

PRESENT: COUNCILLOR S F WILLIAMS (CHAIRMAN)

Councillors P A Carpenter, C J Davie, M Exton, M W Gilbert, A G Hagues, J R Hicks, J D Hough, B W Keimach, C R Oxby, R B Singleton-McGuire, M Smith and C N Worth.

Added Members: Mr C V Miller, Mrs E J Olivier-Townrow, Dr B Roberts, Mr S C Rudman and Mrs G Wright.

Councillor Mrs B Harvey OBE attended the meeting as an observer.

Officers in attendance: Debbie Barnes (Director of Children's Services), Julia Beard (Senior Commissioning and Development Officer), Adrian Clarke (School Reorganisation Officer), Tracy Johnson (Scrutiny Officer), Lynne McNiven (Assistant Director of Public Health), Paul Snook (Principal School Improvement Adviser – Strategic Projects), Janice Spencer (Assistant Director of Children's Services), Meredith Teasdale (Assistant Director of Children's Services), Sal Thirlway (Head of Service Locality South) and Graham Watts (Democratic Services Officer).

79. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE / REPLACEMENT MEMBERS

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors C J Underwood-Frost and R A Shore.

An apology for absence was also received from Mr G R Porter (Added Member).

The Chairman took this opportunity to welcome Mr Miller and Mrs Olivier-Townrow to their first meeting of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee since being elected as Parent Governor Representative Added Members.

80. DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Councillor J D Hough declared a personal interest in relation to minute number 82 as he was a Trustee of the Louth Thirteen Plus Project and minute number 85 as his partner was a Non-Executive Director for Lincolnshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust and he was a Member of the Trust.

Councillor M Smith declared a personal interest in relation to minute number 82 as he was the Vice-Chairman of the Management Group at Skegness Youth Centre.

Councillor C N Worth declared a personal interest in relation to minute number 82 as he helped to develop a business case for the Holbeach Youth Centre.

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81. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING OF THE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON 5 MARCH 2012

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the previous meeting of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee held on 5 March 2012 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

82. PROGRESS REPORT ON THE YOUTH AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT WORKER MODEL WITHIN LOCALITY TEAMS

A report by the Head of Service Locality South was considered, which provided the Committee with an update on progress with developing youth and community activity in Lincolnshire.

It was noted that the Council's Children's Services Directorate was working with communities, schools and voluntary sector partners to ensure that a wide range of positive activities were available for young people to access. This work was led by a team of Youth and Community Development Workers who continued to provide on-going mentoring and coaching to groups of individuals who might be interested in taking responsibility for the delivery of these activities. The team had held a number of stakeholder events to raise awareness of these opportunities and were also able to provide assistance and guidance for groups in completing funding bids or proposals for managing provision.

A formal process for interested parties to take over the complete running of Youth Centres was launched in January 2012 and a development fund had been identified to offer grants to groups in order that start-up costs could be covered. It was reported that progress in this area had been positive and it was anticipated that a number of existing or new providers would become more involved in the direct delivery and management of positive activities for young people from the Council's current facilities stock, enabling the Youth and Community Development Workers to focus on creating further capacity to deliver in communities. As part of the transition to this model of service delivery, Youth Centres were currently still operational one night a week through Lincolnshire County Council.

Members were informed that there was already positive engagement in a number of locations in the county, where community based stakeholders had either begun delivery of positive activities for young people or had submitted proposals to explore taking further responsibilities in respect of buildings and management of provision. Specific details relating to individual areas were outlined in the report.

The following points were noted during discussion by the Committee: -

- facilities in urban areas would be well utilised;
- the use of mobile units was vital to accessing young people in rural communities. It was reported that the deployment of mobile units was currently being considered, taking into consideration similar facilities that

partners such as District Councils also had in operation in order to avoid duplication;

- the undertaking of asset transfers or signing up to lease agreements was referred to, both of which community groups had been considering in certain areas. It was reported that the County Council's priority would be to retain premises and safeguard provision for young people on a long term basis;
- there were a number of former Secondary School Sports Co-ordinators and Further Education Sports Co-ordinators in the county who may be interested in leading sports sessions for young people on a voluntary basis. In addition, young people themselves who undertook qualifications such as the Higher Sports Leadership Award were expected to lead sessions in their communities as part of a practical element of the qualification and could therefore be interested in associated voluntary work;
- there were lots of existing clubs in communities that already offered a range of activities for all people;
- retired people in communities were often overlooked. From the perspective of volunteering and leading positive activities for young people there were lots of retired people across the county who would be willing to offer their services or contribute in some way.

RESOLVED

- (1) That the report be noted.
- (2) That an update report and action plan on Youth Services be submitted to the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee in approximately six months.

83. CHILD POVERTY STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN

Consideration was given to a report by the Senior Commissioning and Development Officer, which invited the Committee to comment on the Child Poverty and Action Plan that was due to be submitted to the Council's Executive on 1 May 2012. Attached as an appendix was a copy of the draft Executive report.

The Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee considered the consultation of the Child Poverty Strategy and Action Plan on 2 December 2011, minute number 50 refers, where an informal working group was established to respond to the consultation on behalf of the Committee. This response was reported back to the Committee on 5 March 2012, as referred to in minute number 74.

