

JOINT EDUCATION & YOUTH AND SOCIAL & HEALTH CARE
OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
24 MARCH 2016

Minutes of the meeting of the Joint Education & Youth and Social & Health Care Overview & Scrutiny Committee of Flintshire County Council held at Council Chamber, County Hall, Mold CH7 6NA on Thursday, 24th March, 2016

PRESENT: **Councillor Carol Ellis (Chair)**

Councillors Marion Bateman, Paul Cunningham, Peter Curtis, Andy Dunbobbin, David Healey, Mike Lowe, Dave Mackie, Mike Reece, Ian Smith, Nigel Steele-Mortimer, and David Wisinger

CO-OPTED MEMBERS: Janine Beggan, David Hytch, and Rebecca Stark

APOLOGIES: Councillor Adele Davies-Cooke, Hilary Isherwood, Colin Legg, Phil Lightfoot, Nancy Matthews, Vicky Perfect, Ian Roberts, Bernard Stuart and Reverend John Thelwell

SUBSTITUTIONS: Councillor Sara Parker (for Hilary McGuill)

CONTRIBUTORS:

Cabinet Member for Education, Cabinet Member for Social Services, Chief Officer (Education and Youth), Chief Officer (Social Services), Senior Manager Children and Workforce, Senior Manager Inclusion and Progression, Senior Manager Safeguarding and Commissioning, Early Years and Family Support Manager, and Senior Learning Advisor

IN ATTENDANCE:

Environment and Social & Health Care Facilitator, Education & Youth and Community & Enterprise Facilitator and Committee Officer

8. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR FOR THE MEETING

The Environment and Social & Health Care Facilitator sought nominations for a Chair for the meeting.

RESOLVED

That Councillor Carol Ellis be appointed as Chair for the meeting.

9. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING DECLARATIONS)

Councillor Andy Dunbobbin declared a personal interest in the following items due to his capacity as a kinship carer.

Agenda Item 4 – Educational Attainment for Looked After Children in Flintshire

Agenda Item 5 – Safeguarding and Child Protection

10. EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN IN FLINTSHIRE

The Senior Manager Inclusion and Progression introduced a report on the academic attainment of Looked After Children (LAC) in Flintshire for the year 2014-15. She provided background information and reported on learner outcomes for the Foundation Phase and Key Stages 2, 3 and 4, as detailed in the report. She advised that the education of LAC was a high priority in Flintshire and reported on some of the initiatives which had been implemented to support better outcomes for this vulnerable group of learners.

The Chairman thanked the Head of Inclusion Service for her detailed report and invited members to raise questions.

Councillor Dave Mackie suggested that information be included in future reports to demonstrate how educational attainment was improving for LAC. The Senior Manager Inclusion and Progression agreed to provide information on predicted outcomes and actual outcomes in future reports.

Councillor Ian Smith asked how the educational attainment for LAC compared to non-LAC. The Senior Manager Inclusion and Progression agreed to provide information on the educational attainment for Flintshire as a whole in future reports.

The Chair commented on the significant difficulties which LAC frequently had to overcome at an early age, and emphasised that this also needed to be taken into account when acknowledging their achievements.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That Members continue to act as ‘Champions’ for Looked After Children, promoting awareness and challenging provision within Flintshire educational settings;
- (b) That the Annual Looked After Children Education Outcomes report, in future, be moved to a cycle following the performance indicator submission at the end of April.

11. SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION

The Chief Officer (Social Services) introduced a report to provide information in relation to Safeguarding and Child Protection within the county boundaries. He gave background information and advised that the report contained key statistical and performance related information about children for whom the Authority had significant safeguarding responsibilities for the period 1 April 2015 to 31 December 2015. The Chief Officer invited the Senior Manager Safeguarding and Commissioning to report on the key considerations as detailed in the report concerning the Child Protection Register, child protection conferences, child sexual exploitation, and the Safeguarding Unit.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee accept the report as information in relation to Safeguarding and Child Protection for the period 1st April, 2015 to 31st December 2015.

12. EARLY YEARS AND FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICE ANNUAL UPDATE

The Chief Officer (Social Services) introduced a report to provide a summary of the work undertaken by the Early Years and Families Support service during 2015/16, funded through the Welsh Government (WG) anti-poverty programmes; Flying Start, Families First, and Communities First, and other WG funded projects and funding streams including European and Big Lottery. The Chief Officer drew attention to the Social Care Accolades Award, in the better outcomes through working together category, awarded to Flintshire Early Years and Family Support Service in April 2015, and the prestigious CANparent Quality Mark received by Flying Start in June 2015.

The Chief Officer introduced the Early Years and Family Support Manager and invited her to present the report.

Councillor David Healey congratulated the team on receiving the CANparent Quality Mark and Social Care Accolades Award and asked if this had been publicised in the local press. The Chief Officer agreed to follow this up and ensure that the awards were publicised in the local press on behalf of the Committee.

Councillor Dave Mackie commented on the issue of young children starting formal education in school who were not yet toilet trained and the additional pressure put on schools as a result. He asked if this matter could be raised and addressed through the Early Years and Family Support Service. Officers responded and explained that there were a range of projects available to support and enable families to build a connection and ongoing working relationship with schools.

RESOLVED

That the Committee endorse the work and service delivery of the Early Years and Family Support Service, and approve a continued focus on early intervention and prevention services in Flintshire leading to better outcomes for families in need.

13. CORPORATE PARENTING

The Senior Manager Children and Workforce introduced a report on the Council's effectiveness as a Corporate Parent. He provided background information and advised that the report provided a focus on the expectations of Corporate Parenting within the framework of the Social Services and Well-Being Act (the Act). The report identified the need to refresh the existing Corporate Parenting Strategy within the context of the Act and the Council's Improvement Plan priorities for 2016/17. The Senior Manager Children and Workforce presented the report and drew attention to the key considerations.

The Chair thanked the Senior Manager Children and Workforce for his report and invited the Committee to raise questions.

In response to a suggestion from Councillor Marion Bateman that a Looked After Child be invited to attend a future meeting of the Committee to meet Members, Councillor Christine Jones commented on the work of the Participation Group and the various other opportunities, citing the Pride of Flintshire Awards as an example, which provided an informal setting for LAC to meet with Members.

The Senior Manager Children and Workforce agreed that next year's report would include information on how well the Council had done on the future priorities, as set out in section 1.05.14 of the report.

Councillor Christine Jones suggested that the revised Corporate Parenting Strategy be presented to Scrutiny for consideration. The Chair agreed with this suggestion.

RESOLVED:

The Committee is content that Corporate Parenting is effective and endorse the development of a revised Corporate Parenting Strategy.

14. ATTENDANCE BY MEMBERS OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

There were no members of the press or public in attendance

(The meeting started at 2.00pm and ended at 3.52pm)

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Chairman