



PEOPLE OVERVIEW COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 29 November 2019

2.00 - 3.50 pm in the Shrewsbury/Oswestry Room, Shirehall, Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury, Shropshire, SY2 6ND

Responsible Officer: Tim Ward

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Present

Shropshire Councillors

Councillor Peggy Mullock (Chairman)

Councillors Christian Lea, Elliott Lynch, Kevin Pardy and Roger Evans (Substitute)
(substitute for David Vasmer)

38 Apologies and Substitutions

38.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Rob Gittins, Kevin Turley, Cecilia Motley and David Vasmer and from Sian Lines (Hereford Diocese).

38.2 Councillor Roger Evans substituted for Councillor Vasmer

39 Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

39.1 There were no declarations of interest made

40 Public Question Time

40.1 There were no questions from members of the public

41 Members' Question Time

41.1 There were no questions from Members

42 Exploitation

42.1 The Director of Children's Services welcomed everyone to the meeting and informed members that the purpose of the meeting was to receive an update on the issue of criminal exploitation and how the Council and partner agencies dealt with the issue, and an expectation that future scrutiny meetings would also focus on the issue.

42.2 Members received a presentation from members of the Shropshire Safeguarding Partnership (SSP) (copy attached to the signed minutes) which outlined the work that members of the Partnership were carrying out in relation to exploitation and safeguarding.

- 42.3 A Member asked how we interact with private schools. The Director of Children's Services advised that that was a sub group of the SSP relating to schools. She added that termly meetings were held with representatives of the independent schools where safeguarding was routinely discussed.
- 42.4 A Member asked whether the work of the SSP extended beyond Shropshire. The Independent Chair stated that he had regular meetings with other Chairs in the West Midlands and also regional representative of other partner agencies.
- 42.5 A Member asked what impact the introduction of the Child Exploitation Pathway had had on budgets. The Director of Children's Services stated that this will become more of an issue with more and more children coming forward with more complex issues. She advised that the Directorate was looking carefully at what it did and was focussing resources on prevention and awareness raising work.
- 42.6 A Member asked how it was ensured that cases were dealt with in a timely manner. The Service Manager, Compass and Assessment Team assured the meeting that care was taken to ensure that all cases were dealt with as quickly as possible.
- 42.7 A Member asked why only 50 cases of exploitation were on the list. The Service Manager Compass and Assessment Team advised that data on criminal child exploitation had only been collected since September and prior to that it was only data on child sexual exploitation (CSE) that had been collected. She added that there was more data on child exploitation than on adults, as the collection of data on adult exploitation had only recently be started.
- 42.8 A Member asked whether cuts to the youth service budget would have an impact on exploitation. The Director of Children's Services commented that the cumulative effect of funding cuts across the board must all be taken into account.
- 42.9 The Clerk to Shrewsbury Town Council commented that the needs of young people were changing and that a lot of town councils were taking over the running of youth services in their areas. She added that it was important that town and parish councils continued to get the support that they needed. The Director of Children's Services commented that it was important that local communities had ownership of their youth provision and confirmed that support would be provided.
- 42.10 A Member commented that children that were excluded from mainstream education became isolated and asked whether excluded children were referred for assessment. The Director of Children's Services stated that each case was considered individually, and appropriate action taken where necessary. The Safeguarding Lead – St John Talbot School commented that schools will only exclude pupils as a last resort, when all other options have been exhausted and stated that where a pupil has been excluded the school will refer them to appropriate agencies where required. The connection between school exclusion and exploitation was noted.
- 42.11 A Member asked what happened when a vulnerable child made the transition from primary to secondary school. The Safeguarding Lead – St John Talbot School

commented that it was important the schools worked together and stated that safeguarding leads within schools will always share information where appropriate.

42.12 The Chairman thanked all present for their input to the meeting and advised members that she and the scrutiny officer would be considering topics raised in this meeting and adding them to the future work programme where necessary.

Signed (Chairman)

Date: