

**CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE**

MEETING, 8TH OCTOBER, 2018

Present – Councillors Shaikh (Chairman), Murray (Vice-Chairman), Ayub, Bagnall, Dean, Flitcroft, Gillies, Mistry (as deputy for Councillor Morris), Parkinson, Warren and C. Wild.

Also in attendance

Councillor Mrs Thomas (as deputy for Councillor Cunliffe)	-	Executive Cabinet Member – Children
Mr G. Rowney	-	Interim Director of People
Mr T. Birch	-	Assistant Director of People – Education and Learning
Ms B. Brown	-	Assistant Director of People – Staying Safe
Mr P. Rankin	-	Assistant Director – Performance, Planning and Resources
Ms J. Robinson	-	Strategic Lead for Early Years
Ms S. Morse	-	Principal Educational Improvement Professional
Ms G. Whitehead	-	11-25 Team Manager
Mrs. S. Bailey	-	Principal Democratic Services Officer

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Cunliffe, Gibbon, Kirk-Robinson, Morris and Swarbrick

Councillor Shaikh in the Chair.

10. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Resolved - The minutes of the proceedings of the meeting of the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee held on 30th August, 2018 were submitted and signed as a correct record.

11. THE COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

The Borough Solicitor submitted a report which put forward the Work Programme for the Committee for the current Municipal Year which had been formulated following the workshop session that had taken place at the meeting in June, 2018.

Resolved – That the 2018/19 work programme, as now submitted, be approved.

12. START WELL – PERFORMANCE AND PRIORITIES 2018/19

Ms J. Robinson gave a presentation on Start Well performance and priorities for 2018/19.

The presentation highlighted the main functions of Start Well which included:

- the Quality and Outcomes Team – early education and childcare;
- the EYSEND Team – early identification and support for pre-school children with SEND;
- the Early Years Communication and Language Development Team – jointly led NHS and LA Team;
- Start Well Children's Centres – preventative and early intervention services for 0-5 year olds and families; and
- the Assessment and Contact Service – targeted parenting/family support and supervised contact of 0-19s and families.

With regard to current performance, members were advised that:

- Bolton was in the top quartile for the number of 3 and 4 year olds benefitting from universal funded early education places;
- 95% of early years settings and 100% of nursery schools were judged by Ofsted to be good or better;
- take up of 2 year old places was now in-line with the England average (72%) and the proportion of 2 year olds in primary schools had risen to 30%;
- 96% of eligible families were taking up funded 30 hours childcare places;
- the number of children achieving a Good Level of Development age 5 had increased to 67.5% and the overall disadvantage gap was narrowing;
- 78% of 0- 4 year olds (14,911) were registered with Start Well children's centres and 59% of targeted groups engaged – lowest engagement with fathers and children with disability; and
- increased programme of Incredible Years Baby and Pre-School parenting programmes and Triple P for 5-19s and 245 families currently receiving outreach support.

The presentation also provided statistical information which demonstrated that Early Years outcomes in Bolton were improving and the gap was narrowing.

In addition, improvements in children's communications and language development were also improving outcomes in other areas of learning that required verbal reasoning and understanding, particularly mathematics and expressive arts.

The presentation also included evidence from schools and settings of the impact of free childcare for two year olds and more recently 30 hours childcare in helping parents getting back into work.

Figures also revealed that there was a good level of development in 2016, 2017 and 2018 by the following groups:

- disadvantaged;
- non-disadvantaged;
- summer born;

- autumn born;
- girls;
- boys;
- EAL; and
- SEND support.

The presentation also highlighted current priorities which included:

- increasing integrated leadership, co-location and delivery of 0- 5s services with midwifery and health visiting teams and partnership working with schools and Early Years settings;
- increased focus on 1001 critical days – pregnancy to age 2 to prevent the attainment gap opening up;
- increased investment and support for early communication and language and reducing the word gap with universal key messages, targeted and specialist parent:child interaction groups in Start Well Centres, schools and Early Years settings;
- increased investment and access to parenting support – universal Solihull approach, parenting groups and outreach support; and
- new stay, play and learn groups for parents and pre-school children with SEND.

The report concluded with a number of illustrations that outlined the five golden rules of communication with children.

Following the presentation, members made a number of comments/observations:

- the constraints associated with applying and claiming for the 30 hours of childcare in helping parents to get back into work and the need to wait until the next full term prior to implementation which could lead to job opportunities being lost – Ms Robinson explained that this was national policy;
- the interesting correlation between deprived areas and better performance in early learning targets relating to time and money;

- the reasons for the gap between girls and boys in terms of development – Ms Robinson explained that this was a national issue and a local priority as the gap was higher than the national average in Bolton - work was ongoing to identify why this was the case;
- early years staffing was female dominated – Ms Robinson advised that initiatives to attract a wider variety of people were being explored;
- the exceptional ofsted results;
- the exceptional achievement results for under 5s despite reduced funding;
- the need to increase engagement with fathers and parents of children with a disability – Ms Robinson advised that there were plans to offer alternative sessions to cater for working parents and it was hoped that the satisfaction survey due in November may reveal reasons for the non-engagement.

Resolved – That Ms Robinson be thanked for her informative presentation.

13. PRIMARY OUTCOMES

Ms S. Morse gave a presentation on primary outcomes and how performance in Bolton compared nationally.

The presentation provided detailed statistical information on Bolton's performance against national indicators and the impact of activities in 2017/18 which were summarised as follows:

- improved standards at KS1 and KS2 across all subjects;
- targeted schools made significant gains in reading outcomes;
- moderation process across KS1-KS2 was recognised as strong by STA;
- revised and improved Data Pack was received well by schools;
- Primary School Improvement Service traded service implemented and buy back continued into the 2nd year;

- focused visits continue to support and challenge standards and quality in schools;
- bespoke CPD has been provided for all schools and attendance has been good; and
- continued use of data analysis to identify schools and groups of pupils in most need of support followed by focused visits that continued to support and challenge standards and quality in primary schools.

The presentation went on to outline the priorities identified for 2018/19 which included:

- bespoke professional development for targeted schools in teaching and learning linked with the University of Bolton in order to narrow the gap between the Local Authority and National at the expected standard at the end of KS1 in all subjects;
- provision of further targeted CPD to support schools in the teaching of reading to narrow the gap between the LA and National at KS1 at greater depth and at KS2 at both the expected and higher standard; and
- commission more time from Associate School Improvement Professionals in order to provide further support and challenge to schools identified as vulnerable to an Ofsted category.

Following the presentation, members made a number of comments:

- 25.5% of schools were outstanding which was a significant achievement;
- a number of schools that were currently rated good were on the cusp of becoming outstanding; and
- the funding arrangements for the commissioning of additional support for vulnerable schools – Ms Morse advised that some funding was received from the DfE for this purpose however, the majority of monies needed to be provided by the Authority if they were community schools and own funding from academies.

Resolved – That Ms Morse be thanked for her informative presentation.

14. SECONDARY OUTCOMES

Ms G. Whitehead gave a presentation on secondary outcomes and how performance in Bolton compared nationally.

The presentation outlined the main changes that had made to Key Stage 4 examination process and described the new secondary accountability measure which had been introduced in 2016 known as Progress 8/Attainment 8.

The main elements of change involved attainment in 8 elements known as buckets and the revised grading of GCSEs from 2017 which would see numbers rather than the current system of letters. The Attainment 8 measure would take the average of a pupil's points across a set of their best 8 subjects.

The presentation went on to provide detailed statistical information on pupils in secondary schools by Inspection Judgements, and how Bolton's performance compared with other statistical neighbours and nationally.

The provisional Attainment 8 results for all pupils in Bolton for 2018 were provided in the report. They could be summarised as follows:

- 40% of pupils had achieved Grade 5 or above in English and Maths
- 57% had achieved Grade 5 or above in English;
- 47% had achieved Grade 5 or above in Maths; and
- 61% had achieved Grade 4/C or above in English and Maths – all pupils.

The National and other local authorities' results were due to be published on 16th October, 2018.

The presentation went on to provide details of the Bolton Learning Partnership in 2018/19 together with the organisational structure, key bodies and support. The Council

was a key partner and had been appointed as Executive Lead. More secondary schools had joined this year and improvements had been seen in all key measures. It was noted that the Bolton Learning Partnership was a local initiative which aimed to provide support for schools. It also produced a yearly action plan which considered requests for support from various schools. This year, all school requests had been prioritised for action.

Following the presentation, members made the undermentioned comments/observations:

- the importance of providing a broad and balanced curriculum; and
- the use of podcasts in schools and the benefits of extending them to all schools – Ms Whitehead explained that different products were currently being evaluated with a view to them being made available to schools if they had proven benefits and if funding allowed so that all schools could be offered the same opportunities.

Resolved – That Ms Whitehead be thanked for her informative presentation.

15. FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT QUARTER ONE 2018/19

The Interim Director of People and Director of Corporate Resources submitted a joint report which provided information relating to the financial position for Adult Services and Health as at Quarter One of the 2018/19 Financial Year.

With regard to Revenue Expenditure, the revenue outturn position for the Local Authority block was expected to be in line with budget following use of reserves of £3.298m.

Revenue expenditure for the Dedicated Schools Grant was projected to be £1.3m greater than the grant available.

In relation to Capital Expenditure, the report advised that the original capital programme approved by the Council in

February 2018 totalled £38.3m. The programme had now decreased to £23.8m due to likely slippage into 2019/20 as the phasing of projects took place. Expenditure at Quarter One was £5.6m.

The report advised that Reserves, including schools, were expected to be £46.7m as at 31st March 2019. This was a decrease of £11.9m due to the use of schools' balances, funding of the current years Capital Programme and the estimated revenue position being offset by Schools Capital in year allocations.

Resolved – That the report be noted.

16. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORT – QUARTER ONE 2018/19

The Interim Director of People submitted a report which gave an update on the latest available 2018/19 performance information for the Adult's and Health Services section of the People Department.

Resolved – That the report be noted.

17. MEMBERS BUSINESS

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

- the Executive Cabinet Member – Children's Portfolio held on 10th September, 2018 ; and
- the Children's PDG held on 24th September, 2018.

Resolved – That the minutes of the various meetings be noted.

(The meeting started at 6.00pm and finished at 7.15pm)

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