

Children and Young People Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Agenda

30 January 2013

WEDNESDAY 30 JANUARY 2013, 10.00am
COMMITTEE ROOM 2, SHIRE HALL, WARWICK

1. General

(1) Apologies for Absence

(2) Disclosures of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

Members are required to register their disclosable pecuniary interests within 28 days of their election or appointment to the Council. A member attending a meeting where a matter arises in which s/he has a disclosable pecuniary interest must (unless s/he has a dispensation):

- Declare the interest if s/he has not already registered it
- Not participate in any discussion or vote
- Must leave the meeting room until the matter has been dealt with (Standing Order 42)
- Give written notice of any unregistered interest to the Monitoring Officer within 28 days of the meeting

Non-pecuniary interests must still be declared in accordance with the new Code of Conduct. These should be declared at the commencement of the meeting.

(3) Minutes of the meeting held on 6 November 2012

(4) Chair's Announcements

2. Public Question Time (Standing Order 34)

30 minutes of the meeting are available for members of the public to ask questions on any matters relevant to the Committee. Questioners may ask two questions and can speak for up to three minutes on each. If you wish to ask a question, please contact Richard Maybey on 01926 476876 or richardmaybey@warwickshire.gov.uk

3. Questions to the Portfolio Holder

30 minutes of the meeting are available for members to question Cllr Heather Timms (Portfolio Holder, Children and Schools) on any matters relevant to the Committee.

4. Report of the Chair of the Safeguarding Improvement Task & Finish Group

This is the final report from the Task & Finish Group, following a series of meetings held in 2012 to monitor the implementation of an Action Plan put in place following the 2011 Ofsted inspection of Safeguarding and Looked After Children services.

5. Report of the Chair of the Academies Task & Finish Group

This is the final report from the Task & Finish Group, following a series of meetings held in 2012 to explore various aspects of academisation and the impact it will have on the future role of the Local Authority in education.

6. Work Programme 2012-13

The Committee is asked to agree its work programme for the year ahead, and propose any new topics that may be suitable for scrutiny via a Task & Finish Group.

7. Any Other Items

Which the Chair decides are urgent.

Jim Graham
Chief Executive

Children and Young People Overview & Scrutiny Committee Membership

Councillors:

Peter Balaam, Jim Foster, Carol Fox, Peter Fowler, Julie Jackson (Chair), Mike Perry, Clive Rickhards, John Ross (Vice Chair), Martin Shaw, June Tandy

Co-opted members for Education matters:

Joseph Cannon and Dr Rex Pogson, Church Representatives
2 vacancies for Parent Governor Representatives

Portfolio Holder relevant to the remit of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Councillor Heather Timms – Children and Schools

General enquiries

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**Children and Young People Overview & Scrutiny Committee
Minutes of the meeting held on 6 November 2012**

Present:

Members of the Committee

Cllr Ashford (for Cllr Fox, no voting rights)
Cllr Balaam
Cllr Foster
Cllr Fowler
Cllr Jackson (Chair)
Cllr Perry
Cllr Rickhards
Cllr Ross (Vice Chair)
Cllr Shilton (for Cllr Shaw)
Cllr Tandy

Co-opted members

Joseph Cannon
Alison Livesey

Others

Cllr Compton
Cllr Timms (Portfolio Holder)
Diana Turner

Officers

David Bristow (Learning Improvement Officer, Secondary Phase Team)
Ross Caws (Commissioning Development Manager)
Sheila Dentith (Senior Learning Improvement Officer)
Mark Gore (Head of Service, Learning and Achievement)
Sara Haslam (Schools Funding and Strategy Manager)
Richard Maybey (Democratic Services Officer)
Jessica Nash (Service Manager, Special Educational Needs)
Steve Pendleton (Lead Improvement Manager for Vulnerable Children)
Simon Smith (Strategic Finance Manager, Resources and Schools)
Shona Walton (Principal Inspector, Secondary and Special Schools)

1.1 Apologies for absence

Received from Cllr Carol Fox, Cllr Martin Shaw, Max Hyde and Chris Smart.

1.2 Disclosures of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

A general declaration of non-pecuniary interest was noted for all members in their roles as school governors and/or trustees.

1.3 Minutes of the meeting held on 6 September 2012

The minutes were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

Matters arising

Paragraph 1.3 - Mark Gore agreed that information about vocational training (destinations and numbers) would be provided within a future report on NEETs (young people not in education, employment or training).

Paragraph 2.7 - Mark Gore confirmed that the Local Authority (LA) had re-contacted the family regarding the offer of a place at a school in Camp Hill.

Paragraph 3.3 - Diana Turner confirmed that a reminder about responsibility for sport will be issued at the next School Governors Forum meeting.

Paragraph 8 - Cllr Balaam proposed the following motion regarding Cabinet's response to the report of the Post-16 Transport Task & Finish Group, which was seconded by Cllr Tandy:

This committee is concerned that the Report and Recommendations of the Post-16 Transport Task and Finish Group, endorsed by this committee, were only "noted" rather than "agreed" at cabinet on 18th October. We welcome the statement by the Leader of the Council that "the findings of the Task and Finish Group . . . would be given due consideration". This committee is also aware of the requirement of the Localism Act 2011, that the executive should "respond to the overview and scrutiny committee indicating what (if any) action the executive proposes to take".

We therefore request that cabinet should provide a written response to the specific recommendations in the Report and, in particular, should address the following concerns raised in the Report:

(a) There is evidence from Warwickshire College & Stratford College that young people are missing out on their education because of transport costs.

(b) Because the low-income subsidy is only available to young people who happen to use WCC sponsored transport, there is a postcode lottery for this subsidy.

(c) Young people have to pay the full yearly amount of £660 for a WCC bus pas even if their course only requires, for example, two terms or two days a week.

Resolved

The Committee passed the above motion by 6 votes to 3

1.4 Announcements

- The Chair announced that it would be Alison Livesey's last meeting as a co-opted member and thanked Alison for her dedicated attendance and contribution to the Committee over the last two years.
- The Chair also announced that it would be Mark Gore's last meeting prior to his retirement from the LA. The Chair and Vice-Chair thanked Mark for his hard work, commitment and co-operation over many years and wished him well for the future.

2 Public Questions

None

3 Portfolio Holder Questions

Cllr Rickhards asked for a progress update on how the LA is building capacity for the extension of free childcare provision for disadvantaged children to two year olds, which comes into effect from September 2013:

- Cllr Timms stated that a project steering group is in progress with a focus on ensuring a high quality of provision. Also, a pilot scheme is up and running successfully in Nuneaton.
- Cllr Rickhards welcomed the response and asked if education was being included within the childcare provision. Cllr Timms stated that the LA is seeking to increase and expand the range of childcare provision available for vulnerable 2 year olds.

4 Passenger Transport Assistants

- 4.1 Mark Gore introduced the report, stating that the removal of passenger transport assistants (PTAs) has been slower than anticipated:
- a) This is partly due to the implementation of new procedures to assess the suitability of all routes (previously welcomed by the Committee)
 - b) The initial savings target of £700,000 was based on the removal of PTAs from all routes, which is not now going to happen following assessment. Mark agreed to investigate a more realistic savings target
 - c) Eventual savings will be significant when all other routes have been retendered
- 4.2 Cllr Timms added that the process of removing PTAs has been deliberately slow to safeguard children's safety and to allow parents and schools sufficient time to adapt to the changes.
- 4.3 Following discussion, Cllr Ross (seconded by Cllr Perry) proposed that the Committee notes this report and receives a further report in 12 months when more information is available to properly assess the savings achieved.

Resolved

The Committee asks for an update report to be provided in 12 months

5 Area Behaviour Partnerships (ABPs)

- 5.1 Mark Gore introduced Steve Pendleton, who has taken post as the Lead Improvement Manager for Vulnerable Children, and summarised the key points of the report:
- a) Approximately half of all secondary schools now have Learning Support Units (LSUs), which are largely funded via the ABPs
 - b) The Eastern ABP is making good progress, having appointed a co-ordinator with significant relevant experience
 - c) The reports of the ABP Chairs will be considered by the project steering group, which is chaired by Cllr Timms
 - d) The project is seeing a significant reduction in the number of exclusions; which will improve as the Eastern ABP develops
 - e) There is now a good range of alternative provision for pupils with different needs, including those with the most severe needs (e.g., alcohol, drug abuse, persistent absence) who can't be placed in schools

- 5.2 During discussion, the following points were noted:
- a) Providers have to pass a series of assessments to become approved
 - b) Providers that fail the assessments will have an opportunity to refresh and resubmit their application, and the LA will work with known and trusted providers to bring them up to standard (e.g., Warwickshire College)
 - c) There is ongoing monitoring of approved providers by LA officers, and an automated registration system is being developed so the LA can monitor attendance at those providers on a daily basis. There is also monitoring from an independent external assessor
 - d) The main responsibility for substance misuse referrals lies with schools, although all providers are made aware of the services available. The LA monitors progress of treatment and re-referrals (of which there are few)
 - e) Since the last report to Committee, a further £20,000 has been devolved for LSU provision
 - f) The creation of Steve Pendleton's role will help the ABPs and coordinators to overcome the barriers highlighted around communication and cohesion – i.e., by helping to make links with relevant support agencies
 - g) While the focus has been primarily on secondary schools, the project steering group does recognise that primary schools also need addressing. Work is underway in six pilot areas, aided by limited funding from the LA, to prevent primary exclusions using managed moves etc.
 - h) The prevalence of behavioural issues in Key Stage (KS) 3, highlighted by the ABP Chair reports, links back to issues at primary school. The LA continues to employ family support workers in order to address these, and the Troubled Families initiative will provide additional support
- 5.3 Members raised specific concerns regarding:
- a) An exclusion in 2010-2011 categorised as “reason unknown” (B2 of 3)
 - b) The view of the Northern Area ABP Chair that “sending vulnerable KS3 girls to external providers raises significant safeguarding issues” (C4 of 5)
 - c) The view of the Northern Area ABP Chair that a number of LA agencies are not aware of the role of the ABP and have not adapted their protocols accordingly (C5 of 5)

Resolved

The Committee welcomes the progress made to date, and asks that:

- a) Alternative provision continues to be rigorously monitored and assessed
- b) All exclusions are recorded with a clear reason (“reason unknown” is not acceptable)
- c) The role of the ABPs is understood by all teams working for the LA, particularly the Looked After Children (LAC) team
- d) The safeguarding issues highlighted in the Northern Area ABP Chair's report are referred to the Director of Children's Services and the Lead Member for Children's Services for immediate investigation
- e) The Southern Area ABP Chair's report is provided to members at the next meeting
- f) A verbal update is provided at the next meeting on the progress of Warwickshire College in seeking to become an approved provider
- g) An update report is brought to the Committee in 9 months to address the concerns raised, including those at KS3

6 Performance of Warwickshire Children and Young People in 2012 National Tests and Examinations

- 6.1 To supplement the written report, David Bristow presented further attainment data to the Committee. Key points from the presentation were:
- a) There are 42 LAC who did not achieve 5 or more A-G GCSEs, all of whom had significant barriers that may have contributed to this
 - b) Attainment data at a locality level will be released in December (KS2) and January (KS4), with data for individual institutions available in January
 - c) One secondary school and four primary schools were below the 2012 floor standards (and another secondary school was very close)

The Committee broke for lunch at 12.30pm, and resumed at 13.15pm

- 6.2 Shona Walton, Sheila Dentith and David Bristow fielded questions from members, and clarified the following:
- a) Work is on-going to monitor how the Pupil Premium is being used in schools, looking at case studies of where it has worked well, with a view to sharing best practice
 - b) Socio-economic data will be useful in analysing the reasons behind lower attainment, and this could be provided at a confidential member seminar
 - c) Warwickshire complies with all examination requirements by monitoring and moderating tests across the county; performing unannounced visits during SATS week; and ensuring headteachers are aware of their responsibilities
 - d) The LA monitors improvement in schools, assisted by data it receives from the school census, the Fischer Family Trust and via a data-sharing agreement with academies

Resolved

The Committee noted the report and presentation, and asks that:

- a) A report on the use of the Pupil Premium in schools, including best practice, is brought in 6-12 months
- b) All elected members have an annual opportunity for a one-to-one briefing about school performance in their locality
- c) A seminar is arranged for elected members to look at attainment data by locality, including the relevant socio-economic data

7 The 2012/14 Schools Funding Reforms

Simon Smith introduced the report, highlighting the following points:

- a) All relevant groups have been consulted on the proposed reforms
- b) Some of the consultation responses were inconclusive
- c) The response rate from schools was relatively low at 64%
- d) Options 1 and 2 focus on money following the pupil, with a top-up for pupils with additional needs
- e) Options 3 and 4 give more weighting to deprivation and additional needs
- f) The recommendation from the Schools Forum was for Option 4

