultation phase of the Strategy be endorsed; and
- (2) the Strategy be presented to the Youth Forum.

CYP18 PARTICIPATION STRATEGY: HEAR BY RIGHT UPDATE

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Young People which

- (1) provided information to the Members on the

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Children & Young
People

developing involvement and voice of children and young people within organisations, schools and council services. The report showed how this linked into the Joint Area Review (JAR) drivers for Children and Young People's Services; and

- (2) presented the three year Hear by Right Development and Delivery Plan to Members.

In this respect, the Board received a presentation from Dave Williams, Connexions which:-

- Explained the background to the Hear By Right Building Standards;
- Set out and explained the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child; and
- Presented and explained a diagram of the Hear by Right 'Seven S's' which underpinned the ethos and practice of an organisation i.e. shared values, skills and knowledge, staff, systems, structure, the strategy and the style of leadership.

At the end of the presentation, the Chairman reported that discussions had taken place regarding paragraph 6.2 of the report, who should champion this agenda within Halton to be most effective? He indicated that discussions had taken place which had suggested Councillor Wright be nominated for the role.

Arising from the discussion, the following comments were noted:-

- the details of the process of the three year plan and how it linked in across the Borough was noted;
- it was noted that approximately £30,000 would be required to ensure continual support to the work being undertaken with the 0-11 year old young people;
- the example given of how an organisation would directly engage with the students was noted; and
- the difference between partnership and involvement and that mutual respect and leadership was crucial to the process was noted.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the three year plan be agreed in principle;
- (2) approximately £30,000 to ensure continuity of the support work being undertaken with the 0-11 year old young people be put forward as a consideration in next budget proposals; and
- (3) Councillor Wright be nominated to champion the agenda within Halton.

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CYP19 OUT OF BOROUGH SCHOOL ADMISSIONS SCRUTINY
TOPIC

The Board received a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Young People which presented the findings from the Out of Borough School Admissions Overview & Scrutiny Group.

The Chairman reported that during discussions with the young people they had highlighted that Council services could be more user friendly for young people, and in this respect they were less likely to access the services. He suggested that this could form a future topic group and reported that he would also be presenting topic group suggestions to the next meeting of the Board.

Arising from the discussions, the following comments were noted:-

- The implications of pupils accessing education outside of the Borough and that the Authority received £4,000 for every pupil in education in the Borough was noted. It was also noted that the Authority were currently looking at how they could identify how many pupils were going into private provision. It was requested that this information be sent out to Members of the Board;
- The process of the first and equal preference system for schools was discussed and the advantages and disadvantages to both systems noted. It was also noted that, due to legislation, the equal preference system would come into effect next year;
- It was suggested that earlier intervention would help to raise the profile of the schools in Halton and that the questionnaire could be sent to parents earlier to

Strategic Director-
Children & Young
People

obtain an indication of their preferences;

- It was noted that, generally more pupils sought school places outside of the Borough, than into the Borough. The various reasons for this, such as school performance, parental choice, the lack of provision of secondary faith schools in Halton, historical links and geographical issues were noted;
- It was noted that in 2009 the Government would be introducing targets related to school progress for all young people over two levels;
- The implications of fewer young people taking a foreign language was noted;
- It was noted that the profile of the school's in Halton would need to continue to be raised and the successes and achievements widely promoted;
- it was suggested that the questionnaire could be sent to parents who are placing their children in schools out of the borough;
- the secondary school re-organisation consultation proposed a joint faith school in Runcorn – it was noted that this proposal had received a positive response from the community and the decision for this would be made by the Diocese of Shrewsbury and Chester. It was also noted that some parents preferred their children to attend a faith school;
- it was suggested that the Authority look at the performance of pupils seeking in and out of borough school places.

The Portfolio Holder, Councillor McInerney commented on the secondary proposal for a joint faith school, the situation relating to in and out of borough school placements and the excellent achievements of the schools this year. In this respect, he read out a letter he had received from the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, School and Learners, which congratulated the authority on the excellent performance in KS2 results in the three core subjects, English Maths and Science. The letter indicated that Halton's results were one of the most improved this year. Councillor McInerney, took the opportunity to thank everyone who had contributed to the excellent results.

The Members of the Board suggested that the letter be

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Children & Young
People

Strategic Director-

circulated in the Members Bulletin and a copy sent to the headteacher at the schools.

Children & Young People

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the report be received;
- (2) the Board receive an annual monitoring report on Out of Borough Admissions at the primary and secondary transfer stage which will include:-
 - (i) the impact of School Organisation on Out of Borough Admissions at primary to secondary transfer;
 - (ii) the financial impact of out of borough admissions on Halton Local Authority each year;
 - (iii) the impact of other Local Authorities Admission Arrangements; and
 - (iv) the impact upon Out of Borough Admissions following the implementation from September 2008 of the 'equal preference' model of allocation of school places against the 'first preference first' model;
- (3) the secondary school re-organisation proposals be noted;
- (4) an annual questionnaire be issued to those parents seeking In and Out of Borough school places; and
- (5) the Authority look at the performance of pupils seeking in and out of borough school places.

Strategic Director-Children & Young People

Councillor Higginson declared a Personal Interest in the following item as his wife was a homeless support worker.

Councillor J Lowe declared a Personal Interest in the following item as being on the Board of Management for Halton YMCA.

CYP20 HALTON JOINT AREA REVIEW

The Board considered a report of the Strategic

Director, Children and Young People which informed the Members of Halton's forthcoming Joint Area Review.

