

DONCASTER METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

TUESDAY, 27TH SEPTEMBER, 2016

A MEETING of the CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL was held at the COUNCIL CHAMBER - CIVIC OFFICE, DONCASTER on TUESDAY, 27TH SEPTEMBER, 2016 at 10.00 AM

PRESENT:

Chair - Councillor Neil Gethin
Vice Chair – Councillor Nigel Ball

Councillors Sue Wilkinson, Jessie Credland, Nick Allen and James Hart

Co-optees – John Hoare and Bernadette Nesbit (Diocese of Hallam Roman Catholic Church)

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Damian Allen – Director of Learning and Opportunities : CYP
Paul Thorpe - Head of Service: Performance Improvement
Linda Calverley - Head of Special Education and Disabilities
Chris Toyne - Head of Service: Education Data, Intelligence & Performance

From Doncaster Childrens Services Trust;

Paul Moffat - Chief Executive
Peter Featherstone - Business Manager
James Thomas - Head of Performance and Business Intelligence
Jackie Wilson - Director of Performance, Quality and Innovation
Leanne Hornsby - Head of Transformation and Business Support
Pauline Turner – Head of Service (Safeguarding and Standards)
Sue Greenhall - Head of Finance and Business Planning

APOLOGIES:

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Sue McGuinness, Mark Houlbrook and Andrea Robinson and

| | | <u>ACTION</u> |
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| | NOTE: In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 4, the Panel resolved to combine two items on the agenda, Overview of outcomes from recent external evaluation:- - LGA Peer Review - Ofsted Monitoring Visit and Doncaster Children's Services Trust Update - Overview Of Outcomes From Recent External Evaluation - LGA Peer | |

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| | Review - Ofsted Monitoring Visit, detailed at number 16 below. | |
| 11. | <u>TO CONSIDER THE EXTENT, IF ANY, TO WHICH THE PUBLIC AND PRESS ARE TO BE EXCLUDED FROM THE MEETING.</u> | |
| | None | |
| 12. | <u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST, IF ANY.</u> | |
| | There were no declarations of interest made. | |
| 13. | <u>MINUTES OF THE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MEETING HELD ON 11TH JULY, 2016.</u> | |
| | The minutes of the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny meeting held on the 11 th July 2016 was agreed as a true record. | |
| 14. | <u>PUBLIC STATEMENTS</u> | |
| | There were no public statements made. | |
| 15. | <u>PERFORMANCE CHALLENGE OF THE DONCASTER CHILDREN'S SERVICES TRUST.</u> | |
| | <p>Members were reminded that the Panel at its July meeting had agreed to a revised approach to the performance monitoring of the Doncaster Children's Trust. The report to the Panel now aligned more closely with the contract requirements and was presented via a 'split screen' approach. The report provided a review and analysis of the performance challenge carried out by the Director of Learning and Opportunities of the Trust's performance in Quarter 1 of 2016/17 arising from challenge meetings held between both parties.</p> <p>The following performance indicators were raised as part of the discussion: -</p> <p>B13: Care leavers in EET Q1 = 39.3% July = 35% Target: 45% Tolerance: 40%</p> <p>It was noted that this figure had reduced by just over 4% as of July 2016 to reach 35%. In relation to how the Council was working with the Trust to manage stakeholder engagement, it was acknowledged that this was a challenging target and recognised that many authorities struggled to optimise performance in respect of this particular vulnerable cohort. Members were informed that this was included as an improvement action within the Ofsted action plan. It was shared that the Council was working with the Trust to support this cohort to make sure that this group of young people were being supported to prepare them for employment. It was explained that efforts were being targeted and that the Trust had several programmes in place.</p> | |

It was also clarified that this area had also been recognised as an area for improvement by the Education Commission. The Panel was informed that changes to funding of apprenticeships in terms of levy will affect the market and potential opportunities. It was noted that the Council was looking at its response to those changes and in time will be seen how resources can be pooled.

A Member stated that these clients needed to be moved forward, possibly by making traineeships more attractive, through some kind of financial incentive or by accredited training being made available. It was explained that this area required more work to be done across the wider needs and through a progression pathway.

