

**CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE  
 SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
 29 NOVEMBER 2013**

**PRESENT: COUNCILLOR J D HOUGH (CHAIRMAN)**

Councillors B Adams (Vice-Chairman), W J Aron, Mrs J Brockway, J P Churchill, S R Dodds, A G Hagues, J R Hicks, R J Hunter-Clarke, B W Keimach, P J O'Connor, C R Oxby, Mrs N J Smith, Mrs C A Talbot, S M Tweedale, L Wootten and R Wootten

Added Members: Mr C V Miller, Mrs E J Olivier-Townrow, Mr S C Rudman, Mr P Thompson, Dr E van der Zee and Mrs G Wright.

Replacement Members: Councillor T M Trollope-Bellew

Also in attendance:- Councillor D Brailsford (Executive Support Councillor for Children's Services) and Vincent Brittain (CEO of Inspire+)

Officers in attendance: Debbie Barnes (Executive Director Children's Services), Keith Batty (Assistant Director of CfBT Education Services), Andrea Brown (Democratic Services Officer), Stuart Carlton (Assistant Director of Children's Services), Tim Culpin (Head of School Improvement), David Dickinson (Programme Director), Steph Douglas (Head of Birth to Five), Maggie Freeman (Head of 14-19), Philip Garner (Specialist Programme Manager - Healthy Lifestyles), John Giblin (Team Leader - Communications), Jill Hodges (Director of CfBT Education Services), Tracy Johnson (Scrutiny Officer), David Robinson (School Services Manager), Janice Spencer (Assistant Director of Children's Services and Louise Tyers (Scrutiny Officer)

44 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE / REPLACEMENT MEMBERS

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs S Ransome and Mrs S Wray.

Councillor T M Trollope-Bellew was in attendance as replacement member for Councillor Mrs S Wray.

45 DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

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46 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE  
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON 18 OCTOBER 2013

The Chairman noted some typographical amendments to the minutes of the meeting held on 18 October 2013.

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the previous meeting of the Committee, held on 18 October 2013, noting the amendments as tabled, be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

47 CLOSING THE ATTAINMENT GAP (BETWEEN CHILDREN AND YOUNG  
PEOPLE WHO ARE OR HAVE BEEN ELIGIBLE FOR SCHOOL MEALS  
AND THOSE WHO HAVE NOT)

The Director of CfBT Education Services, Jill Hodges, introduced the report which focussed on the eligibility of free school meals. It was noted that a significant piece of work was required and that this report was an introduction into this work.

During discussion, the following points were noted:-

- The language in relation to this item was changing nationally and would be known as "Closing the Gap" rather than "Narrowing the Gap".
- Analysis was to be undertaken to determine which area would be the initial focus. The idea was to plan and scope this piece of work through the programme board throughout Christmas and the New Year to ensure this will be thorough and comprehensive. Although this was a national issue, specific analysis of children within Lincolnshire would also be the focus.
- The report did not mention inclusion of parents and it was felt that this was key to the success of this piece of work. It was acknowledged that a number of schools employ parent advisors and do work well with parents but that this success needs to be widely shared. It was possible to include this within the work being undertaken but this would be identified at the scoping stage.
- Schools who have a large number of children receiving free school meals ensured that pupils make better progress than in schools where there were only a few children claiming free school meals.
- It was suggested that the current focus may be wrong, with figures highlighting underachievement rather than focussing on how to support all achievement thereby encouraging children or to try and ascertain what is blocking a child's achievement and helping them overcome that.
- Work continued to reduce the stigma associated with free school meals by promoting the Pupil Premium and the benefit to both schools and parents by accepting help where eligible.

