

Children's Social Care and Learning Select Committee.

Inquiry Scope

Title	Children and Young People's Voice
Signed-off by	Select Committee
	Head of Member Services (Statutory Scrutiny Officer)
Author	Kevin Wright – Committee and Governance Adviser
Date	20 th September 2016
Inquiry Group Membership	All Members of the Children's Social Care and Learning Select Committee
Member Services Resource	Member Services will provide the following officer support: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sara Turnbull - Head of Member Services – Policy Advice and Report Quality Assurance • Clare Capjon - Committee & Governance Manager – Project oversight • Kevin Wright - Committee & Governance Adviser – Policy Lead & project management • Committee Assistant – Administrative support (as needed)
Lead Cabinet Member	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lin Hazell, Cabinet Member for Children's Services • Zahir Mohammed, Cabinet Member for Education & Skills
Lead HQ/BU Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Devora Wolfson – Director of Joint Commissioning • Sue Butt – Head of Strategic Commissioning Children • Carol Douch – Director Children's Social Care • Nick Wilson – Director of Education • Karen Dolton – Director Early Help, Care & Quality Assurance
What is the problem that is trying to be solved?	<p>To consider how well Joint Commissioning (including with health .e.g. Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services & Therapies), Youth Participation and Children's Social Care listen to the voice of the child and young person and the extent to which it influences the way children's services are planned, commissioned and delivered.</p> <p>Members want to explore the extent to which the processes and procedures that are in place for gathering, recording and using the views of children and young people are feeding effectively into the commissioning cycle, thereby ensuring services are commissioned and configured most appropriately to address their needs.</p>
What will not be considered	<p>The following will NOT be part of the scope for this inquiry</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Services for children outside of the remit of CSCL Business Unit, Joint Commissioning or Youth Participation. • Service commissioned by partners for children e.g. District Council services, Bucks Learning Trust. • Services commissioned by schools • School placements. • School Transport
Is this topic within the remit of the Select Committee?	Yes
What are the inquiry objectives	To assess the strengths and weaknesses in taking children and young people's* views into account when planning, commissioning and delivering children and young people's services so that the Council can improve where it is weak and share good practice across business units and with partners where there are strengths. To identify any

	<p>recommendations for improvements in specific areas if needed</p> <p>To assess the effectiveness of the Council at gathering, recording and using the views of children and young people to inform service commissioning and to identify any recommendations for improvement.</p> <p>*Children and Young People 0-18 years and up to 25 years for those with special educational needs or disabilities or using after care services.</p>
<p>What are the key issues to investigate/evidence needed.</p>	<p>Stage 1 – Fact finding & discovery phase</p> <p>Stage 2 – Assessment</p> <p>Stage 3 – Identification of improvement measures. (Stakeholder views on improvement ideas for feasibility, effectiveness and deliverability.)</p> <p>What are the processes and procedures in place to gather record & use the views of all children including those from minority groups/hard to reach groups?</p> <p>How effective are these processes and procedures in feeding into the commissioning cycle?</p> <p>What examples are there of children’s and young people’s views shaping the commissioned service?</p> <p>How easy is it for Commissioners to find out about and access the views that have been gathered recently without having to repeat evidence gathering?</p> <p>What effect, if any, are current commissioning resources (staffing and budget) and/or service structures having on embedding children and young people’s views into local service commissioning and design? What plans are being developed to manage MTP savings and what impact this may have on gathering and using children and young people’s views?</p> <p>How easy it for all children and young people and their families to express their views, how confident are they that their views have been taken into account and what feedback do they get from Commissioners about how their views have been taken into account?</p> <p>How are the views of children and young people used at a strategic level to understand need and inform service planning?</p>
<p>Is the topic of relevance to the work of BCC?</p>	<p>Buckinghamshire County Council (BCC) has committed itself to taking the views of children and young people into account when commissioning services. There is also national legislation which sets out statutory duties on the Council to take the wishes and feelings of children and young people into account when making decisions about them.</p> <p>The Council’s Commissioning Framework includes as a core principle that <i>“Involving customers and service users to ensure their views are central to commissioning services”</i></p> <p>The Buckinghamshire Children’s and Young People’s Partnership</p>

