

Minutes

CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND LEARNING POLICY OVERVIEW COMMITTEE

14 June 2016



Meeting held at Committee Room 5 - Civic Centre,
High Street, Uxbridge UB8 1UW

	<p>Committee Members Present: Councillors Jane Palmer (Chairman), Nick Denys (Vice-Chairman), Jem Duducu, Dominic Gilham, Becky Haggard, Allan Kauffman, John Oswell, Jagjit Singh, Jan Sweeting (Labour Lead) and Tony Little.</p> <p>Also Present:</p> <p>Steve Ashley (Independent Chairman of the Hillingdon Local Safeguarding Children Board), Laurie Cornwell (Executive Headteacher, The Skills Hub / Young People's Academy) and Richard Yates (Headteacher, West Drayton Primary School).</p> <p>LBH Officers Present: Nikki Cruickshank (Interim Assistant Director of Safeguarding and Quality Assurance), Dan Kennedy (Head of Business Performance, Policy & Standards), Andrea Nixon (Children and Young People's Services - Safeguarding Children) and Laura Palmer (Team Manager, Admissions) and Jon Pitt (Democratic Services Officer).</p>
3.	<p>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (<i>Agenda Item 1</i>)</p> <p>Councillor Nick Denys had advised he would be late arriving at the meeting. He subsequently joined the meeting at 7:15pm. There were no other apologies for absence.</p>
4.	<p>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN MATTERS COMING BEFORE THE MEETING (<i>Agenda Item 2</i>)</p> <p>There were no Declarations of Interest.</p>
5.	<p>TO CONFIRM THAT ITEMS OF BUSINESS MARKED PART 1 WILL BE CONSIDERED IN PUBLIC AND THAT THE ITEMS MARKED PART 2 WILL BE CONSIDERED IN PRIVATE (<i>Agenda Item 3</i>)</p> <p>It was confirmed that all items were Part I and would be heard in public.</p>
6.	<p>TO AGREE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS HELD ON 13 APRIL 2016 AND 12 MAY 2016 (<i>Agenda Item 4</i>)</p> <p>A Member said that the minutes of the Single Meeting Review item had raised some good points in relation to the review and she hoped that these would be reflected in the final report. The Member had some questions in relation to the Children and Young People's Social Care Service Improvement Plan, such as whether the Skylakes contract had ended, which she planned to submit as a Member enquiry.</p>

Concerns were expressed that a previously requested update on school expansion was not on the agenda and it was disappointing for Members to find out about local expansion through the local press rather than via the Committee.

Resolved: That the minutes of the previous meetings were agreed.

7. **SINGLE MEETING REVIEW - SUPPORTING EDUCATIONAL ASPIRATION FOR DISADVANTAGED CHILDREN** (*Agenda Item 5*)

Laurie Cornwell, Executive Headteacher at the Skills Hub and Young People's Academy addressed the Committee in relation to major review. The key points raised included the following:

- The Skills Hub was an alternative provision provider for pupils who were unable to attend mainstream schools due to medical reasons or previous exclusion.
- The Young People's Academy was a special school for children with social, emotional or mental health needs.
- With regard to the spending of pupil premium funding, there was often too much focus on GCSE results rather than on other outcomes, such as the development of pupils.
- The schools focused on ensuring that pupils left with results that reflected their abilities and that they were able to maintain relationships, run a household and hold down a job.
- Both schools had low figures for leavers Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET), with the Skills Hub having a figure of zero.
- Access to external resources, such as Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) were a cause for concern. Meeting the threshold for access to services was difficult and the waiting list for service provision was long, which could exacerbate the problems that pupils had, especially where some service access was initially provided, but was then followed by a lengthy wait.
- The CAMHS service itself was considered to be good, but it was the access to it that was problematic.
- Cases referred to CAMHS would be closed in the case of non-attendance. This was concerning as the non attendance could be caused by the mental health issue that the initial referral had been for.
- The schools had started to help arrange doctor appointments on behalf of parents and to attend the appointments with the parents / pupils.

In response to questions from the Committee, the following points were made:

- It was important to demonstrate how pupils had progressed from their starting point when they had joined the school. Baseline data was important with regard to this. Cognitive ability tests were used to provide a clear picture of a pupil's progress at a particular point in time.
- There was a wide range of academic ability across the schools. Some pupils left with functional ability in English and mathematics, while others obtained a number of GCSEs at grade A* to C.
- The aim was to enable as many pupils as possible to return to mainstream education.
- There were currently around 120 pupils who were accessing special educational provision at the schools. Approximately 70% of the pupils were male and a majority were white British.
- Some traveller children were pupils at the schools. These tended to be younger pupils.

- The provision of additional staff training in relation to CAMHS would be welcome. Consideration could be given to employing a clinical psychologist in conjunction with other schools.
- Education provision was too results orientated, with the focus being on GCSE attainment rather than wider education. Teacher training needed to focus on the pastoral system and stabilising children, ensuring that they were in a safe place to learn.

It was agreed that the Chairman and Labour Lead would provide a list of data that would be requested from Laurie Cornwell for consideration as part of the review. It was important for the Committee to have evidence to support the recommendations proposed by the review.

Laurie Cornwell advised that the schools would be holding a Summer Fair on 1 July between 12 and 2. Members would be welcome to attend to meet some of the pupils.

Richard Yates, Headteacher at West Drayton Primary School, addressed the Committee in relation to major review and introduced the witness statement circulated in advance of the meeting. The key points raised included the following:

- West Drayton Primary was a large and expanding primary school. The school had to ensure the quality of teaching and learning and improve educational outcomes as it had a significant number of disadvantaged pupils.
- The progress of white British pupils, particularly those eligible for free school meals, was mentioned as being a cause for concern.
- It was felt that schools in the south of the Borough had to spend more on certain types of resources than schools in the north of the Borough.
- It was questioned whether the Council was able to provide a list to schools of all the families eligible for Pupil Premium. This would help to ensure that schools maximised their access to the funding. A possible issue was that some parents who had children eligible for free school meals did not take these up. This had been raised previously with the Council.
- The role of Children's Centres and how proactive they were within a community should also be considered. It was questioned whether Children's Centres could provide information for schools and to consider the undertaking of audits within specific areas to review the services being provided and what could be required.
- Pupil health checks were not undertaken frequently enough and it was questioned whether this could be increased. Links with local GPs also required strengthening.
- Positive parenting should be encouraged, including parents reading regularly with children and consideration could be given to facilitating 'positive parenting' sessions to encourage this. Some children at West Drayton Primary had poor comprehension skills and it was felt that this was due to parents not spending time reading and talking to them.
- The witness considered that existing provision at Cornerstone and Cherry Lane Children's Centres did not adequately support the accelerated learning of children.

In response to questions from the Committee, the following points were made:

- West Drayton Primary had allocated £10,000 for the provision of speech and language skills but had been unable to find a suitable organisation to provide this.
- The Council's Early Intervention Service did not provide the type of holistic

planning support that would be beneficial to the school.

- The school was required to contribute £6,000 before receiving any intervention services.
- Budgeting and prioritisation of resources was an ongoing challenge and it was, therefore, necessary to be creative with existing services.
- The allocation of pupil premium funding to schools for pupils in receipt of free school meals was £1,320 per child. Around 25 to 30% of children at the school received free meals. The funding was used for the provision of educational trips and extracurricular activities. The school tried to maximise the opportunity for such trips.
- Schools did not receive notification where a health check raised concerns about the weight of a pupil or another issue.
- Recruitment of staff and ensuring that the best possible staff were recruited, retained and effectively supported was a challenge, particularly given budgetary constraints.
- Pupil ability was regularly tested. This included both academic and social ability. Tracking and monitoring of information was important.

Members acknowledged that budgetary constraints would have an impact on services that Children's Centres could provide and the provision of any additional services. It was also acknowledged that there were some areas of the Borough with relatively high levels of deprivation, such as parts of West Drayton, Yiewsley, Hayes. There were also pockets of deprivation in other parts of the Borough.

The Committee thanked the witnesses for the information provided and the good work that their schools were undertaking.

Resolved: That:

- 1. The Chairman and Labour lead to compile a list of data that the Committee wished to request from Laurie Cornwell and this be provided to Laurie.**
- 2. The evidence provided be noted.**

8. HILLINGDON LOCAL SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD ANNUAL REPORT 2016 (Agenda Item 6)

The Independent Chairman of the Hillingdon Local Safeguarding Children Board introduced the Annual Report 2015/16. It was noted that the 2014/15 Annual Report had been presented to the Committee in September 2015. It was considered that this report had been inadequate for a number of reasons, the main reason being that there had been no view from the Chairman with regard to whether children in Hillingdon were being safeguarded effectively. It was unacceptable that the Annual Report had not been produced until September 2015. It had been agreed that the 2015/16 Annual Report would be produced by the end of May 2016, a target that had been met.

It was now possible to say that children in the Borough were being effectively safeguarded. There were four main areas that had led to this conclusion:

1. Investment in children's services, consolidation of senior members of staff into permanent positions and improvements in terms of the number of permanent staff compared to agency staff.
2. Hillingdon Hospital, which had previously received a 'requires improvement' rating. This rating had since improved to 'good.'
3. The Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH). In some areas, the MASH tended

not to contribute much to safeguarding. Stephen Rimmer, a nationally respected figure with regard to Children's Services, had concluded that the Hillingdon MASH was one of the best that he had seen. MASH was central to the front door work of safeguarding.

4. The Council's Early Intervention programme had moved forward more quickly than anticipated. There was buy in across the Council and its partners for the provision of Early Intervention services.

The Board had been restructured and featured members from a suitably high level within their respective organisations. The Board had established a business unit to support its work, which enabled actions to be undertaken promptly.

The finances of the LSCB had been reviewed as its previous financial management had not been acceptable. The Council's contribution was just under 75% of the total budget of the LSCB. This compared to a national average of 65 to 70%. Invoices to debtors were now being sent out when they were due and unpaid invoices were followed up. This had not happened with any consistency previously.

A Training Quality Inspector was supporting training delivered by the Board and it was anticipated that this would become a profitable activity, with the funds then being available to invest in other activities.

It was suggested that the Board Membership could include a Members of the Children, Young People and Learning Policy Overview Committee.

A Member noted that previous annual reports had included details of attendance at meetings and requested that this information be circulated to the Committee and included in future annual reports.

In response to a Member question, the Chairman of the Board advised that it had not undertaken significant work with regard to Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), but that this was being covered within the Children's Services department at the Council. Officers advised that the Domestic Violence Forum and one of its sub groups was considering the issue of FGM.

A Committee Member had a lot of questions in relation to the report presented. It was determined that some of these would be asked at the meeting, with the remainder to be submitted separately outside. The first of these questions related to the audit of outcomes and whether further information could be provided in future reports. This would be provided and it was noted that it was important to ensure that a 'golden thread' ran through the activities of the Board. This would enable the effectiveness of the Board's priorities to be assessed. It was anticipated that it would soon be possible to do so, but it was acknowledged that work was required in this area. This would enable outcomes to be monitored on a quarterly basis. The audit programme would support this and would uncover the story behind the statistics. The audit process was already underway.

It was questioned whether the budget for 2016/17 was in place, whether it was considered to be adequate and what it was. The Chairman of the Board responded that the budget was matched to the outgoings of the Board and was considered to be sufficient. Additional funding had been requested for provision of an audit tool on the basis that this would ultimately save money by increasing the efficiency of the Board. The challenge was to ensure that external partners made a suitable contribution to the LSCB budget and it was noted that the Metropolitan Police contributed significantly less funding to the LSCB compared to the contribution that it was felt that it should be making. This had been accepted by the local Borough Commander. The Pan London

Chair's Association of Safeguarding Children's Boards had written to the Metropolitan Police Commissioner and to the London Mayor to highlight their concerns over the level of funding provided by the Police. Senior management of the Council accepted that the LSCB was striving to become as efficient as it could be.

The third largest group of persons referred for investigation due to either allegations having been made against them or them having committed criminal activities in relation to children were passenger assistants or drivers of children with additional needs. The Annual Report stated that this was concerning and the Chairman of the Committee asked for an explanation of this. The Chairman of the Board advised that publicity in the national press had caused concerns, but it was not considered that local levels were excessively high, so although the issue was of some concern, it was not considered to be a major worry.

In response to a Member question, the Board Chairman advised that one of the two biggest challenges for the Board in the coming year was ensuring that the views of children and their parents were listened to and responded to effectively. Further work was required to engage with the local community. Work with Children's Centres was required to provide them with knowledge of the work of the LSCB and the role of its independent Chair. The second area of improvement was ensuring that any performance or other issues of concern identified received proper challenge and scrutiny. Recent examples of where a challenge had been made had included medicals for looked after children and the proposed closure of children's services at Ealing Hospital. It was expected that the audit process would support the challenge of performance matters.

It was questioned whether schools had the knowledge and ability to refer issues to the LSCB and whether it was known where referrals came from. There were referral figures available, which were in line with what would be expected. Teachers had sometimes attempted to make a referral and were told that the case did not meet the threshold for action to be taken. This had resulted in a review of the threshold document. A Pan London threshold document had also been published. The work of the MASH was critical to ensuring the sharing of concerns received from different organisations, which could collectively result in a threshold being reached where it might not otherwise be. Training was taking place with schools to improve their knowledge and there had been some success in asking schools to financially contribute to the cost of this.

The LSCB Chairman clarified that all the statistics, including deprivation data used by the LSCB, were provided by Government agencies. A Member highlighted that the LSCB Annual Report stated that 40% of children living in poverty in Hillingdon lived in two wards in the south of the Borough. However, the Council's Joint Strategic Needs Assessment published in July 2015 had identified more than two wards. The Chairman of the LSCB agreed to check the data.

The Chairman said that it was clear that the Board had made significant strategic progress. This was leading to better financial management. The Chairman and officers were congratulated on progress made so far. Committee Members applauded the report and the progress made.

Resolved: That:

- 1. Details of attendance at Hillingdon LSCB meetings for 2015/16 be circulated to the Committee and attendance figures be included in future annual reports.**

2. **Members to provide further questions in relation to the report of LSCB to the Chairman / Democratic Services. These would be provided to the LSCB for response.**
3. **The update provided in relation to the 2015/16 LSCB Annual Report be noted.**

9. **SCHOOL ADMISSIONS UPDATE** (*Agenda Item 7*)

Officers introduced the School Admissions Update, noting that the national offer day for secondary school places had been on 1 March 2016. Every child in Hillingdon had been offered a school place. There had been an 8% increase in applications for a secondary school place in Hillingdon and officers were pleased with the relatively high level of first preference offers made. Hillingdon continued to be the best performing Borough in west London for offering one of the top three preferences and was well above the London average. It was noted that 28 Hillingdon residents had been offered a place at Pinner High School, which had opened in Harrow.

Some schools, such as Northwood, were oversubscribed, which was encouraging. This was despite a bulge class of 30 additional places ahead of permanent expansion. 190 places had been offered at Harlington School, the majority of which were for first preference choices. The number of applications naming the school as a preference had nearly doubled. This was a good achievement as the school had been significantly undersubscribed in the past. Additional places would be available at Abbotsfield and Swakeleys Schools for September 2017 and officers were satisfied with secondary capacity.

The Committee asked what the total spare capacity would be in September 2016 across secondary schools in Hillingdon and what the percentage of spare capacity was. Haydon School had 25 places. There were places at Harefield Academy, Douay Martyrs had around 4 places, Abbotsfield had 60 places, there were 15 places at Hewens, around 15 at Harlington School and 20 at Stockley Academy. Available places were well spread across the Borough. A figure for the percentage of spare capacity would be circulated to the Committee outside the meeting.

National Offer Day for primary school places had been 18 April 2016, with every child in Hillingdon having been offered a school place, with the exception of two children that had not received an offer by parental preference. 96% of applicants had been offered one of their top three schools, which was the highest in west London. Hillingdon was joint 1st in London, with Bexley, for children receiving one of their preferences. Hillside Infant School had taken a bulge class of 30 pupils. This had been planned in case of a local increase in applications, which had materialised. Although the overall number of applications in the Borough was similar to 2015, there had been pockets of increase in some areas.

Consultation had been undertaken in relation to changing the admissions criteria for community schools and this had been agreed by the Council. The new criteria would be implemented for September 2017.

Members were pleased that the Hillingdon admission statistics compared favourably to other west London Boroughs. It was questioned whether it was anticipated that the Borough increase of 8% or the London wide increase of 3.3% for September 2016 admissions would be repeated for September 2017. Officers advised that the forecast was that an additional 19 forms of entry would be required over the next five years. Members had agreed to the possible expansion of three secondary schools in the north of the Borough. There were fewer school places in the north of the Borough and the

A40 acted as a barrier to pupils living on one side of the road attending schools on the other. Five forms of entry would be required over the next five years in the south of the Borough, but the majority of this would be towards the end of the five years.

Members noted that admission numbers for 2015 and 2016 were similar and questioned whether a similar number were expected in 2017. It was expected that the number of places required in the south of the Borough would remain fairly stable. The priority for additional place provision was the north of the Borough. There was likely to be a pressure on places in the Hillside area. In addition to the bulge class and expansion at Hillside there was a contingency for a bulge class at Newnham Infant School ahead of an expansion.

The Committee questioned whether new primary schools would be provided at any of the proposed housing development sites in the Borough. Officers advised that place forecasts took into account planned residential development and it was anticipated that there would be new primary provision at at least one of the proposed development sites. There was a pressure on places caused by it not being possible to provide places at Nanaksar Primary School. Additional residential properties would add to this pressure. There had been a free school bid for a three form primary school in the area. This could alleviate the pressure but further action may be required. It was confirmed that the local authority area in which a pupil resided had the responsibility for providing them a school place.

Resolved: That:

- 1. Officers to provide a percentage figure for spare capacity at primary and secondary schools in the Borough for circulation to the Committee.**
- 2. The report be noted.**

10. **WORK PROGRAMME 2016/17** (*Agenda Item 8*)

It was requested that the budget planning report, that was due to be presented to the Committee at the July 2016 meeting, could include an update on budgeted savings made for the previous financial year.

A Member referenced the Children and Social Care Bill that was currently going through Parliament and noted that it would place additional responsibilities on Corporate Parenting Boards. It was suggested that the Committee could consider how the Council would react to this.

Elective Home Education was mentioned as a possible topic for review during the year.

Concerns were expressed that the Committee had raised concerns with regards to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) on a number of occasions and had expressed the wish to review this. However, it had not been possible to make progress on this to date. Concerns had again been raised during the witness session held earlier in the meeting. The Committee wished to ensure that appropriate action was taken.

Youth justice and probation services were mentioned as being a possible review topic, but it was noted that a similar topic had recently been reviewed by the Committee.

Resolved: That:

- 1. The topics suggested for possible future review or other consideration by**

	<p>the Committee be noted.</p> <p>2. The Work Programme be noted.</p>
11.	<p>FORWARD PLAN 2016/17 (<i>Agenda Item 9</i>)</p> <p>Resolved: That: The Forward Plan be noted.</p>
	<p>The meeting, which commenced at 7.00 pm, closed at 8.35 pm.</p>

These are the minutes of the above meeting. For more information on any of the resolutions please contact Jon Pitt on 01895 277655. Circulation of these minutes is to Councillors, Officers, the Press and Members of the Public.