



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

### **Minutes of the meeting held on 1 April 2015**

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

**Responsible Officer:** Tim Ward

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### **Present**

#### Shropshire Councillors

Councillor Joyce Barrow (Chairman)

Councillors Peggy Mullock (Vice Chairman), Hannah Fraser, Kevin Pardy, John Price, Robert Tindall, Kevin Turley, David Turner, Roger Evans (Substitute) (substitute for Andy Boddington) and Paul Wynn (Substitute) (substitute for Vince Hunt)

## **78 Apologies and Substitutions**

- 78.1 Apologies for absence were received from Mr Austin Atkinson, Cllr. Andy Boddington, Cllr Vince Hunt and Mr Mark Hignett
- 78.2 Cllr. Roger Evans substituted for Councillor Andy Boddington and Cllr. Paul Wynn substituted for Cllr. Vince Hunt

## **79 Disclosable Pecuniary Interests**

- 79.1 None were made

## **80 Minutes**

- 80.1 Resolved: -

That the minutes of the meeting held on 4 February 2015 be approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

- 80.2 The Director of Children's Services advised Members that there were currently 193 children being home educated in the County, 67 of primary age and 126 of secondary age. She commented that it was very difficult to compare these figures with the Authority's statistical neighbours as they were much larger than Shropshire, and consequently had larger numbers of home educated children.
- 80.3 The Chairman asked whether the information on safeguarding had been included in the Governors Circular. The Director of Children's Services confirmed that the information had been included in the Circular which was due to be published shortly.

- 80.4 The Chairman confirmed that the Committee's amendments to the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licencing Policy had been agreed by Cabinet and added to the policy.

## 81 Public Question Time

- 81.1 There were no questions from Members of the Public

## 82 Members' Question Time

- 82.1 Cllr. Mrs Kidd had asked the following questions and the Director of Children's Services had provided the following responses.

**1. Much was made of using the youth service to deliver safeguarding around child sexual exploitation. With a reduced youth service, how are we going to have a robust service, especially in the rural areas?**

Keeping children safe is everybody's business – and the children's workforce play an important role in identifying risk, seeking advice and support, and making appropriate referrals. A recent campaign "*Say Something if you See Something*" has been launched to raise public and professional awareness.

Shropshire Council will commission positive activities at a locality level through LJC's, with resources allocated to areas with most need, i.e. vulnerable children and young people. This means that youth activities will continue but delivered in a different way. Following "Working Together" requirements (multi-agency guidelines for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people 2103) the commissioning of services requires providers to meet safeguarding requirements in relation to training and safe recruitment of staff.

All youth providers will be expected to follow established procedures where they have concerns about the safety or welfare of children.

To ensure a consistent level of quality, engagement with young people and support for all local providers of youth activities the Council has commissioned an infrastructure support provider (SYA and Energize). The purpose of the contract is to support the LJC's to become confident commissioners of youth activities and to provide training, policy and procedure development, equipment loan, opportunities to collaborate, added skill and expertise to providers.

The infrastructure support provider is starting by training the Community Enablement Team in safeguarding awareness, in order they have a good awareness of promoting the welfare of children and safeguarding when they are working with the LJC's and community in identifying needs. We have also asked this team to have a specific training in relation to child sexual exploitation (CSE) from one of the children's safeguarding training officers.

Our aim is to increase knowledge and awareness, not reduce it.

Targeted Youth Support provision has been retained by the Council. This team has developed and run Empower, a targeted youth programme for young people at risk of CSE – they have received specialist training, and receive referrals direct from the CSE panel. This programme is evaluated and reviewed regularly and used as evidence in the Shropshire Safeguarding Children's Board (SSCB) Annual Report.

Targeted Youth Support is made up of 11 workers and a senior practitioner. This team work across the county, working closely with schools, receiving targeted early help referrals and at Compass assisting in the triage and assessment of early help. This team also conduct 'return from missing interviews' with young people.

The SSCB Multi-agency Strategy and Pathway established and endorsed by the SSCB in 2011 (under review) sets out a CSE Pathway and Panel to identify and respond to CSE.

