



Minutes

CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE AND LEARNING SELECT COMMITTEE

Minutes from the meeting held on Tuesday 12 April 2016, in Mezzanine Room 2, County Hall, Aylesbury, commencing at 10.32 am and concluding at 12.35 pm.

This meeting was webcast. To review the detailed discussions that took place, please see the webcast which can be found at <http://www.buckscc.public-i.tv/>
The webcasts are retained on this website for 6 months. Recordings of any previous meetings beyond this can be requested (contact: democracy@buckscc.gov.uk)

MEMBERS PRESENT

Mrs M Aston, Mrs P Birchley, Mr D Dhillon (Vice-Chairman), Mr P Gomm, Mrs V Letheren (Chairman), Mr R Stuchbury, Mr D Watson and Ms K Wood

CO-OPTED MEMBERS PRESENT

Mr D Babb

GUESTS PRESENT

Mr C Adams, Ms D Clarke, Mrs A Davies, Ms C Hart, Lin Hazell, Ms M Kuelka, Mr Z Mohammed and Dr E Rowsell

OFFICERS PRESENT

Ms C Douch and Ms S Turnbull

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Mr P Irwin, Mrs J Blake, Mr M Moore and Mrs W Mallen

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest



3 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 23rd February 2016 were agreed as a correct record.

4 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

There were no public questions.

A comment was made about the lack of public questions and the reasons.

ACTION: Committee Adviser to look into promoting public questions for the Committee

5 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The Chairman informed Members of a potential Children's Centre Inquiry and that this would be discussed further at the next meeting on 24th May.

The Chairman also referred to the Children's Workforce Inquiry and recommendations that would be going to Cabinet on 25th April 2016.

6 TO AGREE THE DRAFT REPORT OF THE CHILDREN'S WORKFORCE INQUIRY

RESOLVED:

The Select Committee agreed the Children's Workforce Inquiry report and recommendations as set out in the papers for this meeting and that the report be presented to Cabinet at its meeting on 25th April.

7 COMMITTEE MEMBER UPDATES

Children's Services officers were thanked by the Committee for their time in providing Member briefings. Members agreed that these were important in providing an understanding of children's services work, especially around safeguarding and child sexual exploitation. However, Members expressed their disappointment at the low attendance at the latest briefing.

ACTION: Committee Adviser to send the presentation from the Member's briefing held on 7th April to all Members.

Mr P Gomm updated the Committee on his observations of the setting up of two advisory boards at Children's Centres and the need to improve communications.

Mrs M Ashton informed the Committee that she was working on a task and finish group in Adult Social Care and commented on the need to work jointly with the Health and Adult Social Care Committee on any Transitions issues.

8 CABINET MEMBER UPDATES

The Cabinet Member for Children's Services and the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills gave an update to the Committee as detailed in items 9 and 10

9 CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Lin Hazell updated the Committee on:

- Children's Services briefings on safeguarding and the "journey of the child".
- A new initiative "strengthening families".
- Improving the Council's approach to fostering.
- A rise in the number of children being adopted during 2015/16.
- Permanent managers now in place in the social care assessment teams and MASH.
- The positive comments from the Department for Education Chairman of the Improvement Board.
- No longer any children in secure accommodation.
- An independent audit to be conducted on all children who have been managed through the new Swan unit.

10 CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION & SKILLS

Mr Z Mohammed updated the Committee on:

- The National Funding Formula consultation. Currently 7 out of the 10 schools that receive the least funding nationally were in Buckinghamshire.
- The Government's white paper on the expansion of the academy programme. In response to a question about timescales and potential costs to the Council, the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills replied that conversion of schools to academies was not expected to be completed until 2020-22, with underperforming schools being converted more quickly. Further work would be needed to understand any cost implications to the Council
- The future diminishing role in local authority responsibility for schools around funding.

ACTION: Committee Adviser to send the list of 7 schools in Buckinghamshire that receive the least funding to Members.

11 CHILD & ADOLESCENT MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

The Chairman welcomed

- Ms C Hart, Joint Commissioner, Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS).
- Ms D Clarke, Head of CAMHS, Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust.
- Dr E Rowsell, Clinical Lead, Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust and
- Ms M Kukielka, Assistant Director, Barnardo's Children's Services Buckinghamshire.

Apologies were received from Ms. W Woodhouse, Clinical Director, Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust.

