

Lancashire County Council

Children's Services Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday, 9th March, 2016 at 4.30 pm in Cabinet Room 'C' - The Duke of Lancaster Room, County Hall, Preston

Present:

County Councillor Gina Dowding (Chair)

County Councillors

Mrs S Charles	D T Smith
M Devaney	C Dereli
G Gooch	J Gibson
M Otter	Dr M Hassan
M Dad	

Co-opted members

Sarah Barraclough, Children's Partnership Board - Preston
Terri Hacking, Children's Partnership Board - Burnley and Pendle
Debra Wilson, Children's Partnership Board - Chorley, South Ribble and West Lancs
Elaine Shinks, Children's Partnership Board - Hyndburn, Rossendale and Ribble Valley

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Alice Marquiss-Carr.

2. Appointment of Chair and Deputy Chair

Resolved: Noted the appointment of County Councillor Gina Dowding as Chair and County Councillor Susie Charles as Deputy Chair.

3. Terms of Reference and Membership

Clarification was sought around the role of the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee in relation to the Health Scrutiny Committee. It was confirmed that any health services relating to children and young people would now fall under the remit of this Committee.

It was noted that a Youth Council representative had been requested and officers awaited confirmation. The Committee were also informed that all other

representation outlined in the terms of reference and membership had been confirmed.

Resolved: Noted the terms of reference and membership of the Committee.

4. Disclosure of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

Terri Hacking and Debra Wilson declared a general interest relating to their roles within children's services.

5. Children's Partnership Board Representatives - Services Overview

Sarah Barraclough, Head teacher at Ashton Primary School

Sarah presented information to the Committee on Child Protection and Safeguarding (from a primary school Head teacher's point of view) with questions taken from members.

Sarah discussed some of the ongoing communication issues around children's social care referrals, information sharing and IT systems (functionality of schools portal and data protection).

Although, where social workers were based in schools, considerable difference had been made to communication and information sharing.

Debra confirmed that a pilot was due to take place in Rossendale to look at the outcomes from referrals which would then be emailed to the safeguarding team in Lancashire Care Foundation Trust (LCFT) and if successful, this would be rolled out further.

Sarah also highlighted the issues around support services which included school nurses and the frequency of meeting attendance.

Debra reported that work was being undertaken by LCFT to look at the appropriateness of school nurses attending meetings which should help.

The Committee was informed that there had been general concerns around supervision for staff who worked with very challenging children which had yet to be embedded in schools, and this continued to be the case.

Sarah confirmed that these concerns had been raised at the school cluster meetings (for West Preston), however the concerns may not be mirrored at the same level across the county as Ashton Primary School was based in a particularly challenging area.

Terri Hacking, Children's Services Manager for Action for Children

Members were informed that Action for Children was a childcare provider in Lancashire with two children's centres in Burnley.

Across the two children's centres, Terri reported the reach was in excess of more than 1000 children and that they had been required to register those children at the children's centres. The average was reported to be at 108% (due to transient areas).

Terri highlighted some of the services currently available through the children's centres, which included:

- Identification of families pre-birth through the health agreement in place
- Working closely with children's social care to provide support to families
- Link with Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) through referrals
- Link with families and agencies through Common Assessment Framework (CAF)
- Health visitors support through baby clinics
- Engagement with BME communities through a diverse team of staff
- Working with families through the Continuum of Need levels
- Working with families with special educational needs and neglect

It was noted that children's centres formed a strong element of children's services, which was highlighted in the recent Ofsted inspection. Terri confirmed that concerns had been raised that this could change as a result of the transformation as services became more targeted (with the exception of health visitors and school nurses).

Debra Wilson, Service Line Clinical Lead for Universal Services, Lancashire Care Foundation Trust (LCFT)

Debra provided an overview to the Committee of the Universal Services within LCFT which included:

- 18 Child and Family Health Service teams
- Family Nurse Partnership in Preston and Burnley providing an advanced parenting programme
- Immunisation and vaccination teams (for school age immunisations)
- School nurses services which included the Healthy Child Programme with screening at reception and an offer of contact at Years 6 and 9
- Early help offer with therapeutic work available
- Work with CAMHS workers
- Domestic abuse notifications
- Lead Professional work for CAF particularly for under 5s
- Looked after children

In addition, Debra advised that there was a health visitor universal service available which included five mandated visits and support to parents around perinatal mental health and post-natal depression.

