

CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

At a meeting of the **CHILDREN'S SERVICES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** held in Council Chamber, Priory House, Monks Walk, Shefford on Tuesday, 17 June 2014

PRESENT

Cllr Mrs A Barker (Chairman)
Cllr N B Costin (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors:	D Bowater Mrs G Clarke	Councillors:	D Jones R B Pepworth
Parental Co-optees:	Mr J M A Chapman Mr T Hodey		
Church of England Co-optee: Roman Catholic Co-optee:	Mr D Morton		
Apologies for Absence:	Cllrs	Mr S Court Mrs R J Drinkwater P A Duckett P Hollick Mrs F Image D McVicar	
Substitutes:	Cllrs	R D Berry (In place of D McVicar) K Janes (In place of Mrs R J Drinkwater) B Saunders (In place of P Hollick)	
Members in Attendance:	Cllrs	P N Aldis Mrs S Clark Mrs A L Dodwell Mrs S A Goodchild M A G Versallion	Deputy Executive Member for Children's Services Deputy Executive Member for Children's Services and Community Services Executive Member for Children's Services
Officers in Attendance:	Mr P Fraser Mrs E Grant Mr J Partridge Miss H Redding	Head of Partnerships & Community Engagement Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Children's Services Corporate Policy Manager Assistant Director School Improvement	
	Members of the public:	0	

CS/14/9. **Minutes**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 17 June 2014 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record subject to the amendment of Cllr Pepworth's concerns regarding support teachers to read "redundancies".

CS/14/10. **Members' Interests**

Mr D Morton declared an interest as he had previously been Headteacher at St Swithun's.

CS/14/11. **Chairman's Announcements and Communications**

The Chairman welcomed Mr D Morton as the new co-opted Member representing the Church of England Diocese. The Chairman also drew attention to the AGM of the Child Bereavement and Trauma Service (CHUMS), which she had recently attended and; the ongoing process of consultation on reorganisation of schools in Dunstable.

CS/14/12. **Petitions**

None

CS/14/13. **Questions, Statements or Deputations**

None

CS/14/14. **Call-In**

None

CS/14/15. **Requested Items**

None

CS/14/16. **Executive Member Update**

The Executive Member updated the Committee and responded to questions on the following matters:-

- The appointments of Sue Harrison as the Director of Children's Services and Alan Caton as the new independent Chairman of the Local Safeguarding Children Board.
- A meeting that had taken place with Streetfield Community Lower School to discuss their proposed business plan for reorganisation, meetings with other schools had also been scheduled.
- The launch of the new corporate parenting service and events relating to the Social Worker Academy, and foster care recruitment.

- Progress in relation to schools in Stotfold for which the Council had responded to a letter sent by Stotfold Town Council setting out the current position. The Executive Member had agreed to meet with the Chairman of Stotfold Town Council and governors and work was underway with the school to address this issue and subsequently to schedule a meeting with the Town Council.
- Powers being discussed for local authorities to intervene in academies with poor performance and the strong partnership arrangements that already existed in Central Bedfordshire with academies so that challenges could be discussed collaboratively.

In addition the Executive Members wished good luck to teachers and pupils involved in GCSEs and exams.

CS/14/17. **Youth Audit Action Plan**

The Committee received an update on progress towards responding to the recommendations of the youth audit. The Executive Member was grateful for work done by youth audit and emphasised the importance of taking these recommendations forward.

The Committee also received a presentation from the Head of Partnerships and Community Engagement that set out the requirement for a youth offer and the need for local authorities to make clear the manner in which they listened to young people. There was a good cross-representation of young people aged 13-19 years on various groups including the Youth Parliament. An independent youth audit would be undertaken in 2014 and an action plan had been developed to address the concerns highlighted in the previous year's audit. In summary the previous highlighted that young people were happy with the Council's offer and that there was excellent practice regarding engaging the youth voice. It was suggested however that the offer needed better publicity, which should include a standalone website

In light of the report and the presentation the Committee discussed the following:-

- The cultural diversity of young people represented on the various Council boards, which was provided by the election process.
- A review of the existing youth centre provision that was currently under and would identify opportunities for refurbishment and the provision of improved accessibility and signage.
- Links with Town and Parish Councils that would be encouraged to ensure plans for youth provision were developed collaboratively.
- Encouraging the use of facilities outside of schools for providing sexual health advice in order to enhance confidentiality.
- The importance of engaging hard to reach young people in the Council's youth support offer. The Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Children's Services commented that youth services support young people who were not in education, employment or training (NEET) on a one to one basis and the role of school governors and use of the pupil premium was important in supporting effective outcomes.

- The potential of inviting the youth audit team to present the outcomes of the 2014 audit to the Council's Audit Committee.
- Information, advice and guidance standards, which had now been published and could be circulated to Members outside of the meeting.
- Support for the development of a standalone website for the Youth Service Team.

The Committee agreed that they would like to receive the outcomes of future youth audits and asked that the youth audit team consider whether they would also like to provide a presentation to the Council's Audit Committee in the future.

RECOMMENDED that the Committee's thanks to the youth audit team be recorded and that whilst the Committee welcomed the action plan, that sets out very clearly the manner in which the Council would address the challenges identified by the audit, Members would like to review progress in six-months in a way that does not duplicate the presentation of a report to several groups.

CS/14/18. **Update on the usage of the disability hubs**

Cllr Dodwell updated the Committee on the implementation of the Disability Hub and Spoke model and progress on the East Hub activities delivered during February 2013 to May 2014. The Committee were also informed of several support and aspiration workstreams that would support the Council's response to the Children and Families Act (2014).

The Committee noted the importance of raising awareness of the positive work underway in this area and the benefits of integrating services to support children with disabilities.

RECOMMENDED that the progress in relation to the implementation of the Disability Hub and Spoke model be promoted for the way in which it supports professionals and families.

CS/14/19. **Teaching school**

The Assistant Director for School Improvement delivered a presentation that provided an overview of progress in relation to the teaching school and the manner in which the local authority supported school improvement. The presentation also identified next steps for development. The Committee were advised that Central Bedfordshire had performed better than other local authorities in relation to Ofsted outcomes

In light of the report and the presentation the Committee discussed the following:-

- The significant level of support provided by the teaching school, which demonstrated its value and the benefits of engaging. The Council worked with those schools that were not engaged to try and encourage their involvement.

- The annual report of the Teaching School, which it was agreed be presented to the Committee in the future.
- The use of a 'leadership ladder', which would encourage succession planning and the development of future headteachers.

NOTED the presentation.

CS/14/20. **Work Programme 2014/15 & Executive Forward Plan**

The Corporate Policy Manager introduced the Committee's draft work programme for 2014/15 and the current Executive Forward Plan, which were discussed by Members.

AGREED the work programme subject to the following amendments:-

- 1. Update on the schools curriculum and the Children's Trust Annual Report to be considered on 16 September 2014.**
- 2. The quarter 4 performance and budget reports to be circulated outside meeting for information and Members encouraged to attend the Executive meeting if they have any queries to raise.**
- 3. Outcomes of the consultation on children's centres to be provided to Members by email for their comments prior to its consideration by Executive.**
- 4. Meeting on 22 July 2014 to consider the business plans of schools in Dunstable.**

(Note: The meeting commenced at 10.00 a.m. and concluded at 12.10 p.m.)

Chairman

Dated