

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

Minutes of the Meeting held on 31 July 2019 at 6.00 pm

Present:-

Cllr R Burton – Chairman

Cllr L Lewis – Vice-Chairman

Present: Cllr J Bagwell, Cllr M F Brooke, Cllr E Coope, Cllr P R A Hall,
Cllr J Kelly, Cllr L Northover, Cllr M White and Cllr P Hilliard
(substitute)

Also in Cllr S Moore
attendance:

11. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Geary and Phillips and from Parent Governor Representative Peter Martin.

12. Substitute Members

Councillor Hilliard substituted for Councillor Geary.

13. Declarations of Interests

None.

14. Confirmation of Minutes

In response to a query regarding the omission of a request for information on children in care and child sexual exploitation, the Committee was advised that this request could be found on the appended Action sheet. A Councillor requested that this information be provided quarterly and not six monthly as recorded.

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 26 June 2019, having been previously circulated, be signed by the Chairman and confirmed as a correct record.

15. Action Sheet

The Committee requested the information relating to children in care and child sexual exploitation be received quarterly.

16. Public Issues

No public items had been received.

17. The BCP Children's Services Outcomes Self-Assessment

The Service Director, Quality and Assurance, Interim Service Director, Children and Young People's Social Care and the Interim Service Director, Inclusion and Family Services presented the Report and advised that, in line with best practice expectations, BCP Council had produced a Self-Assessment of its current performance in delivering Children's Services. This would guide and inform service and practice improvement activity.

The Report detailed that based on the outcomes of the Self-Assessment, the four key areas for improvement were:

- (a) Leadership and Management
- (b) Quality of Practice, Management oversight and supervision
- (c) Workforce Development; and
- (d) Effective, strong, collaborative and strategic partnerships.

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

- A Councillor thanked the Officers for the Report and advised that being able to read and digest information prior to the Committee enabled better scrutiny
- A Councillor referred to the Ofsted Judgement Grades for Bournemouth Borough Council and looked forward to seeing improvements in that area
- In response to a request for more detailed information regarding Children missing out on Education (CMOE) and Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEETs), the Committee was advised that a piece of work was being undertaken working alongside the Learning Partnership and schools across Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole (BCP) to see how the Service could best support those children. A Report on this would be brought to a future meeting of the Committee. A Councillor requested that the Committee be kept fully up to date with regards to this area and therefore should be kept on the Forward Plan.
- A Councillor was pleased to see attempts were being made to bring all the recording of data on to one system and in response to the importance of having comparators, the Committee was advised that BCP Council was waiting on guidance from Government as to which Councils would be identified as its statistical neighbours
- A request was made for further information on home educated children, such as age groups and trends
- The Committee felt that a regular update on indicators and comparators across both Social Care and Education would be very beneficial for it to consider on a quarterly basis to enable the Committee to measure the Service's performance clearly and consider areas where more in-depth scrutiny may be required

- It was also requested that the Self-Assessment should remain on the Forward Plan and updates be considered by the Committee on a quarterly basis
- In response to a query regarding the Peer Review, the Committee was advised that it had helped the Service focus on its 'Front door' and a Report on this was coming to the next Committee.
- Clarification was given over the figures relating to Front Door Services on page 27 of the Agenda pack, the Committee was advised that of the 6,720 contacts made to the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), some of them were repeats or duplicates, only 29% of 'unique' contacts, became referable. This wording would be clarified in future versions of the Self Assessment
- In response to a query regarding the Front Door/MASH, the Committee was advised that there had been a lot of work undertaken bringing together the preceding authorities to develop a single approach and align processes, whilst ensuring the service was not adversely affected
- The Committee was advised that there was work being undertaken with other agencies, such as the police, to attempt to reduce unnecessary contact with Children's Services in relation cases which did not require their involvement
- In response to query regarding the Assisted and Supported Year in Employment programme within Workforce planning, the Committee was advised that this item was being brought to the Committee's next meeting. A request to include a split of permanent and agency staff within that Report was made.
- A Councillor requested clarification on how many staff worked at the Christchurch Pupil Referral Unit in Barrack Road and how many young people were transported there by taxi and what the cost of this was to BCP?
- In response to a query regarding the Senior Management Team, the Corporate Director thanked the two Interim Directors and advised that the interim posts had been filled and the successful candidates would be taking up their posts between August and October.
- In response to a query regarding the Key Stage 2 data, the committee was advised that the first results for BCP Council had been received, but not yet fully considered.
- In response to a Councillor query regarding lobbying government, the Corporate Director advised that was a decision for Councillors to make, but that reduced funding settlements were not only impacting the Council, but that schools were currently in the most acute period of austerity
- It was noted that Ofsted had launched a new framework to enable schools not to be so focused on specific areas and a move towards a more holistic approach to education.

RESOLVED that the BCP Children's Outcomes Self-Assessment be noted and the actions requested be detailed on the Action Sheet.

18. Appointment of Co-Opted Members to Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The Senior Democratic and Overview and Scrutiny Officer presented the Report and advised that the Committee had a statutory duty to Co-opt representatives from the Church of England and Roman Catholic Diocese and parent Governor representatives from maintained schools across BCP. One Parent Governor had successfully been appointed to date.

The Committee was advised it had a decision to make on whether to co-opt an Academy representative and to consider any other representatives it wished to have on the Committee including, for example, Members of Youth Parliament.

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

- A Councillor felt that the Committee was already quite large and that adding more members would not be beneficial
- A Councillor who came from the Borough of Poole highlighted how much value the Members of Youth Parliament brought to its Committee. It was discussed that youth representative would be very beneficial, but the logistics needed to be considered.
- A Councillor proposed a way forward of asking Youth representatives how they could be best represented and bring it back to the Committee
- In response to a query regarding BCP's Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education (SACRE), the Corporate Director advised that she would investigate and refer back to the Committee.
- In response to a query on how an Academy parent governor would be appointed, the Senior Democratic and Overview and Scrutiny Officer advised that the same engagement and recruitment process would be used as for the parent governor currently co-opted.
- The Committee discussed the possible advantages and disadvantages of having an Academy representative co-opted on to the Committee.
- The Committee was advised that Academy representatives formed part of the Learning Partnership and that it worked closely with the Regional Schools Commission regarding what was best for the children.

RESOLVED that:

- (a) an invitation for a non-statutory Academy co-opted representative to the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee be made:**

Voting: For – 10; Abstention – 1; and

- (b) a request to the Youth Parliament and Youth Forum Members be made to see how they wished to be represented.**
- (c) the Committee noted the current arrangements for the appointment of statutory co-opted Members to the Committee.**

19. Children's Services Forward Plan

The Corporate Director for Children's Services advised of an amendment to the title of item number 3 on the Forward Plan and that it should read 'Peer Review of BCP Front Door to include multi agency safeguarding and Associated Development Plan.'

The Senior Democratic and Overview and Scrutiny Officer advised of an additional item 'The Corporate Safeguarding Strategy' which was to be scheduled for the September meeting.

20. Dates of Future Meetings

The dates and venues of future meetings were noted.

The meeting ended at 7.15 pm

CHAIRMAN