Resolved

The Committee endorsed the recommendation of the Schools Forum (Option 4) and noted, with regret, the low response rate to the consultation by schools

8 Progress of the SEN Green Paper 'Support and Aspiration' Disability and Special Educational Needs (SEN) Reform

- 8.1 Jessica Nash introduced the report as an update on the government's SEN reforms:
- a) The driver for change has been about narrowing gaps
 - b) The policy details are still being finalised, and ministers have established a select committee to interview relevant stakeholders
 - c) The LA will retain certain statutory duties, which will cut across both LA-maintained schools and academies
 - d) There is a clear alignment in the Department for Education with the new Ofsted inspection regime that bases its judgements on all groups (not just the majority). This will have a positive impact for those with SEN
 - e) The LA is engaging with the Health & Wellbeing Board about the sharing of data to enable single plans to be developed
- 8.2 The following points were raised during discussion:
- a) Issues around children's health (of which SEN are just one) are not covered in full by either this Committee or the Adult Social Care and Health Committee
 - b) It is important that the LA makes provision to help people with accessing and using their personal budgets
 - c) While the government proposals include a focus on SEN education provision through to age 25, the funding arrangements for this are unclear

Resolved

The Committee noted the report, and asks that:

- a) An update report is brought at an appropriate time
- b) The LA ensures that provision is made to assist people with personal budgets
- c) The Overview and Scrutiny Chairs collectively consider how children's health issues should be scrutinised in future

9 Work Programme 2012-13

Resolved

The Committee agreed its work programme, subject to the following additions:

- Report of the Southern Area Behaviour Partnership Chair (*30 January 2013*)
- Verbal report on the progress of Warwickshire College in seeking to become an approved alternative education provider (*30 January 2013*)

- Update report on Area Behaviour Partnerships to address the concerns raised, including those at KS3 (*3 September 2013*)
- Update report on Passenger Transport Assistants, including financial information on the savings achieved (*6 November 2012*)
- Report on the use of the Pupil Premium in schools, including best practice (*18 June or 3 September 2013*)
- Update report on NEETs, including information on vocational training (*when appropriate*)
- Update report on progress of national SEN reforms (*when appropriate*)

.....
Chair

The meeting closed at 14.40

Children and Young People Overview & Scrutiny Committee

30 January 2013

Safeguarding Improvement Task & Finish Group Report of the Chair

Recommendations

1. To endorse the overall conclusion of the Task & Finish Group that the Safeguarding Action Plan is being implemented and monitored in a satisfactory manner
2. To encourage the children's services teams from Warwickshire and Coventry to work towards a common approach to sharing child protection information with University Hospital Coventry and Warwickshire
3. To consider and agree any actions that might be necessary as a result of the observations outlined in section 3 of the report

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The report of the Chair of the Task & Finish Group is enclosed.

	Name	Contact Information
Report Author	Richard Maybey	richardmaybey@warwickshire.gov.uk Tel: 01926 476876



SAFEGUARDING IMPROVEMENT TASK & FINISH GROUP FINAL REPORT

*Working for
Warwickshire*

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1.0 Introduction

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- 1.2 Members and Contributors**
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- 1.4 Dates and Timescales**
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2.0 History of the Review

3.0 Recommendations

4.0 Acknowledgements

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Executive Summary

In November 2011, Ofsted undertook a statutory inspection of Warwickshire County Council's safeguarding and looked after children (LAC) services. The inspectors made a judgement of "good" for the effectiveness of service, with capacity to improve.

Specifically, 20 areas for improvement were identified. Officers from the service formulated an Action Plan to address these, identifying the actions required, the agency responsible, a timescale for completion and how the improvement would be measured.

In March 2012, the Overview & Scrutiny Board commissioned a Task & Finish Group to monitor the progress of this Action Plan to ensure it was being implemented in a timely and suitable manner.

1.2 Members and Contributors

Cllr Bob Hicks (Chair)
Cllr Peter Balaam
Cllr Carolyn Robbins
Cllr June Tandy
Cllr Sid Tooth

Kim Brandrick, Carer, Warwickshire Fostering Service
Judy Dyson, Carer, Warwickshire Fostering Service
Elaine Finnerty, Carer, Warwickshire Fostering Service

Jenny Butlin-Moran, Service Manager, Safeguarding, WCC
Phil Sawbridge, Head of Service, Safeguarding, WCC
Billy Webster, HR Service Centre Manager, WCC
Brenda Vincent, Service Manager, Safeguarding, WCC
Jacqueline Barnes, Director of Nursing, Arden Cluster
Jackie Channell, Designated Nurse for Child Protection, Arden Cluster
Richard Maybey, Democratic Services Officer, WCC

1.3 Evidence Used

- Practical demonstration of case-file recording system
- Practical demonstration of case-file audit procedure
- Case-file audit checklists used by managers
- Senior Leadership Team report: "Case File Recording Audits, July-December 2010"
- Verbal evidence on matters relating to:
 - HR procedures
 - Child protection
 - Health provision
 - Support for LAC

1.4 Dates and Timescales

5 April – scoping meeting

8 May – evidence gathering for Safeguarding-related actions

14 May – evidence for Health-related actions

21 May – evidence for LAC-related actions

30 May – agreement of content for interim report

6 December – final evidence gathering for outstanding actions and update on overall progress

1.5 Recommendations

- 1. To endorse the overall conclusion of the Task & Finish Group that the Safeguarding Action Plan is being implemented and monitored in a satisfactory manner**
- 2. To encourage the children’s services teams from Warwickshire and Coventry to work towards a common approach to sharing child protection information with University Hospital Coventry and Warwickshire**
- 3. To consider and agree any actions that might be necessary as a result of the observations outlined in section 3 of the report**

2.0 History of the Review

2.1 Scoping meeting (1)

We met with officers to receive background information about the inspection and the intentions behind the Action Plan, and to define the purpose and parameters of the review using the Council's Scoping Document (appendix A).

Phil Sawbridge (Head of Service, Safeguarding) explained that the inspection was a dual inspection from both Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission, with the latter undertaking perhaps less methodical and evidence-based analysis than the former. Consequently, some of the inspection findings and areas for improvement were surprising, given the overall strong rating that the service received.

We asked officers which of the 20 areas for improvement (see appendix F) they thought were a priority, and which were less important. Based on the feedback, we agreed not to pursue Areas for Improvement 5 and 10.

The ambition was for the review to be a short and sharp exercise, to be completed over four further weekly meetings. The first three meetings would be themed to allow focused scrutiny of specific topics (safeguarding, health, LAC), with a final meeting to agree findings and recommendations. The aim was to take a report to the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 20 June 2012.

2.2 Safeguarding meeting (2)

This meeting considered Areas for Improvement 3, 4, 6 and 8.

For Area 3, Jenny Butlin-Moran (Service Manager, Safeguarding) presented the checklists used by managers when undertaking case-file audits and gave a practical demonstration of how this would be done on the CareFirst electronic case-file recording system. For areas 4 and 6, Jenny provided a verbal update.

For Area 8, Billy Webster (HR Service Centre Manager) explained that Ofsted wanted more emphasis on employment files being held centrally, rather than stored locally with managers, and provided an overview of the actions taken so far.

As members, we scrutinised the written and verbal evidence presented, and concluded that suitable progress is being made overall.

Detailed notes of meeting 2 are available at appendix B.

2.3 Health meeting (3)

This meeting considered Areas for Improvement 2, 7, 9 and 18

Jacqueline Barnes (Director of Nursing) explained that the Arden Cluster is working to a different Action Plan to that of WCC. Their Action Plan is based on the Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspection report, as opposed to the Ofsted inspection report that WCC is working to.

We also observed that WCC and the Arden Cluster have set different timescales for completion of the actions in their respective plans. The Arden Cluster is working to longer implementation times, which meant that certain evidence was unavailable to us for detailed scrutiny.

For Area 2, we heard that an audit of unscheduled care notifications by the Arden Cluster is due in October 2012 to ensure the necessary improvements have been made.

For Area 7, we listened to verbal evidence about the Arden Cluster's training plans and were satisfied that the improvement was being addressed satisfactorily.

For Area 9, it was the opinion of officers that the inspection findings related more to improvements needed in Coventry than Warwickshire.

For Area 18, we learned that a designated nurse for child protection/LAC will be in post from June 2012, and she will have a responsibility to ensure LAC have timely access to supervision, support and advice on health matters.

It became apparent at this meeting, due to the lack of detailed information to scrutinise from the Arden Cluster, that the original aim of taking a report to the 20 June 2012 OSC meeting was no longer appropriate.

Detailed notes of meeting 3 are available at appendix C.

2.4 Looked After Children meeting (4)

This meeting considered Areas for Improvement 11, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17, 19, 20

Based on a very useful, in-depth and wide-ranging discussion with carers from the Fostering Service and relevant senior officers, we were satisfied that all areas for improvement are being suitably addressed.

In relation to Area 13, we acknowledged that Ofsted's reference to a Corporate Parenting Board has resulted in the formation of Warwickshire's Corporate Parenting Panel, which is now working to improve elected members' knowledge of corporate parenting. The terms of reference and membership of the Panel have been agreed by Cabinet. At the time of writing, it has held two meetings and is scheduled to meet every two months.

Detailed notes of meeting 4 are available at appendix D.

2.5 Interim report

At this stage of the review, it became apparent that not all information or evidence was available for full scrutiny. Therefore, we produced an interim report outlining progress to date. This was circulated to all members via email, and printed copies were made available to members of the Children and Young People Overview & Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 20 June 2012. We agreed to reconvene in December 2012 when the outstanding information would be available in order to complete the review.

2.6 Final evidence-gathering meeting (5)

On 6 December 2012, we received an update on overall progress of the Action Plan from Jenny Butlin-Moran, who explained that:

- All elements of the Action Plan have been completed, but on-going work is needed to maintain them
- The Action Plan was presented to the Warwickshire Safeguarding Children Board (WSCB) on 5 December 2012, and all stakeholders were satisfied with progress

We were keen to look at the areas of the Action Plan where information was not previously available to be assured that progress was being achieved.

Based on the discussion with Jenny Butlin-Moran and Jackie Channell (who had taken up post as the Arden Cluster's Designated Nurse for Child Protection), we were satisfied that all areas for improvement are being suitably addressed, but requested specific confirmation on the information protocols in place at University Hospital Coventry and Warwickshire (UHCW) with regard to children being admitted from different local authorities.

This confirmation was provided to us latterly via email, which is included at appendix G. Although this goes some way to appeasing our concerns, we did feel that efforts ought to be made by Warwickshire Children's Services to hold discussion with Coventry Children's Services with a view to agreeing a common practice.

Detailed notes of meeting 5 are available at appendix E.

3.0 Recommendations

Our remit was to develop recommendations that “help the service to complete the Action Plan” and that “must add value to work that the service is already undertaking”.

Based on our review, the Task & Finish Group members are satisfied that the Action Plan is being implemented and monitored in a robust and detailed manner (this is confirmed by Appendix F, which shows our conclusions against each action within the plan), and we have no suggestions to put forward that would add value to the existing work of the service. Our first recommendation is therefore:

- 1. To endorse the overall conclusion of the Task & Finish Group that the Safeguarding Action Plan is being implemented and monitored in a satisfactory manner**

However, as a result of the concerns we had in section 2.6 regarding the information protocols with University Hospital Coventry and Warwickshire, our second recommendation is as follows:

- 2. To encourage the children’s services teams from Warwickshire and Coventry to work towards a common approach to sharing child protection information with University Hospital Coventry and Warwickshire**

On a similar theme, although not a formal recommendation, we would like to see a more joined-up approach between the County Council and the Arden Cluster on joint action plans such as these to ensure both organisations are working to the same outcomes and timescales.

We also recognise that Warwickshire Safeguarding Children Board undertakes regular monitoring of the County Council’s safeguarding arrangements and would suggest that the Committee establishes a closer link with the Board to understand its function, avoid duplication of scrutiny and share information when appropriate.

To reflect these latter two statements, our final recommendation is therefore for the Children and Young People Overview & Scrutiny Committee:

- 3. To consider and agree any actions that might be necessary as a result of the observations outlined in section 3 of the report**

4.0 Acknowledgements

We would like to thank everyone involved in this review, particularly the lead officers from the Safeguarding team and the foster carers who made such valuable contributions.

Scoping Document

Review Topic (Name of review)	Safeguarding Improvement (To monitor the implementation of the Action Plan put in place following 2011 Ofsted inspection)
Task and Finish Group Members	Cllr Balaam Cllr Hicks Cllr Robbins Cllr Tandy Cllr Tooth
Key Officers / Departments	Phil Sawbridge, Head of Service, Children In Need Jenny Butlin-Moran, Service Manager, Safeguarding
Lead Scrutiny Officer	Richard Maybey, Democratic Services Officer
Relevant Portfolio Holder(s)	Cllr Timms
Relevant Corporate Ambitions	"Reduce abuse of children and vulnerable adults through improving the reach of co-ordinated safeguarding interventions" "Embed the principles of early intervention so that children, young people, parents & carers have the support they need, when they need it"
Type of Review	In-depth review with a minimum of 4 meetings to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess evidence • Speak to witnesses • Collate findings • Produce report for Committee
Timescales	5 April – Scoping meeting 8 May – Safeguarding 14 May – Health 21 May – Looked After Children 30 May – Agree findings and content of interim report (to be circulated outside of Committee) Future meetings to be held, when suitable, to consider missing information and agree recommendations
Rationale (Key issues and/or reason for doing the review)	In November 2011, Ofsted undertook a statutory inspection of safeguarding and looked after children (LAC) services. The inspectors made a judgement of "good" for the effectiveness of service, with capacity to improve. 20 areas for improvement were identified; 15 relating to work led by the County Council; 3 required immediate action (by December 2011) and have been completed. An Action Plan has been formulated to address the 20 areas for improvement. The Overview & Scrutiny Board has commissioned this Task & Finish Group to monitor the progress and implementation of the Action Plan.
Objectives of Review (Specify exactly what the review should achieve)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To monitor how the service is implementing the Action Plan • To suggest any required amendments/additions to the Action Plan • To ensure the areas for improvement identified by Ofsted are being improved

<p>Scope of the Topic (What is specifically to be included/excluded)</p>	<p><u>Include</u> The following is included in the scope of the review:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All areas for improvement identified by Ofsted in their formal assessment • Evidence from Safeguarding, Looked After Children and Health teams related to the Ofsted recommendations <p><u>Excluded</u> The following falls outside the scope of the review:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any service areas not identified for improvement by Ofsted • Aspects of the Ofsted report that do not have associated recommendations
<p>How will the public be involved? (Community Forums, consultation, community groups / clubs, etc)</p>	<p>Carers from the Fostering Service will be invited to the Looked After Children meeting</p>
<p>What site visits will be undertaken?</p>	<p>Site visits could be arranged as and when members deem them necessary during the review.</p> <p>However, at the time of scoping the review, it was felt that all necessary evidence could be gathered during the scheduled meetings.</p>
<p>How will our partners be involved? (Relevant stakeholders, District / Borough reps)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partners from Health Service invited to participate in the Health meeting • Carers from the Fostering Service invited to the Looked After Children meeting
<p>How will the scrutiny achieve value for money for the Council / Council Tax payers?</p>	<p>The findings of the Task & Finish Group will feed into the strategic commissioning review of the service, which is seeking to optimise the value for money of all Council services.</p>
<p>What evidence is needed for effective scrutiny?</p>	<p><u>Existing information</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ofsted report • Action Plan <p><u>New information</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Officer updates on Action Plan • Demonstration of audit procedure (recommendation 3) • Example of a child protection plan (recommendation 4) • HR project plan (recommendation 8) • Feedback from carers (recommendation 14) • Outcome of Corporate Parenting Board discussions (recommendation 13) • Updates from Health partners
<p>Indicators of Success – (What factors would tell you what a good review should look like? What are the potential outcomes of the review e.g. service improvements, policy change, etc?)</p>	<p>Recommendations that help the service to complete the Action Plan and satisfy audit/compliance/inspection requirements</p> <p>These recommendations must add value to work that the service is already undertaking</p>

<p>Other Work Being Undertaken (What other work is currently being undertaken in relation to this topic, and any appropriate timescales and deadlines for that work)</p>	<p>Adult Social Care and Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee may have an interest in the health-related actions. A representative of that body should be invited to participate in the Health session.</p> <p>The current governance review of the Corporate Parenting Steering Group / Corporate Parenting Board will feed into the Looked After Children meeting.</p> <p>The Safeguarding Children Board will be reviewing the Action Plan, and the Task & Finish Group's findings will be reported to them.</p>
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Safeguarding Improvement Task and Finish Group Meeting notes, Tuesday 8 May 2012	
<u>Members</u> Cllr Peter Balaam Cllr Bob Hicks (Chair) Cllr Carolyn Robbins Cllr June Tandy Cllr Sid Tooth	<u>Officers</u> Jenny Butlin-Moran Billy Webster Richard Maybey

Introduction

Cllr Hicks opened the meeting, noting that Cllr Rolfe had withdrawn from the group as she was unavailable on any of the agreed meeting dates.

Papers were distributed to members, including the completed Scrutiny Review Outline document as a reminder of the agreed scope/terms of reference.

HR processes (Area for Improvement 8)

“Improve management oversight of council’s HR recruitment processes, and improve the quality of HR files”

Billy Webster explained that Ofsted wanted more emphasis on employment files being held centrally, rather than stored locally with managers, and provided an overview of the actions taken so far:

- Information about recruitment for managers has been revised
- Their responsibilities will be reinforced to them
- A guide for the retention of employee records is in final draft stage with some comments still to be included. Although the deadline has been missed for issuing this guidance, it is deemed more important to get this guidance right
- Changes have been implemented at the HR Service Centre to ensure that pre-employment checks are in place on the HR system
- All employees will have a central file that guarantees they have passed all pre-recruitment checks before start dates can be issued
- Managers are being assigned access to electronic files, so they can view and input to employee files
- It is hoped these actions will satisfy Ofsted at the time of the next inspection

Case file audits (Area for Improvement 3)

“Improve the robustness of children’s social care case file audits to ensure they more thoroughly address the quality of practice including initial assessments and inform service improvements”

Jenny Butlin-Moran presented the following:

- An aggregated report, analysing 6 months of case file audits
- A checklist for managers to complete during an audit (pro-forma)
- A framework for managers to shape their thinking during an audit, based on the key issues that Ofsted look at

Ofsted concluded that case file audits were focused too much on process, and there was not enough narrative about quality of practice.

- Managers are therefore being re-issued with the framework, which yields a fuller audit response when used
- While it may initially take managers more time to complete audits using the framework, the benefits are significant and the process will become quicker the more they use it
- The framework will help managers to consider more than just process and delve deeper into the quality of practice

Jenny gave a practical demonstration of the CareFirst electronic recording system, which is the primary store of case information (some paper records still do exist, from partner organisations etc)

- The audit checklist (pro-forma) is completed by reviewing various screens within the CareFirst system
- The system does provide a historical record of all case details (including previous social workers etc), so information can’t be edited or deleted out
- All social workers have access to the system and can contribute to all records, but there are different permissions for different levels of staff
- Access to a record can be granted to partners or external agencies if their request is based on a genuine concern

Members raised concerns over the complexity of the system and questioned if social workers and managers had access to appropriate training.

- All staff have training on the system, and those that use it regularly are proficient with it
- On average, a case file audit takes 45 minutes to complete – which although is time-consuming, is a key element for managers in assessing social worker performance

Members asked how the improvements would be measured and judged.

- Ofsted have not asked for evidence, but would re-assess at the next inspection
- A report will go to the Senior Leadership Team later in the year outlining what improvements have been made
- Members requested that this report should also go to the Children and Young People Overview & Scrutiny Committee in November 2012

Child protection plans (Area for Improvement 4)

“Ensure that all child protection plans are specific and measurable and have clear timescales”

Ofsted recommended that all child protection plans should be more SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Timely)

- An audit of the authority’s current child protection plans is being undertaken shortly to ensure they are SMART
- Members requested that a report of the audit findings be presented at their meeting on 30 May 2012

Referral thresholds (Area for Improvement 6)

“Warwickshire County Council and NHS Warwickshire should ensure that referral thresholds for safeguarding are applied consistently across the county to ensure appropriate referrals are made and that children and young people are protected from harm”

- The thresholds document and escalation policy has been sent to all relevant agencies, along with an implementation plan for how to use the policy

Safeguarding Improvement Task and Finish Group Meeting notes, Monday 14 May 2012	
<u>Members</u> Cllr Peter Balaam Cllr Bob Hicks (Chair) Cllr Carolyn Robbins Cllr June Tandy Cllr Sid Tooth	<u>Officers</u> Jacqueline Barnes, Arden Cluster Jenny Butlin-Moran, WCC Phil Sawbridge, WCC Richard Maybey, WCC

Introduction

Cllr Hicks opened the meeting, welcoming Jacqueline Barnes from the Arden Cluster who was present to provide updates on the areas of the Action Plan related to Health.

Area for Improvement 2

“Ensure that notifications of attendance of children and young people from unscheduled care and accident and emergency units are of a good quality and give full information relating to attendance, including the frequency of visits, so that concerns can be followed up effectively.”

- Jacqueline explained that the Arden Cluster has been working to complete a different action plan, based on the Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspection report – rather than the Ofsted report that WCC is working to
- Members requested a copy of the CQC report and the Arden Cluster’s action plan
- South Warwickshire Foundation Trust has had some problems in relaying information from A&E departments due to their paper-based card systems. This is being addressed by the move to an electronic system, which is almost complete
- There are some difficulties with walk-in centres, especially at Camp Hill, in terms of getting the right information to the the right people
- Improvements should be complete within 2 months, and will be measured/overseen via:
 - The Arden Cluster’s internal contract performance meetings
 - Warwickshire Safeguarding Children’s Board (WSCB), who will monitor the implementation of the action plan
 - An Arden Cluster audit in October 2012, which will also go to the WSCB
- Members were of the view that if the Task & Finish Group was no longer in operation at that time, the findings of the audit should be reported to the Children and Young People Overview & Scrutiny Committee and/or the Corporate Parenting Board

Area for Improvement 7

“NHS Warwickshire should ensure that there are robust systems in place to: collect safeguarding training information, assess the impact that training is having on the improvement of safeguarding health services within each contracted service and ensure that safeguarding training is sufficient to meet the needs of health staff.”

- Contracts are in place with hospitals to ensure there is satisfactory training for at least 80% of front-facing staff
- The Arden Cluster is monitoring this and ensuring systems are in place to allow for appropriate training
- Further work is needed with GPs
- It is difficult to measure and assess the impact of training
- Individual trusts have their own training arrangements
- Training is undertaken on an annual basis
- Members were satisfied that the Arden Cluster’s training plans were well advanced and the area for improvement was being addressed satisfactorily

Area for Improvement 9

“NHS Warwickshire should review the different approaches to identifying domestic violence, ensuring that: all opportunity is given to pregnant women to disclose abuse, that they and their unborn babies are appropriately protected from harm, and that information sharing with midwives and health visitors is strengthened.”

- The CQC deadline for this area of improvement is July 2012
- Policies have been reviewed in each organisation
- Many of the issues identified by the CQC relate to improvements needed in Coventry rather than Warwickshire
- For example, there are already processes in place for sharing information effectively with police
- Members asked for evidence that the approaches in Warwickshire are working correctly
- Jacqueline agreed to provide a written update on current approaches

Area for Improvement 18

“NHS Warwickshire should ensure that health staff involved with looked after children and young people have access to supervision, support and advice in a timely manner.”

- Health visitors are invited to LAC reviews, as appropriate (predominantly for LACs under 5 years old)
- Action plans from assessments are being shared with health staff
- The thresholds document has been approved by WSCB and put into place at GP practices

- A new designated nurse for child protection and looked after children starts work in June. Her role will be to:
 - Ensure the reviewed policies and procedures with Trusts are being implemented
 - Co-ordinate work with primary care teams to promote immunisations and wellbeing etc
 - Review current arrangements for supervision, support and advice and make improvements as required
- Jacqueline agreed to confirm the role of this post in writing for members

Safeguarding Improvement Task and Finish Group Meeting notes, Monday 21 May 2012	
<u>Members</u> Cllr Peter Balaam Cllr Bob Hicks (Chair) Cllr Carolyn Robbins Cllr June Tandy Cllr Sid Tooth	<u>Officers</u> Jenny Butlin-Moran, WCC Phil Sawbridge, WCC Brenda Vincent, WCC Richard Maybey, WCC <u>Visitors</u> Kim Brandrick Judy Dyson Elaine Finnerty

Introduction

Cllr Hicks opened the meeting, welcoming in particular the three carers from Warwickshire's Fostering Service, who were in attendance to answer questions about action plan items relating to Looked After Children.

Area for Improvement 12

"Ensure that children and young people are routinely consulted about the timing and venue of their review and that care planning targets have timescales clearly specified."

Jenny Butlin-Moran explained that Ofsted were seeking more evidence of consultation taking place, and requested that planning targets were given more precise parameters – i.e., "within x months" rather than "as soon as possible".

