

BOURNEMOUTH, CHRISTCHURCH AND POOLE COUNCIL
CHILDREN'S SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Meeting held on 27 July 2021 at 6.00 pm

Present:-

Cllr R Burton – Chair

Present: Cllr E Coope, Cllr B Dunlop, Cllr J Kelly, Cllr S Moore,
Cllr L Northover, Cllr R Rocca, Cllr S Gabriel, Cllr G Farquhar and
Cllr P Hilliard

Co-Opted Members: Parent Governors: Mr M Saxby and Ms E Hall
Youth Parliament Members: G Grogan and N Collins

19. Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors Geary and Lewis. Councillor Dr Rice was absent.

20. Substitute Members

Councillors Farquhar and Hilliard substituted Councillors Lewis and Geary.

21. Declarations of Interests

Councillor Hilliard declared an interest as Chair of Governors at Highcliffe School.

22. Confirmation of Minutes

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Children's Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 8 June 2021, having been previously circulated, be confirmed as read, accurate and signed by the Chair subject to the amendment of the spelling of Councillor Rocca's surname.

23. Action Sheet

The Chair advised that any outstanding actions were being progressed and an information only report would be circulated after the Committee in relation to an update on Child Exploitation and County Lines.

24. Public Issues

There were no public issues received on this occasion.

25. Update on SEND Ofsted Inspection

The Interim Corporate Director, Children's Services was due to provide a verbal update on the SEND Ofsted Inspection, however advised that the Service had not received the written outcome so there was no information that could be shared at this time. It was noted that the SEND Improvement Board and Plan were in place and that the inspection had focused on those areas.

The Committee discussed the timescales for when Member briefings could take place and the process that would be followed upon receiving the initial letter and was advised that Member briefings would hopefully be arranged for early September.

The Chair confirmed that Agenda Item 8 would be considered next due to online connection issues for the Officer due to present Agenda Item 7.

26. Covid Recovery - The Summer Offer

The Director of Education presented a report, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member and a copy of which appears as Appendix 'B' to these Minutes in the Minute Book.

The report outlined the Offer for vulnerable young people in BCP during the summer holiday. The Summer Offer looked to address mental health, gaps in learning, the lack of preparation for secondary school, exploitation and knife crime as well as ensuring that families had food during this period.

The Committee discussed the Report and comments were made, including:

- There was a large amount of discussion surrounding the seasonal response and targeting anti-social behaviour through outreach work in specific areas. In response to a request, the Committee was advised that feedback from the Seasonal Response Officer would be sought and feedback at a future date. **ACTION**
- The Portfolio Holder with responsibility for Covid Resilience, Schools and Skills confirmed that 3000 hours of detached outreach work had been commissioned to provide support to the seasonal response.
- Clarification was provided about the difference between children being in receipt of Free School Meals (FSM) and the Health, Activity and Food (HAF) Scheme. The Committee was advised of the number of children who would be able to access the HAF Scheme and what it involved, including the range of providers and activities and although this figure was less than those who were in receipt of FSM, food vouchers were available to all those who received FSM during the summer holidays
- In response to a query regarding whether the Vita Nova theatre group had signed up to the HAF Scheme, the Committee was advised that most of the providers who had signed up had been aimed at primary school children however work to extend the ages

CHILDREN'S SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
27 July 2021

provided for would be considered for the future. The Director for Education advised she would contact the theatre group to see what could be offered in the future. **ACTION**

- A Member highlighted the lack of activities for the 14-17 year old age group and wanted to advertise the activities being arranged by Festival Coast Live. The Committee was advised that there was some funding left over which was going to be shared between youth groups and charities to assist with the seasonal response.
- The Portfolio Holder with responsibility for Children and Young People advised the Committee that a piece of work was being commissioned to see what offer could be provided for young people and the results of that piece of work could be shared with the Committee when completed. **ACTION**
- In response to a query from a Member of Youth Parliament (MYP), the Director for Education confirmed that she would request feedback in September regarding how many students had engaged in the summer schools including whether students were consulted about what would be offered. **ACTION.**

The Chair summarised the discussion as follows:

- Discussed problem behaviours in hotspot areas and the seasonal response team
- Details of the providers who had signed up to provide the HAF offer and the number of children it could accommodate
- Children in receipt of FSM being offered food vouchers for the summer holidays
- Festival Coast Live – ensuring interesting things for young people to do
- How many children engaged with schools offer.

RESOLVED that the committee note the Summer Offer that BCP Council were putting in place as part of the Covid Recovery Plan.

27. Partnership Academy development – Social Work initiative

The Head of Quality Assurance, Governance and Improvement presented a report, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member and a copy of which appears as Appendix 'A' to these Minutes in the Minute Book.

The purpose of the Report was to provide an update on progress of improvement work regarding the development of the Children's Services Partnership Academy.

The Committee discussed the Report and comments were made, including:

- The Committee welcomed and praised the Academy's objective to upskill current staff and train new ones and felt this initiative needed publicity as a good news story

CHILDREN'S SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
27 July 2021

- In response to a query regarding capacity, quality of training and how long it would take for the impact/improvements to be seen, the Committee was advised that this scheme was linked to the improvement journey and action plan and that a new Practice Educator was working alongside the Social Workers to assess the quality of the work. The Committee was advised that some improvements were already being seen but that further progress was expected.
- The Committee was advised that Social Workers of all levels were needed and that BCP had two agencies supporting it with recruitment.
- In response to a query regarding the Equality impact assessment and protected characteristics, the Committee was advised that this was a large ongoing piece of work, which would take time to complete
- In response to a query regarding how the Academy Partnership was going to be developed into a Centre of Excellence, the Committee was advised that it would be developed through the improvement journey, with good solid training, support and workforce development. This would be measured through feedback regarding the lived experiences of staff and service users.
- In response to a query, an Officer advised of her experience and feedback regarding the toolbox which delivered some of the lived experiences, the Committee was advised that it gave people an understanding and indepth detail of all the different areas of Children's services
- The MYPs advised they would be interested to hear some of the experiences and messages, however had not seen any of training delivered.

The Chair summarised the discussions as follows:

- Capacity and whether large enough
- The different ways in which the work would be quality assured
- Good news story which should be publicised
- The number of Social Workers needed and how to recruit and retain
- The shortage of Social Workers and how this initiative would improve it.

RESOLVED that the content of this report was accepted as an update on progress to date.

28. Portfolio Holder Update

The Portfolio Holder with responsibility for Covid Resilience, Schools and Skills highlighted that it had been an extraordinary year for children and young people across BCP and wanted to recognise the work of the professionals who worked with them and acknowledged that support for the children and young people's mental health and wellbeing would be a main priority moving forward.

29. Items for Information

The Chair advised that there would be an confidential information only item circulated regarding Child Exploitation.

30. Forward Plan

The Chair requested a briefing for the Committee to be informed regarding the Social Work website.

In response to a request that future items being considered at Committee could demonstrate links to the Children's and Young People Plan, the Chair advised he would discuss this further with Officers. **ACTION.**

31. Dates of Future Meetings

The Committee noted the dates of future meetings.

The meeting ended at 8.00pm.

CHAIR