Raising Awareness of CSE activity across Shropshire involves raising awareness of both statutory, non-statutory partners and the Community and Voluntary Sector in the following ways:

- The SSCB has recently commissioned an e-learning module, soon to be promoted widely and is free of charge to all.
- The SSCB also promote the PACE e-learning module for parents and carers.
- CSE Briefings to raise awareness to the following colleagues:
  - Members training
  - Licencing members and Public Protection
  - SSCB trainers and members of the board and sub-groups
  - Small business and hotels '*Say something if you see something*' campaign
  - Foster carers training is being developed and due to be rolled out soon by Shropshire Council L&D Team
  - First Point of Contact, Initial Contact Team non-social work staff
  - Residential staff – local authority and private
  - Targeted Youth Support staff
  - In schools:
    - Designated leads have specific CSE Training

- Whole school training to all staff will highlight CSE – delivered by the School Improvement Service
- Raising Awareness to students; Chelsea's Choice is soon to be commissioned to tour around Shropshire schools funded by the Police and Crime Commissioner.
- Multi-agency Training – over 300 people working with young people have received multi agency training on CSE.

**2. We have many small 'homes across the County with up to 3 young people in them. They are registered with OFSTED but we frequently do not have them on our horizons. We may not be responsible but could act as a focus for child sexual exploitation. What have we in place to monitor these and help nip anything in the bud. I have 8 such homes in my Division and young women run away from them on occasions and are always desperate to get to Shrewsbury. This concerns me.**

Local authorities have always had a statutory duty to inform host local authorities when placing a child in a local authority outside of their own.

We have updated the electronic notification system for the placing local authority to share all information regarding risk factors identified at the earliest point of placement so that we can have awareness of how they are managing these in the placement

We have a named senior manager responsible for children placed in Shropshire by other local authorities whose role it is to support private providers and authorities and raise any issues of concern with them.

The Director of Children's Services (DCS) and nominated officers receive a monthly list of children homes from Ofsted that are registered and operating in Shropshire so we are kept up to date with providers located in Shropshire.

The DCS and partner agencies such as Fire and Rescue and Police meet with the senior managers (as a group) of private children's homes providers in Shropshire on a quarterly basis. This has been the case since 2012. Ultimately the aim of the meetings is to ensure that public services (Police and Local Authority etc) and private care providers are clear about expectations of each other in relation to safeguarding children, particularly when they are reported as missing, and to identify issues for collective action. As a result of these meetings, there have been improvements in the working relationship between public services and the private care providers. For example, the required notification, when a child is placed in Shropshire from another Local Authority, is sent from the residential children home to a central point in Children's Social Care. This notification was enhanced and includes a risk assessment in relation to Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Missing. Where risks are identified this is shared with colleagues in the police. This has been in operation for over 18 months and was a direct result from these regular meetings with private providers. More recently, the Missing Person Co-Ordinator from the police attends

the private providers' quarterly meetings and also attends CSE panel on a monthly basis. All missing persons are required to have a return interview. Private providers have agreed to confirm this has taken place.

- 82.2 Mr Evans commented that he had been informed that funding for LJC for youth services would now not be available until September and that it would be reduced pro-rata. He asked whether all LJC's and Parish Councils had been made aware of this. The Director of Children's Services agreed to check that this had been done. The Chair asked that an update be brought to the next meeting.

