

Minutes

EDUCATION & CHILDREN'S SERVICES POLICY OVERVIEW COMMITTEE

21 November 2012



Meeting held at Committee Room 4 - Civic Centre,
High Street, Uxbridge UB8 1UW

	<p>Committee Members Present: Councillors Catherine Dann (Chairman) Judith Cooper (Vice-Chairman) David Benson Lindsay Bliss Jazz Dhillon John Hensley John Riley</p> <p>Representative Member: Anthony Little</p> <p>LBH Officers Present: Linda Sanders (Corporate Director of Social Care and Health), Paul Hewitt (Service Manager for Safeguarding Children and Reviewing Service), Merlin Joseph (Deputy Director Children and Families), Julien Kramer (Interim Chief Education Officer), Dan Kennedy (Service Manager – Performance and Intelligence), Khalid Ahmed (Democratic Services Manager) and Steven Maiden (Democratic Services Officer).</p>	
32.	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE <i>(Agenda Item 1)</i> Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Susan O'Brian with Councillor Wayne Bridges substituting.	Action by
33.	TO CONFIRM THAT ALL ITEMS MARKED PART 1 WILL BE CONSIDERED IN PUBLIC AND ALL PART 2 ITEMS WILL BE CONSIDERED IN PRIVATE <i>(Agenda Item 3)</i> It was agreed that Item 6, Quality Assurance and Audit Framework – Children's Services, be considered in Part II of the agenda. The rest of the agenda was considered in part I.	Action by
34.	MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 10 OCTOBER 2012 <i>(Agenda Item 5)</i> The minutes of the meetings held on 10 October 2012 were agreed as a correct record.	Action by
35.	ANNUAL COMPLAINTS REPORT 2011/12 FOR SOCIAL CARE, HEALTH & HOUSING <i>(Agenda Item 6)</i> Officers presented the Annual Complaints Report 2012/13 for Social Care, Health and Housing.	Action by

The Committee discussed the Report and the following areas were covered:

- Whether it would be possible to receive a similar complaints report which covered education complaints and complaints made to schools across the Borough. Officers noted that it would be possible to draw such a report together but it would not give a complete picture for the Borough because Academies and Free Schools were not required to report complaints to Local Authorities.
- Members noted that they would like the reporting mechanisms from Academies and Free Schools to local authorities formalised.
- It was acknowledged that social workers and officers in Children Social Services had caseloads significantly above the 15 cases recommended by the Munro Review of Child Protection. Given this workload the service was seen to be performing extremely well.
- The increase in complaints received by Children in Need and across the service was largely seen to be due to the way in which officers communicated decisions rather than about the decisions themselves. Staff training in this area had been undertaken in the previous 6 months which had led to a reduction by half in the number of complaints being upheld.
- It was noted that the Children's and Families team were doing an outstanding job given the pressure that they were under. It was especially noted that the problems with staff turnover was a difficult situation but was being dealt with extremely well. Officers advised that they were trying to stabilise the staffing situation but that it was difficult to find and appoint the right candidates.
- Members commended officers for their hard work and for resolving complaints efficiently at Stage 1 rather than allowing them to progress further.

Resolved: That:

1. **The Service Manager – Performance and Intelligence would provide details of education complaints at a future meeting.**
2. **The Annual Complaint Report be noted and officers thanked for resolving all complaints of Stage 1 of the complaints procedure.**

36.	MAJOR REVIEW - SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN WHO ARE REPORTED MISSING - SUGGESTED RECOMMENDATIONS AND DRAFT FINAL REPORT (Agenda Item 7) <p>Officers presented the draft final report on the Safeguarding Children who are Reported Missing review and noted that the following amendments were to be made to the recommendations in the report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Recommendation 1 would be re-worded from "Oyster and numbers" to "Oyster card numbers and known addresses". 	Action by
-----	---	------------------

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Recommendation 5 would have the words “some of” deleted from the first sentence. ▪ Recommendation 5, bullet point 3 would be reworded to refer to the “mobile youth services bus” being made accessible to children in all care homes in the Borough. <p>Members discussed the draft report and the following areas were covered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ There was concern that Recommendation 1 may have data protection implications which should be explored by officers before it is included in the report submitted to Cabinet. ▪ That Recommendation 5, bullet point 1 needed to be reworded to reflect that only approved members of staff would be able to deal with missing children prior to it going to the Police. It was suggested that this might only be authorised by a Care Home manager. ▪ It was advised that Recommendations 2 and 3 should be reworded to include “semi-independent units” in addition to private and voluntary sector care homes. ▪ That Recommendation 5, bullet points 2 and 6 needed to be merged into a single recommendation covering the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH). <p>It was agreed officers would revise the recommendations as outlined above and email them to Members for their information to the submission of the report to Cabinet.</p> <p>Resolved: That Members:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Considered the evidence which the Committee gathered during its review. 2. Highlighted issues for further investigation. 3. Considered the draft recommendations and instructed officers to make revisions as discussed and email the updated report to Members for approval prior to being submitted to Cabinet. 	Khalid Ahmed
37.	<p>EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES POLICY OVERVIEW COMMITTEE - REVIEW TOPIC 2012/13 (Agenda Item 8)</p> <p>The Committee discussed a number of possible review topics for its second major review of 2012/13. The topics put forward were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Local arrangements to ensure access to education for vulnerable children. ▪ Auditing and overseeing the safeguarding arrangements of partners. ▪ Risk assessment for placing children in residential homes. <p>Following discussion, the Committee agreed that a draft scoping report be produced on the Local arrangements to ensure access to education for vulnerable children for the January meeting of the Committee.</p>	Action by Julien Kramer

	<p>It was also agreed that a report be submitted to the Committee's meeting in April on the arrangements for auditing and overseeing the safeguarding of partners via the Local Safeguarding Children Board.</p> <p>Resolved: That Members:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Discussed the possible topics for the Committee to undertake its second major review of 2012/13 2. Instructed officers to produce a draft scoping report on Local arrangements to ensure access to education for vulnerable children. 	Julien Kramer / Steven Maiden
38.	<p>WORK PROGRAMME 2012/2013 (Agenda Item 9)</p> <p>Members requested that a bi-annual report on school admissions be considered at this Committee to see what the trends are across the Borough. Officers advised that such a report was already produced and considered by Cabinet. It was suggested that it might be more useful for this Committee to consider the 10 year plan for schools which highlighted hot spots across the Borough. It was agreed that the 10 year plan should be considered by the Committee in due course.</p> <p>It was clarified that the item listed as "Quarterly Assurance and Audit Framework – Children's Services" should be listed as "Quality Assurance and Audit Framework – Children's Services".</p> <p>It was agreed that the recent Fostering Inspection Report should be considered by the Committee at its January meeting.</p> <p>Resolved: That Members confirmed dates for meetings and made minor amendments to the work programme.</p>	<p>Action by</p> <p>Steven Maiden</p> <p>Steven Maiden</p>
39.	<p>FORWARD PLAN 2012/2013 (Agenda Item 10)</p> <p>Resolved: That Members noted the items and decided not to comment.</p>	<p>Action by</p>
40.	<p>QUALITY ASSURANCE AND AUDIT FRAMEWORK - CHILDREN'S SERVICES (Agenda Item 11)</p> <p>The report on this item was included in Part II as it contained information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Authority holding that information) and the public interest in withholding the information outweighed the public interest in disclosing it (exempt information under paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12 A to the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 as amended).</p> <p>Officers introduced the report giving a brief outline of the information contained in the report. Following discussion the committee noted the report.</p>	<p>Action by</p>

	Resolved: That Members noted the report.	
	The meeting, which commenced at 7.00 pm, closed at 9.10 pm.	

These are the minutes of the above meeting. For more information on any of the resolutions please contact Khalid Ahmed on 01895 250833. Circulation of these minutes is to Councillors, Officers, the Press and Members of the Public.