

## **Lancashire County Council**

### **Children's Services Scrutiny Committee**

**Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday, 10th April, 2019 at 10.30 am in Committee Room 'B' - The Diamond Jubilee Room, County Hall, Preston**

#### **Present:**

County Councillor Andrea Kay (Chair)

#### **County Councillors**

N Hennessy	A Gardiner
I Brown	J Rear
A Cheetham	D T Smith
B Dawson	M Tomlinson

#### **Co-opted members**

Councillor Stella Brunskill, Children's Partnership Board - Hyndburn, Ribble Valley, Rossendale

County Councillor Bernard Dawson replaced County Councillor Jennifer Mein for this meeting.

#### **1. Apologies**

Apologies were received from County Councillor Joe Cooney, County Councillor Paul V Greenall and Councillor Gail Goodman (Co-optee Non-voting) Children's Partnership Board - Fylde, Wyre and Lancashire North.

#### **2. Disclosure of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests**

None were disclosed.

#### **3. Minutes from the meeting held on 27 February 2019**

**Resolved:** That the minutes from the meeting held on the 27 February 2019 be confirmed as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

#### **4. Lancashire Getting to Good Plan**

The Chair welcomed Sally Allen, Acting Director of Children's Social Care; Victoria Gent, Head of Children's Social Care East; and Victoria Gibson, Lancashire Safeguarding Boards Business Manager, to the meeting.

The report presented provided an update on the Lancashire Getting to Good Plan and the progress made. The plan set out the actions required to address the 11 recommendations of the Ofsted report out the actions required to improve the quality of practice and outcomes for children.

The committee commended the excellent work that was going on from Children's Services and the Corporate Parenting Board but was concerned that case load levels were on the rise.

Concerns were raised around the links with partners through the Children's Partnership Boards and their contact with schools. Members were advised that events had been held in the run up to the Ofsted inspection and Children's Services had been getting partners back to the table.

It was highlighted to the committee that further work was required in terms of Edge of Care Services to prevent children coming into care. However, various services are in place to support this including an Outreach Service working closely with the family and the child in their home. There was also an Adolescent Support Unit and the Family Group Conferencing.

Regarding gender in the workforce, members enquired as to the gender breakdown between men and woman. It was noted that the social care workforce was predominantly female. It was suggested that this could be looked at in greater detail through the Workforce Board.

In terms of Lancashire's Multi-Agency Neglect Strategy, the committee was informed that the strategy was a key area in the Lancashire Getting to Good Plan. The strategy reached its review date during 2018 and significant work had been undertaken to not only review but to rewrite the strategy. This work involved LCC, Police, Health Commissioners, Health Providers and Education and the strategy was endorsed by the Lancashire Safeguarding Children Board in January 2019.

Members were informed that the refreshed strategy showed the commitment and ambition of all partners in Lancashire to maintain their focus to better identify children experiencing neglect.

The refreshed multi-agency strategy was launched on 1 April 2019 to assist all practitioners in tackling neglect. Good practice materials had also been collated from national organisations to support practitioners in identifying and assessing neglect. Lancashire Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB) multi-agency training had been refreshed in line with the new neglect strategy. Partner agencies would

have their own action plans and the LSCB would monitor these action plans and hold partners to account.

It was noted that the Neglect Strategy was an integral part of the Lancashire Getting to Good plan and a strategic business priority for the LSCB.

Members were advised that schools had a vital role to play in identifying neglect as they had the most contact with the children. Members were advised that Designated Safeguarding Leads in schools undertake regular training. In addition, the LSCB provide a training programme. Further to this, safeguarding networks have been established in schools as a pilot and provided an opportunity to work with schools to support their knowledge and understanding around pathways to services.

The committee requested that consideration needed to be given on how this information on neglect could be promoted to all staff working with children in Lancashire.

**Resolved: That;**

- i. The information provided be noted.
- ii. The progress of the on the six key areas of Lancashire Getting to Good Plan be considered.
- iii. A Bite Size Briefing on the progress of the Lancashire Getting to Good Plan be arranged for all members.
- iv. A Bite Size Briefing on the Neglect Strategy be arranged for all members.
- v. The workforce gender gap through the Workforce Board be explored.
- vi. Consideration be given to how this can be promoted to all staff across all organisations working with children.

**5. Children's Services Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2018/19**

The work plan for the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee for the 2018/19 municipal year was presented. The topics included were identified at the work planning workshop held on 10 July 2018.

**Resolved:** The report presented be noted.

**6. Urgent Business**

There were no items of Urgent Business.

**7. Date of the Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee will take place on Wednesday 22 May 2019 at 10:30am in Cabinet Room 'C' (The Duke of Lancaster Room) at the County Hall, Preston.

L Sales  
Director of Corporate Services

County Hall  
Preston