It was commented by the Trust that the trend in performance had stemmed from a low base and that work was being undertaken to move some individuals quickly through an employment route. It was explained that individuals such as those in early stages of parenthood, who were pregnant or had a disability were supported in other suitable ways, for example, through part-time employment or looking at additional opportunities. Reference was made to the challenges of supporting those to remain on courses which would require a longer lead-in time.

Members were reminded of issues associated with an inadequate historical care system, now considered to be improving. The Trust felt that there were contributing factors outside the care system.

**A3 Case File Audits rated as Requires Improvement or better
Q1 = 82% July = 90% Target: 95% Tolerance: 90%**

Concern was raised that there was a high proportion of case files that was in need of attention.

Members were told that Ofsted had provided assurance of the quality in rigour and robustness of the process. It was reported that the last 6 months had brought about quality and improvement.

It was explained that this year there had been an intense training programme provided to staff. It was clarified that in August there had been no inadequate cases and before that inadequate cases had significantly decreased. It was reported that the LGA and Ofsted had noted quality and recognised that the Trust was seeing the impact of training on staff with Case File Audits now coming through as outstanding.

Members were informed that the annual review process would take into consideration contract indicators which could potentially be adjusted. It was suggested that it might be helpful to understand what the trajectory is like through Quarter 2 information.

It was acknowledged that the Trust had set a high threshold which was more difficult to achieve albeit with the right intentions and was therefore taking longer to show improved performance. It was acknowledged that progress had been made and there had been areas that were outstanding.

Demand management

Concern was raised about the rise in contacts to social care and how Social Workers were coping with casework and caseloads completing reports in time in view of increasing demands. Members were told that the retention of Social Workers was improving within Doncaster and that there had been a reduction of numbers of agency staff used. Members were also informed that sickness levels were now below 5% which was a further indication of a supported and healthy workforce. Finally, it was reported that an independent evaluation indicated that 75% of staff enjoyed coming to work.

Assurance were provided that within children social care, it was about compliance and making sure that case work was completed in a timely fashion.

An invitation was given to Panel Members to meet with frontline staff and attend events focusing on what it was like to work in Doncaster.

Members were informed that Social Workers had also received the benefit of reflective supervision with their Team Managers which had helped them through more difficult times. Members were that the quality of the workforce had improved through positive engagement that had been made with them. The importance of promoting the message of selling and wanting the best for Doncaster was shared amongst officers.

C14: Frontline FTE posts covered by agency staff Q1 = 15% July = 15% Target: 8% Tolerance: 12%

Concern was raised that this target had not been met during the last year and therefore Members welcomed the update that it had reduced more recently to 11% (now within tolerance). As the indicator had been 15% only in July, a Member raised concern that this reduction was temporary and therefore may increase again. Members were assured that this indicator was monitored very carefully and that the Trust wanted it to be lower.

In respect of agency work, Members were informed that a number of agency staff had actually become permanent members of staff. It was commented that this would be continued as part of the Workforce Development Strategy. It was acknowledged that Social Workers could earn more money working with-an agency.

It was added that it was rare for an authority to achieve 8% and that this indicator was sensitive to change. In reference to the Workforce Development Strategy, Members were informed that the Trust was pleased with progress that had been made within a competitive market. Members were told how using a more collaborative approach helped with monitoring the market so that no authority loses out.

It was recognised that it was in the child's interest to retain the same worker during the process. Members were informed that regionally the Trust was looking at what can be achieved with other authorities across sub regions and what standards can be set. It was noted that this was currently under evaluation although there was some appetite to take it forward.

Members were informed that the Trust was looking to employ experienced staff in addition to new staff within its workforce. Members were told that the Trust was looking to work with universities more at an earlier stage to ensure that those students were of a higher quality when they started to look for employment. Members were told that there was a lot of work within Yorkshire about growing our future placements. It was explained that students were able to carry out experience in a statutory setting (which is something that other places don't have) and therefore were able to see what Doncaster has to offer prior to employment.

It was added that with a permanent management team in place and investment in training that support was there for staff. It was noted that there around 13 other local authorities that were having recruitment problems.

