

**CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY  
 COMMITTEE  
 16 JULY 2021**

**PRESENT: COUNCILLOR R J KENDRICK (CHAIRMAN)**

Councillors W H Gray (Vice-Chairman), S A J Blackburn, T A Carter, R J Cleaver, Mrs J E Killey, C Matthews, N Sear, J Tyrrell and M A Whittington.

Councillor: S P Roe (Executive Support Councillor for Children's Services, Community safety and Procurement) attended the meeting as an observer.

Officers in attendance:-

Katrina Cope (Senior Democratic Services Officer), Tracy Johnson (Senior Scrutiny Officer), Eileen McMorrow (Programme Manager, Special Schools Strategy), Dave Pennington (Head of Property Development), Martin Smith (Assistant Director for Children's Education) and Janice Spencer OBE (Assistant Director of Children's Safeguarding).

9 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE / REPLACEMENT MEMBERS

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor K H Cooke, The Rev Philip Johnson (Church Representative), Mrs M R Machin (Parent Governor Representative) and Miss A E I Sayer (Parent Governor Representative).

Apologies for absence were also received from Councillor Mrs P A Bradwell OBE (Executive Councillor Children's Services, Community Safety and Procurement), Heather Sandy (Executive Director – Children's Services), and Jo Kavanagh (Assistant Director – Early Help).

10 DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTEREST

No declarations of members' interest were received at this stage of the meeting.

11 MINUTES OF THE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 25 JUNE 2021

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 25 June 2021 be received and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

12 ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE CHAIRMAN, EXECUTIVE COUNCILLOR FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES, COMMUNITY SAFETY AND PROCUREMENT AND CHIEF OFFICERS

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The Chairman confirmed that three workshops had now been arranged for members of the Committee with each Assistant Director in Children's Services. Dates and times for the workshops were as follows:

- Monday 19 July 2021 at 11.00am – Janice Spencer, Assistant Director – Children's Safeguarding;
- Tuesday 27 July 2021 at 2.00pm – Martin Smith, Assistant Director – Children's Education;
- Friday 30 July 2021 at 2.00pm – Jo Kavanagh, Assistant Director – Early Help.

It was highlighted that all the workshops were to be held via Teams and the Chairman encouraged all members to attend the workshops if possible.

The Committee noted that the Chairman was proposing to take a ten minute break before item 8 on the agenda.

13 SERVICE LEVEL PERFORMANCE AGAINST THE CORPORATE PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK - QUARTER 4

The Chairman invited Janice Spencer OBE, Assistant Director – Children's Safeguarding to present the report to the Committee, which summarised the Service Level Performance against the Corporate Performance Framework for Quarter Four.

The Committee was advised that there were 11 measures that should have been reported on for Quarter Four. Of the 11 measures, it was highlighted that seven had achieved their target; and four measures had been unable to be reported on due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Appendix A to the report provided a copy of the Performance Measure Summary for the Committee's consideration.

The Committee was invited to review and comment on the performance.

During discussion, the Committee commented on the following:

- An observation was made that an historic graph on page 14 of the report still made reference to the term Looked After Children; it was believed that this term had been changed to Children in Care;
- Some concern was raised regarding the educational achievements as a result of the pandemic; and as a result of this when it was likely the Committee would start to see the return of any data; and whether any mitigation had been put in to place to take the non-availability of data into consideration. The Committee was advised that the impact of the pandemic would be felt over a number of years and that measures were in place to support children's education. It was highlighted that the focus of recovery was being held centrally by the Department of Education and that Ofsted's role had been to identify the impact of provision and what needed to be done to help

recovery from the pandemic. The Committee noted that there had been a national review report by Sir Kevan Collins, the Government's former education recovery commissioner, regarding educational recovery and funding that had been made available to schools to help them in their recovery process. It was noted further that local authorities should not collect data, as the data was not comparable. The Committee was advised that all schools had worked very hard to meet the deadline for the teacher assessment process for the children's results in August. In conclusion, the Committee noted that the local authority had adopted a long term view approach and would be working closely with the Regional Schools Commissioner with regard to the recovery of education in Lincolnshire schools;

- Clarity was sought as to what was meant by the term 'participating in learning' (page 27 of the report pack). The Committee was advised that children in care participated in all forms of learning. It was noted that children in care were not disadvantaged in any way, although some courses might be structured differently, the children in care would be on roll and participating in education. Officers agreed to provide members of the Committee with further information as to the level of participation;
- Page 29 – Care Leavers in suitable accommodation. Reassurance was given that a high percentage of care leavers were in suitable accommodation. Praise was extended to all district councils for their support to children in care;
- Comparable statistics. The Committee noted that the Council was aligned to comparable local authorities for statistical information;
- Page 25 - The impact the pandemic had on the achievement gap between pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM) and their non-FSM eligible peers nationally at Key Stage 4. The Committee noted that schools were deploying the national tuition programme and summer schools were being arranged. The Holiday and Activity Fund for engagement had been made available for schools to focus on this particular group to help narrow the gap. The Committee noted that over 4,000 digital devices had been handed out to pupils through Local Authority maintained schools; as well as schools deploying other devices. A request was made for further information regarding the participation of the young people in these activities;
- How performance would be calibrated going forward. The Committee was advised that schools had accommodated the teacher assessment process really well. How that impacted on future choices would be a topic for debate over the next few years. A further question asked was what could be done to monitor any alternative data. The Committee was advised that the local authority could not request data from schools, however, it was felt that some alternative data could be gathered to identify how schools were delivering statutory functions;
- Page 31 - Juvenile first time offenders - The Committee noted that data was still not available from the Youth Justice Board. It was highlighted that a lot of restorative work was being undertaken; and a request was made for some internal data to be provided to the Committee to be able to monitor levels and have some assurances, in the absence of Youth Justice Board data being available. Officers agreed to look into the request and that the information would be forwarded on to all members of the Committee.

RESOLVED

That the service level performance against the Corporate Performance Framework for Quarter Four be received.

#### 14 PROPOSALS FOR SCRUTINY REVIEWS

The Chairman invited Tracy Johnson, Senior Scrutiny Officer to present the report, which invited the Committee to consider whether it would like to make any suggestions for in-depth scrutiny reviews. Any topics put forward would then be considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board at its meeting on 30 September 2021.

Detailed at Appendix A to the report was a copy of the Scrutiny Prioritisation Toolkit, to help the Committee in selection of the right type of topics.

On pages 37 and 38 of the report, the Executive Director of Children's Services had suggested two topics for consideration by the Committee. These were: Young Carers and Restoring Family Relationships.

Following a short discussion, reference was made to the number of job vacancies in Lincolnshire and how many young people over eighteen would be entering in to the job market and what the economic consequence would be. It was highlighted that matters such as this would be picked up by Economic Development within the Place Directorate.

The Committee agreed to the two suggestions detailed on pages 37 and 38 of the report pack.

#### RESOLVED

That the following two topics be put forward for consideration by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board on 30 September 2021: -

- Young Carers; and
- Restoring Family Relationships.

#### 15 CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

The Chairman invited Tracy Johnson, Senior Scrutiny Officer to present the report to the Committee.

Details of the Committee's planned items were shown pages 43 to 46 of the report pack. Appendix A to the report advised the Committee of the Executive Councillor decisions to be taken up to 30 November 2021.

The Committee was advised that the next meeting of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee would be held on 3 September 2021.

A request was made for the availability of informal Lincolnshire County Council information for the performance indicators where no data had been readily available for the Committee to consider. Officers agreed to look into the request.

RESOLVED

That the work programme presented be agreed.

16 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 two items of business on the grounds that they are considered to contain exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended.

17 EXPANSION OF THE PRIORY SCHOOL, SPALDING

Consideration was given to an exempt report from Dave Pennington, Head of Property Development, which invited the Committee to consider and comment on the expansion of The Priory School, Spalding, prior to a decision being taken by the Leader of the Council (Executive Councillor for Resources, Communications and Commissioning) between 26 and 30 July 2021.

RESOLVED

That the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee unanimously supported the recommendations as detailed on page 54 of the exempt report pack.

18 EXPANSION OF THE ST CHRISTOPHER'S SCHOOL, LINCOLN

Consideration was given to an exempt report from Dave Pennington, Head of Property Development, which asked the Committee to consider and comment on the expansion of St Christopher's School, Lincoln, prior to a decision being taken by the Leader of the Council (Executive Councillor for Resources, Communications and Commissioning) between 26 and 30 July 2021.

RESOLVED

That the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee unanimously supported the recommendations as detailed on page 70 of the exempt report pack.

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The meeting closed at 11.43 am