



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

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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 31st 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: