

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES SCRUTINY PANEL
Friday, 18th March, 2011

Present:- Councillor License (in the Chair); Councillors Ali, Buckley, Falvey, Fenoughty and Kaye.

Also in attendance were:- Councillor Paul Lakin (Cabinet Member for Safeguarding and Developing Learning Opportunities for Children) and co-opted members Mrs. J. Blanch-Nicholson, Mr. M. Burn and Mrs. L. Picthley.

Apologies were received from:- Councillors Dodson, Donaldson, Rushforth, G. A. Russell, Sharp and Sims and from co-opted members Father A. Hayne, Mr. C. A. Marvin, Mrs. K. Muscroft and Dr. S. Warren.

111. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made at this meeting.

112. QUESTIONS FROM THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

There were no questions from members of the public or the press.

113. MATTERS REFERRED FROM THE YOUTH CABINET

The minutes of the meeting of the Youth Cabinet held on 8th March, 2011, had been distributed to Scrutiny Panel members by electronic mail. The Youth Cabinet has been requested to examine young people's access to library services. The outcome of this review would eventually be reported to a future meeting of the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel.

114. COMMUNICATIONS

[1] Discussion took place on the progress of the review of proposals to restructure Children's congenital cardiac services in England; a regional health scrutiny committee is meeting to discuss the proposals and to respond to the consultation; a working group comprising Councillors Ali, Falvey and Sims has been established to examine the proposals and feed into the regional committee; discussions were taking place with the three Members of Parliament for the Rotherham Borough area and with the Local Involvement Network (patients and service users' group). Further details of the review will be reported to a future meeting of this Scrutiny Panel.

[2] The Scrutiny Panel received the resignation of co-opted member of Dr. Susan Warren; it was agreed that a letter be sent to Dr. Warren thanking her for her services to this Scrutiny Panel.

115. CONSULTATION ON THE RESHAPING OF CHILDREN'S CENTRES

Further to Minute No. 189 of the Cabinet meeting held on 9th March, 2011, consideration was given to a report presented by the Assistant Head of School Effectiveness containing proposals for changes to the delivery of Children's Centre services in Rotherham, ensuring the Council's statutory duty to provide sufficient Children's Centres to reach under fives and their families is met and to provide a more efficient and effective service.

The recommended action was for a reshaping of the Centres in a cluster format described in Options 2 and 3 of the Cabinet report:-

- : Option 2 identifies the potential clustering of 17 lead Children's Centres with 5 Children's Centre satellites;
- : Option 3 identifies the potential clustering of 14 lead Children's Centres and 8 Children's Centre satellites.

The consultation process is to be about the preferred Option 2.

The presentation and subsequent discussion included the following salient issues:-

- the impetus provided by national reviews of children's centre provision by Frank Field and Graham Allen;
- the Council's expressed preference for option 2 (detailed in the report submitted);
- there will be no closure of children's centres; high quality care and education remains the priority;
- [option2] : 22 centres will remain, at least one located in each geographical learning community; service provision will respond to the needs of the learning community;
- Stepping Stones (Maltby) is the only children's centre not located on a school campus;
- the extension of the Children's Centre contracts with both governing bodies of schools and staff working within Children's Centres from 1st April until 31st August 2011; the proposed changes would take effect from 1st September 2011;
- use of Sure Start Children's Centre practice guidance which defines the delivery of services to families in vulnerable circumstances;
- service provision from organisations in the private and voluntary sector; the cost and extent of such provision is assessed, based upon the local authority's pricing policy;
- flexible use of children's centres to facilitate the provision of services for older children;
- consultation on the proposals (from 10th March 2011 until 5th May 2011), with a children's centre questionnaire published on the Council's Internet web site; the consultation process includes public meetings, focus group meetings and discussions with service providers;
- satellite sites (5 provided in option 2) : their role and function; opening hours and staffing levels; these buildings will be available for children's centre use for vulnerable families, although the level of need will be

assessed and the building may also be used for other purposes (eg: adult community learning; parenting courses);

- the complex needs of children newly-arrived in the Rotherham Borough area; service-levels and resource provision are being assessed as part of the review and consultation process;
- specific provision for children aged 0-2 years : day nurseries, child-minding and children's centres;
- definitions of vulnerable families and groups of people (per national guidelines); centres attempt to allocate resources according to the specific needs of the local communities they serve;
- the funding of children's centres and ensuring that the needs of vulnerable groups of people in all areas of the Borough are considered;
- the probable impact of the Payment by Results : the Early Years provision accountability framework, being introduced by the coalition Government; and being able to assess that service provision impacts in a positive way upon vulnerable communities.

Resolved:- (1) That the report be received and its contents noted.

(2) That this Scrutiny Panel expresses its support for Option 2, as detailed in the report now submitted.

(3) That this Scrutiny Panel's future work programme shall include an early review of the impact of the proposed changes in Children's Centre services.

116. ROTHERHAM SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD - ANNUAL REPORT 2010/2011

Consideration was given to the Rotherham Local Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report 2010/2011. The Scrutiny Panel welcomed Alan Hazell (Independent Chair of the Safeguarding Children Board) and Ailsa Barr (Service Manager, RMBC Safeguarding Children Unit) who presented the report. Discussion took place on:-

- the role and function of the Safeguarding Children Board and its relationship with the Children and Young People's Trust Board;
- issues arising from the primary school lifestyle survey;
- the effective use of resources in the safeguarding of children and young people;
- the importance of effective and accountable multi-agency working;
- financial arrangements, budget and the formula funding of the Safeguarding Children Board;
- the requirements of the national performance indicators;

- the importance of prevention and early intervention in assisting children and families in deprived and vulnerable circumstances and those families which are 'hard to reach'; resources and support for ethnic minority communities and the EU migrant families;
- the Westminster family recovery model – introduced by the coalition Government, to inform and assist family intervention work.

Resolved:- That the Rotherham Local Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report 2010/2011 be received and its contents noted.

117. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES - PERFORMANCE INDICATOR QUARTER 3 REPORT - 2010/2011

Consideration was given to a report, submitted by the Service Improvement Officer outlining the performance of the Children and Young People's Services Directorate at the end of 2010/11 quarter three against targets, with direction of travel against previous year's performance and comparisons with statistical neighbour and national data. The report and the Scrutiny Panel's subsequent debate highlighted these issues:-

- the various areas of success and of under-performance;
- improving performance in core assessments for children's social care (NI59 and NI60);
- the behaviour of school pupils : NI86 (which would be the subject of further consideration by this Scrutiny Panel);
- staying safe and the prevention of young people entering the youth justice system.

Resolved:- That the report be received and its contents noted.

118. MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY PANEL HELD ON 18TH FEBRUARY, 2011

Resolved:- That the minutes of the previous meeting of the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel held on 18th February, 2011 be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chairman.

119. MINUTES OF MEETINGS OF THE CABINET MEMBER AND ADVISERS FOR SAFEGUARDING AND DEVELOPING LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHILDREN HELD ON 23RD FEBRUARY 2011 AND ON 9TH MARCH 2011

Resolved:- That the contents of the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet Member and Advisers for Safeguarding and Developing Learning Opportunities for Children held on 23rd February, 2011 and on 9th March, 2011, be noted.

120. MINUTES OF MEETINGS OF THE PERFORMANCE AND SCRUTINY OVERVIEW COMMITTEE HELD ON 11TH AND 25TH FEBRUARY 2011

Resolved:- That the contents of the minutes of the meetings of the Performance and Scrutiny Overview Committee held on 11th February and on

25th February, 2011 be noted.