**B13 Care Leavers in Suitable Accommodation (aged 19 – 21)
Q1 = 87.7% July = 85% Target: 85% Tolerance: 80%**

The Chair commented that information previously sought from the Trust had not been forwarded. The Director of Performance, Quality and Innovation offered to supply this information outside of the meeting.

It was reported that at the end of Quarter 1, 4 young people were recorded as being in custody which will have contributed to this figure It was explained that Doncaster did not define 'custody' as suitable accommodation although some other local authorities currently did and a judgement was due to be made on this classification for the sake of consistency. It was reported that Doncaster was performing strongly in terms of reducing custody figures and would put Doncaster in the top quartile. Members were informed that through Team Epic the new crime prevention service for young people where 55 individuals had been diverted from entering custody as first time entrees.

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| | <p>Overall</p> <p>A Member raised concern that overall of the 17 contract measures, only were 7 on target or better and that 10 were failing. It was questioned what the Council was doing and what sanctions could be used if the Trust continually fails. It was reported by the Trust that they were on target where intended or on the trajectory to touching 'good', it was recognised though that performance against all indicators required improvement.</p> <p>The Panel were informed that as well as quarterly monitoring, a series of challenge meetings takes place with the Trust to consider what's in target and what's not and why. It was stressed that holding this information to account in a transparent manner was seen as important. It was commented that although there had been some challenges along the way, quality and standards needed to be right in terms of the workforce reform.</p> <p>It was commented that it would be difficult to find any other organisation undertaking as much oversight. It was stated that investment had been made to build future benefits and provide appropriate challenge in a time of significant savings. It was added that Members were not to lose sight of the co-dependency on the local authority to deliver on its own areas such as education.</p> <p>Members were informed that children in need and their planning would be the focus for the next Ofsted monitoring inspection which was scheduled to take place in October 2016.</p> <p>It was questioned whether a point might be reached as to what punitive measures might be taken for below standard performance. It was explained by the Council that there was a process in terms of role separation, and clear escalation routes with the DFE if issues were not resolvable. It was added that there was a contract direction set by the Secretary of State and that the grading won't change until there is a re-inspection which could be later in 2017.</p> <p>The Vice Chair expressed recognition that the Trust has made tremendous progress and that there had been significant investment made.</p> | |
| 16. | <p><u>DONCASTER CHILDREN'S SERVICES TRUST UPDATE - OVERVIEW OF OUTCOMES FROM RECENT EXTERNAL EVALUATION:LGA PEER REVIEW - OFSTED MONITORING VISIT - REVIEW OF EARLY HELP - DFE ACHIEVING FOR CHILDREN.</u></p> | |
| | <p>Members were presented with an overview of the outcomes from two recent external evaluations. These included the Local Government Association (LGA) Peer Review carried out in July 2016, this looked into how the Trust was keeping children safe and its progress made</p> | |

following its Ofsted inspection last October. Secondly, an update was provided regarding the Ofsted Monitoring Visit that was conducted in August over 2 days. The Director of Learning and Opportunities reported that Ofsted and LGA gave reassurances as to improvement in the progress made to improve services for children and young people in need of help and protection, most importantly, no evidence was found of children being left at risk of significant harm.

Members were informed by the Trust how both reviews had looked at effectiveness of the social work practice. The issue remained that there was too much demand at the front door with a significant number of referrals for Information, Advice and Guidance, and Members were informed that front door arrangements had been strengthened.

One of the major challenges reported to the success of the Trust was that the LGA were not convinced of the shared ownership or shared investment from key partners to provide Early Help. Members were informed that there had been significant developments that have been made in relation to the quality of available data within Early Help, but wider ownership and engagement by partners is key to further improvement. Members were informed by the Director of Learning and Opportunities about the role of the Performance Accountability Board (PAB) which had been meeting since last autumn, demonstrating the commitment at the top of the key organisations involved working on cross-cutting issues to achieve change and improvement. It was explained that the PAB held to account partner agencies across the children's system and challenge was provided on what partners were doing to address pressures as to the social care and safeguarding within their own organisations. It was also stated that in order to ensure that demand for services is appropriately managed across the children's system there needs to be a better and shared understanding by partner agencies around thresholds and the pathways for services across the early help and statutory spectrum. It was further reported that improvements need to be made to the social care IT system, but the Trust is aware of these issues and has a rigorous programme to address them.

Members learnt that at the point that Ofsted conducted their monitoring visit there has been a recent reduction in contacts and assessments since the introduction of the 'Early Help Hub', and a further reduction since the implementation of the 'Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub' (MASH). It was recognised that whilst there had been a consistent reduction in re-referrals since the establishment of the Trust, further work needed to be undertaken with partners.

Early Help Achieving for Children

In response to concerns around lack of partner understanding, Members were informed that, as part of the delivery responsibilities by the Council regarding the Early Help Service, a restructure of Childrens

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| | <p>Centre had been undertaken as well as the Universal 0-5 Starting Well Service with the structure now being populated. It was explained that through the restructure, the existing Head of Service of Stronger Families was currently overseeing the management of the Starting Well Service. It was explained that this restructure was about a remodelled and rationalised centre offer (with a more expanded Early Help offer) which will guide Doncaster to have a locality model which provides a better alignment of services and current management structure that included early years and early help.</p> <p>It was commented that health service do not currently refer into the stronger families offer and it was questioned whether there would be a better identity of the Council's Stronger Families offer so that other agencies knew who to contact. It was responded that this issue would be picked up by the Head of Service.</p> <p>LGA Peer Review</p> <p>Clarification was sought regarding arrangements around CSE and specialist teams, it was questioned which report should be believed as they reported different aspects. It was responded that the teams were questioned in different ways looking at how far it was embedded, the level of knowledge and quality of intervention. It was reported that there was a challenge around the shared understanding of data, intelligence of hotspots and individuals of concern. It was commented that South Yorkshire Police needed to be timelier with problem profiles.</p> <p>Members were concerned that they had previously been told that there were no hotspots. Members were informed that there were clusters of potential concern that may move over time such as shops and establishments where young people gather. It was acknowledged that there was a particular local authority that had experienced particular problems with exploitation.</p> <p>In respect of language used within assessments, a Member expressed their unhappiness and upset regarding the inappropriate language that had been used as referenced within the report.</p> <p>It was reported that through management and strategic groups there had been discussions about problem profiles and undertaking a focused profile.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the Panel notes the findings of the reports and acknowledges the improvement to services for children, young people and their families.</p> | |
| 17. | <u>INSPECTIONS FRAMEWORK SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND/OR DISABILITIES SEND.</u> | |
| | Members received a report outlining that all local areas in England will | |

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| | <p>be inspected during the five year period which commenced in May 2016. It explained that inspections provide an independent external evaluation of how well a local area carries out its statutory duties in relation to children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) in order to support their development.</p> <p>The report explained that three key questions were focused on during the inspection week:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Question A: How effectively does the local area identify children and young people who have special educational needs and/or disabilities? • Question B: How effectively does the local area assess and meet the needs of children and young people who have special educational needs and/or disabilities? • Question C: How effectively does the local area improve outcomes for children and young people who have special educational needs and/or disabilities? <p>Members were told that in terms of preparation monthly meetings took place and information was gathered from reports as soon as they were made available. In order to ensure that everything was being covered where possible, it was explained that a comprehensive self-evaluation was carried out based on a self-evaluation framework based upon previous OFSTED Inspections. This information will provide an indication of the areas that the Council excel in as well as weaker areas. For those weaker areas identified there will be plans put in place and evidence provided of the extensive work in order to improve these outcomes for health partners and the Local Authority.</p> <p>In respect of the number of Children in Care (CIC) in schools it was explained that these have the same opportunities as other children in schools for selection process.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">RESOLVED THAT: The Panel notes the report.</p> | |
| 18. | <p><u>DONCASTER EDUCATION ATTAINMENT SUMMARY 2016.</u></p> | |
| | <p>The Panel received a report providing information about the 2016 educational outcomes of children and young people aged 5, 7, 11 and 16.</p> <p>Members were informed that during the last couple of years, work had been undertaken with a national consortium and exam results were now received on the day with the information later being sent to schools with further provisional analysis being undertaken. It was clarified that there were stronger links to DFE, other authorities and improved systems.</p> | |

