



**CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
10 DECEMBER 2010**

PRESENT: COUNCILLOR S F WILLIAMS (CHAIRMAN)

Councillors P A Carpenter, C J Davie, M W Gilbert, J R Hicks, J D Hough (Vice-Chairman), B W Keimach, C R Oxby, M Smith, and N Worth.

Councillor A P Williams (Executive Support Councillor for Children's Services Including Post 16 Education) was also in attendance.

Added Members: Mrs E French, Dr B Roberts and Mr S C Rudman.

Officers in attendance: Michelle Andrews (Development Manager – Integrated Children's Services), Debbie Barnes (Assistant Director Children's Services), Andy Breckon (Assistant Director Children's Services), Sue Westcott (Assistant Director Children's Services), Paul Snook (Principal School Improvement Advisor – Strategic Project), Gary Nixon (Head of Service – Additional Needs Behaviour Attendance CfBT), Jill Chandar-Nair (Team Manager for Inclusion Attendance), Tracy Johnson, (Scrutiny Officer) and Katrina Cope (Team Leader Democratic Support).

The Chairman welcomed to the meeting the following guests from Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council; the Chairman Councillor Eric Tatton-Kelly, and the Vice-Chairman, Councillor Tony Sockett of Doncaster's Schools, Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel, along with Scrutiny Consultants Deborah Gauld and Caroline Martin.

47. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Miss A M Jenkyns, R B Singleton-McGuire and K J Smith.

An apology was also received from the Executive Councillor for Children's Services including Post 16 Education Mrs P A Bradwell.

Apologies were also received from Mrs G Wright, Mrs J E Pilsworth and Mrs K A Seddon.

48. DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Mr S Rudman declared a personal interest in agenda item 13, (Minute No 51 refers) as a representative of the Nottinghamshire Roman Catholic Diocese and advised that he would take part in the debate, but abstain from voting.

49. MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON 22 OCTOBER 2010

RESOLVED

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee held on 22 October 2010 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

50. EXECUTIVE RESPONSE TO THE NARROWING THE GAP IN DEPRIVED AREAS OF LINCOLNSHIRE – SCRUTINY REVIEW

Consideration was given to a report from the Assistant Director of Children's Services, which presented a Daft Action Plan (attached at Appendix A) to take forward the recommendations developed from the review Narrowing the Gap in Deprived Areas of Lincolnshire, a copy of which was detailed at Appendix B to the report.

The Development Manager – Integrated Children's Services presented the report and responded to questions raised which included the following:-

- The positive response of the Executive to the report; and thanks were extended to officers for all their help and support;
- Reassurance was sought concerning the recommendations that had not been accepted in the action plan. It was reported that in these instances, the recommendations had not been accepted as guidance, information or legislation had still not been received. It was noted that the action plan was therefore subject to change;
- Children's Centres – It was reported that the white paper had indicated that Children's Centres would continue to be universal but would target the most vulnerable families. Funding arrangements would be better known after 15 December 2010. It was reported that for clarity it was a 'no' to the rebranding of Children's Centres and a 'yes' to the rest of the recommendation. It was agreed that the action plan would be reworded to reflect this;
- Revisiting the action plan in six months to see the effect of government policies; and
- Clarity was given on what the insurance implications would be for extended hours at school facilities.

RESOLVED

1. That the Draft Action Plan presented be noted.
2. That a review of the Narrowing the Gap in Deprived areas of Lincolnshire action plan be considered by the Committee in six months time.

51. CONSULTATION ON THE FUTURE OF ST BEDE'S CATHOLIC SCIENCE COLLEGE, BOSTON

The Committee gave consideration to a report from the Assistant Director of Children's Services, which sought approval to begin consultation on the proposal to close St. Bede's Catholic Science College in Boston to enable the site to become part of Haven High Technology College under the Boston Witham's Schools' Federation through the expansion of Haven High.

In guiding the Committee through the report the Assistant Director made reference to:

- The background behind the closure. Particular reference was made to the close working with the Nottinghamshire Catholic Diocese through out the process;
- Educational perspective to support the proposed closure;
- Current and future standards of attainment;
- Breadth of Curriculum;
- Recruitment of teaching staff;
- Financial sustainability;
- The benefits of St Bede's incorporation into the Boston Witham School's Federation; and
- Statutory requirements (full details were contained within the report presented).

