

## **CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

MEETING, 3RD DECEMBER, 2009

Present – Councillors Wild (Chairman), Rushton (Vice-Chairman), P. Allen, Ashcroft, Mrs. Brierley, Harkin (as deputy for Councillor Darvesh), Mistry, Mrs. Rothwell, R. Silvester, Mrs. Swarbrick and White.

### Lay Member

Ms. Judith Martin                    -     Foster Carer

### Also in attendance

Ms. S. Schofield	-	Assistant Director, Environmental Services and Committee Chief Office r Support
Mr I.D. Mulholland	-	Principal Scrutiny Officer
Councillor Adia	-	Executive Member for Children's Services
Councillor Murray	-	Executive Member for Looked After Children and Safeguarding
Ms. M. Asquith	-	Director of Children's Services
Mr. J. Livesey	-	Assistant Director, Performance, Planning and Resources
Mr. A. Birch	-	Assistant Director School Effectiveness
Mr. A. Rigler	-	Strategic Manager – Curriculum Development
Mr. J. Daly	-	Assistant Director Staying Safe
Mr. S. Fazal	-	Assistant Director Access and Inclusion
Ms. A. Chadderton	-	School Improvement Professional
Ms. S. Morse	-	Principal School Improvement Professional

Mr. P. Rankin - Knowledge and Information Manager

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillor Daryesh.

Councillor Wild in the Chair.

## 29. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 8th October, 2009 were submitted.

Further to Minute 21, Be Healthy Outcome Area, Members referred to the positive examples of sex education in schools in Bolton. The Committee was advised by the Executive Member for Children's Services that sex education in schools would become statutory from September, 2010.

Members also referred to the issue<sup>4</sup> of teenage contraception relating to children in care.

Resolved – (i) That the minutes be approved as a correct record.

(ii) That information in respect of teenage contraception relating to children in care be circulated to Members of this Committee.

(iii) That the neighbouring Council comparison statistical information and ward-based information relating to teenage contraception, previously made available to this Committee, be circulated more widely to all Members of Council.

### 30. MONITORING OF DECISIONS

The Director of the Chief Executive's Department submitted a report which provided details of the progress of decisions taken at previous meetings of this Committee.

Resolved – That the position be noted.

### **31. ANNUAL WORK PROGRAMME**

The Director of the Chief Executive's Department submitted a report which set out details of the previously agreed Committee Work Programme for the 2009/10 Municipal Year.

Members' views were sought in relation to any further items that they wanted including in the Work Programme. The report also included information which would aid the Committee in selecting appropriate items for future consideration.

Resolved – That the updated Work Programme be noted.

### **32. ENJOY AND ACHIEVE**

Mr. John Livesey, Assistant Director Performance Planning and Resources, gave a presentation detailing the performance indicators included under the Enjoy and Achieve outcome area, together with the Council's current performance information.

In terms of the Early Years Foundation Stage, it was report that there had been a drop in performance compared with the last few years for Bolton but in relation to other statistical neighbours the Council compared well.

Also referred to was a map of the Borough in which was detailed the above average and below average performing areas.

With regard to Key Stage 2 in relation to Maths and English, the Committee was advised of gradual progress in terms of Bolton's recent statistics and when compared to statistical neighbours.

Also referred to was a map of the Borough in which was details the above average and below average performing areas.

In respect of GCSE attainment and the targets for 5 GCSEs A-C, including Maths and English, achievements had been made but much work still needed to be undertaken, particularly

in the more deprived areas of the Borough.

The Committee was further advised in terms of children from BME communities and attainment at Key Stage 2, the figures for Asian were above average for the north-west but below average for black. Similar statistics also applied to Key Stage 4 level.

In conclusion, Mr. Livesey reported the performance information regarding Looked After Children at Key Stage 2 and 4, which largely comprised small variations although there had been an increase in their gaining 5 GCSEs A-C.

Members in their discussions referred to performance in relation to Looked After Children and the fact that the policies recently put in place would not have an overnight impact.

Resolved – (i) That the presentation and its performance content be noted.

(ii) That the information contained therein be circulated to Members of this Committee.

### **33. EDUCATIONAL IMPROVEMENT UPDATE**

The Director of Children's Services submitted a report which provided an overview of the purposes of the Education Improvement Team in Children's Services and their range of work, particularly:-

#### Enriching the Curriculum

Enrichment aimed to deliver the Council Key Aim of Achieving Bolton. It was essential that the Council designed and implemented teaching and learning which was fit for purpose and met the needs of all children and young people. The Enjoy and Achieve Team of Services aimed to maximise the impact of Music, the Arts, Physical Education and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) subjects on children and young people's achievements. Through one to one tuition in

English and Maths and other National Strategy programmes the Council aimed to narrow the gap in educational outcomes so that all children and young people were equipped with the knowledge and skills to succeed.

### The School Improvement Framework

The School Improvement Framework was the key means by which Bolton Council addressed its responsibilities documented in the statutory framework and non-statutory guidance of the Education and Inspections Act 2002. The School Improvement Framework was agreed and developed with schools and defined which schools were eligible for support through a five tier model (Core Programme, Specific Support, Focused Support, Intensive Support and Intensive Intervention). In a very small number of cases the LA may deem it necessary to intervene in the running of a school and the processes for this are also outlined in the documentation. The intention was to use the School Improvement Framework to improve the quality of school leadership and teaching and learning; it also outlines the work to be undertaken by School Improvement Partners.

