

## Minutes of the Meeting of the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 20 October 2010

### Present:-

<b>Members of the Committee</b>	Councillor Peter Balaam “ Robin Hazelton “ Julie Jackson “ Tilly May “ Clive Rickhards “ John Ross “ June Tandy (Chair) “ Helen Walton (replacing Councillor Carolyn Robbins for this meeting)
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<b>Parent Governor Representatives</b>	John Liddamore Alison Livesey
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<b>Invited Representatives</b>	Claire Sangster (Governor Representative) Chris Smart (Governor Representative)
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<b>Other County Councillors</b>	Councillor Heather Timms (Portfolio Holder for Children, Young People and Families)
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<b>Officers</b>	Dave Abbott, Assistant to Political Group (Liberal Democrat) David Bristow, School Improvement Officer – Performance Data Jim Graham, Chief Executive Geoff King, Head of Service – Commissioning Planning & Partnerships Division Ann Mawdsley, Principal Committee Administrator Richard Maybey, Assistant to Political Group (Labour) Jane Pollard, Democratic Services Manager Gereint Stoneman, Sub-Regional Planning Manager Shona Walton, Principal Inspector, Secondary and Special Schools
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### 1. General

#### (1) Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Joe Cannon, Councillor Carol Fox, Max Hyde, Councillor Mike Perry, Rex Pogson and Councillor Carolyn Robbins (replaced by Councillor Helen Walton for this meeting).

#### (2) Members Declarations of Personal and Prejudicial Interests

Councillor Julie Jackson declared a personal interest as her daughter currently uses post 16 transport.

**(3) Minutes of the Children, Young People and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 1 December 2009**

The minutes of the meeting held on 23 June 2010 were noted with the following corrections:

**Page 6 – 4. Review of Permanent School Exclusions 2010**

Geoff King clarified this point by adding that an electronic system was being built to capture CAFs, but until this was implemented each case had to be dealt with individually.

**Page 6 – 6. Review of Permanent School Exclusions 2010**

The words “It was agreed” to be replaced with the words “One point of view was expressed” in the first line of point 6.

**Page 6 – 7. Scrutiny of Safeguarding**

Councillor Balaam asked whether, in light of the national picture and the likelihood that the number of social workers across the country would be cut, the Committee should revisit Safeguarding to assess the situation. It was noted that the Committee’s report was scheduled to be considered by the Cabinet on 18 November and this question should be raised at that meeting.

**Matters Arising**

**Page 7 – 8. Work Programme 2010-11**

In response to a question as to whether arrangements had been made to visit a PRU, Jane Pollard reported that she had sent out an invitation to Members for a visit on 16 November. Members who had not responded should contact Jane Pollard directly.

Councillor Julie Jackson recorded her concern that visits were not taking place in the north of the county where there were more children going through the PRU. In light of that, Jane Pollard undertook to look into a visit being arranged to the Keresley Centre PRU

**(4) Chair’s Announcements**

The Chair reminded Members that the select committee to consider the PRU had been scheduled for Wednesday 24 November in the Council Chamber. The meeting would be a full day meeting with a 10:00 am start.

## **2. Public Question Time**

There were no public questions.

## **3. Questions to the Portfolio Holder**

Members' attention was drawn to the documents they had received setting out the Portfolio Holder and Directorate's Key Challenges over the next 12 months and the detailed Appendix of LAA targets relating to this Committee. Jane Pollard noted that the O&S Board had considered the LAA Quarterly Performance Report at their meeting on 5 October and asked that the targets relating to the Children and Young People block that were forecast to be missed, be brought to the attention of this Committee. The Chair noted that she would consider this information together with the Spokespersons and agree a way forward.

There was broad discussion regarding the challenges outlined by the Portfolio Holder and the need for more information to be provided on what was being done to mitigate these challenges and to address the issues facing the Council. Councillor Heather Timms responded that this would depend on the Comprehensive Spending Review being announced later today. She added that as plans developed, information would be shared with the Committee and with the Chair and Spokespersons.

## **4. Coventry Solihull and Warwickshire Sub-Regional Working Progress Report**

The Committee considered the report of the Assistant Chief Executive setting out the progress to date and future plans for sub-regional working.

During the ensuing discussion the following points were noted:

1. A package of early intervention tailored for the sub-region including working with NEETs (not in education, employment or training) had been implemented involving a college from each area (North Warwickshire and Hinckley College in Warwickshire) and this was progressing well. Gereint Stoneman added that a separate pilot was taking place in Studley, looking at young people and their provision and it was hoped that the work being done regionally with NEETs could be extended to Studley.
2. The Coventry Solihull and Warwickshire (CSW) joint work programme would now focus on nine different areas, but the Chief Executive of the Programme Board had asked for special focus to be put on Children's Services and school improvement.
3. Working sub-regionally optimised opportunities for step change rather than incremental changes, taking into account good practice, but also requiring organisational will to give up proprietorial control and different philosophies within different authorities.