The following points were made during the discussion:

- The new service currently had a pooled budget of £5.4m. Buckinghamshire County Council (BCC) contributed around 30% of funding with most of the rest from the Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs). In response to a question around funding and spend, the Head of CAMHS explained that funding was around the national average.
- The service was commissioned to focus on increased support at an early stage before problems escalated, including having link workers in schools. This role was working well and being developed further. New key roles were also introduced for Barnardos, volunteers and apprentices which were also working well.
- The new service was set up to provide a single point of access with specialist pathways to particular services e.g. eating disorders. This had made access easier and simpler to understand for residents.
- Last year the service's caseload was around 3% of Buckinghamshire's 0-19 year old population and there had been an increase of 18% in referrals compared to last year.
- In response to a question about the timescales for getting a service, the Head of CAMHS explained that emergency cases were dealt with within 24 hours. There was also an emergency 24 hours, 7 days per week on-call service. The service was working to reduce the 8 week wait for a routine assessment and it was noted there was a longer wait for neuro-developmental assessments.
- In response to a question about access for looked after children (LAC), the Head of CAMHS explained that LAC and children who are fostered would have the same access as others. However, there was a specific LAC team who would respond within 5 days.
- Children from outside the County who were looked after within Buckinghamshire would have the same access to CAMHS as other children. This was not always replicated in other local authorities for Buckinghamshire children.

ACTION: Committee Adviser to arrange the production of a press release about the presentation from CAMHS.

SEE PAPERS AND WEBCAST FOR FULL CONTENT

12 MISSING CHILDREN, INCLUDING MISSING FROM EDUCATION

The Chairman welcomed Mrs C Douch – Service Director Children's Social Care. Mr D Johnstone's apologies were noted.

The following points were made during the discussion:

- There was a clear link between missing children and children becoming vulnerable to child sexual exploitation.

- For children missing from home or care there was close partnership working with Thames Valley Police through the Missing, Sexual Exploitation Risk Assessment Conference (M-SERAC). Missing children causing concern were discussed at the M-SERAC and a decision made whether to refer to Child Sexual Exploitation services.
- The Buckinghamshire Children's Safeguarding Board had a sub-committee specifically focussing on Child Sexual Exploitation.
- A new electronic data system had been developed to allow better analysis of patterns and themes where children were going missing from home or care.
- Thames Valley Police would always check on absent children. Barnardos would also complete an independent return interview within 72 hours of children returning, although this may not always be a face to face interview.
- In response to a question about whether all missing children were referred to social care, the Service Director Children's Social Care explained that not all would be automatically referred but that referrals would always be made if there were any vulnerability issues.
- The increasingly high numbers of children being recorded as missing from education were thought, in part, to be due to an improved system of recording.
- Schools were required to advise the local authority of any children going missing which then started a standard process of follow up. If there were any concerns around vulnerability, these would be referred to Children's Social Care.
- The timescales for schools to refer missing children to the local authority varied as there was an element of professional judgement by schools as to when a child was considered missing.

ACTION: Service Director to provide timescale data to the Committee.

- There had been an increase in missing children which was being managed by the new Swan Unit set up to deal specifically with children missing and child sexual exploitation. The work of the Swan Unit allowed links to be made at an early stage. A question was raised about the demographic breakdown of missing children.

ACTION: Service Director to provide demographic data of missing children.

SEE PAPERS AND WEBCAST FOR FULL CONTENT

13 PREVENTING CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION INQUIRY 6 MONTH UPDATE

The following points were raised during the discussion:

- Recommendation 3 had not yet been fully implemented but it would be straightforward to implement.
- Recommendation 4. Some good progress has been made but there was still more to do.
- Recommendation 6 & 7. Health partners were included in the Swan Unit and were able to disseminate to other health professionals.

Determination on progress was made using a red, amber green (RAG) rating system as follows:

✓ Implemented ★ On track ● May not be fully implemented
▲ not delivered/implemented

RESOLVED:

The Select Committee agreed the following RAG ratings against the 6 months implementation of the recommendations.

Recommendation 1: Tick
Recommendation 2: Green
Recommendation 3: Amber
Recommendation 4: Amber
Recommendation 5: Green
Recommendation 6: Amber
Recommendation 7: Amber
Recommendation 8: Green
Recommendation 10: Green

SEE PAPERS AND WEBCAST FOR FULL CONTENT

14 TENDER OF CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION SERVICE DRAFT BUSINESS CASE

This item was considered in confidential session. See items 16 and 17.

15 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Tuesday 24th May 2016 10.30am in Mezzanine Room 2, County Hall, Aylesbury.

16 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED

That the press and public be excluded for the following item which is exempt by virtue of Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12a of the Local Government Act 1972 because it contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)

17 TENDER OF CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION SERVICE DRAFT BUSINESS CASE

The Committee discussed the business case for the re-tender of the Child Sexual Exploitation service.

CHAIRMAN