Debra confirmed that there had been and continued to be concerns around information sharing. It was conveyed that a Tier 2 information sharing agreement assisted with the process but noted that this was time consuming, particularly

around the sharing of information with schools where individual agreements for each school needed to be signed.

A positive working relationship was ongoing with children's social care although communication remained a concern. In addition there existed a difference between the practitioner threshold requirements and that of children's social care.

The Committee was informed that Elective Home Education (EHE) children continued to form part of the school nurse contract to delivers services.

Debra confirmed that in the instance that any safeguarding issues where a health visitor visit had been declined would be escalated to children's social care through discussion with GP's, midwives etc.

Elaine Shinks, Community Rehabilitation Company, Sodexo

Elaine reported that The Probation Service had been split into two service areas. The National Probation Service (public sector) provided the reports to courts, and dealt with the most high risk offenders. It was also confirmed that the National Probation Service defined the level of risk.

It was reported that the private sector service area worked with low to medium risk offenders and these could include offences against children, domestic abuse and substance misuse. In addition they also worked with women's centres and had staff who delivered services through these centres.

Members were informed that there was no direct responsibility for children, although the service could be part of the child protection plan and would therefore work alongside this. In addition, the service received children's details on first contact and would inform children's social care.

There had been, it was conveyed, varying experiences with children's social care and it was felt that communication had deteriorated between agencies.

Moreover, it was explained that there were very clear protocols around data protection, particularly in cases of safeguarding.

The Chair thanked all of the speakers for their informative presentations.

Resolved: To identify the issues raised from the four presentations to feedback to the Children's Services Directors and the Post Inspection Improvement Board

6. Draft Work Plan

The draft work plan was circulated with the agenda for discussion and recommendations.

Due to the number of transformation projects taking place across many of the children's services areas, it was recommended that it would not be beneficial to

discuss these service areas until they had been completed. However, it was noted that it would be beneficial to look at the services which were currently working well to ensure that there was no reduction in the quality of services.

The Committee were informed that information received from Louise Taylor indicated that the Youth Offending Team (YOT) and the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) services were due for an Ofsted inspection. The Committee discussed the benefits of looking at these two services through sub group work to be further clarified at the next meeting in April.

It was recommended that the two sub groups could utilise the two meeting dates currently in the diaries for June and July for this Committee if needed and a brief report outlining the aims, information and outcomes to the September meeting of the full Committee.

It was then recommended that the Fostering and Adoption service could be discussed at the September meeting.

Resolved:

- i. Committee noted the report and the draft work plan
- ii. Work plan to be updated following discussions held
- iii. Officers from SEND and YOT services to attend the meeting in April to give Committee overview of services
- iv. Review the information which has previously been presented to the Education Scrutiny Committee
- v. Volunteers for the two sub groups to Wendy Broadley prior to the next meeting
- vi. Meeting dates booked for June and July to be utilised for the sub group work if required
- vii. Next full Committee meeting to take place in April and then to meet on a quarterly basis with the following meeting in September

7. Recent and Forthcoming Decisions

The Committee's attention was drawn to forthcoming decisions and decisions recently made by the Cabinet and individual Cabinet Members in areas relevant to the remit of the Committee, in order that this could inform possible future areas of work.

Resolved: Committee noted the report.

8. Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business declared.

The Chair informed members that the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee have been approached to take part in an e-learning pilot which included a package of online training for Safeguarding Level 1, Safeguarding Level 2 and

Child Sexual Exploitation. It was explained that an email from Catherine Earnshaw would be circulated with further detail in due course.

Resolved: Committee agreed to take part in the e-learning pilot

9. Date of the Next Meeting

Next meeting of the Committee to be held on the 20th April at 4.30pm, Cabinet Room C, County Hall

I Young
Director of Governance, Finance
and Public Services

County Hall
Preston