

Minutes

EDUCATION & CHILDRENS' SERVICES POLICY OVERVIEW COMMITTEE

23 March 2010

Meeting held at Committee Room 3 - Civic Centre,
High Street, Uxbridge UB8 1UW



HILLINGDON
LONDON

	<p>Committee Members Present: Councillors Catherine Dann, Brian Crowe, Judith Cooper, Peter Curling, John Hensley & Anita MacDonald.</p> <p>Councillors Present: Councillors Mo Khursheed & Phoday Jarjussey.</p> <p>Other Voting Representatives Present: Anthony Little.</p> <p>LBH Officers Present: Anna Crispin, Natasha Dogra, Debbie Haith, Fiona Lyon & Merlin Joseph</p>	
1.	<p>APOLOGIES OF ABSENCE (<i>Agenda Item 1</i>)</p> <p>None.</p>	Action by
2.	<p>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN MATTER COMING BEFORE THIS MEETING (<i>Agenda Item 2</i>)</p> <p>Cllr Catherine Dann, John Hensley, Judith Cooper, Peter Curling and Anita MacDonald declared a personal but non-prejudicial interest in all items on the agenda as all acted as School Governors. All Members remained in the room for the full meeting and were able to vote on all agenda items.</p>	Action by
3.	<p>TO CONFIRM THAT ALL ITEMS MARKED PART I WILL BE CONSIDERED IN PUBLIC, AND ALL ITEMS MARKED PART II WILL BE CONSIDERED IN PRIVATE. (<i>Agenda Item 3</i>)</p> <p>All items on the agenda were marked Part I and were considered in public.</p>	Action by
4.	<p>TO RECEIVE AND AGREE THE MINUTES OF 11 FEBRUARY 2010 (<i>Agenda Item 4</i>)</p> <p>The minutes of 11 February 2010 were agreed as an accurate record/</p>	Action by
5.	<p>UPDATE - ACHIEVEMENT OF LOOKED-AFTER CHILD AND REPORT ON VIRTUAL SCHOOLING (<i>Agenda Item 5</i>)</p> <p>The Chairman welcomed Fiona Lyon, Head Teacher of Virtual Schooling, and invited the officer to begin her presentation.</p>	Action by

	<p>The officer informed Members that the London Borough of Hillingdon appointed a Virtual Head teacher in October 2008 to support looked after children’s education and challenge services to ensure best outcomes. The Looked After Children’s Education (LACE) Team was now managed by the Head teacher and the service was called Hillingdon Virtual School.</p> <p>In September 2009, the role of Designated Teacher for Looked After Children became a statutory role in all schools. This was to ensure that schools met the individual needs of looked after pupils as a specific vulnerable group monitored by Ofsted. The Personal Education Plan (PEP) was a statutory document for all looked after children, which was completed every 6 months, in line with care planning reviews. The London Borough of Hillingdon had adopted the Pan London PEP to raise the level and quality of PEPs being completed across London.</p> <p>There were 314 children looked after at 30 September 2008 who had been looked after for at least 12 months. Of these 71% were eligible to receive full-time schooling during the school year, 23% of whom were covered by a statement of special educational needs (at some point during the academic year 2008-2009).</p> <p>Members asked Officers what the term “virtual” meant in this case. Officers said “virtual” schooling was schooling which was not designated to one building. A team of virtual schooling staff support children in schools across 60 Local Authorities. The team was divided into key stage coordinators who visited all types of schools; mainstream, special, residential units and alternative units inclusive. Computers and ICT are used to teach the children, but no one child solely used IT to complete their education.</p> <p>Children who were excluded from school or were “school phobic” did not reply on virtual schooling, but were enrolled on a scheme called “NOT school”. This could be performed for a short period of time and would only be used after the vulnerability of the child had been assessed.</p> <p>Officers informed the Committee that the current IT provision was sufficient with funding being used to purchase laptops and specialist desktops for the children. Officers said training was provided for designated teachers by the Virtual Schooling Team through a vigorous programme aimed at staff involved in teaching through virtual means.</p> <p>To Note: Members noted the update and requested comparative data to be circulated, with in borough and out of borough data included.</p>	
6.	<p>OVERVIEW OF SAFEGUARDING RESPONSIBILITIES AND SCRUTINY PAPER (<i>Agenda Item 6</i>)</p> <p>The Chairman welcomed Debbie Haith, Head of Safeguarding, and invited the officer to begin her presentation.</p>	Action by

