



**Buckinghamshire County Council**  
**Select Committee**  
Children's Social Care and Learning

# Minutes

## *CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE AND LEARNING SELECT COMMITTEE*

Minutes from the meeting held on Tuesday 5 September 2017, in Mezzanine Room 1, County Hall, Aylesbury, commencing at 10.30 am and concluding at 1.18 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](mailto:democracy@buckscc.gov.uk))

### **MEMBERS PRESENT**

Mr A Collingwood, Mrs I Darby, Mr D Dhillon, Mr M Hussain, Mr N Hussain, Mr B Roberts, Mrs L Sullivan, Ms J Ward, Mr G Williams and Ms K Wood

### **CO-OPTED MEMBERS PRESENT**

Mrs M Aston and Mr D Babb

### **GUESTS PRESENT**

Mr M Appleyard and Mr W Whyte

### **OFFICERS PRESENT**

Ms S Callaghan, Ms M Edmonds, Mr J Fowler, Ms G Rhodes White and Ms V Trundell

### **1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Mr M Moore, Mr K Hamblin and Mrs W Mallen.

### **2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The following declarations of interest were noted:



- Mr G Williams - Chairman of Bucks Learning Trust Commissioning Committee and a member of the Fundraising Board at Dr Challoner's Grammar School.
- Mr N Hussain - Board member at Aylesbury College and a Board Member of BEST and the Healthy Living Centre.
- Ms I Darby - Governor at Robertswood Primary and Dr Challoner's Grammar School.

### **3 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> July 2017 were confirmed as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman.

### **4 PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

There were no public questions.

### **5 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

The Chairman told the Committee of his attendance at an adoption panel information meeting which had been very useful prior to attending an adoption panel arranged for next month.

### **6 COMMITTEE MEMBER UPDATES**

Mrs Darby, Mr Williams and Mr Collingwood updated the Committee on their attendance at the children looked after and care leavers celebration event which they had found to be a very humbling experience and a good introduction to the work of the Select Committee. They thanked all those concerned.

Mr Dhillon asked Committee Members to let Mr Wright, Committee and Governance Adviser, know if they wanted to undertake any Children's Services work shadowing.

Mr Collingwood updated the Committee on his visit to a Social Worker's team meeting and acknowledged the excellent work of the team. He was due to visit a resource panel and an adoption panel during September.

### **7 CABINET MEMBER QUESTION TIME**

The Chairman welcomed Mr Warren Whyte, Cabinet Member for Children's Services, to the meeting.

Mr Whyte updated the Committee as follows:

- He had undertaken a number of visits to:
  - Front line social work and prevention teams
  - A children's home
  - Children's Court and
  - A Children's Centre

- Two meetings had been held with the refreshed Children's Partnership Board.
- He was now attending the South East Lead Members Forum.

In response to Members concerns around timescales for increasing placements for children and young people within Buckinghamshire, Mr Whyte explained that a two year programme had already commenced, with recruitment for new residential home managers underway with a view to having Managers in place as early as January.

Members queried how the service would prioritise individual cases to bring back into Buckinghamshire. Ms Gladys Rhodes White, Executive Director for Children's Social Care, explained that each case would be looked at individually and an assessment carried out to look at the advantages and disadvantages for each child or young person.

Ms Rhodes White explained that it was sometimes in a person's best interest to be placed a distance away from home, although these cases were not common.

Members asked for a breakdown of the percentage of cases that were placed out of county because it was in a child's best interest compared to the percentage of those cases that were placed out of county because there was no option to place locally.

**ACTION: Ms Rhodes White.**

## **8 VOICE OF THE CHILD AND YOUNG PERSON INQUIRY - RECOMMENDATION MONITORING**

The Chairman welcomed:

- Mr Warren Whyte, Cabinet Member for Children's Services
- Ms Gladys Rhodes White, Executive Director, Children's Services
- Laura, Guest Young Person
- Eve, Guest Young Person
- Mr James Fowler, Youth Service Manager
- Ms Emily Dover, Youth Worker

Laura and Eve gave a summary of how they were involved in providing the views of children and young people and Ms Rhodes White summarised the progress so far against each of the recommendations from the report.

Members of the Committee asked questions about:

- Transition arrangements for children and young people moving into adulthood.
- Ways of engaging with young children to provide their views.
- The quality and ease of use of the website for children and young people.
- How well children and young people felt they were listened to and whether things were improving.
- Hit rates of the website.

- How the service let children and young people know what they have done to address feedback.

The following points were made by Laura and Eve in response to the Committee's questioning:

- Transition arrangements e.g. from school to college were good with support provided by schools and youth workers in a number of ways.
- Laura was the joint chair of the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) forum which helped to ensure all SEND children and young people's voices were heard
- There was work going on to promote Youth Voice in schools e.g. publicity through assemblies and poster campaigns but there was still more to do.
- Laura had worked on developing the "local offer" web pages but both Laura and Eve thought the websites for children and families could still be made easier to use particularly for providing feedback.
- The Children and Adolescent Mental Health (CAMHS) website was good but needed to be publicised to children and young people more.
- Some children and young people did not have internet access and so this needed to be taken into account when provided information and opportunities to feedback.
- Eve and Laura felt that they personally were listened to but that they did not always know what had happened as a result of their feedback.

Mr Fowler advised that if children and young people were asked to contribute to service improvement work, they would be given IT equipment to help.

Ms Rhodes White confirmed that she would provide data on how often the children's services website was used including data to show trends over time.

**ACTION: Ms Rhodes White**

Ms Rhodes White also explained the process for transition planning for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities into adult services.

Mr Whyte confirmed that advisers and social workers were now working jointly on transition planning and that the "Staying Put Policy" was being refreshed to make pathways clearer.

Members of the Committee asked the service to engage the help of the Director of Technology Services and involve children and young people in further developing a website hub - (recommendation 4).

**ACTION: Ms Rhodes White**

**RESOLVED: The Committee AGREED to delegate the RAG rating of the recommendations to the Chairman with the ratings being shared with the Committee after the meeting.**

## **9 CHILDREN'S SERVICES IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME ACTIONS - RESPONSE TO THIRD OFSTED MONITORING VISIT.**

Mr Whyte and Ms Rhodes White presented the report.

Mr Whyte made the following points:

- Ofsted's 4<sup>th</sup> monitoring letter had been received since the report was written.
- He shared Ofsted's concerns about the pace of improvement and had made it clear to the management team about focussing on the pace of change.

Ms Rhodes White explained that the last 2 monitoring visits had focused on children looked after and those leaving care and that the next Ofsted intervention would be a full 4 week inspection starting sometime between September and December 2017.

Members questioned Mr Whyte and Ms Rhodes White on:

- Why weekly performance and improvement monitoring had ceased only to have to be re-instated later.
- The availability of the Improvement Plan to the Committee.
- Being able to evidence improved outcomes for children and young people.
- Involving children and young people on the Corporate Parenting Panel.
- Managers' misunderstandings around practice processes.
- The need to increase the pace of improvement.

The following main points were made in response to the questions.

- Following improvement in some areas initially, the service may have taken its focus off these areas too early before improvement processes had been embedded and so it had been necessary to re-instate increased monitoring.
- Ofsted had commented on some sustained improvement in some areas e.g. in return interviews for children going missing.
- Mr Whyte held Officers to account through quarterly performance reviews to ensure stable improvement.
- The Improvement Plan would be provided to the Committee

• **ACTION: Ms Rhodes White**

- A "so what" column would be added to the Improvement Plan to help measure the outcome of improvement actions on children and young people.
- The best way to measure outcomes was to ask children and young people themselves and also monitor "negative" key performance indicators (e.g. "Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)").
- The timings of the Corporate Parenting Panel would be reviewed to start later so children and young people could attend.

**ACTION: Mr Whyte**

- A young person would be appointed as a member of the Corporate Parenting Panel and be a champion for children looked after and care leavers.
- There was a process of self-evaluation being undertaken by the service to identify any misunderstandings around social care practice processes by managers and staff.
- The pace of improvement had been a concern but was being addressed with renewed focus; through improved recruitment, the Cabinet Member challenging middle management and a new Director of Children's Services due to start in October.

## **10 PERMANENT EXCLUSIONS**

The Chairman welcomed:

- Mr Mike Appleyard, Cabinet Member for Education and Skills
- Miss Sarah Callaghan, Service Director Education and
- Mrs Vivian Trundell, Education Entitlement Manager

The Cabinet Member and Officers:

- Acknowledged that the level of permanent exclusions was not acceptable.
- Outlined the need for a robust response which would include a strong focus on prevention and early help.
- Focussed on the need for strong partnership working with schools and learning from good practice and expertise within Buckinghamshire and elsewhere.

Members questioned the Cabinet Member and Officers on:

- The speed of the response by the service so far.
- Schools reporting a lack of support to manage the issue.
- A lack of communication between schools and the local authority.
- The sudden rise in numbers of permanent exclusions in 2014/15.
- The need to act quickly to make improvements so as to positively impact on children and young people affected.
- Partnership working, including working with the NHS in responding to the issue.
- Access to better quality data and analysis to help understand the key issues and timelines.

The following responses were made by the Cabinet Member and Officers:

- It was imperative that the issues that were leading to children and young people being permanently excluded were identified much earlier and needed to be linked to the Early Help programme.
- Prevention and support panels were being piloted to help support schools by bringing together expertise where good practice was identified and an Inclusion Charter was being developed.

- Children's Services had not always acted as quickly as it should have and had been too reactive. The push to address the issue through the Early Help process would aim to address this.
- There was a wish to bring Educational Psychologists into schools to provide support earlier but the focus had been on Educational Psychologists doing statutory assessments. The new Early Help approach aimed to reduce the need for statutory assessment by intervening earlier.
- A number of issues had contributed to the large increase since 2014/15 including:
  - changes to Central Government guidance in 2012.
  - issues relating to children's mental health impacting nationally.
  - reduced resourcing.
- There needed to be a culture change and a new approach between schools and the local authority through better joint working and communications which was starting to happen.
- Central Government policies were making it essential for schools to also take increased responsibility in preventing permanent exclusions.
- There was recognition that the situation needed to improve quickly with the Cabinet Member and Director of Children's Services keeping pressure on officers to show numbers reducing.
- Early identification of issues should happen at a number of points where families interacted with the Council and partners including, pre-birth services, first point of contact, Children's Centres, pre-schools and nursery schools.
- Once issues were identified it was important to wrap relevant services around the family to provide support.
- It was important that children entered education with the ability to deal with social situations and curriculum expectations that they would be faced with.
- Although the Early Help programme approach may result in fewer Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) assessments, where appropriate, EHCP would still be used.
- It was recognised that the current set of data on exclusions and analysis still needed to be improved and work was underway. Any new data would be shared with the Committee.

**ACTION: Ms Rhodes White**

**RESOLVED: The Committee AGREED that:**

- **a further in depth review by the Committee would be undertaken on the issue.**
- **the Committee would scrutinise the outcomes of the prevention and support panels once the pilot had been completed.**

## **11 EDUCATION STRATEGY**

The Chairman welcomed Mrs Maria Edmonds – Education Strategy Manager to the meeting.

Mr Mike Appleyard, Miss Sarah Callaghan and Mrs Maria Edmonds presented the report and summarised the key points.

Members of the Committee asked questions about the following:

- The quality of secondary education for children and young people in Aylesbury.
- Whether the strategy would still include as a driver, central government's policy of increased selection, now that this appeared to have been dropped
- The Buckinghamshire Learning Trust's (BLT) involvement in the strategy.
- How the strategy would manage the increased independence of academies from local authorities and pastoral care issues.

During discussions, the Cabinet Member and Officers made the following points:

- Reducing the attainment gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers would be an important part of the strategy and there would be key performance indicators included so that the issue could be monitored.
- It would be important to tackle the underperformance of some vulnerable children and young people in helping secondary schools in Aylesbury improve.
- Once completed, the results of all consultations would be analysed and developed into a draft strategy which would be brought back to the Committee

**Action: Committee and Governance Adviser**

- The new strategy would be more specific about actions for Buckinghamshire Learning Trust to help improve areas of underperformance.
- The level of engagement between academies, grammar schools and the Council was strong and there had been positive feedback about pastoral care.

## **12 CHILDREN'S WORKFORCE INQUIRY- RECOMMENDATIONS MONITORING**

The Committee reviewed the actions being undertaken to implement the two recommendations still outstanding

The Committee questioned the low level of participation in exit interviews and asked whether these could be undertaken by an independent officer rather than the line manager of the person leaving.

**ACTION: Ms Rhodes White**

**RESOLVED:** The Committee **AGREED** to delegate the RAG rating of the recommendations to the Chairman with the ratings being shared with the Committee after the meeting.

## **13 COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME**

The Committee noted the work programme and requested that an item on the Early Help Review be added.

**ACTION: Committee and Governance Adviser**



#### **14     DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Children's Social Care and Learning Select Committee will take place on 17<sup>th</sup> October 2017, Mezzanine Room 1, New County Offices, Aylesbury. There will be a private pre-meeting for Members from 9.30am

**CHAIRMAN**



### **Inquiry Progress Update on Recommendations after 6 months**

**Inquiry: Voice of the Child**

**Select Committee Inquiry Report Completion Date: Recommendations accepted by Cabinet on 9<sup>th</sup> January 2017**

**Date of this update: July 2017**

**Lead Officer responsible for this response: Carol Douch**

**Cabinet Member that has signed-off this update: Warren Whyte**

#### **Recommendation 1**

That sufficient tools are readily available for all people working with children and young people to gather and record views for example books, pictures, games and toys and that purchasing cards are made available to buy additional items quickly.

Lead Cabinet Member: Cabinet Member for Children's Services

Lead Officer: Carol Douch

Action by date: End of February 2017 and ongoing

#### **Original Response and Actions**

- We have made a number of tools available to children's social workers and we will consider what other tools are available for other staff who work with children.
- Over the last 4 months there has been an increasing number of children and workers using the apps
- We will review with our commissioned providers to identify any gaps in access to relevant tools and review the ability to purchase new items within the scope of the commissioned service budget.
- We will review availability and use of purchasing cards by social work staff.

#### **Progress Update After 6 months**

There is clear evidence to demonstrate that Social Workers have increased their knowledge and application of using electronic applications and tools for obtaining children's wishes and feelings. This is evidenced through the Monthly Senior Management Audits that has demonstrated that a variety of tools are being used by Social Workers.

Social Workers evidence the children's wishes and feelings through their visits, meetings and written reports and are more able to articulate the children's journeys through Children's Social Care. The Tools Library is being upgraded on a regular basis (as and when new tools are being made available by other agencies, Social Workers, etc.)

Children are also able to use the MOMO (Mind of My Own) application. They can speak with their Social Workers, Managers and Practice Improvement Managers and share their views.

The electronic ePEP (electronic Personal Education Plan) for Looked After Children (LAC) is co-ordinated by The Virtual School in conjunction with the school, social

worker, carer and pupil. The vast majority of pupils attend their termly PEP and find the interactive platform user friendly and fun to use as it is adapted according to age and ability. (There is one specifically for Special Educational Needs (SEN) pupils).

Using this information targets are set and the Pupil Premium is allocated accordingly. These targets are reviewed every term. This input allows pupils to request additional activities and educational games and resources.

Pupils are rewarded for their participation via a voucher scheme.

The Virtual School distributes age and interest appropriate books to all primary aged and Early Years Pupils and to any older pupils who request it. This is based on a detailed knowledge in relation to ability and interest. The pupils contribute to this via PEPs and letters from their carers. We have a huge number of compliments and letters of gratitude from carers and pupils for their books.

All social workers have access to a team purchasing card via their Business Support Officer to enable them to purchase appropriate resources to facilitate the child's voice.

Committee RAG Rating:



## Recommendation 2

That more innovative way are introduced to increase the amount of quality time workers within social care have to gather the views of children and young people, particularly within the children in need service.

Lead Cabinet Member: Cabinet Member for Children's Services

Lead Officer: Julie Davies

Action by date: January 2017

### Original Response and Actions

- "Mind of My Own" app was introduced in early summer 2016 which is a means in which children and young people in our care can share their wishes and feelings in a secure way on line.
- The implementation has been successful and we are now developing the tool further to ensure it is accessible to children and young people with disabilities.
- We will consider the opportunities as part of the restructure of the children in need service and review its effectiveness.

### Progress Update After 6 months

Mind of My Own (MOMO) was introduced in Buckinghamshire April 2016 with a specific application for children with disability available from December 2016.

For all child protection review conferences taking place on and after 1<sup>st</sup> July 2017, social workers will be expected to support the use of MoMo One (for children aged 8 years and above) and MOMO Express (for children under 8 years of age and disabled children) to gain children's views for all review child protection conferences at a statutory child protection visit during the 5 weeks before the conference takes place.

Buckinghamshire Children's Services were recently nominated and reached the final for an award at the national 'MOMO' event. Buckinghamshire County Council were nominated in two categories - fastest implementation and the highest number of children registered to use the app in our drive to improve the way we gather the views of children and young people.

As of 24<sup>th</sup> August 2017, 260 young people had MoMo accounts, 274 workers had downloaded MOMO onto their phones and 287 statements had been received from children and young people.

Social Workers attend the termly Personal Education Plan meetings for looked after children.

Committee RAG Rating:



### Recommendation 3

That participation group for children and young people with disabilities is established so that their collective voice can be heard and disseminated to Commissioners, Youth Service and Social Care to act upon.

Lead Cabinet Member: Cabinet Member for Education and Skills

Lead Officer: James Fowler

Action by date: February 2017

#### Original Response and Actions

This has recently been established in the Youth Service as part of our disability participation work. We can liaise with our commissioned providers to help disseminate details about this group and help identify potentially interested young people to take part.

Actions:

- Share Terms of Reference more widely across commissioners and Social Care
- Share/add to existing work plan for the group
- Develop process for sharing outcomes to relevant parties.

#### Progress Update After 6 months

There is a Special Educational Needs / Disabilities (SEND) youth forum, young people age ranges from 15-19 with a variety of disabilities.

SEND youth forum priorities are led by the young people of the forum and last year's topic was mental health. This year the SEND youth forum have chosen the topic – 'raise disability awareness to help prevent bullying'. The forum will be working in partnership with Alfriston School on this priority.

The disability work plan priorities 17/18 were agreed by the Head of Service for SEND. The set priorities were agreed following young people recommendations along with information and additional gaps identified by other services such as, SEND IAS (SEND Information, Advice and Support) , Adult Social Care Transitions Team and Change for Children SEND lead.

Young people from the SEND youth forum, special schools/colleges, post-19 provision, Talkback and Macintyre are currently being engaged to complete priorities from the work plan.

All services and young people involved in the work plan priorities are regularly updated with progress and outcomes. The voice of the child is shared with key partners including SEND Team, Transitions Team, and Schools. As well as included in Change for Children Programme, Local Offer working group etc.

The SEND Youth Forum has produced a booklet called 'MY Education, Health & Care Plan' which is sent out when the Local Authority agrees to carry out an Education Health Care (EHC) needs assessment. This advises the young person what to expect from the process, what things mean and what to do if they are unhappy with the EHC plan (if one is issued).

The ePEP has a section for children with disabilities with a Makaton symbol pupils part.

Feedback to key professionals and other relevant parties is shared as a matter of course as part of the work completed on each priority of the Work Plan 2017/18. In addition key partners/ individuals are invited to attend SEND Youth Forum.

Young people have helped to produce SEND Youth Forum promotional material including young people's flyer and promotional video.

Current SEND Youth Forum campaign priorities identified by young people include:

1. Young people felt it was important to raise other children and young people's awareness of disability to prevent bullying of vulnerable young people.

The forum have created a poster for the MASKS (Make A Special Kid Smile) charity exhibition and are now working on a project to introduce students from mainstream schools to their local SEN schools and placements. The forum will be working in partnership with Alfriston school for this work.

2. Young people felt there needed to be more information for young people on supporting transitions into adulthood.

Young people from the SEND Youth Forum helped create and appeared in 6 short information films about SEND post 16 provision. The films include a young person's tour of a college, therapies available on site, community provision by Macintyre and Talkback and residential placements with Aster Lodge. The films show SEND post 16 provision we currently offer and help young people and their families better understand the Local Offer and how the different services support can support young people with disabilities transition into adult services.

(<https://www.bucksfamilyinfo.org/kb5/buckinghamshire/fsd/advice.page?id=GIVSsf4UkOq>)

Committee RAG Rating:



#### Recommendation 4

That a specific Voice of the Child and Young Person website hub is developed to :

- Publicise prominently the relevant email addresses, phone numbers and social media for children and young people to give their views.
- Provide links to all relevant BCC and partners' website pages that focus on and provide a way for children and young people to give their views.
- Let children and young people know what has happened as a result of their feedback. (You said, we did)
- Clearly signpost services for children and young people in a way that is easy to understand.
- Publicise the rights of children and young people to be heard

