



**CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE
22 APRIL 2022**

PRESENT: COUNCILLOR R J KENDRICK (CHAIRMAN)

Councillors W H Gray (Vice-Chairman), S A J Blackburn, T A Carter, R J Cleaver, C Matthews, N Sear, T J N Smith, J Tyrrell, M A Whittington and R B Parker

Added Members

Councillors: Mrs P A Bradwell OBE and S P Roe were also in attendance.

Chris Cook (Independent Chair of Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (LSCP)) and Philip Clark (Lincolnshire Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner) also attended the meeting as guests.

Officers in attendance:-

Charlotte Gray (Head of Service- Children's Strategic Commissioning), Heather Sandy (Executive Director – Children's Services), Linda Dennett (Interim assistant Director – Children's Health & Children's Commissioning), Martin Smith (Assistant Director – Children's Education, Matt Clayton (Admissions and Education Provision Manager – Children's Education), Nicky Myers (Interim Head of Service for Early Years), Sara Gregory (Commissioning Manager – Children's Strategic Commissioning), Stacy Waller (LSCP Business Manager – Children's Safeguarding), Thomas Crofts (Democratic Services Officer) and Tracy Johnson (Senior Scrutiny Officer)

In attendance via Teams: -

Janice Spencer OBE (Assistant Director – Children's Safeguarding)
Fenella Chambers (NHS Lincolnshire Clinical Commissioning Group) attended the meeting as a guest.

69 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE / REPLACEMENT MEMBERS

Apologies for absence were received from Megan Machin (Parent Governor Representative), Marc Jones (Lincolnshire Police and Crime Commissioner) and Jo Kavanagh (Assistant Director – Early Help).

It was reported that, under Regulation 13 of the Local Government Committee and Political Groups) Regulation 1990, Councillor Parker was replacing Councillor Killey for this meeting only.

70 DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTEREST

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There were no declarations of interest.

71 MINUTES OF THE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 4 MARCH 2022

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 4 March 2022 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

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

The Chairman announced that at the Government had now published the SEND Green Paper and the Education White Paper and that an overview of the SEND Green Paper had been added to the work programme for the next meeting of the Committee to advise Members of its consultation process. An overview of the Education White Paper had also been added to the work programme for the meeting on 22 July 2022.

Councillor Mrs Bradwell announced that the Council's Ofsted inspection report had been published and was to be distributed to Members. It was reported that the report was very positive and commended all officers involved in sustaining services throughout the pandemic.

Heather Sandy commended all officers involved in the Ofsted inspection.

73 LINCOLNSHIRE SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN PARTNERSHIP - ANNUAL REPORT

The Committee received a report and presentation from Chris Cook (Independent Chair - Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Partnership) and Stacey Waller (LSCP Business Manager). In reference to the report, the following matters were covered in the presentation:

- An analysis of child exploitation, including digital exploitation. The Committee was also informed that a piece of research and data collection work was underway to gain a better understanding of the issue.
- The LSCP had secured a successful partnership with the Child Sexual Abuse Centre of Expertise. Work was ongoing to develop a pathway of support so that practitioners, social workers, police officers and teachers know where to go and how to access the best support for children and young people within the county. The project was expected to launch in September 2022 and the Committee was to be made aware of developments.
- A programme to give children aged 10 to 11 the opportunity to become Junior Online Safety Officers (JOSOs) had been rolled out across participating schools, whereby children take on the role of helping their peers stay safe online. 72 children in Lincolnshire were currently JOSOs.

- New courses had been developed this year, including:
 - Recognising and Supporting Parents in Parental Conflict
 - Sexual Behaviours Traffic Light e-Learning and toolkit
 - Children that Experience Domestic Abuse
 - Responding to Child Exploitation and Missing Children during the COVID-19 Pandemic
 - DASH
 - MARAC & MOP Training
 - Control, Coercive Behaviour and Stalking in an intimate relationship
 - Disguised compliance (updated to include new learning)
- The Neglect Strategy had been updated to standardise nomenclature and help practitioners more easily identify neglect.
- Campaigns during the reporting period had covered:
 - Self Harm Awareness
 - Safer Sleep for Infants
 - National Child Safety Week
 - Private Fostering
 - Child Exploitation
 - Safer Internet Day (in collaboration with Lincolnshire Police)
 - Online Safety (annual campaign delivered across the Christmas period)
 - Racist, Bullying and Hate Crime
 - Domestic Abuse
- A Q (quad) Collaboration Group was formed to align activities in training, audit and policy, analytical resource, reviews and engagement.

Philip Clark, Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner, and Fenella Chambers from NHS Lincolnshire Clinical Commissioning Group, were in attendance to represent the Police and Health on behalf of the Partnership and were allowed to participate for this item.

During the discussion on the report and presentation the following comments were received:

- The prevention of illicit drug use was principally the responsibility of the police and social care interventions.
- JOSOs should be celebrated and recognised to promote the benefits of understanding online safety and responsibility.
- The wider rollout of the JOSOs programme relied upon school engagement. Some schools had not engaged with the programme as resources had been tight throughout the pandemic. Only 66% of schools had responded to confirm compliance with safeguarding responsibilities.
- It was a statutory obligation to report data pertaining to the deaths of children and highlight any deaths that were flagged as concerning. The current data gave assurance that there was no shortfall of service.
- Child deaths identified smoking as a modifiable factor, and second-hand smoke was not considered to be a form of neglect unless the child had specific health issues.

- The Partnerships' priorities reflected those identified by young people themselves at the Youth Council.
- A new LCC Domestic Abuse Programme Board had been set up to oversee and report on the Domestic Abuse Partnership to ensure governance and accountability. Updates on the Partnership would be reported to the Public Protection and Communities Scrutiny Committee.

Members expressed disappointment school response rate to the JOSO programme and agreed to promote the programme to schools within their divisions.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee reviewed the report and was satisfied with the work of the Partnership.

74 COMMISSIONING ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE HOLIDAY ACTIVITIES AND FOOD (HAF) PROGRAMME

Consideration was given to a report by Sara Gregory, Programme Manager – Children's Integrated Commissioning, on Commissioning Arrangements for the Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) Programme, which was being presented to the Executive for a decision on 4 May 2022. In addition to the report, the following was reported:

- The Council had received a £2.6 million grant from central government to use for activities and meals for children throughout school holidays.
- The programme had received a lot of positive feedback.
- The County Council had relied upon other organisations to deliver the programme including charities and district councils.
- The programme was to be extended to secondary school aged children.
- The programme had also proved to help educate children on good nutrition.
- It was ensured that the procurement of services to deliver the programme was fair and competitive but maintained a strict criterion on quality.

In response to questions raised by the Committee, the following points were confirmed:

- The HAF programme had to be delivered in line with strict guidance from the Department for Education which meant it had to be focused on children entitled to benefits related free school meals. The Council would not be able to prioritise a provider for a grant because they offered to provide sessions for all children due to the strict guidance and the eligibility criteria. However, it was recognised that for some providers who offer chargeable services, this might restrict their ability to become involved in the HAF programme and the Council was keen to ensure a wide range of providers were taking part. As a result, these providers were being approached to highlight how they could still deliver their sessions but offer a number of free places to children who would be eligible for the HAF programme.

- By holding the HAF sessions in schools, the overheads would be less than some of the private venues, which was an important consideration when there was a limit on the level of funding for each place in order to make the programme viable. In addition, schools were considered a good venue as a lot of families like to go to their local school as it was a familiar environment. When sessions for the Christmas and Easter programmes had been hosted at a school, trips had been arranged to take children for days out to different places to enrich their experiences.
- The grant funding given to the Council was based on the number of eligible children entitled to free school meals and would be available to those children who attended a school in Lincolnshire.
- The Council was required to collect monitoring information and provide this back to the Department for Education. In addition, the Council had its own monitoring process which was established through the pilot programme and was being refined and expanded as the number of providers increased. Spot checks were being undertaken of providers to check the quality of the food and activities being undertaken, check the safeguarding policies and procedures in place, and that food allergies and cultural needs were being catered for. The assessment of the Easter HAF programme would be shared with the Committee. An invitation was extended to members of the Committee to join officers on monitoring visits to see what HAF provision was being provided in their local communities.
- Hard to reach communities could be targeted due to the range of provision offered all over the County which meant that some provision could be offered really close to where they live. The open select list approach enabled the Council to bring in new providers each time it ran the HAF programme so it would be able to look at where there was a need to increase provision in a particular area. Schools were being informed of any planned HAF provision in the area for passing onto eligible families to encourage attendance and highlight the benefits of their child attending. Children's social care staff were also being informed of the HAF programme so that they could promote it to any eligible families they worked with.
- Not many schools were delivering HAF provision themselves, but some were allowing providers to use their premises. Work was being undertaken to get more schools on board and ensure providers were covering more schools.
- There was no specific target set by the Department for Education in terms of the percentage of eligible children reached. The £2.6m grant funding would not be enough to reach all of the nearly 30,000 eligible children. It was expected that between 10,000 and 15,000 children of the eligible cohort would be reached. However, not all eligible children were expected to take up the offer. As the HAF programme was operated during the school holidays, some families did not put their children into HAF sessions during the shorter Christmas and Easter breaks as they wanted to spend the time with their children. It was anticipated that the summer programme would be more popular due to the longer break. The Council reported to the Department for Education on the number of children who were involved in the HAF programme.
- Some of the funding could be used to cover transport costs to enable access to the HAF provision if it was not within walking or travelling distance.

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- Alongside district councils, the Voluntary and Community Sector was fundamental for expanding the programme and providers were being made aware of the opportunity to take part through the Voluntary Sector Forum. In addition, the application process was being simplified to encourage more applications and longer-term funding was being offered so that providers could employ staff to deliver the provision.
- Any unspent grant funding would have to be returned to the Department for Education. The underspend in 2021 was due to the very short notice received to deliver the pilot and put arrangements in place. In addition, there was only around 5,000 places available for the Christmas programme due to a lack of providers offering to deliver the provision. Lessons had been learnt from the pilot and a mixed model approach of planning for targeted provision and allowing providers to spontaneously come forward was being pursued.
- There was a need to ensure that the provision was spread across the County and focused in the areas where it was needed the most. For the Easter HAF programme, some bids were not accepted as there was already provision being offered in that area, whereas bids were accepted in areas of priority which were not already covered. The Easter HAF programme had been a hybrid model with some provision being delivered by providers, while some was delivered by Council staff, such as the Music Service and youth teams.

Members of the Committee agreed that all councillors needed a briefing on HAF provision in their areas so that they could better support residents and promote the service, which was felt to be underutilised. It was agreed that a briefing would be circulated to all councillors setting out what HAF provision would be offered in their local communities.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Committee support the recommendations to the Executive as set out in the report.
2. That the Committee's comments be passed on to the Executive in relation to this item.

75 PROPOSAL TO EXPAND CAPACITY AT THE FOURFIELDS CHURCH OF ENGLAND SCHOOL, SUTTERTON (FINAL DECISION)

Consideration was given to a report by Matthew Clayton, Admissions and Education Provision Manager, on the proposal to expand capacity at Fourfields Church of England School, Sutterton, which was being presented to the Executive Councillor for Children's Services, Community Safety and Procurement for a decision on 29 April 2022. In addition to the report, focus was drawn to the need for additional classroom space, as currently a class of 30 could not be accommodated and it was necessary to mix year groups.

In response to questions raised by the Committee, the following points were confirmed:

- When planning the design of schools, consideration was given to trying to future proof the school as much as possible for further increases in pupil numbers. It can be anticipated where there might be a need to expand a school further in the future.

Future proofing schools was limited by the size of the site and access, so there might come a point in the future where another school was required, but at this stage future proofing was planned as best as possible based on what was currently known.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Committee support the recommendation to the Executive Councillor as set out in the report.
2. That the Committee's comments be passed on to the Executive Councillor in relation to this item.

76 CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee considered a report from Tracy Johnson, Senior Scrutiny Officer, which invited members to consider and comment on the content of its work programme, to ensure that scrutiny activity was focused where it could be of greatest benefit.

Members noted the work programme and asked that a report on the effectiveness of the Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme be added.

RESOLVED:

That the work programme be agreed subject to the inclusion of the amendments mentioned above.

77 WELTON DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTIONS

Consideration was given to a report which summarised developer contributions for a capital project in Welton.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Committee support the recommendation to the Executive Councillor as set out in the report.
2. That Committee's comments be passed on to the Executive Councillor in relation to this item.

The meeting closed at 12.58 pm

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