	<p>The 2004 Children Act established the legislative framework for the duty to cooperate across agencies and the establishment of Children's Trusts and Local Safeguarding Children's Boards (LSCB). Following the introduction of the legislation, statutory guidance was issued on the roles and responsibilities of Local Safeguarding Children's Boards, Children's Trust arrangements and the roles and responsibilities of the Leader of the Council, the Lead Member for Children, the Chief Executive and the Director of Children's Services. Following the death of Baby Peter in Haringey Lord Lamings report set out recommendations to clarify and strengthen the relationship between the Local Children's Safeguarding Board and the Children's Trust. Legislation was introduced as part of the Apprenticeships Skills, Children and Learners Act 2009 which set out key responsibilities and accountabilities.</p> <p>The Children's Trust Board developed the local strategy for improving children's lives which was set out in the statutory Children and Young Peoples Plan and focuses on four key local priorities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having specialist, early intervention and prevention services for all children and young people identified as having additional needs. • Narrowing the Gap: Having a strategy in place to reduce child poverty including raising aspirations and attainment of the whole family. • Using multi-agency teams, working through Children's Centres to address the needs of children underachieving at the Early Years Foundation. • Developing effective joint working and commissioning, and listening to views of children, young people and families. <p>The LSCB should report to the Children's Trust Board and publish an annual report on the effectiveness of safeguarding in the local area. LSCB should provide robust challenge to the work of the Trust and its partners in order to ensure that the right systems and quality of service and practice are in place so that children are properly safeguarded. Hillingdon Safeguarding Children's Board now has an independent Chairman.</p> <p>To Note: The Committee noted the update report.</p>	
7.	<p>REVIEW 2: CHILD TRAFFICKING - CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS (<i>Agenda Item 7</i>)</p> <p>The Chairman directed Members to the Child Trafficking review final report and opened the floor to suggestions regarding the conclusions and recommendations.</p>	Action by

	<p>Members agreed that the basis of each recommendation was correct, but further information was needed. The following changes were necessary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendation A - the recommendation should be clear what training would be made available for foster carers and respite unit staff. • Recommendation B – information regarding the safeguarding of children would be included here. • Recommendation C – the communication links should be expanded to include inter agencies. • Recommendation D – clarity needed to be achieved through wording alterations. • Recommendation E – rewording of recommendation was needed for ease of reading. <p>Members agreed that conclusion 4 would include information on a specific case where an embassy was involved in safeguarding a group of children.</p> <p>Agreed: Members agreed the final report with the above recommendations.</p>	
8.	<p>TO AGREE THE FORWARD PLAN 2010 (<i>Agenda Item 8</i>)</p> <p>Agreed: The Cabinet Forward Plan was agreed by the Committee</p>	Action by
9.	<p>TO AGREE THE WORK PROGRAMME 2010 (<i>Agenda Item 9</i>)</p> <p>The Committee requested a report outlining the progress of children in care filing system - had the transfer of paper files to electronic files been completed, what problems the system face, when and how the system would be implemented.</p> <p>Agreed: The Committee agreed the 2009/10 Work Programme with the report on the Children in Care filing system being presented to Committee in the next municipal year.</p>	Action by Debbie Haith, ECS
<p>The meeting, which commenced at 7.00 pm, closed at 9.30 pm.</p>		

These are the minutes of the above meeting. For more information on any of the resolutions please contact Natasha Dogra on 01895 277488. Circulation of these minutes is to Councillors, Officers, the Press and Members of the Public.