### **83 Independent Reviewing Officers Annual Report**

- 83.1 Members received the report of the Service Manager – Safeguarding and Review which gave details of the activity and development of the Independent Reviewing Officers (IRO) Service over the past year.
- 83.2 The Service Manager advised Members that every looked after child would have an IRO appointed who would monitor their case and provide an independent overview to ensure that the authority provided good outcomes for the young people in its care. He introduced Jon Walshaw who acted as an IRO.
- 83.3 A Member queried whether there were sufficient IROs to cover the increasing workload. The Service Manager advised that there were sufficient staff to cover the current workload and that over time the implementation of the LAC Strategy should reduce the number of Looked After Children (LAC). The Director of Children's Services commented that a constant review was undertaken to monitor workloads. Mr Walshaw commented that some cases required a lot of input and others less so.
- 83.4 A Member commented that the report stated that the recommendations of LAC reviews would be moved onto Carefirst and asked what this was. The Service Manager advised that it was the system where all social care records were held and reports would be added to the system so that all information was held in one place.
- 83.5 The Chairman thanked Mr Walshaw for attending and for all the good work carried out by the IROs.
- 83.6 Resolved: -

That the contents of the report be noted and the role and the impact of the Independent Reviewing Officers be acknowledged.

### **84 Annual Report - Looked After Children Education and Health**

- 84.1 Members received the report of the Head of LAC Education and Health Team which set out the educational achievements and outcomes for the cohort of Looked After Children (LAC) who were continually in the care of Shropshire Council between 1 October 2013 and 30 September 2014.

- 84.2 The Head of LAC Education and Health advised Members that the total LAC cohort for 2013-14 was 181 children of which 152 were of statutory school age and of these 31.6% had a statement of special educational needs (SEN). 18.4% were supported at School Action Plus which provided support to address concerns around learning or behavioural and emotional difficulties which required specialist support in the schools and the advice of external professionals.
- 84.3 The Head of LAC Education and Health reported that education achievement and outcomes had been excellent at KS4, with 23.8% of pupils achieving 5 GCSEs at grades A\* to C including English and Maths, the national average for LAC being 12% with the majority continuing in some form of further education.
- 84.4 The Head of LAC Education and Health commented that a major change had taken place in the way pupil premium was received which meant that the Virtual Head Teacher had a greater role in how the pupil premium was allocated which had allowed the money to be targeted to an individual's needs.
- 84.5 A Member asked how well CAMHS worked. The Head of LAC Education and Health informed Members that there were two CAMHS workers in his team and that on the whole the system was working well and added that speed of referral was key to a good outcome. The Director of Children's Services commented that problems experienced with CAMHS in Shropshire were the same as those experienced nationally and that resourcing of CAMHS was a major concern.
- 84.6 The Chairman thanked the Head of LAC Education and Health for his report and congratulated him and his team on their tremendous work for the looked after children of Shropshire.
- 84.7 Resolved: -
- That the Young Peoples Scrutiny Committee –
- a) Congratulate Shropshire's LAC on their educational achievements in 2013 – 14 particularly at Key Stages 1 and 4, which are above the national average performance for LAC;
  - b) Congratulate Shropshire's LAC on their school/educational attendance rates throughout 2013 -14: and
  - c) Congratulate Shropshire LAC on their post 16 year destinations in 2013 - 14

## **85 Transfer of Commissioning Arrangements for 0-5's**

- 85.1 Members received a written update on the transfer of commissioning arrangements for 0 – 5's (Copy attached to the signed minutes).
- 85.2 The Director of Public Health advised Members that Public Health England was undergoing reorganisation and that the key point of contact had left which was delaying the process.

## 86 Work Programme

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

86.2 A Member asked for an update on the work of CAMHS.

86.3 A Member asked for an update on Child Sexual Exploitation especially the changes to policy and practise post Rotherham and the trends going forward. The Director of Children's Services advised that the Safeguarding Board held the overview on CSE and was in the process of setting up a project, and that she would be happy to report back on the completion of this work.

86.4 A Member questioned whether the report from the Childhood Obesity Task and Finish Group would be the final report. His understanding, as a member of the group, was that it would go on to consider further topics.

86.5 A Member stated that she had attended an event on autism and had received several comments about how difficult it was to access services. The Director of Children's Services advised the meeting that a report would be brought to a future meeting of the Committee on the SEND reforms and the "local offer" of the local authority.

## 87 Date of Next Meeting

87.1 Members were reminded that the next scheduled meeting would take place on Wednesday 24 June 2015 at 10.00am at the Shirehall

Signed ..... (Chairman)

Date: .....