

DONCASTER METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

THURSDAY, 8TH AUGUST, 2019

A MEETING of the CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL was held at the COUNCIL CHAMBER - CIVIC OFFICE, DONCASTER on THURSDAY, 8TH AUGUST, 2019 at 4.00 PM

PRESENT:

Chair - Councillor Neil Gethin

Councillors Lani-Mae Ball, Nick Allen, Jane Cox, Frank Tyas and Sue Wilkinson

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

DMBC;

Riana Nelson - Director of Learning, Opportunities and Skills
Danielle Adams - Strategy & Performance Improvement Manager
Michael Jameson - Strategic Adviser for Education and Skills
Martyn Owen – Head of Service (Inclusion)
Caroline Martin, Senior Governance Officer

		<u>ACTION</u>
1.	<u>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</u>	
	Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Susan Durant, Sean Gibbons, Nikki McDonald, John Hoare (Diocese of Sheffield Church of England) and Bernadette Nesbit (Diocese of Hallam Roman Catholic Church).	
2.	<u>TO CONSIDER THE EXTENT, IF ANY, TO WHICH THE PUBLIC AND PRESS ARE TO BE EXCLUDED FROM THE MEETING.</u>	
	None	
3.	<u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST, IF ANY.</u>	
	There were no declarations of interest made.	
4.	<u>MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 5TH MARCH 2019</u>	
	RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting be agreed as a correct record. Clarification was also provided that reference in the apologies	

	to “Hoare” was Mr John Hoare – Education Co-optee.	
5.	<u>PUBLIC STATEMENTS</u>	
	There were no public statements made.	
6.	<u>INCLUSION PROGRAMME OVERVIEW- INCLUDING ELECTIVE HOME EDUCATION, INCLUSION, ATTENDANCE AND SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS</u>	
	<p>Doncaster Caring/Doncaster Learning</p> <p>The Panel was provided with a report and presentation that covered areas that included; the Inclusion Programme Overview (including Elective Home Education), Inclusion and Attendance and Special Education Needs (SEN). The presentation provided covered the following areas;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenges • Strategic Response- Inclusion Programme Board • Progress- Attendance • Progress- Behaviour • SEND Inspection and Strategy • Next steps <p>The Chair requested that when acronyms were used in reports that a glossary be included as well.</p> <p>A discussion took place that addressed the following areas:</p> <p>Increased Movement in Elective Home Education - Concern was raised about the limited resources available against the rising numbers of children in Elective Home Education. It was explained that resources were being managed against identified priorities and by targeting staff with those children who were vulnerable, it was also the case that staff were looking to learn more about new cases coming forward. It was noted that as figures increase, it was becoming more challenging to ensure that cycles were as tight as they could be. In respect of deprived areas, it was explained that there was more of a focus in some areas of the borough than others although recognised that other factors might have an influence.</p> <p>It was reported that the Local Authority was working on a more proactive protocol that would help to identify children and young people at risk of Elective Home Education. It was recognised that it was a difficult issue compounded by multiple-levels of different interactions and was about engaging with schools and families in a far more</p>	

proactive way.

Monitoring Standards of Elective Home Education - Concern was raised around how the Council monitored the quality of education being provided at home and standard of exams undertaken when it did not possess any statutory responsibilities. Assurances were provided that monitoring was taking place and around 40 to 60 interventions had been made during the year when children had been returned back to school. It was stated that it was about developing the knowledge of those in the system from the point of starting school. It was also recognised that there was still a number of gaps and loops to address but that there was a movement towards ensuring greater national accountability and enhancing the monitoring role of local authorities.

Reference was made to Lord Solely's Home Education (Duty of Local Authorities) Bill, which it was felt articulated the need for an enhanced role of the local authority about the challenge element but had not amounted to anything and the situation remained that all local authorities would need to maintain a register around Elective Home Education. It was added that the authority's strategy relied on ensuring that its risk assessment was strong and that conversations have taken place with families at an earlier stage prior to the point when the service goes live. It was noted that some families provided a higher offer of education at home and that good practice was being shared to benefit other families.

Reasons for Elective Home Education - In respect of the reasons why people chose to home educate, concern was raised that young people with SEND needs were choosing to leave mainstream school. It was questioned what would be done to help break down barriers to help bring those young people back in. It was also questioned what were the powers of the new Panels. Concern was raised that schools were not providing the right provision which resulted in more children being educated at home.

It was explained that a significant issue faced nationally was that schools were driven by the Ofsted outcomes framework and that changes to the special needs code of practice meant that there was less emphasis on mainstream education than there had been historically. It was continued that due to a number of factors, there had been a national picture showing a growth of young people outside mainstream education. It was stated that there was now a clear set of resources and an understanding of what should be done to meet needs as part of the bigger strategy.

It was explained that there was a substantial amount of work being undertaken and nationally this was recognised as a significant issue. Members were informed that conversations had taken place with Ofsted and the Regional Schools Commissioner around their support to ensure that messages reached across schools. It was added that an improving picture of data would enable the authority to monitor the

situation more carefully.

Concern was raised about the funding gap with currently 634 young people being educated at home in the Borough. Clarification was provided that in terms of Elective Home Education, Doncaster was 4th or 5th of authorities in the Yorkshire and Humber region and although this was considered as high, the growth was in line with the national picture.

Reference was made to the most common reasons outlined in the report for choosing Elective Home Education within Doncaster, they included traveller culture, philosophy and dissatisfaction with school. It was commented that a further breakdown would be helpful as the broad categorisation provided might disguise important information. Regarding the categories outlined, Members were informed that they were used for the purpose of the survey and had been agreed regionally. It was acknowledged that although the categories were quite broad, more mandatory involvement with families would enable the authority to create their own data set to address things at source. A Member commented that data had improved over recent years. It was recognised that the new Ofsted Framework brings more accountability and that Ofsted were keen to work with the authority to share data to build a clearer picture.

Links to Other Strategies - Assurances were provided that the authorities "All Age Learning Disability and Autism Strategy" covered education and was aligned in with authorities SEND strategy. It was explained that the strategies met through the SEND approach to schools and special schools in terms of transitions. It was continued that there was a Transition Board in place that discussed the difficulties of transitioning of young people with education needs. It was recognised that there was a great deal of work to be undertaken in this area.

Focus Schools - Reference was made to 64 'focus' schools identified (due to their absence being a concern over the last three academic years), of which 31 were reported as making 'immediate improvements' in their overall attendance figure over the first two terms of the intervention. The Chair of the Panel asked what had been learnt from those 31 schools to work with the other 33. It was reported that some schools had complex challenges where they had worked on improving attendance through the schools improvement offer. It was added that there was a concentration on a smaller number of schools with complex catchments.

It was stressed that it was important to understand the authority's role in terms of support to schools for areas such as systems and leadership. Reference was made to steps previously taken to introduce support and challenge meetings between the authority and the Chief Executive of large Multi-Academy Trusts, outlining the performance for the whole school for areas such as the attendance,

SEND, deprivation, number of Children in Need and Looked After Children. It was explained that the work undertaken with both multiple and single academy trust was about collaboration. Members were advised that where concerns still existed they would then be escalated to the Regional Schools Commissioner and Ofsted.

Pilot Specialist AP - Knife Crime- Summer 2019 - It was explained that an evaluation would be shared in September 2019. It was noted that those young people who were the most vulnerable to knife crime had the opportunity for a 14-week programme that blends education with an awareness of the issues.

Concern was raised about parents who had contacted the Inspector in relation to the identification of needs. It was added that not all parents were aware of the range of services available. It was commented that some parents felt that they were well-supported through the process and the offer they had received. It was added there were a number of areas that could be improved, for example, the publication of the local offer on educational needs and improving communications.

Members were informed that closer work was being undertaken with the Doncaster Cultural Leisure Trust and that a card would be made available offering children with educational needs, discounts at various places. It was explained that there was a need to co-produce with young people what activities they would like to access at a lower minimal cost.

It was commented that there was a need to ensure that the funding was in the right place, to reinforce expectations and ensure that needs of children were being met. It was noted that ownership by schools was critical when piloting those areas during the autumn term and ensuring that the necessary expertise reaches the right place. Members were informed that there was a group of Headteachers working with special schools to bring expertise into the local area. It was viewed that cohesion encouraged professional development to ensure that it can be accessed by Classroom Teachers and also that support reaches outreach work.

A Member queried why academies were unable to educate children in a child-centred way. It was explained that priorities around a short-term turnaround meant that investment had been made to achieve outcomes (such as through Ofsted). It was commented that this was recognised as a national issue and indicated the complexity of some of those environments.

The Chair commented that there had been some excellent work undertaken and requested that the Panel continue to monitor the issues as part of their workplan.

RESOLVED that the Panel;

	<p>i. Note the report; and</p> <p>ii. Receive an update on these areas in 12 months as part of the Children’s and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Workplan for 2020/2021</p>	<p>Senior Governance Officer</p>
<p>7.</p>	<p><u>EDUCATION AND SKILLS 2030 FRAMEWORK FOR CONSULTATION</u></p>	
	<p>A report provided an update on the draft Framework for Education and Skills in Doncaster, which was currently out for public consultation. The document detailed the vision for the future Education and Skills System, the characteristics that such a system would exhibit, and the priority areas for action in order to realise that vision.</p> <p>A presentation was provided which outlined the following areas;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key Questions • Methodology • Key Strengths/Strong Foundations • Key Areas for Development • Findings from Consultation with Parents, Children, & Young People • The Vision for Consultation • Characteristics/Priority Themes for Consultation <p>A discussion took place which addressed the following areas;</p> <p>Celebrating Achievements - Concern was raised by a Member of the Panel that more could be done to celebrate achievements and an example was used of a successful event that was held recently in Hexthorpe. It was explained that there were different level of tiers that could be used to promote achievements. Members were informed that conversations were taking place with communications and there were a number of low cost solutions to be considered, for example, holding annual rewards sponsoring key roles such as Teacher, Students, Governors, or Community Supporter “Of The Year”. It was continued that building community cohesion through the different events played a key part.</p> <p>Job Opportunities - A Young Adviser asked about how job opportunities were being linked to young people and how were young people being made aware of what jobs were available. It was explained that it was about connecting employers and industry more</p>	

closely to schools and young people to create that change.