Carers spoke about how LAC reviews take place with young people (YP):

- Carers advocate for their YP, so reviews take place when and where they want them – i.e., out of school, at home, to fit in with their social life
- YP prefer short reviews in a relaxed environment, with familiar officers so information does not have to be repeated
- Consultation is via a booklet for YP to complete (not that they always do)

Officers added that there is a tight planning system in place for LAC reviews, with an established escalation procedure through the line management structure.

Carers felt very well supported by the local authority, explaining that support is always available either through their fostering social worker or the out-of-hours support service. Carers can suggest improvements and provide feedback via a regular questionnaire.

Members were satisfied that the area for improvement was being suitably addressed.

Area for Improvement 14

“Ensure consistency in the application of sleepover policies.”

Brenda Vincent explained that there is a consistent sleepover policy, which is provided to children’s teams and carers. In short, it gives decision-making responsibility to carers about whether a YP can have a short break away (up to 4 days), but gives a clear framework about how to reach that decision. Warwickshire was the first authority to implement such a policy, and this has now been adopted nationally.

Carers reported that the policy works well and is used frequently. It is based on the same principles that parents would use for their own children – i.e., taking into account circumstances at that time. If a sleepover is allowed, then carers speak to the other adults first to exchange contact details etc.

Phil Sawbridge stated that LAC should have the same opportunities as other young people, and therefore sleepovers are encouraged. But they have to be within safe boundaries. Decisions are based on individual circumstances, but the framework for making those decisions has to be consistent.

Members were satisfied that sleepover policies are being used consistently.

Area for Improvement 16

“Ensure that the complaints service is effectively promoted and is readily accessible to looked after children and young people.”

Carers stated that older very much know their rights; they know how to make a complaint and access the services available to them. Complaints are rare, but when they do occur are usually about trivial issues such as access to their mobile phone or staying up late. Younger children are supported by both carers and social workers in understanding their rights and the options available to them.

Brenda Vincent stated that the customer service team is currently updating a leaflet for carers that outlines how and who to access should issues arise (i.e., contact details for reviewing officers, social workers; info about sleepover policy etc). There is also targeted information for young people, which has been designed with their input. For example, there is story-based information for younger LAC (with guidance notes for carers), and a system for older LAC based around playing cards and QR codes (linking to web-based info).

Brenda confirmed that there are very few complaints (less than a handful a year), which may be the reason why Ofsted put forward the recommendation – i.e., they perceived that YP did not know how to make complaints. However, there may be other reasons why the numbers are low – such as that YP don’t feel the need to complain or there are suitable other systems in place to deal with problems.

Members were satisfied that the complaints service is effectively promoted and accessible.

Area for Improvement 17

“Ensure that there are sufficient independent visitors, in order to meet the needs of all looked after children.”

Officers explained that LAC with no direct family (e.g., if they are an asylum seeker or have no living family members) have access to an “independent visitor” through a befriending service operated by Barnados.

At the time of inspection, Barnados could not provide sufficient independent visitors to meet demand, hence their recommendation. This has now been addressed and contract has been renewed. There is currently no waiting list for independent visitors.

Members were satisfied that the area for improvement has been addressed.

Area for Improvement 20

“Ensure that there is sufficient appropriate housing to meet the needs of care leavers and that any temporary accommodation offered is in a safe environment.”

Phil Sawbridge suggested that the Ofsted recommendation was based on them finding a few cases where YP had made unsuitable housing choices when leaving care, plus some subjective responses from YP to a survey.

He also explained that clear protocols are in place for when YP leave care, overseen by a dedicated Leaving Care Manager. The local authority is also considering the appointment of a designated LAC officer in each of the 5 boroughs/districts who would support YP’s housing requirements.

Phil stated that – as a member of the Supporting People group that is responsible for commissioning services – he would be advocating strongly for Leaving Care support services.

Brenda Vincent informed members about the initiatives in place for care leavers:

- “Staying Put”, which encourages YP to stay in a fostering environment after the age of 18
- Preparing YP for independence via pathway plans that cover issues such as finances, housekeeping, health and wellbeing etc
- Temporary lodging options are available to care leavers, where their needs can be assessed
- Additional visits and support for care leavers who require it
- Supporting YP to come back into foster care if they become vulnerable

To support YP with their housing needs, officers help negotiations with landlords and social workers visit potential homes with YP to assess suitability. Warwick District

Council leads the housing policy on behalf of all 5 districts, ensuring there is a consistent county-wide approach.

Members were satisfied that the area for improvement is being addressed.

Area for Improvement 11

“Ensure that all statutory visits to looked after children and young people are completed by qualified social workers. Where cases are held by practice leaders they should attend the review.”

Jenny Butlin-Moran explained that Ofsted had witnessed some statutory visits being undertaken by non-qualified social workers – although it should be noted that they did have relevant backgrounds and were always overseen by qualified team leaders.

Guidance has now been put in place and given to all team leaders, and the review templates have been revised to make it clear what is a statutory and non-statutory visit. Service managers are now confident of demonstrating to Ofsted that the necessary systems and processes are in place and are sustainable.

Members were satisfied that the area for improvement is being addressed.

Area for Improvement 13

“Elected members should ensure that they are familiar with the key priorities established by the Corporate Parenting Board in order to ensure good outcomes for looked after children and young people, and the development of apprenticeship schemes.”

This recommendation stemmed from Ofsted interviewing a Corporate Parenting focus group, which included elected members, health representatives and LA officers. From this, Ofsted concluded that not all members may be aware of their Corporate Parenting responsibilities.

The Local Authority has addressed this via:

- Two dedicated training sessions for elected members, which were well attended
- Work of the Corporate Parenting Steering Group, including a review of monitoring arrangements and how other authorities operate
- Proposal to establish a formal Corporate Parenting Board, which Cabinet will decide on soon
- Scope for regular member briefings on Full Council day

Regarding apprenticeships, LAC receive a guaranteed interview for vacant apprenticeships if adequately skilled. However, Phil Sawbridge stated that he would be promoting the number of LAC who actually enter apprenticeships as one of the Council's “Going for Growth” indicators.

Brenda stated that information about apprenticeship opportunities is now more available via Twitter and Facebook, and clear pathways are in place. There are two LAC currently in apprenticeships and 14 are in training positions.

Members acknowledged the steps taken already and the scope for further training for elected members. They also acknowledged that a Cabinet decision was pending around the formation of a Corporate Parenting Board.

Area for Improvement 19

“Develop the work of the Tiffin Club to ensure that strategic support for the council’s corporate parenting role is improved, including the promotion of apprenticeship opportunities within the council and with local business partners.”

Members were appreciative of the work undertaken by the Tiffin Club, acknowledging that it is not a statutory requirement for the local authority to deliver – but an officer initiative that adds value.

Members were satisfied that strategic support for the Council’s Corporate Parenting role is being suitably addressed (via the Corporate Parenting Steering Group etc) and apprenticeship opportunities are being promoted effectively (see Area for Improvement 13)

Safeguarding Improvement Task and Finish Group Meeting notes, Thursday 6 December 2012	
<u>Members</u> Cllr Peter Balaam Cllr Bob Hicks (Chair) Cllr Carolyn Robbins Cllr Sid Tooth	<u>Officers</u> Jenny Butlin-Moran, WCC Jackie Channell, Arden Cluster Richard Maybey, WCC

Introduction

Jenny Butlin-Moran circulated an updated and integrated Action Plan – which was put in place to address the concerns raised by the Ofsted and Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspections held November 2011.

Jenny explained that all elements of the Action Plan have been completed, but on-going work is needed to maintain them.

The Action Plan was presented to the Warwickshire Safeguarding Children’s Board (WSCB) on 5 December 2012, and all stakeholders were satisfied with progress.

Area for Improvement 3

“Improve the robustness of children’s social care case file audits to ensure they more thoroughly address the quality of practice including initial assessments and inform service improvements”

The Local Authority (LA) understands that case file audits are key to assuring inspectors, and has therefore held a workshop for managers to stress their importance and provide guidance on improving their robustness. The LA has put in place additional audits of child protection plans and Looked After Children (LAC) visits.

Members asked what useful information the case file audits have revealed.

- Although performed on a random basis, they do reveal geographical trends of where things are working well and where they aren’t
- They also reveal that practice leaders do not always take on the case manager role, so managers have been asked to remind practice leaders of their responsibilities

Area for Improvement 4

“Ensure that all child protection plans are specific and measurable and have clear timescales”

Ensuring timely fulfilment of child protection plans is difficult to achieve, as the timescales associated with referrals cannot always be predicted. However, the LA does ask for indicative timescales from all agencies involved, which are reviewed at every meeting to keep the plans as accurate as possible.

Area for Improvement 1

“Ensure that health agencies, including GPs, are promptly notified of child protection strategy meetings and conferences to which they are being invited”

Strategy meetings, by their nature, are usually emergency meetings so the notification period will be short. The LA does ensure prompt notifications, but the issue is more about GPs attending and contributing to those meetings.

Jackie Channell, as the Designated Nurse for Child Protection, has delivered training to 30 GP practices, including guidance on their responsibilities. For example, if unable to attend the meeting itself, GPs are required to provide a written report. Most GPs do recognise and fulfil these responsibilities.

Area for Improvement 2

“Ensure that notifications of attendance of children and young people from unscheduled care at accident and emergency units are of a good quality and give full information relating to attendance, including the frequency of visits, so that concerns can be followed up effectively”

Audits have been completed at various sites (including George Eliot Hospital, Warwick Hospital and Stratford) which have revealed the need for some improvements. Actions are in place for these and they will be monitored by the WSCB Health Sub-committee. As problems are identified, staff have visited the sites to address the issues there and then.

Legibility of information has improved with the introduction of a new card system, which ensures that information is typed rather than handwritten. This will be audited and monitored.

There was discussion around the information given to University Hospital Coventry and Warwickshire (UHCW) by Coventry Social Care to identify children with a child protection plan. It was confirmed that Warwickshire’s policy is only to provide information if the hospital has concerns when a child is presented; it does not provide the hospital with a list.

Members asked for a briefing note to clarify:

- What information UHCW receives from Coventry Social Care
- If Coventry Social Care operates a different policy to Warwickshire
- If there is confusion among staff, and therefore risks to children, as a result of UHCW operating different systems for each authority

Area for Improvement 9

“NHS Warwickshire should review the different approaches to identifying domestic violence, ensuring that: all opportunity is given to pregnant women to disclose abuse, that they and their unborn babies are appropriately protected from harm, and that information sharing with midwives and health visitors is strengthened”

South Warwickshire Foundation Trust (SWFT) and George Eliot Hospital (GEH) have reviewed their approach and put new policies in place. Information relating to risk of domestic violence is now shared with all relevant agencies (e.g., health, midwifery, mental health services). Jackie has been distributing various domestic violence resources (leaflets, posters etc.) to all GP practices and a number of awareness events have been organised.

Area for Improvement 17

“Ensure that there are sufficient independent visitors, in order to meet the needs of all looked after children”

The contract for independent visitors has been re-tendered, and the new contract terms take into account the rising LAC population. This will be monitored via the LA’s Contract Monitoring arrangements and through feedback from those assessing the service.

Area for Improvement 18

“NHS Warwickshire should ensure that health staff involved with looked after children and young people have access to supervision, support and advice in a timely manner”

A system is in place to ensure supervision for all staff working with LAC. Staff know that they can contact the Designated Nurses for LAC and/or Child Protection at any time – and they are doing so. Staff responsible for younger LAC or children with a child protection plan already had automatic supervision, but now all staff have the opportunity for supervision if they want it.

Area for Improvement 20

“Ensure that there is sufficient appropriate housing to meet the needs of care leavers and that any temporary accommodation offered is in a safe environment”

The LA works with its partners to ensure appropriate housing according to the needs of the young people. The LA has a statutory duty to stay in contact with care leavers up to the age of 21 (or 25 for those with a disability), and this is done via personal advisers who are commissioned from Barnardos. Young people who chose to leave foster care at age 16/17 are still supported by the LA in terms of housing provision (although they are encouraged to stay in a family setting as long as possible).

Conclusions

- Members were satisfied with overall progress of the Action Plan to date
- Members asked for clarification on the information policies at UHCW, before finalising its findings

Next steps

- Jenny Butlin-Moran / Jackie Channell to prepare briefing note on information policies at UHCW (Richard to circulate to members)
- Richard Maybey to prepare final report and circulate to members for approval
- Cllr Hicks to present final report to Children and Young People Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 30 January 2013

Action Plan – with conclusions of the Task & Finish Group (TFG)

	Area for Improvement – identified by Ofsted	Conclusions
1	Ensure that health agencies, including GPs are promptly notified of child protection strategy meetings and conferences to which they are being invited.	WCC – actions complete TFG – no action requested at meeting 1
2	Ensure that notifications of attendance of children and young people from unscheduled care and accident and emergency units are of a good quality and give full information relating to attendance, including the frequency of visits, so that concerns can be followed up effectively.	NHS Warwickshire – actions complete TFG – verbal assurance at meeting 5: • Satisfied with progress
3	Improve the robustness of children’s social care case file audits to ensure they more thoroughly address the quality of practice including initial assessments and inform service improvements.	WCC – actions complete TFG – reviewed at meeting 2 / further assurance at meeting 5: • Satisfied with progress
4	Ensure that all child protection plans are specific and measurable and have clear timescales.	WCC – actions complete TFG – received verbal assurance at meetings 2 and 5: • Satisfied with progress
5	Ensure that the concerns of parents and carers of disabled children and young people, about the quality and flexibility of school transport arrangements, are suitably investigated.	WCC – actions complete TFG – no action requested at meeting 1
6	Warwickshire County Council and NHS Warwickshire should ensure that referral thresholds for safeguarding are applied consistently across the county to ensure appropriate referrals are made and that children and young people are protected from harm.	WCC – actions complete TFG – verbal assurance at meeting 2: • Satisfied with progress
7	NHS Warwickshire should ensure that there are robust systems in place to: collect safeguarding training information, assess the impact that training is having on the improvement of safeguarding health services within each contracted service and ensure that safeguarding training is sufficient to meet the needs of health staff.	NHS Warwickshire – actions complete TFG – verbal assurance at meeting 3: • Satisfied with progress
8	Improve management oversight of council’s HR recruitment processes, and improve the quality of HR files.	WCC – actions complete TFG – reviewed at meeting 2: • Satisfied with progress
9	NHS Warwickshire should review the different approaches to identifying domestic violence, ensuring that: all opportunity is given to pregnant women to disclose abuse, that they and their unborn babies are appropriately protected from harm, and that information sharing with midwives and health visitors is strengthened.	NHS Warwickshire – actions complete TFG – reviewed at meeting 3 / further assurance at meeting 5 • Satisfied with progress
10	NHS Warwickshire and Warwickshire County Council must ensure that the accommodation for sexual assault referrals is forensically clean pending the construction of the new centre.	Warwickshire Police TFG – no action requested at meeting 1
11	Ensure that all statutory visits to looked after children and young people are completed by qualified social workers. Where cases are held by practice leaders they should attend the review.	WCC – actions complete

		TFG – verbal assurance at meeting 4: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Satisfied with progress
12	Ensure that children and young people are routinely consulted about the timing and venue of their review and that care planning targets have timescales clearly specified.	WCC – actions complete TFG – verbal assurance at meeting 4: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Satisfied with progress
13	Elected members should ensure that they are familiar with the key priorities established by the Corporate Parenting Board in order to ensure good outcomes for looked after children and young people, and the development of apprenticeship schemes.	WCC – actions complete TFG – reviewed at meeting 4 / further assurance at meeting 5 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Satisfied with progress
14	Ensure consistency in the application of sleepover policies.	WCC – actions complete TFG – verbal assurance at meeting 4: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Satisfied with progress
15	Improve the quality of case file audits within children’s social care services to ensure they robustly address the quality of practice and inform service improvements.	WCC – actions complete TFG – reviewed at meeting 2 / further assurance at meeting 5 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Satisfied with progress
16	Ensure that the complaints service is effectively promoted and is readily accessible to looked after children and young people.	WCC – actions complete TFG – verbal assurance at meeting 4: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Satisfied with progress
17	Ensure that there are sufficient independent visitors, in order to meet the needs of all looked after children.	WCC – actions complete TFG – verbal assurance at meeting 4: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Satisfied with progress
18	NHS Warwickshire should ensure that health staff involved with looked after children and young people have access to supervision, support and advice in a timely manner.	NHS Warwickshire – actions complete TFG – reviewed at meeting 3 / further assurance at meeting 5 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Satisfied with progress
19	Develop the work of the Tiffin Club to ensure that strategic support for the council’s corporate parenting role is improved, including the promotion of apprenticeship opportunities within the council and with local business partners.	WCC – actions complete TFG – verbal assurance at meeting 4: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Satisfied with progress
20	Ensure that there is sufficient appropriate housing to meet the needs of care leavers and that any temporary accommodation offered is in a safe environment.	WCC – actions complete TFG – verbal assurance at meeting 4 and 5: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Satisfied with progress

Addendum to the report of the Task & Finish Group

Supplementary information regarding information protocols at University Hospital Coventry and Warwickshire (UHCW)

“Jackie Channell has liaised with UHCW with regards to the information they receive from Coventry Children's Services. It seems that they do receive information about children subject to child protection plans from Coventry. However, this does not result in differential practice and they do contact Warwickshire Children's Services to discuss concerns regarding children who present to UHCW and make referrals as appropriate. Jackie has checked with the other hospitals in Warwickshire and they do not have any difficulties with the procedures adopted by Warwickshire Children's Services in this regard. Therefore we do not think that there is any further action that needs to be taken.”

Source: Email from Jenny Butlin-Moran (Service Manager, Safeguarding) dated 8 January 2013

Response to the perceived need for closer working between Warwickshire Children's Services and the Arden Cluster on future action plans

“Warwickshire Children's Services and the Arden Cluster did devise an integrated action plan, derived from the recommendations made within the report compiled by Ofsted. Due to the way in which the inspectorate conducted the inspection process, a separate report was completed by the Care Quality Commission which detailed only the actions for the health economy – therefore its layout was different. It was this action plan that Jacqueline Barnes referred to when she met with Members. This did cause some confusion due to the difference in the layout although the content was the same. The resultant different plans unfortunately was beyond the control of Children's Services or the Arden Cluster and was a feature of the inspection process. I would like to reassure Members that Children's Services and the Arden Cluster did work collaboratively in devising the action plan and in subsequently reporting to the Safeguarding Children's Board.”

Source: Email from Jenny Butlin-Moran (Service Manager, Safeguarding) dated 8 January 2013

Children and Young People Overview & Scrutiny Committee

30 January 2013

Academies Task & Finish Group Report of the Chair

Recommendation

To endorse the recommendations of the Task & Finish Group.

1.0 Overview

The report of the Chair of the Task & Finish Group is enclosed. For ease of reference, the recommendations are also printed below:

1. The Local Authority (LA) should provide a timely response to any school that indicates an intention to convert to academy status, and ensure that the response contains up-to-date and accurate guidance and contact information.
2. The LA should co-ordinate an event, such as a seminar or conference, for headteachers of all schools, lead officers/members of the LA and other appropriate stakeholders. The intention would be for headteachers to network, share issues and build relationships, and to work towards agreed protocols with the LA around key issues such as school-place planning.
3. The LA should strongly encourage academies to sign up to a data-sharing protocol that guarantees the transparency of key school information.
4. The LA should investigate options for a jointly agreed protocol between elected members and headteachers to clarify and define members' role as "champion of the learner". This should include guidance about how members can get to know their local schools and how they can engage with headteachers and governing bodies.
5. The LA should review the Governor Training service it offers to academies on a traded basis, to ensure it is up to date, fit for purpose and provides governors with clear guidance on their roles and responsibilities. This review should also explore the training offered to clerks to ensure they are equipped with the appropriate skills.
6. The Children and Young People Overview & Scrutiny Committee should investigate whether the School Improvement team has sufficient capacity to ensure it can carry out its role.
7. a) The LA should actively promote closer working arrangements between the different agencies that provide services for vulnerable children, including better integration of their different systems, processes and terminology, so that families receive a more consistent experience.

- b) The Children and Young People Overview & Scrutiny Committee should consider if further scrutiny of services to vulnerable children is required in the context of academisation.
8. a) The LA should urgently review its statutory duties for school-place planning in the context of an increasingly fragmented and diverse educational landscape.
 b) The LA should adopt a co-ordinating role between all relevant stakeholders (e.g., district councils, property developers, headteachers) to address the risks to sufficiency of school places caused by potential new housing developments.
 c) The Children and Young People Overview & Scrutiny Committee should request a report on the LA's strategy for addressing the risks to both insufficiency and oversufficiency of school places.
9. The LA should review its approach to future planning developments to ensure it has the strongest possible evidence base to access Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funds.

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**ACADEMIES
TASK & FINISH GROUP
FINAL REPORT**

*Working for
Warwickshire*

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Executive Summary

Since the coalition government came to power in 2010, there have been significant reforms in the education sector. Existing schools are now able to acquire greater independence from the Local Authority (LA) by converting to academy status. All new schools (including “free schools”) will automatically have this status as well.

In Warwickshire, the majority of secondary schools have already become academies. The conversion rate among primary schools has been slower, but it is becoming a serious consideration for many.

This Task & Finish Group was established to ensure the LA is doing all it can to be the “champion of the learner” for all children in Warwickshire, no matter what type of school they attend.

1.2 Members and Contributors

Cllr Ashford
Cllr Balaam
Cllr Boad
Cllr Fox
Cllr Hopkinson (Chair)
Cllr Jackson
Cllr Rickhards
Cllr Ross
Cllr Tooth
Cllr Tandy

Wendy Fabbro (Strategic Director - People Group)
Mark Gore (Head of Service, Learning and Achievement)
Fay Ford (Senior Solicitor and Education Team Leader)
Simon Smith (Strategic Finance Manager)
Peter Thompson (Service Manager - Access and Organisation)
Paul McIntyre (Headteacher, Myton School)
Carl Lewis (Headteacher, Water Orton Primary School)
Sheila Dentith (Senior Learning Improvement Officer)
Shona Walton (Principal Inspector)
Richard Maybey, Democratic Services Officer

1.3 Evidence Used

- Briefing note on financial implications of academisation
- School funding presentation
- Briefing note on legal implications of academisation
- Verbal evidence on impacts of academisation relating to:
 - A school that has undergone conversion
 - School-place planning
 - School improvement
 - Vulnerable children
- Research on scrutiny recommendations from other LAs

1.4 Dates and Timescales

- 25 July – scoping meeting
- 16 August – financial and legal implications
- 7 September – Q&A with headteacher of an academy
- 26 September – school-place planning
- 19 October – school improvement
- 27 November – vulnerable children
- 19 December – conclusions

1.5 Recommendations

1. The LA should provide a timely response to any school that indicates an intention to convert to academy status, and ensure that the response contains up-to-date and accurate guidance and contact information.
2. The LA should co-ordinate an event, such as a seminar or conference, for headteachers of all schools, lead officers/members of the LA and other appropriate stakeholders. The intention would be for headteachers to network, share issues and build relationships, and to work towards agreed protocols with the LA around key issues such as school-place planning.
3. The LA should strongly encourage academies to sign up to a data-sharing protocol that guarantees the transparency of key school information.
4. The LA should investigate options for a jointly agreed protocol between elected members and headteachers to clarify and define members' role as "champion of the learner". This should include guidance about how members can get to know their local schools and how they can engage with headteachers and governing bodies.
5. The LA should review the Governor Training service it offers to academies on a traded basis, to ensure it is up to date, fit for purpose and provides governors with clear guidance on their roles and responsibilities. This review should also explore the training offered to clerks to ensure they are equipped with the appropriate skills.
6. The Children and Young People Overview & Scrutiny Committee should investigate whether the School Improvement team has sufficient capacity to ensure it can carry out its role.
7.
 - a) The LA should actively promote closer working arrangements between the different agencies that provide services for vulnerable children, including better integration of their different systems, processes and terminology, so that families receive a more consistent experience.
 - b) The Children and Young People Overview & Scrutiny Committee should consider if further scrutiny of services to vulnerable children is required.

8.
 - a) The LA should urgently review its statutory duties for school-place planning in the context of an increasingly fragmented and diverse educational landscape.
 - b) The LA should adopt a co-ordinating role between all relevant stakeholders (e.g., district councils, property developers, headteachers) to address the risks to sufficiency of school places caused by potential new housing developments.
 - c) The Children and Young People Overview & Scrutiny Committee should request a report on the LA's strategy for addressing the risks to both insufficiency and oversufficiency of school places.

9. The LA should review its approach to future planning developments to ensure it has the strongest possible evidence base to access Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funds.

2.0 History of the Review

2.1 Scoping meeting (1)

In defining the terms of reference of this review, we (the members of the Task & Finish Group) invited senior officers Wendy Fabbro and Mark Gore to join us for a discussion about the key issues around academisation.

Based on the discussion, we agreed that:

- The review should not duplicate any work being undertaken by the Warwickshire Education Services (WES) Board – therefore the issue of Traded Services would be excluded
- The two headteachers seconded to the LA for the Autumn term should be invited to contribute to the review, as they would provide a useful school perspective
- The review should consider how the LA will fulfil its role as “champion of the learner”
- The review should focus on the core themes of school-place planning, school improvement and vulnerable children
- The initial two meetings should provide some contextual information about funding and legal implications and the experiences of a recently converted academy

The Council's Scoping Document was completed and circulated for approval.

The notes of meeting 1 are available at appendix A.