	<p>confirms that <i>“listening and acting on the voice of our children and young people is central to the planning and delivery of services in Buckinghamshire”</i> in their Children and Young People’s Plan 2014-18</p> <p>BCC has a statutory duty set out in The Children Act 1989 to consider the wishes and feelings of children when decisions are made about them.</p> <p>The UK Government is signed up to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Article 12 outlines the right for children to give their opinion on all matters affecting them.</p>
What work is underway already on this issue?	<p>Currently views are gathered through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth Voice Work Plan • Youth Voice Events • Young People Panels • Youth Council • Takeover Day • Children in care council called “We do care” • Children and Young People Voice Survey • Youth Steering Group • Social workers working with individual children • CSE service Commissioning (and other current commissioning activity)
Are there any key changes that might impact on this issue?	<p>In April there was a restructure of the Children’s Joint Commissioning Team into a Joint Commissioning Team with Adult Social Care.</p> <p>Both commissioning and the fair access and youth provision service have been tasked with making budget efficiency savings and service reductions during 2017/18.</p>
What are the key timing considerations?	<p>August is a key holiday period which impact on evidence gathering and inquiry group meetings.</p> <p>Ofsted are due back to visit social care twice for two days each time during August and a full re-inspection probably during the Autumn.</p>
Who are the key stakeholders & decision-makers?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buckinghamshire children and young people and their families (service users and non-service users) • Senior management / leadership team Children’s Social Care and Learning (CSCL) Business Unit • Commissioners of Children’s and Youth Services including Youth Offending Service • Buckinghamshire Children and Young People’s Partnership • Social Workers • Providers • CSC&L Business Unit officers • Fair Access and Youth Provision Service • Children’s Advocacy and independent visitors. (National Youth Advocacy Service - NYAS) • Children in Care Council (We Do Care) • Independent Reviewing Officer
What media /communications support do you want?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Press release to let the public know that the inquiry is taking place • Press release post report publication • Publicise on social media • Call for evidence

Evidence-gathering Methodology

What types of methods of evidence-gathering will you use?

List them here e.g.

- Desktop research
 - Local information/access
 - National and peer group good practice
 - International approaches
 - Review of commissioning policies/strategies
 - Recently commissioned service documentation (including any KPIs in respect of seeking views)
 - CSCL complaints
- Interviews and visits
 - Joint Commissioners
 - Providers of Key Services
 - Senior managers including from fair access and youth provision
 - Social work teams
 - Participation Team
 - Local Children and Young People's Partnership Board members
 - Youth Steering Group Members
 - Youth Voice members/groups
 - Children's and young people's advocates or groups
 - Commissioning and Supplier Management Group (Oversee the Strategic Commissioning Framework)
 - Charity Groups
- Any groups/workshops/meetings that have already been set up by Commissioners to gather children and young people's views.
- Survey
- Social Media

How will you involve service-users and the public in this inquiry?

Interviews as detailed above.

Aim to have a youth group (e.g Youth Steering Group) providing a critical friend view and support to the inquiry.

Explore the possibility of having a co-optee onto the inquiry team.

Produce an additional child and young person friendly version of the report.

Assessment Methodology

Identify a number of key services to ascertain whether the voice of the child and young people has been used in commissioning those services. Key services to look would be based on the higher value contracts.

Make an assessment against a key list of criteria to identify what good or successful would look like and then use this assessment criteria as the basis for collecting and triangulating evidence from agreed stakeholders e.g. partners/officers/children (users). (See attached list at appendix 1)

Outline Inquiry Project Plan

Stage	Key Activity	Dates
Scoping	Inquiry Outline Agreed by Select Committee Planning Workshop	July
Evidence-gathering	Evidence-gathering phase - List key events	Aug/Sept/October
	Final Evidence Session – fact finding complete	October
Developing Recommendations	Inquiry Group/Select Committee meeting – Key Findings Report & Possible Areas of Recommendations considered	October
	Testing & developing recommendations with stakeholders	November
Reporting	Final Inquiry Group report with recommendations completed (signed-off by SC Chairman)	November
	Report published for Select Committee	November
	Select Committee agrees report to go forward to decision-makers	November
	Cabinet/Partner considers recommendations	December

See appendix 1 for draft assessment criteria and what good/success might look like.

Inquiry. Children and Young People's Voice.

Assessment Criteria.

Evidence shows that the wishes and feelings of children and young people have been taken into account in commissioning and delivering services.

- Children and young people can express their views and these are taken into account in planning of services
- Children & young people know how to share their views and experiences
- Children & young people are supported and encouraged to be involved in expressing their views
- The views of children and young people are acted upon in service provision
- The views of children and young people are informing future service delivery.

What will good / success look like?

Children & young people are supported to express their views. They are involved as far as possible in making decisions about services. Staff use innovative ways to support CYP in focusing and prioritising their goals so that services are shaped to meet their needs.

Children & young people who use the service are asked about their experiences. There are a range of ways for children & young people's views to be sought taking into account individual communication skills and abilities

Where appropriate children & young people who use the service know about & have access to advocacy support to share their views & there are links to local advocacy services where available.

There are a range of ways in which children & young people can feedback their experiences of the service they receive and raise any issues or concerns they may have.

There are a sufficient number of views taken into account relevant to the service being commissioned and delivered

The compliments and complaints raised by children, young people & their families are used to improve the service

There is a clear strategy or framework for gathering, recording and using the voice of the child & young person in commissioning services

Representation on looked after children groups, groups of children in the community or youth voice groups is effective and reflects the diversity of the community.

The views of children & young people are systematically recorded and are available to all commissioners

There is evidence that the views of children & young people are taken into account when commissioning and delivering services.

There is evidence that the views of children & young people are taken into account when looking at future service provision at a strategic level

The voice of children & young people is shared widely amongst commissioners and partners as appropriate to commission services

Feedback from children & young people is sought regularly and not just when re-commissioning or making changes to services.

Children and young people feel confident that their views will be dealt with in confidence where appropriate and that they trust and respect those that are seeking their views.