

Date: Wednesday, 16 December 2015

Time: 10.00 am

Venue: Shrewsbury/Oswestry Room, Shirehall, Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury, Shropshire, SY2 6ND

Contact: Tim Ward, Committee Officer  
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## YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

### TO FOLLOW REPORT (S)

- 3 Minutes of the Last Meeting (Pages 1 - 10)**  
To confirm the minutes of the meetings held on 4 November 2015 and 16 November 2015 (**To Follow**)

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## YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

**Minutes of the meeting held on 4 November 2015**

**10.00 - 11.45 am in the Shrewsbury Room, Shirehall, Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury, Shropshire, SY2 6ND**

**Responsible Officer:** Tim Ward

Email: [tim.ward@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:tim.ward@shropshire.gov.uk) Tel: 01743 257713

### **Present**

Shropshire Councillors

Councillor Joyce Barrow (Chairman)

Councillors Peggy Mullock (Vice Chairman), Andy Boddington, Hannah Fraser, Vince Hunt, John Price and Kevin Turley

### **41 Apologies and Substitutions**

41.1 Apologies for absence were received from Austin Atkinson (Roman Catholic Diocese), Councillor Robert Tindall, Councillor Kevin Pardy and Philip Tranter, (Parent Governor Representative)

41.2 There were no substitutions

### **42 Disclosable Pecuniary Interests**

42.1 There were no declarations of pecuniary interest.

### **43 Minutes**

43.1 The minutes of the meeting held on the 16 September 2015 had been circulated

43.2 RESOLVED: -

That the minutes of the meeting held on the 16 September 2015 be approved and signed by the Chairman as a true record

### **44 Public Question Time**

44.1 There were no questions from members of the public.

### **45 Members' Question Time**

45.1 There were no questions from Members.

With the agreement of the Committee the Update on the commissioning of Youth Services was taken next.

## **46 Update on the Commissioning of Youth Services**

- 46.1 The Director of Commissioning gave an update on the commissioning of youth services. He advised the meeting that 32 separate grants and contracts had been set up across the county with a range of different providers offering services. He commented that several learning points had been recognised, one of which was that staff transfers under TUPE regulations had taken longer than expected and that the process to transfer staff should have commenced earlier. He agreed to circulate a list of what was being provided in each area. In response to a question from a Member the Director of Commissioning confirmed that funding was in place to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017.
- 46.2 The Local Commissioning Manager commented that the decision making process through the Local Joint Committees had been good with all Members being involved. She stated that developing the provision in Ludlow had been a challenge and that following no response to the initial tendering process, Officers and Members had worked to understand the issues and to find a solution to the provision of a service for a group of older more challenging young people. She informed Members that as a short term measure activities for younger children and some detached youth work aimed at the older youth had been commissioned from Shropshire Youth Association (SYA).
- 46.3 The Local Commissioning Manager informed Members that development of provision in Market Drayton had been delayed due to staffing issues. It was noted that a contract had been awarded to the SYA who had a leader and 1 youth worker in place and were looking to find more youth workers to enable them to run the club at full capacity.
- 46.4 The Portfolio Holder for Children's Services commented that there was a lot of good work being done over the County and cited the example of Oswestry where 60% more youth activity was being provided with only 25% of the previous funding.
- 46.5 A Member commented that some of the more difficult services did not seem attractive to providers and asked what lessons had been learned during the commissioning process. The Director of Commissioning commented that whilst there had been a lot of positives during the process, some of the commissioning had taken longer than anticipated leading to a break in provision, and in some areas the commissioning process had not worked as well as envisaged.
- 46.6 A Member asked how contracts would be monitored and outcomes would be measured. The Director of Commissioning confirmed that the Community Action Officers would be responsible for this work.
- 46.7 The Chairman thanked Officers for their update and asked that a further report be brought to a future meeting. The Director of Commissioning commented that it may be useful that a representative of the Shropshire Youth Association attends the meeting and this suggestion was welcomed by Members.

## **47 Safeguarding Arrangements in Independent Schools**

- 47.1 Members received the report of the Education Welfare Team Leader which provided details of how Shropshire Council met its statutory duties in relation to safeguarding arrangements in independent schools.
- 47.2 The Education Welfare Team Leader advised Members that the Local Authority had a duty to ensure all schools reflected the importance of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and that Shropshire Council had a designated Education Safeguarding Officer who liaised with independent schools. She added that the Local Authority monitored compliance through the termly section 9 practice audit and the annual section 11 audit. She commented that recently a proforma had been developed which was completed annually and provided a checklist for schools and monitored compliance with regard to safeguarding training throughout the school. She added that the Local Authority provided consultancy visits and safeguarding training on a traded basis and that a number of schools made use of these services.
- 47.3 The Education Welfare Team Leader informed Members that an Independent School Safeguarding Group had been established under the chairmanship of the Director of Children's Services which aimed to extend relationships with independent schools and to raise awareness of the importance of safeguarding. She added that as part of the groups work schools were updated on statutory duties and recommended best practice and were updated on amendments to relevant policies and areas of focus.
- 47.4 Marie Jones, designated safeguarding lead at Shrewsbury High School outlined the support she received from the Local Authority. She welcomed the work of the Independent School Safeguarding Group.
- 47.5 In response to a query, the Education Welfare Team Leader confirmed that the resources referred to in paragraph 3.6.2 of the report were primarily staff time.
- 47.6 The Chairman thanked Officers and Ms Jones for attending the meeting.
- 47.7 RESOLVED: -

That the contents of the report be noted

## **48 The Oversight of Children who are Educated at Home or who are Missing From Education**

- 48.1 Members received the report of the Education Access Service Manager which provided details of Shropshire Council's oversight of children who were educated at home, known as elective home education (EHE) and those children missing from education (CME).
- 48.2 The Education Access Service Manager outlined the legislation around EHE and advised that there was no obligation on a parent to notify the Local Authority of their decision to educate their child at home and that whilst Shropshire Council held a

register of home educated children registration was not compulsory. She emphasised that the vast majority of children that were electively home educated would be cared for satisfactorily but that a small minority may be at risk of abuse or neglect and would be particularly vulnerable as the Local Authority did not have powers of entry to the home or rights to see the child.

- 48.3 The Education Access Service Manager advised the meeting that children deemed as missing education were those of compulsory school age who were not on a school roll, nor being educated otherwise and who had been out of any educational provision for 10 school days or more. CME's were considered vulnerable and it was important to establish the reasons a child is missing at the earliest possible chance.
- 48.4 In response to a query the Education Access Service Manager confirmed that there were currently 195 children registered with Shropshire Council as being home educated, although there may be more that the Council is not aware of, and 148 active CME referrals.
- 48.5 A Member commented that there was a concern that children would "slip through the net". The Director of Children's Services commented that it was a gap in the current legislation that there was no right of entry to the home or right to insist on seeing the child and that pressure was being put on government to change this.
- 48.6 **RESOLVED:**

That the details given in the paper and the Council's approach to fulfilling its responsibilities, and how the identified risks to children and young people missing from education are addressed are noted.

**49 Progress in Implementing Personal Social and Health Education (PSHE) which Addresses Issues of Child Exploitation**

- 49.1 Members received the report of the Public Health Curriculum Advisor which provided details of the Council's approach to challenging and supporting primary and secondary schools to ensure effective provision for Personal Social and Health Education (PSHE).
- 49.2 The Public Health Curriculum Advisor informed Members that Shropshire was recognised nationally as an area of good practice for the development and implementation of relationship and sex education (RSE) curriculum resources in mainstream schools. She added that the work was fully funded by the Public Health Department as part of the work around safeguarding. She then outlined the work that was being done throughout schools in the county, stating that 75% of primary schools and 90% of secondary schools were delivering or planned to deliver the programme from Summer 2015. In addition she advised that work was co-ordinated with other school and community based provision such as pastoral provision, school nurses, targeted youth support the police, Young People's Health Champions and Members of the Youth Parliament.
- 49.3 Members congratulated the Public Health Curriculum Advisor on the excellent work that was being undertaken and welcomed the fact that the programme was being

delivered in so many of the County's schools. A Member commented that it would be good to have 100% of the schools delivering the programme.

49.4 The Chair thanked the Public Health Curriculum Advisor for her presentation and for all the excellent work that was being undertaken.

49.5 RESOLVED: -

That the details contained in the report and the approach taken by the Council in fulfilling its responsibilities to address issues of child exploitation and the way identified risks to children and young people are addressed, are noted.

## 50 Peer Review

50.1 The Meeting received an update on the Peer Review from the Director of Children's Services. She advised Members that the Internal Board had met twice and had been working on the final action plan. She added that the roles of the Board and the Scrutiny Committee needed to be established and that reports would be brought to a future meeting.

## 51 Work Programme

51.1 Members received copies of the Committee's Work Programme and the Cabinet Forward Plan.

51.2 The Chairman asked Members to let her know of any topics they would like added to the Committee's Work Programme.

## 52 Date of Next Meeting

52.1 Members were reminded that the next meeting of the Committee would take place on Wednesday 16 November 2015 at 10.00am at Shirehall.

Signed ..... (Chairman)

Date: .....

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## **YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

### **Minutes of the meeting held on 16 November 2015**

**11.00 - 11.40 am in the Shrewsbury Room, Shirehall, Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury, Shropshire, SY2 6ND**

**Responsible Officer:** Tim Ward

Email: [tim.ward@shropshire.gov.uk](mailto:tim.ward@shropshire.gov.uk) Tel: 01743 257713

### **Present**

#### Shropshire Councillors

Councillor Joyce Barrow (Chairman)

Councillors Peggy Mullock (Vice Chairman), Hannah Fraser, Vince Hunt, Kevin Pardy and John Price

#### Co-Opted Members (Voting)

Austin Atkinson

Philip Tranter

## **53 Apologies and Substitutions**

- 53.1 The Committee held one minute's silence following the Paris atrocities at the weekend.
- 53.2 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors A Boddington [Substitute: Councillor R Evans] and R Tindall.
- 53.3 The Chairman welcomed Mr P Tranter as a new member of the Committee. Mr Tranter stated that he served as a Parent Governor at Lower Heath School on the outskirts of Whitchurch, Shropshire. A welcome was also offered to Diane Steiner, Public Health, as an observer at the meeting.

## **54 Disclosable Pecuniary Interests**

- 54.1 No interests were declared.

## **55 Public Question Time**

- 55.1 There were no questions received from members of the public.

## **56 Members' Question Time**

- 56.1 No questions had been received from Members.

## 57 Consideration of the Financial Strategy

- 57.1 The Chairman drew attention to advice received from the Chief Executive explaining the limited role that scrutiny could play in its consideration of the Financial Strategy at this stage in the process. Members considered that scrutiny involvement at an earlier stage would have been preferable but the opportunity to be part of the debate was, nevertheless, of value.
- 57.2 The Performance Manager reinforced the message from the Chief Executive and added that the meeting provided Members with an opportunity to have an understanding of the content of the Financial Strategy and the Council's financial direction of travel. He commented that the detail was still lacking but the changes and the challenges to be met were clear together with the need for the Council's future flexibility and fluidity. The strength in engaging with communities was also very apparent.
- 57.3 The Committee considered the information available and the following specific areas were highlighted during the debate; Early Help, the Big Conversation and future scrutiny involvement in the process.
- 57.4 Early Help  
The Committee voiced concerns that Early Help was not included in the list of protected services going forward. Members recognised that this service helped other services within Children's Safeguarding to run more cheaply and cost effectively. It was believed that movement away from preventative measures would most certainly have repercussions elsewhere within the service. It was concluded that 'prevention' was a difficult term to quantify and this would be included as part of the Big Conversation.
- 57.5 A Member commented that the failure to include Early Help within the list of protected services would call into question the whole Children's Safeguarding Strategy. The Committee understood that the Council was legally required to have Early Help in place but it was for each authority to determine the appropriate level for themselves.
- 57.6 Big Conversation  
Some concern was voiced on the lack of Member involvement and input into the development of the Big Conversation questionnaire. It was noted that local members would be involved in their own areas. Members acknowledged that it was hoped the same level of feedback would be generated as that engendered by the unitary debate. Feedback from local people was considered to be essential given the huge budgetary implications for the Council.
- 57.7 Some Members voiced concerns on the projected level of services to be decommissioned by the Council and considered that these decisions would have serious repercussions both now and in the future. The Portfolio Holder urged all to become involved in the Big Conversation to ensure that savings were found safely and that children and young people would be kept safe in future.

57.8 Future Scrutiny Involvement

The Chairman considered that the key role of the Committee in future would be scrutiny of the changes, once decided. She also drew attention to the Committee's key 'overview' role.

57.8 The Committee recognised that the fast pace of events represented a challenge in establishing a meaningful route for scrutiny involvement. Members also recognised the need to consider how scrutiny could have a meaningful role in future at an earlier stage in the process.

57.9 **RESOLVED:**

That the Committee's feedback be included as part of the overall scrutiny comments on the Council's Financial Strategy.

58 **Date of Next Meeting**

58.1 It was noted that the next meeting of the Young People's Scrutiny Committee would be held at 10.00am on Wednesday 16 December 2015.

Signed ..... (Chairman)

Date: .....

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