During discussion, the Committee made reference to the following issues:-

- Attainment standards;
- The retrospective analysis of results;
- It was reported that a lot of commitment had been shown to try and make the school work; and
- 45% of the children at St Bede's had special educational needs. It was reported that Haven High were aware of all the risks and had a lot of specialised teachers. Reassurance was given that support would be given to all involved during the process.

RESOLVED

That approval be given to start the process of consultation regarding the related proposals to close St. Bede's Catholic Science College, Boston and expand Haven High Technology College onto the St Bede's site.

52. IMPROVING ACCESS TO POST-16 LEARNING PROVISION IN LINCOLNSHIRE – SCOPING FOR A SCRUTINY REVIEW

The Committee gave consideration to a report from the Scrutiny Officer, which presented a draft Section 2 document for a Scrutiny Review on Improving Access to Post -16 Learning Provision in Lincolnshire, to agree the contents prior to the commencement of the review.

The Scrutiny Officer presented the report making reference to the background to the review; the make up of the Task and Finish Group, details of which were contained within the report presented; and the content of the Scoping Record.

During discussion, the Committee made reference to:

- The loss of EMA; and
- In relation Contributors/key stakeholders – the new Chairman of LEP and the MP for South Holland should be included within the document.

The Committee were advised that Councillor Hough was the lead member for the review and that the next meeting was scheduled to be held on 14 December 2010.

It was reported that it was proposed to submit an interim report to the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee in May 2011 and then a report would be presented to the Executive in June 2011.

RESOLVED

That subject to the inclusion of the additions mention above, that the Section 2 of the Scoping document for Scrutiny Review document for Post - 16 Learning Provision in Lincolnshire be agreed.

53. THEME PERFORMANCE – QUARTER 2 2010/11

The Committee gave consideration to a report from the Assistant Director of Children's Services, which provided a summary of Quarter 2 2010/11 performance for Children and Young People by each of the 5 key outcomes, plus the service management outcome for Children's Services.

The Assistant Director presented the report and Performance Summary and invited questions from the Committee, from which the following issues were raised:

- Breast feeding performance – the Committee agreed that the Health Scrutiny Committee for Lincolnshire should be invited to look at this matter;
- Stay Safe - The report identified that 51% of indicators were underperforming at the end of this quarter. Reassurance was given to the Committee that significant action plans and Services Review were now in place to ensure that performance would be improved upon in the next two quarters. It was agreed that Children Looked After would be considered at a future meeting;
- Children in Care – Particular reference was made to foster care and the need to ensure that foster carers received the necessary training. The Committee were advised that foster carers received training and individual support to meet their needs;
- Being Healthy – The Committee were advised that a press article had reported that the take up of MMR vaccinations was below average. It was explained that the missing data on page 3 of the report in relation to this indicator was as a result of a data lag. Clarification was given that no schools in Lincolnshire were refusing to admit children who had not had a MMR vaccine; and
- Stability of Young Children in foster care – Due to concerns raised with regard to stability of foster placements, it was agreed that this would be referred to the Corporate Parenting Panel for further investigation.

RESOLVED

1. That the Quarter 2 2010/11 performance for Children and Young People by each of the 5 key outcomes be noted.
2. That the concerns relating to the stability of foster placements be referred to Corporate Parenting Panel.

54. CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL UPDATE

Consideration was given to the minutes of the Corporate Parenting Panel held on 23 September and 12 November 2010.

The Assistant Director of Children's Services presented the report and responded to questions raised.

RESOLVED

That the work of the Corporate Parenting Panel and the minutes presented be noted.

55. VERBAL UPDATE ON SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (SEN)

The Committee received a joint verbal update from the Principal School Improvement Advisor – Strategic Projects and the Head of Service – Additional Needs Behaviour Attendance CfBT on Special Needs which made reference to:

- Funding for SEN in mainstream provision. It was noted that the new formula for the allocation of funding of mainstream schools for additional needs had been implemented and that all schools would be fully protected in year one;
- It was reported that some areas of concern had arisen, as a result of ongoing consultation with schools and interested parties and that these had been addressed through a working group of Head Teachers, officers, and governors;
- Review of Special Schools and Mainstream Unit Provision – It was noted that a period of consultation had taken place and the outcomes would be reported to the Committee in February 2011; and
- The effect of the Academies Bill 2010.

Discussion ensued, from which the following issues were raised:

- Pupil Premium - Assurance was given that a governing body had to make sure that provision met the needs of a child with special needs;
- Medical statements – It was reported that these had been reviewed and that a policy was to be agreed with health;
- Special Educational Needs reception class targets – It was highlighted that money would be passed to schools based on their profile/previous history; and;
- Funding of pupils with SEN into 6th form education

The Chairman extended his thanks on behalf of the Committee for the informative update.

56. OFSTED SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN INSPECTION - ACTION PLAN REVIEW

Consideration was given to a report from the Assistant Director of Children's Services, which provided the Committee with information in relation to the post Ofsted & CQC Inspection Action Plan and latest update.

It was reported that Lincolnshire's Inspection of Safeguarding and Looked After Children Services had taken place earlier in the year and eight areas for improvement were detailed in the report which had been fed into the action plan (detailed at Appendix A) with tasks and measures of success. It was noted that seven additional tasks were listed which had been put forward by Children's Services as areas of discussion and challenge during the inspection and were noted within the report.

RESOLVED

That the contents of the report and Appendix presented be noted.

57. CHILDREN'S TRAVELLERS EDUCATION POLICY

Pursuant to Minute No. 7 (2) from the meeting held on 11 June 2010, the Team Manager for Inclusion Attendance presented an amended Traveller Education Policy document and Action Plan for consideration by the Committee.

During discussion, the following issues were raised:

- Elective Home Education – It was reported that some families elected to educate their families at home rather than enrol them in a school. It was noted that CfBT monitor and assess every two years, but the council did not have a right of access to the home. It was agreed that a further report pertaining to Home Elective Education should be presented to a future meeting;
- The need for target dates to be included in the action plan and that the action should be review at a future meeting; and
- Issues and challenges for local authority and schools – It was raised that schools were not always able to provide a flexible curriculum for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children. It was highlighted that schools in the Grantham area operated a flexible system to meet the needs required. Reference was also mentioned to the Gainsborough Initiative which had a very positive Key Stage 4 in place and supported flexible schooling.

RESOLVED

1. That the amended Traveller Education Policy Document be noted.
2. That target dates be included in the action plan detailed; and that the action plan be presented to a future meeting of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee.
3. That a report concerning Elective Home Education be presented to a future meeting of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee.

58. VERBAL UPDATE ON ACADEMIES

The Committee received a verbal update in relation to Academies from the Assistant Director of Children's Services, which referred to the following issues:

- The background behind the Academies Bill. It was reported that the purpose of the Bill was to enable more schools to become academies and give them the freedoms and flexibilities needed to continue to drive up standards;
- Funding Formulae – It was noted that the principle of academies' funding was that academies should receive the same level of per-pupil funding as they receive from the local authority as a maintained school. In addition, they receive a top-up funding to meet additional responsibilities that are no longer provided for them by the local authority;
- Current position for Lincolnshire in relation to Academies – On 1st November 2010 Lincolnshire had seven Academies and the DfE had recently confirmed five more schools had submitted business plans to become Academies by December 2010. The Committee were advised that two grammar schools had converted. It was highlighted that it was not clear yet exactly how Local Authorities will contribute to academy funding as this is subject to future consultation; and
- Strategies in place to manage the process; and
- Transportation issues.

59. LINCOLNSHIRE SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD SCRUTINY SUB-GROUP

The Vice-Chairman of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee presented the report and the draft Minutes from the meeting held on 18 November 2010.

RESOLVED

That the draft minutes from the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Board Scrutiny Sub-Group be noted.

60. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2010/11

Consideration was given to a report by the Committee's Scrutiny Officer, which provided members with an opportunity to review the work programme for the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee for 2010/2011.

The Committee were reminded that the Budget proposals for Children's Services would be considered at the next meeting on 14 January 2011.

RESOLVED

That the work programme be approved, subject to the inclusion of the following items:

- That a review of the action plan in relation to the Narrowing the Gap in Deprived Areas in Lincolnshire be considered by the Committee in six months time.

- That the Traveller Education Policy and Action Plan with target dates included be presented to a future meeting of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee.
- That a report concerning Elective Home Education be presented to a future meeting of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee.

The meeting closed at 12.40 pm