2.2 Financial and legal implications (2)

At this meeting, we received brief introductions to the financial and legal implications of academisation from Simon Smith and Fay Ford. Further documents were requested and received to provide us with more background. The overall conclusion was that the picture is still unclear in terms of the statutory duties the LA has to fulfil and there are still unknowns with regard to certain elements of funding.

The notes of meeting 2 are available at appendix B.

2.3 Q&A with headteacher (3)

This was a very useful meeting with the Headteacher of Myton School, Paul McIntyre, who shared with us his experience of converting to an academy. It was enlightening on a number of issues, dispelling some of the myths around academisation. For example, Paul explained that extra funding was not the motivator for conversion and that his school would actually have been slightly better off as a maintained school. He also explained that the school is working closer than ever before with local partners (e.g., police, health, housing etc.) and now has a more purposeful relationship with the LA, which provides a very effective brokering service for them.

The notes of meeting 3 are available at appendix C.

2.4 School-place planning (4)

Peter Thompson provided us with a very clear account of what he sees as the main issues and risks to the LA around school-place planning. We heard that the LA's statutory role in ensuring a "sufficiency of places", which it undertakes via commissioning and de-commissioning of provision, is being complicated by many factors.

For example, the birth rate is changing and uncertainty around local housing plans will have a huge (but hard-to-predict) impact on local demographics. Added to this, the policy changes from central government are bringing about an increasingly fragmented education provision – alongside maintained schools, private schools and independent schools, there are now academies, free schools, university technical colleges and studio schools. Apart from its maintained schools, the LA simply has no power to influence the admissions of these other institutions – which makes it very hard to ensure a sufficiency of places. For example, if new housing is built near to an academy, the LA has no power to force it to increase its admissions numbers – but still has a duty to ensure a sufficiency of places for those new residents.

There was consensus among the group that the LA needs to develop a consistent and coherent approach to addressing these risks, and clarification is needed on what powers are available to us in order to fulfil our statutory duties.

The notes of meeting 4 are available at appendix D.

2.6 School Improvement (5)

During this meeting, we invited in staff from the Learning and Achievement team to look at how the School Improvement service operates currently, and what the challenges are with regard to supporting school improvement in academies.

Of note, we learned that the staff reductions in the Learning and Achievement team (from 38 FTE to just 3.5 FTE) has completely changed the nature of school improvement. Schools no longer have a linked officer from the LA. Instead, the LA has become a commissioner and broker of improvement services – and all efforts are directed to schools that have an Ofsted judgement of "satisfactory" or below.

In terms of school improvement for academies, it was clear that the LA's influence could disappear completely unless relationships were built with them. And those relationships should allow for local elected members to visit, raise issues of concern and receive alerts about Ofsted inspections and results.

We were especially concerned over the uncertainty around failing academies, and what role/duty the LA will have in those circumstances.

The notes of meeting 4 are available at appendix E.

2.7 Vulnerable children (6)

As members, we identified very early on that our responsibilities to vulnerable children are the same no matter what institution they attend. So our key concern was how the LA was going to fulfil its duties to those children attending academies.

Officers agreed that while the LA has no formal accountability over academies, it has a responsibility to all Warwickshire children – therefore, it should be drawing issues of concern to the attention of academy heads and governing bodies.

Paul McIntyre, as a headteacher, stressed that governance over schools is the key mechanism for escalating issues and he encouraged us, as local elected members, to engage with governing bodies and contact the Chair to raise any issues of concern around vulnerable children.

Paul also stated that support for vulnerable children would be improved if there was more continuity between all the different agencies involved. As members, we felt there was a strong co-ordinating role for the LA to play in that regard.

The notes of meeting 6 are available at appendix F.

3.0 Recommendations

Members of the Task & Finish Group met on 19 December to conclude the review. Paul McIntyre was also present and we thank him for his valuable input. At this meeting, we were provided with the following documentation, which had been requested much earlier in the review:

- Letter from the LA to schools considering academy conversion
- Letter from the LA to all schools regarding academisation
- Guidance document for schools considering conversion (including a Memorandum of Understanding between the LA and academies)

We were disappointed that these documents had been delayed for so long, and were also concerned to learn that they had not (at that point in time) been issued to all schools. We also noted with concern that the letters were under the name of the outgoing Head of Service, with no further point of contact offered. We felt that the Task & Finish Group should have been consulted on the contents and timeliness of these communications.

The discussion then moved on to members' overall feelings of the review – and we felt that the key issue was around relationship building. This was an occurring theme in all the meetings. It relates not only to the relationship between the LA and academies, but also school-to-school relationships, the relationship between elected members and their local school/governing body, the link between different agencies that deliver other children's services and the complex inter-relationships associated with school-place planning.

Our discussion resulted in the following recommendations for the Children and Young People Overview & Scrutiny Committee to consider:

- 1. The LA should provide a timely response to any school that indicates an intention to convert to academy status, and ensure that the response contains up-to-date and accurate guidance and contact information.**
- 2. The LA should co-ordinate an event, such as a seminar or conference, for headteachers of all schools, lead officers/members of the LA and other appropriate stakeholders. The intention would be for headteachers to network, share issues and build relationships, and to work towards agreed protocols with the LA around key issues such as school-place planning.**
- 3. The LA should strongly encourage academies to sign up to a data-sharing protocol that guarantees the transparency of key school information.**
- 4. The LA should investigate options for a jointly agreed protocol between elected members and headteachers to clarify and define members' role as "champion of the learner". This should include guidance about how members can get to know their local schools and how they can engage with headteachers and governing bodies.**

5. **The LA should review the Governor Training service it offers to academies on a traded basis, to ensure it is up to date, fit for purpose and provides governors with clear guidance on their roles and responsibilities. This review should also explore the training offered to clerks to ensure they are equipped with the appropriate skills.**
6. **The Children and Young People Overview & Scrutiny Committee should investigate whether the School Improvement team has sufficient capacity to ensure it can carry out its role.**
7.
 - a) **The LA should actively promote closer working arrangements between the different agencies that provide services for vulnerable children, including better integration of their different systems, processes and terminology, so that families receive a more consistent experience.**
 - b) **The Children and Young People Overview & Scrutiny Committee should consider if further scrutiny of services to vulnerable children is required.**
8.
 - a) **The LA should urgently review its statutory duties for school-place planning in the context of an increasingly fragmented and diverse educational landscape.**
 - b) **The LA should adopt a co-ordinating role between all relevant stakeholders (e.g., district councils, property developers, headteachers) to address the risks to sufficiency of school places caused by potential new housing developments.**
 - c) **The Children and Young People Overview & Scrutiny Committee should request a report on the LA's strategy for addressing the risks to both insufficiency and oversufficiency of school places.**
9. **The LA should review its approach to future planning developments to ensure it has the strongest possible evidence base to access Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funds.**

4.0 Acknowledgements

We would like to thank everyone involved in this review, particularly the lead officers from the Learning and Achievement team, and Paul McIntyre and Carl Lewis who provided valuable insights from a school perspective.

**Academies Task and Finish Group
Meeting notes, 25 July 2012, 11am**

Present

Cllr Ashford
Cllr Boad
Cllr Hopkinson
Cllr Rickhards
Cllr Ross
Cllr Tooth
Cllr Watson

Apologies

Cllr Balaam
Cllr Fox
Cllr Jackson
Cllr Tandy

Wendy Fabbro
Mark Gore
Richard Maybey

1. Cllr Hopkinson was elected as Chair of the Task & Finish Group
2. Richard Maybey introduced a short presentation setting out some of the concerns raised by the Children and Young People Overview & Scrutiny Committee. This also highlighted some of the practical issues for members to consider (structure of the review, timings, possible outcomes, information required etc.)
3. The Chair invited Wendy Fabbro and Mark Gore to contribute their thoughts and advice. Comments included:
 - Extra officer support will be available from September 2012, as the People Group has seconded two headteachers for the Autumn term. Carl Lewis (Water Orton Primary School) and Paul McIntyre (Myton School – a secondary academy) will help define and specify the Council's relationship with schools and assist with Mark's handover prior to his retirement.
 - Members can play a valuable role in helping to set the strategic aims for how the service achieves its goal of being "champion for the learner".
 - The initial impression from academies is that they are keen to work collaboratively with schools in their area, and to utilise the peer-to-peer support that the Council has been implementing. While academies are free to make their own choices, there has been loyalty from many of them to date.
 - The issue of Traded Services and the sustainability of Council services to schools is being examined in a lot of detail by the Warwickshire Education Services (WES) Board, chaired by David Carter. The main objective of this Board is to improve the range and quality of services to all schools, which will improve their sustainability. Given that this work is on-going and well-advanced, members were advised not to include Traded Services as a main area of review for the Task & Finish Group.

It was suggested that members focus on the following key areas of work:

- a. Approach to new academies – how should the Council respond to schools who wish to convert to academies; what relationship should be developed with them; what services can be offered to them; what information can be gleaned from them to fulfil the role of champion of the learner
- b. Planning of school places, including post-16 provision – how can the Council ensure there are sufficient places in all areas of the county, when academies are free to set their own admission numbers; how can the Council prevent the quality of post-16 provision from being diluted as more and more academies establish their own 6th forms
- c. Learning improvement – how can the Council ensure that academies continue to improve; what measures can be put in place if standards fall; how can the Council intervene
- d. Vulnerable children – how can the Council manage and negotiate with academies to ensure vulnerable groups (those with special educational needs; Gypsy and Roma travellers; Looked After Children etc.) can access a suitable education should academies turn them away
- e. Legal and financial implications – what are the implications for the Council of the new legislation and how are we responding to the changes

4. Members then agreed an approach for the review, using the fields within the scoping document as a basis for discussion. Richard Maybey agreed to complete the scoping document and circulate for approval.

5. The next meeting date was scheduled for Thursday 16 August at 11am in Committee Room 3.

**Academies Task and Finish Group
Meeting notes, 16 August 2012, 11am**

Present

Cllr Ashford
Cllr Boad
Cllr Fox
Cllr Hopkinson
Cllr Jackson
Cllr Rickhards
Cllr Tandy

Apologies

Cllr Balaam
Cllr Ross
Cllr Tooth
Cllr Watson

Wendy Fabbro
Mark Gore
Fay Ford
Simon Smith
Richard Maybey

1. Confirmation of Chair

Members agreed that Cllr Hopkinson should continue in the Chair, following her election at the first meeting.

2. Recap on last meeting

For the benefit of those not at the previous meeting, the Scoping Document was reviewed to ensure all members agreed with the terms of reference of the review.

Cllr Tandy questioned what contingencies and processes the LA has in place now, should something go wrong at an academy. Wendy Fabbro confirmed that work is currently underway to establish clear procedures and guidance, and this will be available for scrutiny by members towards the end of November 2012.

There was discussion about the value of sending the Scoping Document to Community Forums, and the practicalities of how it would be considered at each meeting. Cllr Boad stated she would be happy to mention it to her Community Forum as part of the Chair's introduction. Cllr Fox stated that perhaps an information sheet outlining the key facts (and debunking myths) about academies would be more useful. Cllr Jackson stated that there is a wider issue about how the LA engages with the community in general, and this may be something the Overview & Scrutiny Board should address.

Wendy Fabbro and Mark Gore agreed to provide draft correspondence for key consultation groups, containing factual information about academies.

3. Legal implications

Fay Ford described how the Academies Act 2010 and the Education Act 2011 is changing the statutory duties that the Local Authority has in relation to schools.

There are over 250 statutory duties to maintained schools, but not all of these disappear when a school converts to academy status. At last count, the LA still has around 100 statutory duties to academies/free schools. The Department for

Education (DfE) has not published a list of these duties, so work is on-going in the legal team to record these.

Fay agreed to provide members with the current lists of statutory duties to maintained schools and to academies (Richard Maybey to circulate).

Cllr Rickhards asked for clarification on the LA's obligations in relation to new schools. Fay confirmed that if a new school is proposed, the LA must, by law, first invite proposals for an academy.

Cllr Jackson asked for clarification that if a school judged as "satisfactory" is forced to become an academy, the LA will no longer have an influence over its improvement. Mark Gore confirmed this was correct, but the LA would still have residual responsibilities around school improvement in its role as "champion of the learner". This will require the building of relationships with academies so the LA can offer advice and guidance. Work is on-going around this, and the message is being reinforced that the LA wants to continue working with all schools.

4. Funding implications

Simon Smith provided an overview of the changing funding arrangements for schools. Simon agreed to circulate this as a briefing note, along with a presentation on school funding reform.

In conclusion, it was stated that the LA is very restricted in terms of how it distributes money to academies, and there are still unknowns with regard to certain elements of funding (e.g., LACSEG).

