

## CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

At a meeting of the **CHILDREN, FAMILIES & LEARNING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** held at Room 14, Priory House, Monks Walk, Shefford on Tuesday, 14 July 2009

### PRESENT

Cllr J Street (Chairman)  
Cllr Mrs D B Gurney (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors: P A Blaine  
D Bowater  
R Egan  
N B Costin  
P Hollick

Parental Co-optees: H Chapman  
D Landman

Church of England Co-optee: J Reynolds  
Roman Catholic Co-optee: F Image

Apologies for Absence: Cllrs I Dalgarno  
K Janes  
B Sear

Substitutes: Cllr Mrs A Barker (In place of I Dalgarno)

Members in Attendance: Cllrs P N Aldis  
M Gibson  
Mrs A M Lewis  
S F Male  
T Nicols  
Mrs C Turner

Officers in Attendance: Mr B Carter – Overview & Scrutiny Manager  
Mrs M Clampitt – Democratic Services Officer  
Mrs S Gibson – Interim Assistant Director, Policy,  
Planning and Commissioning  
Mrs E Grant – Deputy Chief Executive/ Director of  
Children, Families and Learning  
Ms K Peddie – Head of Policy and Strategy  
Mr P Shevlin – Head of School Standards and  
Improvement

CFL/09/1 **Members' Interests**

(a) **Personal Interests:-**

The following Members declared that they were also School / College Governors at various educational facilities:

Cllr P A Blaine  
Mrs Chapman  
Cllr N B Costin  
Cllr Dr R Egan  
Cllr Mrs D B Gurney  
Cllr P Hollick  
Cllr Mrs A M Lewis  
Cllr S F Male  
Mr Reynolds  
Cllr J Street  
Cllr D Bowater Assistant Portfolio Holder Adult Services

(b) **Personal and Prejudicial Interests:-**

None.

(c) **Any Political Whip in relation to items on the agenda:-**

None.

CFL/09/2 **Chairman's Announcements and Communications**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the inaugural meeting of the Children, Families and Learning Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

He referred to the Terms of Reference of the Committee and emphasised the importance of its policy development work in the context of supporting the Council's strategic objective of raising the aspirations of our children and young people.

A question was asked in relation to agenda item 11 Bedfordshire and Luton Partnership NHS Trust Tender Process – Next Steps and why it had been placed on the agenda. It was noted that it was a cross cutting topic which related to both this Committee and the Social Care, Health & Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

CFL/09/3 **Petitions**

The Chairman announced that no petitions had been referred to this meeting.

**CFL/09/4 Questions, Statements or Deputations**

There were no applications from members of the public to speak under the Public Participation Procedure allowed for under Part A4 of the Constitution.

**CFL/09/5 Call-In**

No matters were referred to the Committee for a decision in relation to call-in of a decision.

**CFL/09/6 Requested Items**

No items were referred to the Committee for consideration at the request of a Member under Procedure Rule 3.1 of Part D2 of the Constitution.

**CFL/09/7 Children, Families and Learning Policy Development**

The Committee received a presentation from the Deputy Chief Executive/ Director of Children's, Families and Learning which provided an overview of the work being carried out by this directorate and the impact for all residents of Central Bedfordshire.

The Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Children's, Families and Learning introduced the Assistant Directors and their areas of responsibility:

The Children and Young People's Plan was the responsibility of the Children's Trust and the legal responsibility of the Director to ensure a Plan is endorsed by Council.

The Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Children's, Families and Learning gave an overview of the Scrutiny role within the Children and Young People's Plan as follows:

"Lead Members may wish to encourage the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to look closely at the priorities and associated work streams in the Children and Young People's Plan. This could provide extra leverage over partners in the Children's Trust to drive better delivery." Statutory Guidance The Roles and Responsibilities for the Lead Member and Director of Children's Services – Crown Copyright 2009

The Cultural Strategy should be consultative, area specific, kept under constant review, linked to the sustainable community strategy and offer guidance on allocation of resources. It should be what makes 'life worth living'. The Department of Culture, Media and Sport encourage authorities to have a strategy.