Arising from the discussion, the following comments were noted:-

- It was suggested that a prompt sheet which addressed the main areas be provided to each Councillor;
- The process and the multi-agency involvement in relation to a disability emergency was noted;
- The narrow gap relating to the difficulties in respect of Post 16 accommodation during the transitional period for young people when leaving care was noted. Concern was raised on the unsuitability of the provision of accommodation for these young people as they could be in a flat on their own or in a hostel.

The Board was advised that a commissioning strategy was required to recruit families that would take young care leavers. The Board was further advised that some authorities had a contract with a Housing Association which would enable young people to be on a site with other people 24 hours a day. It was highlighted that there were significant financial costs involved in addressing this problem and the Authority were currently exploring Teenage Fostering Schemes and supported lodges which would help to address this problem.

- It was suggested that the Authority should identify good provision in other Authorities;
- It was noted that information on homelessness was available on the Council website; and
- It was suggested that a report on the Post 16 accommodation provision for young people leaving care be presented to the Board. The report should incorporate the financial implications and the provision be benchmarked with other Authorities.

The Chairman reported that a young person had asked how the Authority shared good practice and facilities in the Borough, such as in the Grange Comprehensive School.

After discussion, It was agreed that a report would be

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Children & Young
People

Strategic Director-
Children & Young
People

presented to the next meeting of the Board on collaboration across extended services.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) that the progress to date be noted;
- (2) a seminar be arranged for Members;
- (3) a report be presented to the Board on the provision of accommodation for Post 16 young people leaving care; and
- (4) a report be presented to the next meeting of the Board on the collaboration across extended services.

Strategic Director-
Children & Young
People

Councillor D Inch declared a Personal Interest in the following item as a Member of the Governing Body of Moore Primary School.

CYP21 KEY STAGE 2 AND 3 RESULTS

The Board received a verbal report from the Operational Director Student Services and Lifelong Learning which gave an update on the results obtained at Key Stage 1 and 2.

The Board was advised that schools in Halton were celebrating their best ever GCSE results. The results for GCSE and equivalent showed a major increase of almost 10% from 2006 in the number of pupils achieving 5 A* - C. The improvement in the number of pupils gaining English and Maths GCSE had resulted in the LSPA target being achieved 12 months ahead of schedule. This now needed to be sustained. Halton, was now leading its Statistical Neighbour Local Authority Group.

The Board was further advised that there had been huge increases in the percentage of pupils gaining Level 4 and above and level 5 in English and Maths at KS2. However, Level 4 and above results in Science had remained the same, and the percentage of pupils gaining Level 5 had increased.

It was reported that in KS1 there had been no progress and KS3 had been disappointing. However, these issues would be addressed. The NEET figures (not in employment, education or training) regionally had reduced by 8% but Halton's had reduced by 15.3% which was the lowest level for more than six years. It was anticipated that this

performance would be sustained in the future.

In closing, it was reported that a more detailed report would be presented at the next meeting of the Board.

The Chairman, on behalf of the Board, took the opportunity to congratulate everyone who had been involved in helping the Authority achieve excellent results this year.

RESOLVED: That

- (1) the verbal update be noted;
- (2) the Board place on record their congratulations to everyone who has been involved in achieving excellent KS1 and KS2 results in Halton; and
- (3) that a detailed report be presented to the next meeting of the Board.

Strategic Director-
Children & Young
People

Councillor J Lowe declared a Personal Interest in the following item as a member of the Trustee and Management Committee of West Runcorn Youth Club; and

Councillor Horabin declared a Personal Interest in the following item as a Member of the Governing Body of Simms Cross Primary School.

CYP22 STANDING ORDER 51

The Board was reminded that Standing Order 51 of the Council's Constitution stated that meetings should not continue beyond 9.00 pm.

RESOLVED: That Standing Order 51 be waived.

CYP23 QUARTERLY MONITORING REPORTS

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director, Children and Young People which gave Members the opportunity to examine progress towards achieving the service objectives, milestones and performance targets contained in Quarter 1 of the 2006/07 service plans within the Boards remit.

The following points arose from the discussion:-

Business Planning and Resources

- The progress in relation to ContactPoint was noted;
- It was noted that a report on the progress in respect of the Equality and Diversity strategy be presented to a future meeting;
- The review of funding for 14-16's and the major changes and how funding would be allocated was noted;
- It was noted that although the quarterly figures showed no expenditure on redundancies. There had been a number approved and that the expenditure would be shown on the 2nd and 3rd Quarter financial report. An update would be provided at the next meeting; and
- It was agreed that the information on external and capital funding would be combined rather than repeated in future reports.

Strategic Director-
Children & Young
People

Community Services

- It was noted that Castlefield's and Runcorn All Saints would be the site for Phase 2 Children's Centres;
- The update in relation to aiming high for disabled children: better support for families was noted;
- It was noted that there were 55 pupils who were receiving enhanced provision of which 12 were early years children; and
- It was noted that the number of pupils attending out of borough placements had reduced from 115 pupils in 2006 to 91 pupils currently. The savings from such placements had been redistributed to schools for use in support of pupils at 'School Action' and 'School Action Plus' stages of the SEN Code of Practice.

Specialist Services

- The difficulties in relation to recruitment was noted; and
- The update in relation to the Child Protection re-register, the % of Care Leavers living in temporary accommodation and the % of social carer referrals

with neglect as the primary factor was noted.

Universal & Learning Services

- The review of the school improvement service and the school improvement partners was noted; and
- The update in relation to the progress made concerning the improvement of young peoples sexual health was noted.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

Meeting ended at 9.25 p.m.