5. Possible outcomes of the review

Wendy Fabbro suggested that members may wish the review to focus on 2 strands of work, as follows:

- The practical arrangements the LA should adopt locally in relation to academies
- The overall view from the LA about national education policy, and the risks associated with it

There was agreement from members towards this suggestion.

6. Next meeting

The date of the next meeting was agreed: **7 September, 11am, Committee Room 1**
Paul McIntyre, Myton School, will attend to provide a headteacher's perspective on the benefits of being an academy.

Richard Maybey agreed to circulate:

- The LA's statutory duties (from Fay Ford)
- The school funding briefing note and presentation (from Simon Smith)
- A list of the current status of all secondary schools (academy vs maintained etc.)
- A schedule of future monthly meeting dates for the Task & Finish Group

**Academies Task and Finish Group
Meeting notes, 7 September 2012, 11am**

Present

Cllr Ashford
Cllr Boad
Cllr Hopkinson (Chair)
Cllr Jackson
Cllr Rickhards
Cllr Tandy
Cllr Tooth
Mark Gore
Paul McIntyre
Richard Maybey

Apologies

Cllr Balaam
Cllr Fox
Cllr Ross
Cllr Watson

The Chair opened the meeting and invited Paul McIntyre, headteacher at Myton School, to introduce himself and share his experience of academisation.

- Paul explained that he was the current headteacher at a successful multi-cultural school of around 650 students, which converted from Foundation status to an academy around 1 year ago.
- As a Foundation school, Myton was already slightly detached from the Local Authority, so academisation was not a huge step.
- The transfer of staff (via the TUPE process) was well managed and agreement was reached with the unions over pay and conditions. In fact, staff have benefited from improved pay and conditions due to the school having greater flexibility.
- Myton is not bound by the National Curriculum, but does largely follow it.
- The school has a long history with the Local Authority regarding access to capital funding for school building improvements; a big incentive to convert to an academy was that it allows them to apply directly to the Department for Education (DfE) for this funding.
- Its relationship with the Local Authority is better and more mature now under the new arrangements.

Members asked Paul to explain some of the positive differences the school has experienced since converting to an academy:

- There are now positive and mature relationships with partners based on mutual interest. There is no longer any dependency or paternalism.
- The school is working closer than ever with social services, police, health and housing, who offer a broader perspective on the local area and needs of families.
- The Local Authority acts as an effective broker of services, especially those for vulnerable learners. And the school recognises its responsibility to identify problems early in order for the LA to identify the most efficient approach.
- The school works in partnership with others from the Central Area Behaviour Partnership, offering spaces for children from other schools to visit and re-focus their behaviour.
- School-to-school support is becoming ever-more important. While there is room for improvement and more consistency across the county, it is getting better.

How has the curriculum changed since becoming an academy? Are there plans for expanding it in a certain direction?

- It has not changed much, and is still based around the core subject areas.
- The focus has grown towards RE, with an emphasis on ethics and philosophy.
- Myton would like to expand its community work, particularly around learn-to-learn initiatives, but this requires identifying areas of the curriculum to withdraw from.

There has been a lot of press coverage about the financial incentives of academisation for schools. What happens when this extra funding stops?

- Myton would actually have been slightly better off as an LA-maintained school.
- The real incentives were the increased choice and freedoms that come with being an academy.

How has the make-up of the governing body changed since academisation?

- It has largely stayed the same, but there has been the need to bring people in with certain expertise, such as those with knowledge of running a charity or financial accounts etc.
- The governing body is not yet at capacity, but the school is working to get more on board.

Will you be co-operating with the Local Authority on access to information and performance data etc.?

- The school is happy to share performance data, but it has to consider what the benefit is of doing so.
- The school would be keen to work together with all other schools, via the Local Authority, on all-authority response to certain issues, such as GCSE grade boundaries etc.

How do you manage your admissions process?

- Myton uses the Local Authority's admissions service, on a traded basis.
- Numbers are down this year and next, due to competition from private, independent and grammar schools. Plus, the local primary catchment is currently only 300 students (but demographics suggest that this will have risen dramatically by 2017).
- Myton has issued information leaflets to primary schools about the places it has available, but has also promoted open days for other schools to help families make the right choices.

What problems/challenges have you encountered as an academy?

- We are now more financially accountable, with strict reporting requirements to the DfE. We have therefore expanded our finance team.
- We are not getting the clarity we need from the DfE about future funding. We used to have a 3-year indicative budget, which we no longer get.
- As an academy, we often become associated with the views of academy chains, which we do not necessarily agree with.

What could the Local Authority do better for you as an academy?

- There could be greater cohesion between different policy areas (social services, housing, health, police etc.) to pull together an overarching vision for what we want for children and families.

How are standards being driven and monitored? Who has responsibility for that?

- The school itself is responsible for maintaining standards, and does this by working with training schools (e.g., Lawrence Sheriff, Bilton) to share best practice.
- The school works with the National College for leadership development, and it promotes inward coaching – e.g., peer-to-peer support in classrooms with colleagues sharing their expertise.
- Responsibility for standards rests with the governing body. However, the obvious question is: can they fix the problems they created?
- The Local Authority's role in investigating standards is still unclear.
- It will be important for School Improvement teams to monitor performance data closely in order to identify gaps, and for governors to be trained appropriately.

Based on the discussion and the questions raised, Mark Gore suggested the Task & Finish Group should focus its future lines of enquiry around the following 3 areas:

What is the role of the Local Authority in relation to:

1. School improvement.
 - a. How can we play a part in raising standards?
 - b. What is our role in preventing decline?
 - c. What is our role should a school fail?
2. School-place planning.
 - a. With a statutory duty to ensure every child has a place in suitable education, what is our role in securing this?
3. Vulnerable children.
 - a. How can we better provide services to vulnerable groups by brokering arrangements between different agencies?

Actions:

- Mark Gore to circulate a copy of a DfE report about the evolving role of the local authority in education
- Mark Gore to circulate a link to an event in October, expanding on the above report

Future meetings:

- 26 September 2012, 11am, CR1
 - What is the role of the Local Authority in relation to school improvement?
- 19 October 2012, 11am, CR3 [*replaces the meeting scheduled for 30 October*]
 - What is the role of the Local Authority in relation to school-place planning?

**Academies Task and Finish Group
Meeting notes, 26 September 2012, 11am**

Present

Cllr Ashford
Cllr Jackson
Cllr Tandy
Cllr Tooth (Chair)
Mark Gore
Peter Thompson
Richard Maybey

Apologies

Cllr Boad
Cllr Rickhards

Cllr Tooth was nominated as Chair in the absence of Cllr Hopkinson, and invited comments on the notes of the previous meeting.

Mark Gore explained that the Local Authority (LA) is still drafting letters to schools, which will include a formal request to include a LA governor on their governing body, and these would be made available to the Task & Finish Group (TFG) in due course.

Members agreed that this session would focus on the topic of **school-place planning**, rather than school improvement as originally scheduled. Mark introduced Peter Thompson (Service Manager, Access and Organisation) to talk through the key issues.

Peter circulated a handout (see attached pdf), outlining his interpretation of the impact that academisation is having on school-place planning and school organisation. This was the basis for a lengthy discussion, the key points of which are noted below:

1. Schools are realising that academisation makes them more **“inter-dependent”**, rather than “independent”, and they need to collaborate to succeed.
2. The LA has a statutory role in ensuring **sufficiency of places**, which it undertakes via commissioning (and possibly de-commissioning) of provision.
3. However, this statutory role is complicated by increasingly **diverse provision**:
 - a) The LA has no control over the establishment of new free schools, studio schools, University Technical Colleges and academy 6th forms
 - b) New provision is appearing around the county borders, which will attract Warwickshire students away from our own schools
4. **Rising birth rates** are a current national phenomenon, creating demand for school places. This is beneficial for the academy system now, as it means less competition for numbers. However, demographics do change and a drop in the birth rate could threaten the long-term sustainability of certain establishments
5. Ensuring **diversity of provision** is a difficult issue for the LA – e.g., if a minority faith school opens in a rural area, families may not have the provision they want. While the LA has no power to enforce diverse provision, it can play a role in influencing the type of applications being made for academies and free schools
6. The LA has an extensive **planning process** for school places, which looks as much as 18 years into the future. This involves:

- a) Forecasting demand across the county by analysing birth rate, migration, housing plans and parental preferences
 - b) Assessing the supply of school places; looking at current capacity, priority areas and planned admission numbers (PAN)
 - c) Redressing any imbalance – if there is demand for places, then the LA may need to commission new provision; or decommission* provision if there is surplus capacity (such as when birth rates fall) – this may involve closing schools or reducing the size of schools. The new school funding formula, starting in April 2013, will put further pressure on the viability of smaller schools
**The LA can only decommission LA-maintained schools. academies/free schools can only be decommissioned by the Education Funding Agency, which holds the contract with the Academy Trust*
 - d) Acknowledging that school place planning will always be affected by unknowns, such as new school developments and new legislation
7. There is a risk of **oversufficiency of places**, as successful academies can expand their PAN and increase capacity as they wish – this could threaten the sustainability of other local schools. Academies can also open 6th forms without the consent of the LA, which could dilute the quality of provision in an area
 8. There could also be a risk of **insufficiency of places**, e.g., if academies choose not to expand their PAN in line with rising birth rates etc., it will fall back on the LA to ensure sufficiency of places. In this scenario, the LA would need to engage with sponsors and encourage a new school to open – or, failing that, open a maintained school itself
 9. The LA is a statutory provider of **early years provision**, and Children’s Centres are often sited on school campuses. If a school converts to an academy, the land is usually leased from the LA to the Academy Trust – who may choose not to host the Children’s Centre any longer. The LA is currently working on a protocol to help avoid this situation
 10. The LA will soon know the outcome of the **Local Plans** from the five districts/boroughs, which will show projected housing/population growth across the county – this will allow the LA to plan better for demand on school places
 11. The LA should develop a consistent and **coherent response** to all the different issues from its various teams (property, legal, learning and achievement)
 12. The **future role of the LA** needs to be defined and clarified – e.g., what powers are needed in order to fulfil its statutory obligations? And now that academies are their own admissions authorities, is there still a role for a central admissions forum – especially as the Admissions Forum is no longer a statutory body?

Members were in agreement that this had been a highly informative and enlightening session, revealing a number of issues of concern. Cllr Tandy suggested that all elected members would benefit from understanding these issues, and asked if a seminar could be arranged accordingly.

Next meeting: **19 October 2012, 11am, CR3**

Topic: **What is the role of the LA in relation to school improvement?**

The meeting ended at 12.35

Academies Task and Finish Group Meeting notes, 19 October 2012, 11am

Present

Cllr Ashford
Cllr Boad
Cllr Hopkinson
Cllr Jackson
Cllr Rickhards
Cllr Tandy

Sheila Dentith
Mark Gore
Carl Lewis
Paul McIntyre
Richard Maybey
Shona Walton

11.00am-11.40am: Member discussion – Progress

The Chair outlined progress of the Task & Finish Group to date, recapping on the agreed objectives of the Scoping Document and the findings of previous meetings (see attached summary document).

Key points of the discussion were:

- Some recommendations from other Local Authorities (in the provided research paper) have associated costs, and members acknowledged that any recommendations proposed should take account of the Council's current financial constraints
- The future of Local Authority (LA) governors is uncertain at best, and they will likely disappear altogether in the future
- There are risks to the LA caused by the new "free market" of education, with a potential loss of students to studio schools, University Technical Colleges (UTCs) etc. that could threaten the future viability of local schools

Key topics identified for future/further scrutiny were:

- Funding arrangements in the new system
- How to build and maintain relationships with academies
- Admission arrangements for vulnerable children/LAC/SEN

11.40am-1.20pm: Member/Officer/Head discussion – School Improvement

Mark Gore explained that a document setting out the LA approach to school improvement for both LA-maintained schools and academies is being developed. He introduced the supporting officers for school improvement, Shona Walton (secondary) and Sheila Dentith (primary), to provide a verbal summary of the issues. Carl Lewis and Paul McIntyre (head teachers seconded to the LA) were present to act as critical friends for the discussion.