It was commented that it was important to consider the different sectors within the Borough such as engineering, rail, construction, development and creative industries. It was noted that the biggest employer within the Borough was the health economy. Members were informed of the intention to work more closely with employers and partners in those sectors with an aim to have proposals in place next year around how that will work, what was available, career pathways and what can be achieved.

Careers Advice (Start)/Bringing Together Business and Education (Opportunities Doncaster) – Members were informed that colleagues in opportunity areas had developed a Careers Advice platform (Start) to enable young people to identify what opportunities were available locally, create a profile and be able to register their interest. It was also explained that there was a service that brings business and education together for Doncaster to showcase its best sectors (Opportunities Doncaster). Members were advised that it would also connect young people with employers and educators in relation to their chosen career pathways.

It was commented that Doncaster was on that journey but needed to improve by creating different opportunities within and outside of school and connecting young people better. It was viewed that Doncaster was one of best-placed authorities to undertake this.

Career Pathways – It was explained that career progression was important to both young people and adults and therefore having a clear career pathway was key. It was added that it was also important how disadvantaged people could be more connected and this was an area that could be further highlighted within the plan.

Work Experience - A Young Adviser raised their concern about accessing work experience opportunities in order enter the job market. It was explained that there was a need to promote work experience across the Council, through its partner, anchor organisations and schools etc. It was recognised that inspiration could be provided and opportunities raised through positive work experiences. It was recognised that Young Advisers had a potential role in promoting this to young people within the Borough.

A Member commented that there was a need to engage with larger companies linked to construction projects. Concern was raised about how work experience was going to be managed and delivered effectively. Reference was made to current mechanisms available through certain projects and employers such as a skills passport. It was felt that something similar could be considered through the Council and local employers.

It was commented that consideration needed to be provided on what was the role of the Council and how benefits could be gained through

	<p>its contribution. It was commented that there could be relatively low cost options to support this through areas such as volunteering.</p> <p>A Member asked whether something could be put in place where young people built up a portfolio of what they had achieved to show employers. It was responded that this could be explored further through consultation.</p> <p>Environmental Issues - A Member commented on the increasing concerns raised around environmental issues and poised whether this could be considered as part of the work going forward. It was recognised that this was a particular area that young people were becoming engaged with and would be taken into consideration when producing the final framework as well as the wider strategic picture.</p> <p>Social Value - A Member raised the importance of achieving social value, particularly through the procurement process and questioned how this could be further encouraged. It was responded that the Council's procurement process allowed 10% of every tender and contract to be geared towards social value and impact. It was recognised that more could be achieved and Members commented how they would like to see the Council's level raised to 20%. There was a brief discussion around the criteria and approach around social value and environment issues. Members heard how the Councils climate change environmental friendly journey was now beginning.</p> <p>Transport - A Member raised their concern around transport being a barrier to supporting young people accessing places of work. It was felt that further links could be made with larger companies with the potential to provide their own transport or utilise different initiatives such as cycling. It was recognised that this was an important issue that needed further consideration as part of the work going forward.</p> <p>Future Steps - Members were advised that the consultation on the framework would end 20th September 2019. It was explained that this would be followed by the co-production of an action plan of partners together around each priority theme. It was offered that following the consultation and analysis phase, a report could be brought back to the Panel providing more information on its delivery. A Member complimented the report provided and recognised the challenges in place.</p> <p>RESOLVED that;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. the Panel note the report; and ii. that a update be provided as part of 2019/2020 Workplan 	<p>Senior Governance Officer</p>
8.	<p><u>CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY WORK PLAN REPORT - AUGUST 2019 UPDATE</u></p>	
	<p>The Panel received a report updating Members on the Panels work</p>	

plan for 2019/20.

A copy of the work plan was attached at Appendix A of the report taking account of issues agreed by OSMC at its meeting on the 27th June 2019.

A brief discussion took place around the Panel's proposed Elective Home Education Review and the Panel agreed that the Chair pursue this further at his next briefing with the Director of Learning, Opportunities and Skills

There was also a brief discussion around the Forward Plan.

RESOLVED that the Panel note the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Workplan 19/20 - September 2019 update.