4. In response to a query regarding potential savings in relation to teacher recruitment, which was carried out by schools, it was noted that considerable savings could be made in the common administrative processes that sat about the school processes, eliminating waste and picking out best practice where it existed. It was noted that other areas for savings included CRB checks, which could result in huge savings if they could be held sub-regionally. The Chair noted that the area of teacher recruitment on a regional basis, including issues around Governors and confidentiality was an area that may need to be scrutinised at a later date.
5. Claire Sangster made reference to a proposed DCFS pilot for a centralised teacher recruitment scheme which had been presented to the Governor's Forum approximately three years ago. The Chair asked that this be investigated and a response be sent to the Committee.
6. Jim Graham confirmed that there was no new money for Total Place and the intention was to retrieve monies from inefficiencies that existed across the region. He added that approximately £1.8 billion was spent annually across the region on services for children and it was estimated that 20% savings could be achieved by improving co-ordination of services.
7. Discussions were ongoing with the Department of Education regarding the Place Based Budget Community Budgets, which could still result in a second phase of work.

The Chair thanked Gereint Stoneman for his presentation and asked that a further report be brought back to the Committee at an appropriate time.

## **5. Report of the Performance of Warwickshire Pupils in 2010 Public Examinations**

The Committee considered the report of the Strategic Director for Children, Young People and Families outlining how well Warwickshire pupils did in their public examinations in 2010 compared with results seen nationally and in similar Authorities.

David Bristow gave a PowerPoint presentation to the Committee, including additional District information, which was tabled at the meeting.

During the ensuing discussion, the following points were raised:

1. The emphasis on improving the attainment of boys over the past few years had resulted in the attainment of girls improving at the same rate. It was noted however that the attainment of boys often improved in Key Stage 5 when pupils were able to opt for subjects according to their own interests.
2. Numbers and percentages were important when considering statistics relating to Looked After Children (LAC). This was a complex picture, but as corporate parents, the Local Authority

and elected Members had a responsibility to support all LAC to reach their maximum potential. It was acknowledged that tracking the progress of LAC was difficult, as this was a fluctuating group of children, including children with special needs and unaccompanied asylum seekers, and children could be in care for very different lengths of time. Members agreed that this was an area that needed further scrutiny within a broader review of attainment. The Chair also suggested that the Committee needed to keep abreast of issues including progress made from one Key Stage to the next, and what was being done to continue improvement. The timing of these updates would be considered by the Chair and Spokespersons.

3. Statistics showed that while Warwickshire children receiving Free School Meals (FSM) at KS2 outperformed the national statistics, the results at KS4 were expected to be worse than the national picture. A broad discussion was held around the use of FSM as a measure and it was noted that there was a very wide range of measures and terms (including FSM) within performance measurement that could be considered, but that generally, children from disadvantaged backgrounds tended to do worse academically. The definition of deprivation to be used by the Coalition Government to determine pupil premiums was not yet known.
4. Children with Special Educational Needs (SEN) had a broad range of needs that could be complex and severe needs and so the group were less likely overall to achieve the national expectation.
5. Overall performance in the north of the county was lower than that in the south and east and this gap had widened over the past five years.
6. Concern was raised about the resources focussed on narrowing the gap in the past without any evidence given on outcomes. It was noted that the data provided under "Annex – End of Key Stage 4 performance by locality" was collated according to where children lived and did not yet include 2010 data. A number of localities were highlighted where trends in attainment were giving cause for concern, predominantly in Nuneaton and Bedworth and North Warwickshire. It was suggested that consideration should be given to putting a strategy in place setting out how value could be added to achieve the aim of narrowing the gap and ensuring quality education for all children.
7. Schools were judged on a large number of measures. Information on school inspections was available in Ofsted reports which were in the public domain, and it was important that schools be judged on broader profile issues than just results, including environment, culture and teaching.
8. Members agreed to hold a select committee style seminar to look at educational attainment, including:
  - schools that were failing and why

- standards of teaching
- super output area (SOA) data.

This would be held once 2010 final results were available, possibly in March/April 2011.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

- Thanked all those involved in producing the report
- Noted the performance in Warwickshire schools in 2010
- The issues related to “narrowing the gaps” in performance for all groups of children across the county needed to be addressed.

## **6. Work Programme 2010-11**

The Committee agreed the Work Programme with the inclusion of:

- Update report on the Coventry Solihull and Warwickshire Sub-Regional Working to the February 2011 meeting.
- A select committee style seminar to look at Educational Attainment (date to be confirmed).

Jane Pollard confirmed the new dates of meetings for the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee for 2011-12 and undertook to e-mail these to co-opted Members and observers.

Jane Pollard confirmed that the O&S Board had decided not to commission a Task and Finish Group to consider Post 16 Transport.

## **7. Any Other Items**

There were no urgent items.

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Chair

The Committee rose at 12:50 p.m.