The role of the Learning and Achievement team

1. As Champion of the Learner, the team monitors academies as best it can using the official data it receives, plus informal data and links with professional bodies
2. The Department for Education (DfE) has amended the regulations, so the LA will receive GCSE data for all schools
3. A protocol is being developed with academies on the sharing of information
4. The LA has asked academies for copies of their funding agreements with the DfE

5. The team is working with the Private/Voluntary/Independent sector to monitor organisations that provide alternative provision (following the PRU closure)
6. The team employs a RAG (red/amber/green) system to rate all schools, and a series of interventions can be employed for those at the red end of the scale
7. The LA has statutory powers to intervene in schools that are placed in Special Measures by Ofsted – for example, it can remove the governing body
8. The LA's statutory assessment unit ensures schools are applying assessments correctly at early years/Key Stage 1/Key Stage 2 – e.g., at the end of SATS week
 - **Confirmation was sought as to whether Primary academies have to conduct SATS**

The current context

1. The Learning and Achievement team has been reduced from 38 to 3.5 FTE staff
2. Schools therefore no longer have their own linked officer. A new way of working has been introduced, whereby the LA is a commissioner and broker of services
3. The team no longer has a presence in good and outstanding schools; all efforts are put into schools that are satisfactory or below
4. Despite the huge loss of capacity, the team still gets into a third of all schools and has a good record of improving schools' Ofsted category
5. The Ofsted inspection regime is now tighter and tougher. It focuses on all students (which is positive), but small pockets of under-performance in a school will now affect its overall rating
6. The team has a close relationship with teaching schools in Warwickshire. They provide continuous professional development (CPD) for head teachers and meet with them regularly to discuss issues
7. A core offer for primary schools includes a "partner diagnostic visit" to help schools self-identify what they need to improve and how to do so. Schools then buy in their own support
8. For schools that are "stuck" (two successive "satisfactory" Ofsted ratings), the team can act as a broker to access funding for self-improvement
9. Relationships with schools need to be reviewed in the context of reduced funding and capacity. The team is monitoring the expectations of all schools. It is also being guided by the academic research of David Hargreaves
 - **Members to be invited to the upcoming conference at which David is speaking**
10. Where a school undergoes a forced academy conversion, the LA looks to influence who the sponsor will be
 - This has been positive so far, with the LA successfully helping schools to work with their sponsor
 - Sponsors have not been resistant to the LA providing services or having LA governors or sharing information
11. There was discussion about the accountability of academies to the LA, and the need for a mechanism to alert local members about upcoming Ofsted inspections and judgements
 - Paul McIntyre stated that he, as an academy head, is happy to talk with local members about issues/complaints, but would likely be resistant to a protocol for intervention by the LA
 - Members discussed a possible recommendation for an annual discussion opportunity between local members and heads to build and maintain relationships with the school and local community

- Paul stated that the relationship between academies and the LA has to be based on trust and reasonableness; otherwise there is a risk that the academy will pull away from the relationship completely
12. Regarding system leadership, the reduced Learning and Achievement team is helping to build a culture of inter-school networks (for SENCOs, heads of subjects, area behaviour managers etc.) who meet regularly and take forward improvement work themselves
- Head teachers are stepping up to a leadership role beyond their own institution as Leaders in Education

Areas of continuing uncertainty

1. How will the LA assist/intervene in failing academies?
2. What does autonomy really mean for schools and the LA (there are different interpretations even within the DfE itself)?
3. Which issues should be prioritised for inclusion within the Memorandum of Understanding between academies and the LA?
4. Should the LA try to influence academy sponsors, or let the market decide?
5. Should the LA offer training for school governors as a traded service?
6. How will the LA manage situations where Early Years provision is being provided on an academy site (i.e., a Children's Centre or nursery within a primary school)?
7. How can the LA influence the future of post-16 education to prevent the dilution of quality provision?
8. How will the LA collaborate with sub-regional partners to benefit from economies of scale, improved efficiency etc.?

Head teacher perspective

- Primary – Carl Lewis provided an overview of his secondment role with the LA:
 - Primary schools are a long way behind secondaries in terms of academisation
 - He will be trying to raise awareness among primary heads about the issues and options
 - He is helping heads and governors to undertake objective discussions, by removing some of the myths around academisation so they can make informed decisions
 - He will help develop a list of steps to take, an awareness of the implications, clear timescales and the choices available
 - There is a natural affinity among primaries to work with bigger schools in order to address non-teaching issues like HR, utilities, building maintenance – and many are looking at potential academisation via academy Chains rather than risk going it alone
- Secondary – Paul McIntyre provided an overview from a secondary perspective:
 - The educational landscape is changing quickly and schools must anticipate these changes and work together if they want to thrive
 - Academisation is just a mechanism for serving children and the community more effectively. It's essential for schools to be proactive in shaping their own future
 - Head teachers do not want to see duplication of effort/resources when schools could share and collaborate; they don't want additional layers of bureaucracy; they don't want a fragmented school system, but a focus on

working together with other institutions (like studio schools, UTCs) for mutual benefit

Conclusions

- Building relationships with academies is key, otherwise the LA could become irrelevant
- The LA has a vastly reduced capacity, but can play a crucial role in brokering improvement services for schools
- Relationships need to be balanced, with academies providing relevant information to the LA and allowing elected members to visit, raise issues and receive alerts about Ofsted inspections and results

Future meeting dates

- ~~21 November 2012, 11am, CR3~~ (replaced by meeting below)
- 27 November 2012, 11am, CR3 (Vulnerable Children)
- 19 December 2012, 11am, CR3 (Conclusions / Recommendations)
- 8 January 2013, 11am, CR3 (Agree draft report)

**Academies Task and Finish Group
Meeting notes, 27 November 2012, 11am**

Present

Cllr Ashford
Cllr Jackson
Cllr Rickhards
Cllr Tandy

Mark Gore
Paul McIntyre
Richard Maybey

Apologies

Cllr Boad
Cllr Fox
Cllr Hopkinson
Cllr Tooth

Introduction:

Cllr Jackson agreed to take the Chair in the absence of Cllr Hopkinson.

Mark Gore was asked to provide an introduction to the theme of the meeting:

“In the new educational landscape, what is the role of the Local Authority (LA) in relation to vulnerable children?”

Overview:

- Academisation is bringing about a shift in thinking for LAs, from being the champion of schools to the champion of children
- While they are not all “our” schools any longer, they are still all “our” children – and our responsibilities to vulnerable children are the same no matter what institution they attend
- There are many different types of vulnerable children: Special Educational Needs (SEN), risk of NEET, teenage parents, hard-to-place, Gypsy Roma Travellers, asylum seekers and Looked After Children

Funding implications:

- For pupils with SEN, schools have a delegated budget to meet a range of needs
- For children with a Statement, a multi-agency assessment will consider if additional support is needed – which would then be funded by the LA
- The schools funding formula allocates additional money to schools for vulnerable children via the Free School Meal indicator
- The LA provides additional support for “low-incidence, high-need” children, such as those with hearing or visual impairments
- Reductions to LA grants as a result of funds being diverted to academies (i.e., LACSEG) will have a financial impact on generic LA services, but should not impact on LA support for vulnerable children

The LA role:

- Schools and governing bodies are responsible for progress, attainment and achievement of their institution
- The LA role (for LA-maintained schools) is to monitor attainment data and offer support and challenge to improve
- The LA has no formal accountability over academies. But it has a moral responsibility towards all Warwickshire children, so should draw issues of concern to the attention of academy heads and governors

Admissions:

- To ensure that hard-to-place children (with complex needs and/or behavioural difficulties) are placed fairly between schools, the LA has an In-Year Fair Access Protocol (IYFAP)
- Since January, around 250 children have been placed successfully via the protocol
- If a school or academy refuses to accept a child that falls within the IYFAP criteria, the LA can report the case to the Education Funding Agency (EFA) and/or Ofsted
- The perception is that schools/academies, heads and governors accept the principles behind the IYFAP and are not seeking to abdicate responsibility for difficult children

Role of elected members:

- Although the LA and members don't have a right to intervene in academies (e.g., if they feel vulnerable children are not being supported effectively), they can offer support to the academy and, ultimately, refer it to the EFA and/or Ofsted
- While there are some examples of academies not wanting to engage with elected members, many are open and welcoming. Schools are accepting the need to grasp any opportunity to work with interested parties, particularly in the context of diminishing resources
- Governance over schools is the key; elected members are encouraged to work with the governing bodies and contact the Chair of Governors to escalate issues

Looked After Children:

- The LA has a duty as a Corporate Parent to ensure provision for Looked After Children (LAC) is as good as would be expected for one's own children
- The LA offers support to schools for LAC via the Virtual School, helping those children to perform as well as they can
- The Virtual School collates and monitors all data for LAC, whether they attend an LA-maintained school or any other type of institution (**Mark Gore to confirm**)

Multi-agency working:

- Continuity of provision between different agencies is essential for supporting vulnerable children effectively
- Academisation is forcing schools to reach out and build strong relationships with those agencies (e.g., CAMHS, Priority Families, EBD)
- The Common Assessment Framework (CAF) is helping to bring the right support to vulnerable children/families, but it still needs to improve

- The national Think Family initiative and local Priority Families initiative will yield positive outcomes for vulnerable children by helping to change the family environment

A wider view – Paul McIntyre (Head of Myton School):

- The challenge of the new educational landscape is not necessarily the relationship between the LA and academies, but the fragmentation of provision from University Technical Colleges, studio schools and free schools etc, which don't seem to share the same values/motivations as academies and LA-maintained schools
- Academy chains will be the future, and it is important for the LA to acknowledge this and explore how it will engage with these chains, which will not necessarily be based locally

Final comments:

- Members agreed that the Task & Finish Group needs to be forward-thinking about its recommendations, taking into account the LA's wider provision for vulnerable children
- Cllr Jackson invited Mark Gore and Paul McIntyre to input their own suggestions with regard to the group's recommendations
- Cllr Jackson invited Paul McIntyre (and interested colleagues) to attend the next Overview & Scrutiny Committee at which the Task & Finish Group report would be presented

Next steps:

- Mark Gore to confirm that academies will be required by statute to provide attainment data of Looked After Children to the Local Authority
- Mark Gore to arrange for an officer to attend the next meeting of the Task & Finish Group to support members in forming recommendations
- Richard Maybey to remind all Task & Finish Group members of the next meeting date and to encourage full attendance

Meeting dates:

- 19 December 2012, 11am, CR3 – Conclusions / Recommendations
- 8 January 2012, 11am, CR3 – Agree draft report

Children and Young People Overview & Scrutiny Committee

30 January 2013

Work Programme 2012-13

Recommendation

To consider the Committee's current work programme, amend as appropriate and put forward any recommendations for Task & Finish Groups for consideration by the Overview & Scrutiny Board.

1.0 Work Programme

The Committee's current work programme is appended to this report.

	Name	Contact Information
Report Author	Richard Maybey	richardmaybey@warwickshire.gov.uk
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Children and Young People Overview & Scrutiny Committee – work programme

New school developments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To consider how WCC and its partners are responding to new school developments and the growth in pupil numbers 	Liz Holt	NEW	3 April 2013
Strategy for School Improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To review the strategy for school improvement following the cessation of SIPs, involving school-to-school support at primary and secondary levels 	New Head of Service, Learning & Achievement	NEW	3 April 2013
NEETs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To consider the latest data on young people in Warwickshire who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) To receive information on vocational training opportunities in Warwickshire 	Yvonne Rose	6 Sept 2012	3 April 2013
Transformation of Services for Young People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To scrutinise the effect of the transformation programme on outcomes for young people 	Hugh Disley	June 2012	18 June 2013
Children's Centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To consider the commissioning strategy for Warwickshire's Children's Centres To forward feedback and recommendations to the decision-maker 	Colin McKenzie	NEW	18 June 2013
Special Educational Needs – reforms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To consider the latest progress of the national SEN reforms 	Jessica Nash	6 Nov 2012	18 June 2013
Pupil Premium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To assess how the Pupil Premium is being used in schools to raise attainment, looking at examples of best practice 	Author and date to be confirmed by David Bristow	NEW	18 June or 3 Sept 2013
Area Behaviour Partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To consider how the new arrangements are working, after 12 months of them being full WCC policy To consider how the Committee's previous concerns, particularly those around Key Stage 3, are being addressed 	Steve Pendleton	6 Nov 2012	3 Sept 2013
Passenger Transport Assistants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To consider how the policy is progressing, including financial information on the savings achieved 	Craig Pratt	6 Nov 2012	6 Nov 2013

Potential other topics – to be scheduled

Children’s health

- Addressing the fragmentation of children’s health plans (due to different agencies adopting different processes etc.)
- Ensuring the Quality Accounts process takes account of children’s health issues

Role of the Director of Children’s Services

- To assess the robustness of arrangements in place for the dual role of the Director of Children’s and Adult Services

Provision for young people with Behavioural, Emotional and Social Difficulties (BESD)

- To consider the business case for providing an in-county BESD resource

Briefing notes – the Committee to request when appropriate

Impact of staff reductions

For data on the number and percentage of staff reductions in service areas, and any direct impacts this has had on service delivery

Library and Information Service

For information on how the transformation programme is affecting library usage among young people, especially in areas of deprivation

Scrutiny of Bullying

For information on the Council’s current anti-bullying strategy and for statistical data on bullying across the county

Education of Vulnerable Pupils

For an update on the Council’s emerging strategy and for statistical data on the numbers of vulnerable children in the county

Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG)

For an update on how schools are fulfilling their responsibilities for IAG