



YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 3 February 2016

10.00 am - 12.15 pm in the Shrewsbury/Oswestry Room, Shirehall, Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury, Shropshire, SY2 6ND

Responsible Officer: Tim Ward

Email: tim.ward@shropshire.gov.uk Tel: 01743 257713

Present

Shropshire Councillors

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

69 Apologies and Substitutions

69.1 Apologies for absence were received from Austin Atkinson, Joyce Barrow, Mark Hignett and Robert Tindall.

69.2 In the absence of the Chairman, the Vice Chairman Councillor Mullock took the meeting.

69.3 The Vice Chairman informed the meeting that Philip Tranter had resigned as the Primary School and Special School Governor representative as he had resigned as a School Governor.

70 Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

70.1 There were no declarations of pecuniary interest made.

71 Minutes

71.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 16 December 2015 had been circulated.

71.2 RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 16 December 2015 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

72 Public Question Time

72.1 There were no questions from members of the public.

73 Members' Question Time

73.1 There were no questions from Members.

74 Shropshire Safeguarding Children's Board Annual Report

74.1 Members received the annual report of the Shropshire Safeguarding Children Board (SSCB) for 2014-15.

74.2 The Independent Chair of the SSCB reminded Members that under section 14A of the Children Act 2004 she was required to publish an annual report on the effectiveness of child safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in Shropshire. She advised that as well as the Scrutiny Committee the report was submitted to the Leader of the Council, the Police & Crime Commissioner and the Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board.

74.3 The Independent Chair informed the meeting that in the year in question:

- There were 66,400 children under 19 in Shropshire, 13% of which were in income deprived households
- There were 2,626 referrals to children's social care, up from 2,305 in the previous year.
- 249 children were subject of a Child Protection Plan.
- 313 looked after children
- 400+ children in care placed in Shropshire from elsewhere in the country
- 1 serious case review which was for a child placed in Shropshire from out of county.

74.4 The Independent Chair commented that there was considerable pressure from rising demands and reducing resources across the system but the development of Early Help, the development of Compass and strong leadership, placed the County in a good position to cope with this.

74.5 A Member asked for more information on the Task and Finish Group on the safeguarding of disabled children mentioned in paragraph 4.3.1 of the report. The Independent Chair commented that the Task and Finish Group had been established to raise awareness of disabled children and to look at any gaps in the service provided for disabled children, and that it was due to report its findings to the SSCB Board in 2016 and that its finding would be included in the next annual report.

74.6 A Member asked what was being done to improve the attendance of GPs at Meetings. The Independent Chair commented that the attendance of GPs was improving and that often they could not attend due to work commitments and added that the SSCB was putting pressure on the CCG and NHS England to ensure that GPs received proper training and support. The Head of Safeguarding stated that the Council were looking at ways of improving engagement with GPs.

74.7 A Member asked what was being done to ensure that "the voice of the child" was being heard. The Independent Chair stated that the Board received regular reports around hearing the voice of the child at each meeting and also received presentations from young people, but that there was more to be done.

74.8 A Member commented that there seemed to be a real problem with the support of children placed in Shropshire from other Counties and asked whether anything could be done about this at a national level. The Independent Chair stated that the matter was very much on the national agenda but the Board needed to ensure it was satisfied that arrangements for LAC placed out of County were robust.

74.9 The Vice-Chairman thanked the Independent Chair for attending the meeting and answering Members' questions.

74.10 **RESOLVED**

That the contents of the Shropshire Safeguarding Board Annual Report 2014-15 be noted.

75 **Social Care Support for Children with Disabilities**

75.1 The Director of Children's Services advised the meeting that the Chairman had asked that this item be added to the agenda following receipt of the Shropshire Parent and Carer Council (SPCC) report "Accessing Social Care Support for Children with Disabilities in Shropshire" which had raised several concerns.

75.2 The Vice Chairman welcomed Sarah Thomas (Secretary) and Sarah Cox from SPCC and asked them to address the meeting.

75.3 Ms Thomas advised the meeting that the SPCC provided support for parent and carers of disabled children and that they currently had 500 families on their database. She outlined SPCC concerns which included: -

- A lack of transparency in the system of social care support and confusion regarding the role of Children's Social care both amongst families and some Shropshire Council staff
- Concerns regarding the decision to recommission the contract for the provision of overnight short breaks at the Willows
- Concerns over the future of social care services following publication of the Council's FINANCIAL STRATEGY.
- Concerns over the impact of the move to local commissioning of services.

75.4 The Director of Children's Services advised the meeting that whilst she understood some of the concerns expressed, the large majority of families did get their needs met. She went on to say that she had already met with PACC and was working with PACC representatives to achieve the best outcomes for all families.

75.5 The Director of Children's Services stated that there had been over commissioning of bed nights at the Willows which had led to surplus capacity. She added that the

situation would be monitored to ensure that there was sufficient capacity available to meet needs.

75.6 A Member made reference to the recommendations of the 0-25 Years Disability Services Task and Finish Group, which had completed its work in 2010. It was agreed that the Committee Officer would circulate the final report to Committee Members.

75.7 A Member asked how families could access services. The Head of Children's Social Care and Safeguarding advised that services were offered as part of "Early Help" and that currently 668 children were accessing services. She added that in the year to date the Compass team had had interaction with 90 children with disabilities. She informed Members that work was currently ongoing with PACC to develop an easy guide to the services that were available.

75.8 The Vice Chairman thanked the representative from PACC for attending the meeting and participating in the debate.

76 Promotion of Physical Activity

76.1 The Chairman advised that due to a family emergency the Officer who was due to give the presentation could not attend the meeting and that the presentation would be given at a future meeting of the Committee.

77 Update on Changes to the Provision of Youth Services

77.1 Members received the report of the Director of Commissioning which updated Members on progress with the commissioning of youth activities.

77.2 The Commissioning Director reminded the meeting that the Shropshire Youth Association in Partnership with Energize had been commissioned to provide infrastructure support to the voluntary community sector and that currently there were over 100 clubs affiliated to the SYA that received a wide range of support from them. The Commissioning Director informed Members that that Local Joint Committees had made 43 separate awards for youth activities ranging from small grants of less than £200 to the awarding of large contracts of over £15,000. He added that responsibility for the commissioning of youth activity in Shrewsbury had been passed to the Town Council under a formal delegation agreement.

77.3 A Member commented that in some places the commissioning of youth services had been a "painful" process", and asked what lessons had been learnt through the commissioning process. The Commissioning Manager commented that the local commissioning model was welcomed rather than the "one size fits all" model but that more time should be allowed for the commissioning process especially where staff were transferring.

77.4 A Member asked about the future funding of youth activities. The Commissioning Manager informed the meeting that funding was secured to the end of the March 2017. He added that other sources of funding may need to be investigated for future years.

77.5 In response to a query Richard Parkes CEO Shropshire Youth Association updated Members on how the new infrastructure contract was evolving and other work that they were carrying out.

77.6 The Vice Chairman thanked Officers for their report and for answering Members questions.

78 Work Programme

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

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

79 Date of Next Meeting

79.1 Members were reminded that the next meeting of the Young People's Scrutiny Committee would be held on Wednesday 23 March 2016 at the Shirehall at 10.00am

Signed (Chairman)

Date: