

**CHILDREN'S SERVICES, SAFEGUARDING AND SKILLS POLICY
DEVELOPMENT GROUP**

MEETING, 13TH MAY, 2014

Present – Councillors Watters (Chairman), Ashcroft, Ayub, Cunliffe (as deputy for Councillor Gillies), McKeon, Mrs Thomas (as deputy for Councillor Murray) and Sherrington.

Also in Attendance

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|-----------------|---|------------------------------------|
| Mrs M. Asquith | - | Director of Children's Services |
| Mrs S. Cornwell | - | Head of SEN Services |
| Mr. D. Smith | - | Head of Finance |
| Mrs V. Ridge | - | Deputy Democratic Services Manager |

Apologies for absence were submitted by Councillors Gillies, Murray and Mrs Swarbrick.

Councillor Watters in the Chair.

3. MINUTES

The minutes of the proceedings of the meeting of the Policy Development Group held on 23rd July, 2013 were submitted and signed as a correct record.

4. SEN REFORMS

Mrs S Cornwell, Head of SEN Services gave a presentation which advised members of the changes to Special Educational Needs and the impact of this.

Information was provided in relation to the following areas, viz:-

- The Children and Families Act;
- Key changes to the Act;
- The key changes to the draft Special Educational Needs (SEN) Code of Practice;
- The new consultation process on the revised Code of Practice;
- The similarities in the revised Code;
- The significant changes to the revised Code;
- Implementation of the new code;

- Progress to date in Bolton; and
- How the information would be disseminated.

With regard to the key changes these were outlined as follows:-

- Would cover 0-25 age range;
- There would be a requirement to ensure that parents, children and young people were fully involved in decision making and the reviewing provision;
- There would be a requirement to jointly plan and commission services to ensure close co-operation between education, health and social care;
- Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP) would replace statements of Special Educational Need and Learning Difficulty Assessments and the time scales had reduced to 20 weeks;
- There was a duty on Health to provide any provision specified in the EHCP;
- Option of personal budgets;
- Greater focus on successful transition to adulthood; and
- The need to publish a Local Offer.

In terms of the implementation, it was anticipated that the final Code of Practice would be available in early June, 2014 for implementation in September, 2014.

Following the presentation a number of comments/questions were made:-

- The training involved for SENCO's;
- How would personal budgets operate and what services could be bought;
- Would the new reforms lead to better outcomes;
- The need to monitor personal budgets; and
- The financial implication for Health.

Members also requested that this item be included on the Children's Services and Culture Scrutiny Committee forward plan for 2014/2015

It was agreed that the presentation be noted.

(The meeting started at 4.00 p.m. and finished at 4.40 p.m.)