Lead Cabinet Member: Cabinet Member for Children's Services

Lead Officer: Carol Douch

Action by date: End of January 2017

#### Original Response and Actions

#### Progress Update After 6 months

- A specific website area has been designed with children and young people to ensure key information is accessible to them. The final technical details are being completed and the website will go live at the end of January 2017.
- Buckinghamshire CAMHS (child and adolescent mental health) have recently re-launched their website following significant input from young people which addresses a number of the inquiry recommendations for this group of service users:  
<http://www.oxfordhealth.nhs.uk/fresh/bucks/>
- The Bucks Family Information Service (BFIS) website has sections dedicated to young people, including a section for young people to share their own views, vlogs etc (Your Space). There is also a Youth Space section that could be developed further with rights etc. BFIS is managed by Anna Ellis.
- The Youth Service also has a LAC website linked to the Children in Care Council called [kidsincare.org.uk](http://kidsincare.org.uk)

- The specific website area for children to understand their journey through social care system went live as planned, with an interactive tool so that they can access key information about what will happen at different points of the child's journey. The information has been co-produced and is in accessible language for children and young people.
- We do Care website clearly outlines the rights of children in care and aftercare and the pledge from the County Council and there is a link to this from the BFIS website.
- Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Board has a specific area with key information for children to understand what to do to keep safe

Committee RAG Rating:





### Recommendation 5

That the recording and discussion of children and young people's views are strengthened by:

- Work with staff across each business area to draw up a good practice guidance document on the process of recording and discussing the views of children and young people to improve consistency.
- Making discussion at social care supervision meetings & recording on the supervision template of children's and young people's views obligatory.
- Investigating whether the field within the ICS system to record the views of children and young people can be made mandatory to complete.
- As part of the Business Unit's work on Business Intelligence, look to set up a data hub in which all views gathered and recorded, from whichever service, can be stored, accessed and analysed from one place by multiple users.

Lead Cabinet Member: Cabinet Member for Children's Services

Lead Officer: Carol Douch

Action by date: June 2017

#### Original Response and Actions

Good practice guidance on recording children's views currently exists for children's social care and is currently specific to this service area. The quality of this is audited on a regular basis through supervision and through regular auditing. Guidance will be shared across the business unit through management and team meetings over the next 4 months.

It is currently a requirement in supervision and group supervision to consider the views of children and young people when decisions are made about assessment, effective planning and reviewing. It is monitored through supervision and file auditing.

There is a mandatory field in LCS about detailing when a child has been seen.


Some of the views of children and young people are confidential to that child and their circumstance. Information is already analysed in relation to themes about complaints and compliments. We will investigate the possibility of the BI Service finding a solution and essentially if we can achieve this without compromising

#### Progress Update After 6 months

The monthly case file audits undertaken across Children's Services evidence that the voice of the child is consistently being considered in assessments, interventions, planning and review. The child's voice is at the centre of what children's social care do. The guidance and regular management oversight has ensured this area of improvement has moved forward.

The supervision procedure and template has been reviewed and updated and formally launched in June 2017. The template now includes a prompt for the manager to discuss with the social worker a specific children's journey and this is then recorded on the child's record in LCS (the case recording system). (This will include Aftercare once all of the records have been transferred over)

The Rights to Information Team in Children's Services share anonymised outcomes and lessons learnt from individual complaints (both Stage 1 and Stage 2) in a thematic way that does not compromise confidentiality. For example, themes are included in the Getting to Good newsletters, form the basis of broader practice discussions at the regular County Manager meetings and Practice Improvement Managers encourage sharing by their Team Managers at their team meetings.

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|  | <p>The Good Practice Guidance document to highlight examples of good practice in schools currently that enables the voice of the child to be shared including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Responsive marking</li><li>• Target setting sessions</li><li>• School reports</li><li>• School Council</li><li>• Pupil Form/Class Reps</li><li>• Clubs and participation groups</li><li>• Via PTA activities</li><li>• Pupil surveys</li><li>• (via Autumn Term 2017 Liaison Groups)</li></ul> <p>Committee RAG Rating:</p>  |
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## Recommendation 6

To strengthen the strategic approach:

- a. Ensure that the voice of the child and young person is an overarching priority within Business Unit strategies, for example the Children's Strategy and its associated implementation plan, to include specific actions and performance measures.
- b. Make sure children and young people are part of the recruitment panel for appointments supporting children and young people

Lead Cabinet Member: Cabinet Member for Education and Skills

Lead Officer: James Fowler. Action by date: June 2017

| Original Response and Actions  | Progress Update After 6 months   |
|--|--|
| <p>a) It is already one of the overarching priorities as set out in the Children's Strategy that Children are at the heart of Buckinghamshire County Council's strategic priorities. We will consider how we monitor the voice of the child across our contract management function from a commissioned services perspective and look to embed an appropriate mechanism. We will ask BI to develop a possible solution to assist us in gathering the views of the children we work with by June 2017.</p> <p>b) The Youth Service has a pool of trained young people who can be available for recruitment processes. Action: Ensure the inclusion of C&amp;YP from the trained pool of young people are involved in recruitment process, and the process to access them through HR and the Youth service is reviewed by June 2017.</p> | <p>a) The voice of the child and young person is an overarching priority within Children's Services, and Safeguarding our Vulnerable is one of three overarching priorities for the Council.</p> <p>How a provider captures the voice of the child is key question in commissioning of new services and in monitoring and challenging providers in contract management.</p> <p>b) The Youth Service has a pool of trained young people and will continue to provide training and support for young people to enable them to participate in recruitment processes. Recent sessions delivered in April and May 2017. Planned session in October half-term specifically targeting Children Looked After and Care Leaver's. Additional plans to incorporate interview training in YS existing employability programmes to increase number of trained young people.</p> <p>Liaising with HR to include process for requesting young people's interview panels added to existing 'Recruitment Journey' guidance.</p> <p>Young people from Youth Voice, We Do Care and SEND Youth Forum to support refresh of young people's interview panels recruitment material.</p> <p>Young people's interview panels were recently involved in the recruitment of the DCS and 'Step up to Social Work' interviews</p> <p>A young people panel has been involved in the recruitment of all SEN Offices and Managers over the last 2 years.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Committee RAG Rating:</p> <p style="text-align: right;"></p> |

### Recommendation 7

That at each meeting of the wider leadership team there is a standing agenda item on the voice of the child and young person to focus on:

- Ensuring the voice of the child and young person is included in key strategies and plans
- Understanding the themes and lessons that can be learned from analysing the views of children and young people from across the different service areas.
- Using analysis of children and young people's views to identify gaps and duplication in service provision and ensure effective and efficient use of resources.
- Feeding back on key issues to the Senior Management Team meeting and Business Unit Board.

And that once a year, a wider leadership team meeting is devoted to the voice of the child and young person

Lead Cabinet Member: Cabinet Member for Children's Services

Lead Officer: Gladys Rhodes-White

Action by date: February 2017

#### Original Response and Actions

The agenda will be changed to ensure that this is considered at each WLT meeting. Once a year the meeting will be dedicated to the Voice of the Child.

Key themes identified from children's voices will help to amend and develop children's services policies and procedures and will be included in an annual review.

#### Progress Update After 6 months

Wider Leadership Team across children services has had 2 facilitated sessions by Local Government Association focussed on the cross cutting themes in children's services and ensuring the voice of the child is central to the work that is completed. The next WLT meeting is scheduled for November and the theme will be Voice of Child.

Key themes are used to amend and develop children's services policies an example is Buckinghamshire Looked after Children and Placement Sufficiency strategy which is focussed on ensuring that there are placements in Buckinghamshire which enables children to be maintained in their school and keep contact with their family friend and community.

Another recent example of co-production of work with young people is the revised Pathway way plan which is now user friendly and enables the child and young person's voice to be central to the planning.

Committee RAG Rating:



### Recommendation 8

That Voice of the Child and Young Person Leaders in the CSCL Business Unit and throughout the organisation are identified and whose role is to maintain a high profile for this area of work, share good practice and ensure that the voice of the child and young person becomes a more detailed cross cutting theme in strategies, plans and projects.

Lead Cabinet Member: Cabinet Member for Children's Services

Lead Officer: Gladys Rhodes-White

Action by date: Ongoing

#### Original Response and Actions

This is the responsibility of all staff and is one of the overarching priorities of the Council as identified in the Children's Strategy.

- Also it is the specific role of the Principal Children's Social Worker to ensure to maintain the profile and to challenge where this is not evident
- Simon Billenness and Theresa Carlyle lead on our Youth voice work in the Youth Service.

#### Progress Update After 6 months


A report from the Principal Social Worker was considered at the senior leadership team and One Council Board. A newly appointed Principal Social Worker has been appointed and will check the progress of the annual report and to be the champion for children's social work and the voice of the child. He has met with the Cabinet Member for Children's Services and the Director of Children's Services in his first few weeks in post.

The Youth Service delivers Youth Voice work including the Children in Care Council and SEND Youth Forum. The Youth Voice initiatives provide a mechanism for the Council to consult with young people on a regular basis and maintain open dialogue. Both the Children in Care Council and SEND Youth Forum have an annual work plan that includes key priorities identified by young people and officers and link to priorities for BCC.





In addition Youth Voice feed into wider strategies and plans for example planned consultation as part of the current Change for Children Programme.

Sarah Barnett leads on Youth Voice. James Fowler oversees Children in Care and SEND YV work.

Current approach to broaden contributions to Youth Service Youth Voice events include building an online community to enable children and young people to participate anytime and anywhere, ongoing engagement with key partners such as schools and other youth sector organisations to promote the Youth Voice opportunities. Developing young people as Youth Voice Ambassadors to recruit other young people to the Youth Voice community and promote streams of work

|  |   |
|--|---|
|  | <p>and outcomes.</p> <p>Committee RAG Rating:</p>  |
|--|---|

*RAG Status Guidance (For the Select Committee’s Assessment)*

|   |  |   |  |
|---|--|---|--|
|  | <i>Recommendation implemented to the satisfaction of the committee.</i>              |  | <i>Committee have concerns the recommendation may not be fully delivered to its satisfaction</i> |
|  | <i>Recommendation on track to be completed to the satisfaction of the committee.</i> |  | <i>Committee consider the recommendation to have not been delivered/implemented</i>              |

## Children's Workforce Scrutiny Inquiry Progress Update on Recommendations


### Interim Progress Report 12 months on

Select Committee Inquiry Report Completion Date: April 2016

Date of this update: 10<sup>th</sup> August 2017



Lead Officer responsible for this response: Carol Douch


Cabinet Member: Warren Whyte:

| Accepted Recommendations   | Original Response and Actions  | Progress Update after 12 months   | Committee Assessment of Progress (RAG status)   |
|--|--|---|---|
| Recommendation 1: There should be systematic analysis by the Children's Social Care & Learning Business Unit Management Team of the findings of social worker exit interviews. | <p>A new exit interview process has been adopted since March 2015. An analysis is undertaken of them already and reports to the workforce development Board on a quarterly basis.</p> <p>Example of trends identified so far include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work-life /balance</li> <li>• Career progression</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workforce Development meetings take place on a quarterly basis to consider the findings of exit interviews for staff leaving the Council or internally transferring to other teams. This assists in identifying what needs to be implemented to address any recurring themes for staff leaving BCC</li> <li>• Data gathered is also taken to the CSCL Monthly Resource Meetings attended by Heads of Service, PIMs, and HR where both compliance with the exit interview process and specific service/HR issues/actions are raised and addressed</li> <li>• Employees who leave employment in Social Worker roles voluntarily are encouraged to take part in a confidential exit interview, either with a manager from another department or with their line manager. Numbers of leavers and leaving reasons are monitored on a quarterly basis and</li> </ul> | <br><p>Agreed as implemented by the Committee on 31st January 2017</p> |

| Accepted Recommendations | Original Response and Actions | Progress Update after 12 months   | Committee Assessment of Progress (RAG status) |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------|---|---|
|                          |                               | <p>an annual exit interview report is produced after the end of each financial year. During the period 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017, 46 employees left BCC. Of the 46 voluntary leavers, 12 completed an exit interview (26%). The analysis that was undertaken therefore covered feedback from only those 12 individuals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Over this reporting period although the number of exit interviews conducted has increased, more needs to be done to capture the views of leavers. In order to address this new online process “Last Opinion” has been devised in order to capture the views of leavers. This new system is due to be launched shortly</li> <li>• Key messages from the exit interviews have been fed into an improvement action plan. Areas for improvement are central to the Workforce Strategy action plan and specific improvement suggestions will be reviewed and actions to address incorporated.</li> <li>• Actions in relation to workload have been addressed and are reported at performance meetings</li> <li>• Career progression is now one of the features of the retention offer and monthly boards are held to manage this process.</li> <li>• These processes are now business as usual as workforce development meeting and Resource meetings are occurring on a regular basis with caseloads being reported at the monthly SMT</li> </ul> |   |



| Accepted Recommendations  | Original Response and Actions   | Progress Update after 12 months  | Committee Assessment of Progress (RAG status)  |
|---|---|--|--|
|   |   | performance meetings.  |  |
| Recommendation 2: Efforts should be made to address the underrepresentation of men in the social care workforce.                    | This was discussed at Workforce Development Board (WDB) on 22/4/16. The priority is to ensure that we attract competent social workers for permanent jobs, irrespective of their gender, as we still have too many agency workers. The gender of the workforce will continue to be monitored and benchmarked. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In June 2017 22% of qualified social workers were on an agency contract, covering vacancies, sick leave, maternity and over establishment. If only the vacancies covered by agency staff is considered this figure drops to 18.5%</li> <li>From April to end June 2017 – 13% of permanent staff were male and 87% female as opposed to 8% and 92% respectively between June and December 2016</li> <li>Between April and June 2017 we have 64 agency workers in HCPC posts, of which 72% were female and 28% male, very similar to the figures reported in last update report</li> <li>Overall the composition of the Social Care workforce is Male 17% and Female 83% which shows some measured improvement in this trend. This compares to a National breakdown of 85% Female and 14% Male in 2016 (based on Guardian publication Social Lives 2017)</li> </ul> |   |
| Recommendation 3: Legal assurance should be sought around the implementation of Phase 2 of the South East Memorandum of Cooperation | A legal view has already been taken and incorporated into the Memorandum and the actions are deemed to be in line with employment law. The memorandum went live on 4 <sup>th</sup> April 2016.  | <p>There is a South East Region Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) for managing the demand and supply of Children's Social Workers across the south east region and with bordering councils.</p> <p>The purpose of this agreement has been to overcome some of the difficulties that many LAs have experienced</p>  | <br>Agreed as implemented by the Committee on 31st January 2017 |

| Accepted Recommendations   | Original Response and Actions   | Progress Update after 12 months  | Committee Assessment of Progress (RAG status)   |
|--|---|--|---|
|  |   | <p>in relation to agency worker quality, and cost in order that there is cooperation between local authorities. In order to manage the mis-match of requirements i.e. under supply and increased demand for 21.9% of social workers, it was felt that there needed to be a more collaborative and strategic approach, particularly in relation to managing agency worker supply and demand and associated costs.</p> <p>Buckinghamshire has signed this agreement along with 16 other authorities in the South East and regularly attends the quarterly update meetings. Since the MoC has been in place the agency rate has been capped, and the movement of social workers has slowed.</p> <p>Any children's social worker leaving a permanent contract will not be employed on an agency contract by another authority in the region within 6 months</p> <p>The arrangements outlined in the SE Memorandum of Cooperation remain current at the time of writing this update in July 2017.</p> |   |
| <p>Recommendation 4: The Cabinet Member for Children's Services and Director of Children's Services should take a lead on developing collaborative approaches on workforce issues with other</p> | <p>The Memorandum of Cooperation (Moc) has been agreed following collaborations across a number of Local Authorities. The training officer and HR attend a number of regional meetings to enhance collaboration.</p> <p>Examples of Regional Collaborations</p> | <p>The MoC quarterly review meetings are attended by Buckinghamshire senior Social Care managers and HR representatives and provide an opportunity for colleagues to share information and best practice. Key information is relayed back to the Workforce Development Group that is also held quarterly inside the Council and the monthly social care Resource Group.</p> <p>The organisation that facilitates the MoC, The South East</p>   |  |

| Accepted Recommendations                 | Original Response and Actions   | Progress Update after 12 months  | Committee Assessment of Progress (RAG status) |
|--|---|--|---|
| authorities both nationally and locally. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Learning &amp; Development Team are involved in a number of regional and national collaborative groups covering: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ASYE,</li> <li>• Step Up to SW,</li> <li>• Four Programmes Group – comprising Bucks, Oxfordshire and 4 Universities</li> <li>• Skills for Care Social Work Education Group – comprising Milton Keynes, Oxfordshire, Bucks and Berkshire (4 unitaries) + all HEI's feeding in.</li> <li>• National forums and best practice workshops on related activities.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> | <p>Sector Led Improvement Programme (SESLIP) provides project opportunities to allow colleagues to collaborate e.g. they will be running a project on Audit and Quality Assurance Procedures.</p> <p>We are also leading and involved in Newly Qualified Social Worker University programmes including the new graduate social work programmes - Step Up to Social Work and Frontline. In addition to the initiatives outlined above we are now sponsoring 5 colleagues to undertake the Open University Qualification in Social Work.</p> <p>There is an established pipeline of newly qualified Social Workers to start in CIN service; at present (July 2017) there are 14 NQSW in the process of joining. In addition, the Assessment team there are 2 NQSW joining the Assessment Team and one further colleague in CWD (Children with Disabilities). These colleagues will have protected number of children to work with so that they have the opportunity to further develop their skills. A new campaign to recruit NQSW for August and September 2017 is underway.</p> |   |

*RAG Status Guidance (For the Select Committee's Assessment)*

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|---|---|---|--|
|  | <i>Recommendation implemented to the satisfaction of the committee.</i> |  | <i>Committee have concerns the recommendation may not be fully delivered to its satisfaction</i> |
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*Recommendation on track to be completed to the satisfaction of the committee.*



*Committee consider the recommendation to have not been delivered/implemented*

| <b>AGENDA ITEM 13 – CHILDREN’S SOCIAL CARE AND LEARNING SELECT COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME.</b> |   |  |   |  |
|--|---|--|---|--|
| <b>Date</b>  | <b>Topic</b>  | <b>Description and Purpose</b>   | <b>Lead Service Officer</b>                                 |  |
| 5 Sep 2017   | Children's Workforce Inquiry                                      | To review and make an assessment of progress against the agreed recommendations of the inquiry 12 months on..  | Carol Douch, Service Director (Children & Family Service)   |  |
| 5 Sep 2017   | Education Strategy  | For Members to consider the proposals for the new Buckinghamshire Education Strategy.  | Sarah Callaghan, Service Director Education                 |  |
| 5 Sep 2017   | Permanent Exclusions  | For Members to look into the current position regarding the increase in permanent exclusions in Buckinghamshire.                                       | Sarah Callaghan, Service Director Education                 |  |
| 5 Sep 2017   | Refreshed Safeguarding Children Improvement Programme - June 2017 | For Members to consider the refreshed Safeguarding Improvement Programme and to look at the issues raised by Ofsted following their monitoring visits. | Carol Douch, Service Director (Children & Family Service)   |  |
| 5 Sep 2017   | Voice of the Child and Young Person Inquiry                       | To review and make an assessment of progress against the agreed recommendations of the inquiry 6 months on   | Gladys Rhodes White, Executive Director Children's Services |  |

| <b>Date</b> | <b>Topic</b>                                       | <b>Description and Purpose</b>  | <b>Lead Service Officer</b>  |  |
|-------------|--|---|--|--|
| 17 Oct 2017 | Independent Reviewing Officer Service              | For Members to consider the performance of the IRO service and current resourcing.  | Julie Davies, Head of Children's Quality Standards & Performance                     |  |
| 17 Oct 2017 | Performance Report - Q1 2017-18                    | For the Committee to review and question Cabinet Members on areas of underperformance.  | Gladys Rhodes White, Executive Director Children's Services                          |  |
| 17 Oct 2017 | Preventing Bullying in Schools                     | Paper for information only at this stage. Preventing bullying in schools in Buckinghamshire   | Yvette Thomas, Children's Policy and Equalities Manager                              |  |
| 17 Oct 2017 | The Educational Psychology Service Action Plan     | To update Members on progress with implementing the Educational Psychology Service Action Plan  | Craig Tribe  |  |
| 5 Dec 2017  | National Funding Formula for Schools               | For Members to consider changes to the National Funding Formula and the impact on Buckinghamshire schools.  | Sarah Callaghan, Service Director Education  |  |
| 5 Dec 2017  | NHS England Sustainability and Transformation Plan | Understanding the impacts of integrating Health and Social Care on Children's Services including the NHS England Sustainability and Transformation Plan | David Johnston, Managing Director, Children's Social Care, Children and Young People |  |

| <b>Date</b> | <b>Topic</b>  | <b>Description and Purpose</b>  | <b>Lead Service Officer</b>                                 |  |
|-------------|---|---|---|--|
| 6 Feb 2018  | Performance Report - Q2 2017-18                               | For the Committee to review and question Cabinet Members on areas of underperformance.                      | Gladys Rhodes White, Executive Director Children's Services |  |
| 6 Feb 2018  | Voice of the Child and Young Person Inquiry - Recommendations | To review and make an assessment of progress against the agreed recommendations of the inquiry 12 months on | Gladys Rhodes White, Executive Director Children's Services |  |

#### **IN DEPTH INQUIRIES – TO BE CONFIRMED**

- **PERMANENT EXCLUSIONS**
- **TRANSITIONS - Children With Disabilities and Looked After Children**

**Once confirmed one or both inquiries would take place over the autumn/winter period**