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- Only ten secondary schools in Lincolnshire had not become an academy but the majority of those who had were requesting that the Local Authority work in partnership with them on these issues. It was felt that the dynamic of the relationship between academies and the LA was improving.
- Members felt it was important to include the background of progress made to to-date as the report contained little information on what had been done previously. It was felt that it was important to be clear about why this direction had been taken.
- An action plan had been developed in relation to free school meals and an increase in what had been seen which had resulted in more funding coming into Lincolnshire. A paper had been presented to the School's Forum which explained both local and national figures and how they were moderated. Officers agreed to provide detailed information to the Committee following the meeting.
- It was the responsibility of each school to decide the individual needs of the children and what their Pupil Premium would be spent on. A paper had been produced by the Sutton Trust which detailed the most effective way of spending their Pupil Premium and that report had been shared with all schools as part of an Ofsted package. There was also a requirement for all schools to publish details of the Pupil Premium received and how this had been spent.
- Although the government was aware of the number of people claiming benefits and, therefore, eligible for free school meals, the Department for Work and Pensions would not provide the individual details to Local Authorities to be able to close the gap.
- Work was ongoing with Ofsted to ensure that all children were supported but the focus on this report had been Free School Meals as requested by the Committee. School Improvement Officers were focussed on all children within schools.
- It was agreed that the Committee would be presented with an update and a request for members on the Programme Board once the scoping exercise had been completed.

RESOLVED

1. That the report be noted.
2. That an update be added to the Work Programme for April 2014.

48     SUPPORT AND ASPIRATION - GOVERNMENT REFORM

The Assistant Director of CfBT Education Services, Keith Batty, presented the report and introduced David Dickinson, Programme Director, who provided details of the report to the Committee.

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During discussion, the following points were noted:-

- South West Lincolnshire Clinical Commissioning Group (SWLCCG) were to take the lead and it was proposed that a similar report would be presented to the CCG Council. Discussions as to whether the lead commissioner would be the local authority or health, however, were still to be held.
- Education would remain the focus with health and social care forming additional support for those who need it. It was acknowledged, however, that children identified as having SEN or a statement had risen in recent years.
- This system would offer a unique opportunity to provide support for children and families who had educational, health and care needs. A significant number of officers, health and care partners were engaged in the work involved.
- Councillor Mrs C A Talbot volunteered as the Committee representative on the Stakeholder Group. It was also agreed that an Added Member would also join the Stakeholder Group, the name of whom would be agreed and advised following the meeting.

#### RESOLVED

1. That the report be noted.
2. That Councillor Mrs C A Talbot and one Added Member (to be confirmed) would represent the Committee on the Stakeholder Group.

#### 49 SCHOOL PE, SPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY: THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE LEGACY CHALLENGE ACROSS LINCOLNSHIRE

Philip Garner, Specialist Programme Manager – Healthier Lifestyles, presented the report and introduced Vincent Brittain, Chief Executive Officer for Inspire+. A booklet entitled "Lincolnshire Sport" and a leaflet entitled "Inspire the Legacy Challenge" were circulated to the Committee for their information.

During discussion, the following points were noted:-

- The pilot had been presented to the Director of Public Health who agreed that this be considered within future budget discussions for formal inclusion in the Public Health budget. The scheme was currently running as part of a maintained grant of £48k until March 2015.
- Should the Government take the decision to withdraw the Sports Manager initiative, Inspire+ could continue to liaise directly with school headteachers. As a local charity, they received no funding whether locally or nationally and so would continue to lean on local businesses for their support.

At 11.50am, Councillor A G Hagues left the meeting and did not return.

- As with Pupil Premium, schools were required to publish details of Sports Premiums on a yearly basis, in addition to completing an Ofsted report.

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- Concern was noted regarding the Certificate of Achievement and medals awarded to the children taking part. The awards were not accredited and were signed off by teachers which raised concern about extra pressure being put upon teachers as a result.
- It was agreed that, overall, the Committee was pleased with the proposals being put forward but that input into budgets in other areas, where children's services were being considered, may be required.

At 12.05pm, Councillor Mrs C A Talbot left the meeting and did not return.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted.

50     VERBAL FEEDBACK FROM MEMBERS' VISITS TO CHILDREN'S CENTRES

The Chairman proposed that this item be deferred and requested Members to consider the information circulated, which detailed Members Visits to Children's Centres, for the next meeting. Members were also encouraged to visit Solutions 4 providers and to liaise with the Scrutiny Officer outside the meeting should they wish to do so.

RESOLVED

That Verbal Feedback from Members' Visits to Children's Centres be deferred to the next meeting.

51     CORPORATE PARENTING PANEL UPDATE

The Chairman of the Lincolnshire Corporate Parenting Panel, Councillor D Brailsford, provided an update to the Committee on the work of the Panel. Members noted that an additional meeting of the Corporate Parenting Panel had been arranged for 5<sup>th</sup> December 2013 to discuss the Signs of Safety Framework, Looked After Children Strategy and the Looked After Children Placement Sufficiency Strategy.