The top performance issues for children's services were the following:

- Governance and accountability of Children's Trusts
- The sharp focus on safeguarding
- The need for the Children and Young People's Plan to be endorsed as soon as possible
- The impact of the performance framework on partners and the council – see national indicators and Local Authority Agreements
- New legislation on Child Poverty, Apprenticeships and Skills, 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools
- Revised guidance for working together for Child Protection and word by work guidance for the Lead Member, DCS, Leader and Chief Executive to follow about their roles

#### Issues for Cultural Services

- Realistic outcomes for the Cultural Strategy to ensure it makes a difference in real terms of outcomes
- Linking work with aspiration and the impact of recession on families
- Co-working across all capital projects
- Review of our services – constantly on-going
- Partnerships with Parish and Town Councils

In summation the Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Children's Families and Learning confirmed the following:

- 'Every Child Matters' agenda is the best idea ever
- Central Bedfordshire had the potential to go far in terms of cultural services

The Committee then determined an initial work programme for the coming months:

Children and Young People's Plan	To decide whether to receive the whole Plan at one meeting or over several meetings.
Special Education Needs	A report requested outlining the SEN provision in Central Bedfordshire.
Next Steps in Transforming Teaching and Learning	A presentation and complimentary report in advance of Executive consideration on 15 September 2009.
Performance report Q1	The quarterly performance report
Safeguarding update	To be presented quarterly together with the performance reports
Commissioning Policy	Consideration to be given to the establishment of a task force to review this policy.

Performance report Q2	The quarterly performance report
Safeguarding update	To be presented quarterly together with the performance reports
Children's Workforce Development Strategy	Consideration to be given to the establishment of a task force to review this strategy.
Cultural Strategy	Consideration to be given to the establishment of a task force to review this strategy.
Performance report Q3	The quarterly performance report
Safeguarding update	To be presented quarterly together with the performance reports
Home to School Transport Policy	Consideration to be given to the establishment of a task force to review this policy.

### **RESOLVED**

- 1. that the report of the Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Children, Families and Learning be noted.***
- 2. that the work programme as detailed above, be noted.***
- 3. that the work programme be refined further at the next meeting.***

CFL/09/8

### **Building Schools for the Future and Transforming Teaching and Learning in Central Bedfordshire**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Assistant Director for Schools and Learning which set out the background to the Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme and outlined the early stages of the work of the Learning Transformation Board. It also outlined initial arrangements for gathering information and views from head teachers and chairs of governors about improving the way we: organise school places; develop innovative curricula; manage transition and ensure that schools are at the centre of communities in Central Bedfordshire.

The Committee were informed that the former Bedfordshire County Council (BCC) had put in a bid for BSF and had reached wave 2 of 6. Bedford Borough and Kempston were on wave 6 of 6. It was hoped that Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) would place a bid but concerns were expressed about accessing the funding due to difficulties experienced by other authorities.

Bedford Borough Council (BBC) had provided their School Organisation Review public consultation document. The Committee were asked to provide their views and what response should be given to BBC. Concerns were expressed in relation to the impact on schools near the border between BBC and CBC.

Members felt that the Portfolio Holder Children's Services should send a response to the equivalent Portfolio Holder at BBC expressing the concerns of the Committee. It was agreed that a copy of the letter would be forwarded to all members of the Committee for reference.

It was agreed that reports would be brought to the next meeting of the Committee in relation to:

- 1) Special Educational Needs
- 2) Advance viewing of the 15 September Executive report on the development of the educational vision and progress towards entry into the National BSF.

#### **RESOLVED**

- 1. that a presentation / report in respect of the progress made since March 2009 in development of the educational vision for Central Bedfordshire and progressing towards entry into the National BSF be provided to the August Children Families and Learning Overview and Scrutiny Committee.***
- 2. that a report outlining Central Bedfordshire's approach to Special Needs provision be submitted to the August Children's Families and Learning Overview and Scrutiny Committee.***

CFL/09/9

#### **Bedfordshire and Luton Mental Health & Social Care Partnership NHS Trust**

The Committee received and considered the report from the Assistant Director, Specialist Services, which summarised the process and next steps on the proposed 'As Is' transfer of Bedfordshire and Luton Partnership NHS Trust to another NHS organisation.

In January 2009, the NHS East of England asked for NHS Trusts to prepare to become Foundation Trusts by December 2009. Bedfordshire and Luton Partnership NHS Trust was not a large enough organisation to have achieved this target and instead proposed the transfer of their Trust to another Foundation Trust. This would ensure the continuation of service provision for the population. The NHS East of England approved this alternative and the tendering process was initiated.