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| <p>It was recognised that there was a popular belief that the Council was unable to make comment or provide appropriate challenge with academies. Members were told how duties sat with the Regional Schools Commissioner who had a duty to identify coasting schools. The Panel was told how the Director of Learning and Opportunities had met with the Commissioner with a challenge that they would undertake their role, as the Council would undertake theirs. It was added that Heads and Chairs of Academies had been alerted where they were falling short compared to maintained schools. Members were informed that there was the intention to rebroker or approve failing schools or those not meeting required standards. Members were reminded that the Council has a statutory responsibility for the outcomes of all children.</p> <p>It was questioned whether a separate session was needed to consider the information on a separate occasion. It was clarified that the information would be brought back to the Panel once validated and that care needs to be taken so that overview and scrutiny does not duplicate the role of governing body and teachers. Members were informed that a Member workshop could be delivered about scrutinising education results. The Panel was informed that an information pack had been developed providing guidance on how to challenge Headteachers.</p> <p>It was commented that historically the relationship between the Council and schools had varied and changed over two parliaments and that the Council still retains a school improvement function which may change. It was commented that it was appropriate for overview and scrutiny to hold the Council to account in how that was being done. Members were informed that there would be an Ofsted HMI visit over the summer with the purpose of the review to inspect post Ofsted action plan which was signed off.</p> <p>2016 results have reaffirmed the need to place additional focus on reading through the Key stage 2 Raising Achievement Initiative.</p> <p>Action: Subject to Members interest that a workshop around KS2 be arranged around changes in methodology</p> <p>It was commented that KS4 figures expressed disappointment, that 3% achieving 5+ A* to C Including English and Mathematics equates to one child. It was commented that it would be helpful to have a deeper diver to look at what sits beneath that. It was added that 50% which formed the greater majority achieved D and below.</p> <p>Action: For the Panel to receive more detail at a future meeting.</p> <p>There was a brief discussion about governance arrangements around the importance of Looked after Children and it was stated that the</p> | <p>Head of Service: Education Data, Intelligence & Performance</p> <p>Head of Service: Education Data, Intelligence & Performance</p> |
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| | <p>appropriate route for any issues would be the Children in Care council and the Corporate Parenting Board. Further to that it was added that if there were any further issues yielded then overview and scrutiny could be involved. It was questioned what was the Councils role in respect of the Virtual School.</p> <p>Action: To circulate the Virtual School Annual Report</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the panel notes;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenges that are in place to the DfE, Governing Bodies and School • Leaders to improve performance at all levels, including proposals for the growth of Multi-Academy Trusts • The transformational nature of school improvement support and services within Doncaster, across the region and nationally • That year one of the Key stage 2 Raising Achievement Initiative placed focus on writing and GPS as subjects identified as weak in 2015. • 2016 results have reaffirmed the need to place additional focus on reading through the Key stage 2 Raising Achievement Initiative. • Changes to the curriculum and assessment system. • That in line with the white paper 'Educational Excellence Everywhere' the next phase of current strategies and initiatives looks to build on educational performance by building character and resilience in every child. | <p>Head of Service: Education Data, Intelligence & Performance</p> |
| 19. | <p><u>OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S PANEL WORK PLAN REPORT 2016/17.</u></p> | |
| | <p>The Panel considered the work plan for the 2016/17 year. The Senior Governance Officer reminded Members of the Mental Health joint meeting with the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Panel on 25th January, and the Chair encouraged Panel Members to attend.</p> <p>The Chair informed the Panel that further to meeting with Officers with a view to strengthening the Panels link with the Youth Council, it was proposed that the Panel could either invite the Youth Council to attend (provided that the meeting was later in the day to accommodate school hours or that it be held within half term) or alternatively, the Panel maybe be to attend a future Youth Council Meeting.</p> <p>Action: To rearrange the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny February meeting to the half-term week that month, so that members of the Youth Council could be invited.</p> <p>Reference was made to the ETE Opportunities which would involve the Panels Members.</p> | <p>Senior Governance Officer</p> |

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| | <p>It was also noted that there would be a 3rd Ofsted inspection at the end of February/March 2017 and would be useful to ensure that there is scrutiny oversight of that report.</p> | |
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RESOLVED: That report be noted.