During discussion, the following points were noted:-

- It had been agreed that should the date of the Ofsted Inspection be changed, the date of the additional meeting may also be changed to ensure that the inspectors were able to attend.
- The problems faced by children using social media sites and the internet in general had been discussed at the last meeting of the Corporate Parenting Panel and it was asked that this be brought to the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee for consideration.

## RESOLVED

1. That the report be noted.
2. That Internet Safety be added to the Work Programme of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee for a future meeting.

52 HOME TO SCHOOL AND COLLEGE TRANSPORT POLICY

David Robinson, School Services Manager, introduced the report which provided the Committee with a summary of the current Home to School and College Transport Policy.

During discussion, the following points were noted:-

- Concern was noted regarding potential anomalies which could occur during the implementation of the policy. Officers were confident that these were few and any issues could be worked through on an individual case basis.
- A report had been considered by DMT in relation to the use of taxis to transport children and young people to school. It was acknowledged that taxis were regularly used to transport children with Special Educational Needs.
- The Local Authority was not required to provide transport should the post 16 course of choice be based at a different school to that of the catchment area. It was noted that some authorities were not funding post-16 transport although Lincolnshire were not at this time considering this.
- There was no legal requirement to provide transport for apprenticeships.
- The maps included in the policy did not show all schools and it was requested that a better, more comprehensive, map be obtained, if possible.
- Pupils who remained at school post-16 would continue to receive supported transport but there was a charge for this. There was no legal duty to move the school leaving age from 16 to 18 and although young people were required to participate until the age of 18 years – transport duties remain unchanged.
- The discretionary charge for post-16 cohort was confirmed as £399 but the actual cost to the local authority was around £750.
- In 2011, the designated transport area for colleges providing further education were redrawn on the basis of postcodes with geographical distances to the nearest college. However, there was no legal requirement for the Local Authority to provide transport for students at post-16.

At 12.50pm, Mrs E Olivier-Townrow left the meeting and did not return.

- In regard to Discretionary Travel, should an 11+ pupil be unsuccessful in obtaining a place at their designated grammar, the current policy would not support subsidised help to get to the next grammar school unless it was within the area.
- The Committee requested a paper after March 2014 detailing the comparisons with other councils on discretionary travel.

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RESOLVED

1. That the report be noted;
2. That a report comparing discretionary travel arrangements in other authorities be presented to the Committee after March 2014.

At 1.00pm, Mr S C Rudman, Councillors D Brailsford and B M Keimach left the meeting and did not return.

53 PERFORMANCE - QUARTER 2 2013/14

The Chairman proposed that this item be deferred and requested Members to consider the information and refer any issues to Stuart Carlton, Assistant Director of Children's Services, via email.

Any specific issues could be added to the agenda for the next meeting of the Committee, should this be necessary.

RESOLVED

That the Quarter 2 Performance Report be deferred.

54 LINCOLNSHIRE SAFEGUARDING BOARDS SCRUTINY SUB-GROUP UPDATE

The Chairman of the Safeguarding Boards Scrutiny Sub-Group, Councillor Pat O'Connor, provided an update on the progress of the Sub-Group and advised that an element of training had been introduced for inclusion at each meeting.

It was noted that a recent course on the topic of Child Sexual Exploitation had been extremely useful to the members of the Sub-Group.

RESOLVED

That the draft minutes of the meeting of the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Boards Scrutiny Sub-Group, held on 30 October 2013, be noted.

55 CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2014

Tracy Johnson, Scrutiny Officer, presented the Committee's Work Programme for 2014. The following amendments were noted, further to discussions during the meeting:-

- Internet Safety
- Closing the Gap (April 2014 – 6 monthly updates)
- Visits to Children's Centres (January 2014)
- Discretionary Transport
- Sensory Impaired Service (June 2014)

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A list of visits to Solutions 4 providers in December 2013 and January 2014 was circulated at the meeting and Members were invited to sign up to one of the visits that had been arranged.

RESOLVED

That the contents of the work programme, noting the amendments above, be agreed.

The meeting closed at 1.08 pm