Discussion ensued on the latest version of the Strategy and Action Plan, as part of which the following comments were noted: -

- the Strategy was very aspirational but it also needed to be achievable;
- the Action Plan was very demanding and Members questioned how it would be delivered and who would be responsible for its delivery. The Committee was informed that it was proposed that the Director of Public Health would be responsible for delivering the Action Plan, but there was a need to engage through the Health and Wellbeing Strategy Board. It was emphasised that the

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issue of child poverty was not just a Children's Services issue, and the Council's Children's Services Directorate was already linking with the Communities Directorate, as well as other service areas across the Authority, and partners such as Job Centre Plus to deliver the Action Plan;

- Members questioned whether Child Poverty Champions would be volunteers or officers. It was noted that there were no fixed ideas on who these people would be at this stage and that this was an area still to be worked through;
- there was a need to monitor other areas of poverty in Lincolnshire and not just the 15 wards highlighted in the Strategy.

RESOLVED

- (1) That the recommendations contained within the draft Executive report in respect of the Child Poverty Strategy and Action Plan be supported by the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee.
- (2) That an update report be submitted to a future meeting of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee on the outcomes of the Strategy and Action Plan.

84. PROPOSAL TO DISCONTINUE RESIDENTIAL PROVISION AT ST LAWRENCE SCHOOL, HORNCastle

Members considered a report by the Principal School Improvement Adviser – Strategic Projects, which invited the Committee to consider a proposal to discontinue residential provision at St Lawrence Special School in Horncastle that was due to be considered by the Executive Councillor for Children's Services and Lifelong Learning on 15 May 2012. Attached as an appendix was a copy of the draft Executive Councillor report.

It was reported that St Lawrence Special School had eight pupils with residential statements, four of whom were due to leave the school in June 2012 and the remainder in June 2013. The demand for residential provision had fallen in Lincolnshire in recent years and continued to decline. There had been a shift of focus to this provision being provided for educational reasons and not care or respite. This, together with improved transport, the move to more generic special schools serving each area of the county and improved support through integrated team working, meant that residential provision for children and young people with less complex needs was no longer appropriate.

In taking a decision on the discontinuation of this residential provision, a number of key factors had to be taken into consideration. These included the following and were outlined as part of the report: -

- a system shaped by parents;
- standards;
- diversity;
- every child achieving their potential;
- boarding provision;

- equal opportunities issues;
- surplus places;
- travel and accessibility;
- special educational needs provision;
- views of interested parties.

The following points were noted following discussion by the Committee: -

- Members noted the overwhelming positive comments from young people about their experiences at St Lawrence Special School and questioned how this would be replicated. It was reported that only a small number of pupils had benefitted from the activities and life skills provided at St Lawrence Special School and that any special school focussing on complex needs would have the same provision in place. It would be for schools to determine what alternative provision would be allocated based on the individual needs of the young people;
- in answer to a question regarding the legalities of the proposal, Members were informed that the proposal did adhere to legal requirements in relation to ceasing residential provision;
- there were residential placements available in Lincolnshire for those young people with residential statements, along with specialist out of county placements;
- the residential provision was not being closed for financial reasons, but due to underuse. Approximately £320,000 of revenue would be saved each year and would be retained in the central special school budget share to support the cost of new provision to be developed elsewhere in the county. The Committee supported the proposal that, subject to funding being made available through the capital programme, the residential facility should be converted to improve the teaching accommodation at the school thereby enabling it to better meet the needs of children and young people with complex needs. Members noted that no commitment could yet be made regarding the allocation of additional funding. A review of the current capital programme in respect of this proposal for residential provision was in progress.

RESOLVED

That the recommendations contained within the draft Executive Councillor report in respect of the proposal to discontinue residential provision at St Lawrence Special School in Horncastle be supported by the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee.

85. JOINT HEALTH AND WELLBEING STRATEGY

A report by the Assistant Director of Public Health was considered, which invited the Committee to review the draft Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy as part of its formal 12 week consultation process.

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The following documents were appended to the report: -

- draft Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy – Executive Summary;
- drafts for each theme of the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy;
- draft Impact Analysis;
- Public Health Outcome Framework.

The Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy consisted of the following key themes: -

- theme one – promoting healthy lifestyles;
- theme two – improving the Health and Wellbeing of older people in Lincolnshire;
- theme three – delivering high quality systematic care for major causes of ill health and disability;
- theme four – improving health and social outcomes and reducing inequalities for children;
- theme five – reducing worklessness.

Members focussed on theme four, which was broken down into the following priorities: -

- early years impact on health and social outcomes;
- social and emotional development and mental wellbeing;
- childhood obesity.

Discussion ensued on each of the priorities and questions were raised regarding an overarching action plan setting out how partners would address the key issues. It was noted that this would be developed at the end of the consultation which was due to end in June 2012 and would take into account feedback from partners.

RESOLVED

- (1) That the draft Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy be supported by the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee.
- (2) That an update report be submitted to the meeting of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee in November, including a copy of the action plan to show how the priorities in theme four of the Strategy will be addressed.

86. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2012

Consideration was given to a report by the Committee's Scrutiny Officer, which enabled Members to discuss the work programme for the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee for the coming year.

It was noted that the reports on the Early Intervention Strategy listed for the Committee's meetings on 7 September 2012 and 30 November 2012 had been removed from the work programme until further notice, as further work on the document was required.

RESOLVED

That the work programme for the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee be approved, subject to the inclusion of the above amendments and the additional items agreed in minute numbers 82, 83 and 85 above.

87. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED

That under Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined by Paragraph 4 of Schedule 12A of the Act, as amended.

88. ACADEMIES – PURCHASING OF TRADED SERVICES

An exempt report by the Director of Children's Services was considered, which provided the Committee with an opportunity to discuss the purchasing of traded services by academies.

RESOLVED

That the exempt report be noted.

The meeting closed at 12.30 p.m.