

DONCASTER METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

SCHOOLS, CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S OVERVIEW AND  
SCRUTINY PANEL

26<sup>th</sup> JUNE, 2013

A MEETING of the SCHOOLS, CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S  
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL was held at the CIVIC OFFICE,  
DONCASTER on WEDNESDAY 26<sup>TH</sup> JUNE, 2013

PRESENT:

Chair – Councillor Rachel Hodson

Councillors Barbara Hoyle, Andrew Bosmans, Paul Coddington, Charlie Hogarth, Jane Nightingale, Sue McGuinness, Sue Wilkinson and Doreen Woodhouse.

Mr D Thorpe, Diocese of Hallam Roman Catholic Church  
Mr J Hoare, Diocese of Sheffield Church of England

Also in attendance:

Chris Pratt, Director Children and Young People's Service  
Louise Parker, Policy and Performance Manager  
Malcolm Newsam, Improvement Consultant, Children and Young People's Service

APOLOGIES:

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Barry Johnson, Alan Jones, Eva Hughes, Nuala Fennelly, Cabinet Member for Education Skills and Lead Member for Children's Services and Tony Corden, Cabinet Member for Children's Safeguarding and Services to Families (and support to Lead Member for Children's Services).

1.	<u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST, IF ANY.</u>	
	No declarations of interest were made.	All to note.
2.	<u>MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 20<sup>TH</sup> MARCH, 2013</u>	
	<u>RESOLVED</u> that the minutes of the meeting held on 20 <sup>th</sup> March, be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.	All to note.
3.	<u>PUBLIC STATEMENTS.</u>	

	There were no public statements.	All to note
4.	<u>COUNCILLOR FENNELLY, CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION AND SKILLS AND LEAD MEMBER FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES – VERBAL UPDATE</u>	
	<p>Unfortunately Councillor Fennelly was unable to attend the meeting. The Panel accepted Councillor Fennelly's apologies and proposed that she and Councillor Corden be invited to the next meeting to update the Panel on their key priorities and that an open invite be forwarded to them to attend future Schools, Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel meetings.</p> <p>The Chair explained that Councillor Corden had contacted her asking if the Panel would like to nominate up to four representatives to take part in visits to children's accommodation throughout the year. Members accepted the invitation and agreed that five Members, as detailed below, be put forward for training prior to visits being undertaken.</p>	
	<p><u>RESOLVED</u> that:-</p> <p>a) Councillors Fennelly and Corden be invited to attend the next meeting of the Panel to update Members on their key priorities;</p> <p>b) an open invitation be forwarded to Councillors Fennelly and Corden to attend all future Schools, Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel meetings.</p> <p>c) the following Members represent the Schools Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel on visits to children's accommodation in Doncaster:-</p> <p>Councillors Andrew Bosmans, Barbara Hoyle, Charlie Hogarth, Paul Coddington and Sue Wilkinson.</p>	
5.	<u>NEW IMPROVEMENT PLAN – MALCOLM NEWSAM, IMPROVEMENT CONSULTANT, CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICE</u>	
	Malcolm Newsam informed the Panel of work he had undertaken since being appointed, including, drafting	

	<p>the new Improvement Plan and undertaking the procurement process resulting in Impower being appointed to support the Council in delivering accelerated improvement in its children’s social care services.</p> <p>The Panel recognised that the new Improvement Plan would require Eleanor Brazil’s, (Director Children and Young People’s Service) endorsement prior to it being considered by the Executive and Cabinet.</p> <p>Malcolm Newsam outlined that the Improvement Plan was based on six themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing confident leadership and management;</li> <li>• Putting in place effective front-line practice;</li> <li>• Creating an organisation fit for purpose;</li> <li>• Strengthening partnerships to make a difference;</li> <li>• Becoming the employer of choice in the region; and</li> <li>• Robustly managing performance.</li> </ul> <p>The six themes were supported by ten core tasks which were progressing well.</p> <p>Detailed discussion ensued with Members focusing on the sense of urgency to improve the service, the safety of children in the Borough and support for social workers.</p> <p>The Chair thanked Malcolm Newsam for updating the panel on his progress.</p>	
	<b>RESOLVED</b> that the discussion, be noted.	All to note
6.	<u>VERBAL UPDATE FROM THE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE’S SERVICE ON SAFEGUARDING</u>	
	<p>Chris Pratt, Director of Children and Young People’s Service continued the Panel’s discussion with Malcolm Newsam with progress relating to Safeguarding since the last meeting.</p> <p>He outlined that his concerns with poor professional practice and the number of unallocated cases still</p>	

	<p>remained a priority. He reminded the Panel that there continued to be a high number of cases being referred to the Authority each month with approximately half reported by the Police following domestic violence incidents, and explained that this situation was not unique to Doncaster.</p> <p>The following issues raised by Members were addressed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Case management and reduction in caseloads;</li> <li>• Additional managers in family support teams;</li> <li>• Retention and improvement of staff;</li> <li>• Benefits of “One Team Working”; and</li> <li>• Data relating to intergenerational cycle of violence and neglect in families and support mechanisms.</li> </ul>	
	<p><u>RESOLVED</u> that the update by the Director of Children and Young People’s Service, be noted.</p>	All to note.
7.	<u>YOUTH OFFENDING SERVICE PLAN 2013/14</u>	
	<p>The Panel considered the Youth Offending Service Statutory Plan for 2013/14 prior to consideration by Full Council on 25<sup>th</sup> July.</p> <p>Members noted that there was no fundamental change to the plan presented last year but wished for the changes that had been made to the service and funding to be highlighted in the covering report when presented to Full Council.</p> <p>It was highlighted that reoffending performance in Doncaster was good however there was an issue with costs associated with custodial remand being that the Authority had to bear the costs with the estimated £50,000 possibly being exceeded this year.</p>	
	<p><u>RESOLVED</u> that:- The Plan be supported but the changes made to the service and funding, since the Plan for 2012/13, be highlighted in a covering report for consideration at Full Council.</p>	Scrutiny Officer/Director Children and Young People’s Service