A brief overview/presentation from representatives of the Bedfordshire and Luton Partnership NHS Trust outlined the work completed to date. It was noted that 22 applicants, all mental health trusts, had expressed an interest, this was shortlisted to 5 applicants and now 4 would be asked to tender. The final 4

were: South Essex, Cambden and Islington, Hertfordshire and Cambrige. The contract would be awarded by November 2009 and the new services would begin from April 2010.

The Committee were informed that there had been strong collaboration between NHS Bedford, NHS Luton, CBC, BBC and LBC. The essential part of the contract was to ensure that the health of the 'child to adult' process was considered. The following were areas of importance:

- Local and national imperatives are accounted
- Improved integration of services
- Improved transition
- Review the social work roles
- Commissioning on behalf of Children and Families
- Speak to children/adults about their experiences of the service
- Providing better services for local people

Members asked if it was a novel tendering process and what experience within the health service was there for this process? Members noted that it was not novel for foundation trusts to take over another trust.

In response to another question, the Director of Health System Management confirmed that the main contract was for 3 years with a possible additional 2 years however if the contract was not working well there was an 18 month cancellation clause.

It was noted that this report/presentation was also being made to the Social Care, Health and Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee who would take the lead in monitoring progress in relation to the new management arrangements.

#### **RESOLVED**

- 1. that the contents of the report of the Director of Children Families & Learning be noted and that the arrangements to ensure the they review progress in relation to new management arrangements for local mental health services later in the year, be agreed.***
- 2. that the Social Care, Health & Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee be requested to monitor progress in relation to the new management arrangements and report back to this Committee any significant issues arising in relation to children's mental health.***

CFL/09/10

#### **Progress made towards establishing a Local Safeguarding Children Board for Central Bedfordshire**

The Committee received and considered the report of the Assistant Director, Specialist Services, which described the progress to date towards establishing a Local Safeguarding Children Board for Central Bedfordshire as agreed by the Shadow Executive on 14 April 2009. Currently a shared agreement with Bedford Borough maintains the previous Board established by the former County Council. Due to the strong working relationship which would be needed

with the Children's Trust Board and the need for effective local arrangements, it was agreed at the meeting of the Shadow Executive held on 14 April 2009 (see Minute No. E/08/124) to establish a Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) for Central Bedfordshire.

It was agreed at the 14 April 2009 Executive that an Independent Shadow Chairman be appointed to work closely with the Chairman of the Bedfordshire Local Safeguarding Children Board and the Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Children, Families & Learning. Maggie Blyth has been appointed to the position.

At the 9 June meeting of the Bedfordshire Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) it was agreed to establish a task and finish group to oversee the establishment of the CBC LSCB. The Group met on the 26 June and will meet again in July and early September to adopt the establishment plan. The programme will be underpinned by the following four principles:

- (a) Effectiveness
- (b) Efficiency
- (c) Consensus
- (d) Resilience

The Department for Children, Schools and Families would be consulted throughout the restructuring process. A meeting was held on 2 July 2009 with the Deputy Director for Children Families and Learning and the Assistant Director for Vulnerable Children from Bedford Borough. The meeting provided reassurance to the Department of Children, Schools and Families that all safeguards would be in place prior to the disaggregation of the service.

### **RESOLVED**

***that the initial work undertaken to establish a Local Safeguarding Children Board for Central Bedfordshire as detailed in the report of the Assistant Director Specialist Services be noted.***

## **CFL/09/11 Executive Forward Plan**

The Committee received and considered the Executive Forward Plan, which covered the period from 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2010. It was noted that from the Forward Plan to be published on 15 July 2009 specific Portfolio Holders for each item would be listed. It was noted that they had been removed prior to the appointment of the new Executive at the annual Council meeting held on 18 June 2009. In addition, Members requested that Officers indicate under the consultation column which Overview and Scrutiny Committee it was felt should consider the item. It was noted that some items would cross cut several directorates. This information would be provided from the August Forward Plan.



**RESOLVED**

***that the Forward Plan, as attached to the agenda at item 12, be received.***

(Note: The meeting commenced at 9.30 a.m. and concluded at 12.30 p.m.)