### 14-19 Developments

The starting point was the concept of a 14-19 entitlement for all young people in Bolton to the right learning opportunities and the right support. To deliver that entitlement, there were four clear priorities:-

1. Develop a high quality learning route for every young person that enabled them to participate, achieve and progress.
2. Integrate support services for young people, so that they could make the most of their opportunities and choices.

3. Strengthen local partnership and consortia arrangements.
4. Engage in the development and operation of effective local, sub-regional and regional delivery arrangements.

### Early Years Developments

Early Years education was a critical part of the Council's work. Improving outcomes for young people improved their chances of longer term educational success. The Early Years Quality Improvement Team, under the direction of Educational Improvement, had been in place since December, 2008 and comprised the Early Years foundation stage lead, two Early Years advisers, three Early Years consultants and nine Quality and Inclusion Officers (roles currently under review).

The report went on to set out the key performance information in respect of each of these areas.

Members in their discussions referred to:-

- the early intervention of the Improvement Team in respect of schools with low GCSE attainment levels; and
- the monitoring of specific school performance information.

Resolved – (i) That the update be noted.

(ii) That the Director of Children's Services be asked to explore possible ways of informing Members of key confidential school performance information.

### **34. HMI PROBATION INSPECTION OF BOLTON YOUTH OFFENDING TEAM**

The Director of Children's Services submitted a report which provided information about the outcome of the Youth Offending Team (YOT) inspection and the action plan to improve systems and processes within the YOT.

By way of background information, the report explained that the YOT was inspected in July, 2009 by HMI Probation and the final report was received in September, 2009. The inspection focused on systems and processes and did not take into account the outcomes achieved by Bolton YOT.

The inspection looked at three areas: Safeguarding, Risk of Harm to the Public and Reoffending. Substantial improvement was identified as being required in each of these areas.

There was evidence of the process focus of the inspection, in that, the inspector's required substantial improvement in Risk of Reoffending when Bolton's reoffending statistics better the regional and statistical neighbour averages and were improving.

The improvements were related to providing evidence in case of records of the work undertaken by the staff and managers in the YOT, improving quality assurance systems and management oversight, improving the quality of assessments and improving case recording.

The Committee was advised that line management responsibility for the YOT had been transferred to Children's Services Staying Safe, since the inspection report had been received and the YOT would now be included in the rolling programme of audits undertaken within the division.

The majority of areas of work identified in the recommendations were now either completed or were in progress. The YOT Manager and Assistant Director have met with the Youth Justice Board (YJB) and the YJB had agreed to provide targeted support for Bolton through consultancy which had focus on: case recording, analysis, engagement, sequencing and escalation techniques.

In conclusion, Members were advised that the inspection revealed some systems issues relating to workflow in the YOT and were structural issues which had impacted on the outcome of the inspection and these would need to be addressed in the near future.

Resolved – (i) That the report be noted.

(ii) That an update on the proposed actions be provided to the April meeting of this Committee.

### **35. MEMBERS' BUSINESS**

The following question was submitted by Councillor Ashcroft in accordance with Standing Order 36:-

Q When the skate park was given temporary approval for a further 12 months, Members were of the understanding that a report would come to the appropriate Scrutiny Committee reviewing, its location, whether hindering development, whether it was being policed correctly, etc. Please can I formally request that report?

A The further one year temporary approval of the planning permission was given in August of this year and Planning Committee had indicated that alternative locations should be explored for the future base of this Skate Park. A report on the future strategy of this Skate Park would be presented to a forthcoming meeting of this Committee.

In terms of a general update on the Skate Park, the following had been provided by Eric Grindle, Operations Manager, Youth Service:-

1. The YMCA had received a commission from the Youth Service, post June 2009, to support work with young people in and around the Skate Park.
2. The basis of the commission was to provide a level of outreach/detached work from the YMCA to engage young people from the skating community



to continue to attend the YMCA and to provide additionally to the programme through supporting young people to apply for additional funds.

3. To identify a core group of young people with the intention of developing of a 'Friends of the Skate Park' group. The YMCA were currently exploring access to Peer Education Programmes as a means of recognising, guiding and providing a focus for the group (alongside a recognised qualification).
4. The young people (potential friends of the Skate Park) had been successful in obtaining support from the Youth Opportunities Fund to support this work, run a Skate competition and purchase mobile ramps. The intention of the ramps being to widen access to skating groups across the Borough.
5. The team or workers supporting the project were based from the YMCA and consisted of YMCA workers, workers supported by the commission process and a member of staff directly employed by the Youth Service. This partnership was supported by the young people who wished to present positive images of the Skating Community.
6. To date, members of the skating group have visited skate parks in Blackpool, Clitheroe and Leeds, with the intention of developing a picture of the management, construction and layout of Skate Parks across the north-west.

The Committee received extracts of minutes of other meetings of the Council relevant to the remit of this Committee:-

- a) Executive Held on 26th October and 23rd November, 2009.
- b) Executive Member for Children's Services held on 19th October and 16th November, 2009.

- c) Children's Policy Development Group held on 7<sup>th</sup> December, 2009.
- d) Executive Member for Looked After Children and Safeguarding held on 26th October and 23rd November, 2009.
- e) BSF Policy Development Group held on 12th October and 16th November, 2009.

Resolved – (i) That the minutes of various meetings be noted.

(ii) That the Member's question and response, as submitted, be noted.

(iii) That a review of the strategy for the Skate Park be undertaken prior to the next review of the planning provision by the Planning Committee.

(The meeting started 4.00 p.m. and finished at 6.00 p.m.)