8.	<u>QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE INFORMATION - QUARTER 4 2012/13</u>	
	<p>The Panel considered a report detailing the fourth quarterly key performance and budgetary issues in the Children and Young People’s Service.</p> <p>Members questioned the Director on the following areas:</p> <p><u>Safeguarding</u></p> <p>In response to Members seeking assurances that a marked improvement would be made by September, as was highlighted at the OSMC meeting the previous week, the Director outlined that the Management had to be robust and support the workforce to ensure that changes were made.</p> <p>With regard to Children on Protection Plans (CPP) there had been an increase during reassessments, for example, a child in need being categorised as requiring a CPP. The Director explained that CPPs were temporary and practices needed to be embedded to ensure a child was removed from the plan once each key target had been achieved.</p> <p>It was confirmed that additional agency staff that were advanced care practitioners had been employed to support and mentor newly appointed and qualified social workers.</p> <p><u>Financial Management</u></p> <p>Members accepted that the net overspend in the budget had reduced but expressed concern that it was substantially overspent and not sustainable. They indicated that it was their wish to look at the use of agency staff and expenditure as part of their work plan this year.</p> <p><u>Asset Management</u></p> <p>The Panel was aware that a number of teams had or were due to move to the Mary Woolletts Centre and with the closure of children’s centres questioned the future plans for empty buildings or whether they had been declared surplus. The Director explained that this was an issue that required consideration and would ensure a response was provided to Members.</p>	Director CYPS

	<p><u>Liquid Logic Computer System</u></p> <p>It was noted that there had been a few teething problems following the introduction of Liquid Logic but the computer system was now embedded. The system had introduced a culture change and enforced discipline for users by not allowing them take the next step with a case until the last stage had been completed.</p> <p><u>Education/Ofsted</u></p> <p>There was an acceptance that achievement of grades A to C had gradually improved and were around the national average but the Panel wished to see a greater improvement in future years.</p> <p>Members expressed concern that there seemed to be a large number of school Ofsted inspections resulting as inadequate. It was explained that the Ofsted regime was much harsher and operated under a more robust system. The Director confirmed that Ofsted was provided with data prior to undertaking its inspections.</p>	
	<p><u>RESOLVED</u> that the report and discussion, be noted.</p>	<p>All to note.</p>
<p>36.</p>	<p><u>WORK PLAN</u></p>	
	<p>The Scrutiny Officer brought the following issues to the attention of the Panel:-</p> <p><u>Work Plan</u></p> <p>The Panel's draft work plan was considered for approval, including the two reviews to be undertaken throughout the year.</p> <p>Care Leavers Review – Members appointed to undertake investigatory work outside the review meeting are:-</p> <p>Councillors Hodson, Sue McGuinness, Wilkinson, Hogarth and Bosmans.</p> <p>Agency Staff review – Members appointed to undertake work outside the review meeting are:-</p> <p>Councillors Woodhouse and Nightingale</p>	

	<p>The Scrutiny Officer explained that she would contact Members not in attendance at the meeting to ask if they also wished to undertake any review pre-work.</p> <p><u>Impacts of past reviews</u></p> <p>The Panel recalled meeting parents of children with special educational needs and disabilities, as part of its work on inclusion, and wished for a further meeting to be arranged, if possible, to discuss progress following the review.</p> <p><u>Appointments made by OSMC</u></p> <p>Following discussions at the informal panel meeting OSMC made the following appointments:-</p> <p>Children’s Trust Board – Councillor Hodson and Councillor Hoyle as substitute. Corporate Parenting Panel – Councillor Bosmans and Councillor Wilkinson as substitute.</p> <p>As had been the practice over the last two years, Members were reminded that reports would be presented to the Panel following each meeting by the appointed representative.</p> <p><u>Minutes of the Children’s Trust Board and Corporate Parenting Board</u></p> <p>Minutes of the above meetings dated 11<sup>th</sup> April, 5<sup>th</sup> March, and 7<sup>th</sup> May, respectively, were noted.</p> <p>It was noted that the Children’s Trust Board on 4<sup>th</sup> July, had been cancelled and the next meeting was scheduled for 15<sup>th</sup> August.</p>	<p>Councillors Hodson and Bosmans</p>
	<p><u>RESOLVED</u> that:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) The work plan for 2012/13, be approved.</li> <li>2) The Review groups, be agreed as detailed above, but the Scrutiny Officer contact those not present to see if they wish to take part in any pre-work.</li> <li>3) Investigate whether a further meeting be arranged with parents of children with</li> </ol>	<p>Scrutiny Officer</p>

	<p>special educational needs and disabilities as part of the panel's review of impacts of past reviews.</p> <p>4) The appointments made by OSMC to the Corporate Parenting Panel and Children's Trust Board, be noted.</p>	
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