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OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHILDREN - 08/ 09/ 10**

**CABINET MEMBER FOR SAFEGUARDING AND DEVELOPING LEARNING
OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHILDREN
Wednesday, 8th September, 2010**

Present:- Councillor Lakin (in the Chair); Councillors Havenhand and Currie.

D44. PETER RENNIE

The Chairman reported that this was Peter's last meeting before he retired. He was wished a long and healthy retirement.

**D45. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS HELD ON 20TH JULY,
2010 AND ON 21ST JULY, 2010**

Resolved:- That the minutes of the meetings of the Cabinet Member and Advisers for Children and Young People's Services, held on 20th July 2010 and on 21st July, 2010 be approved as correct records for signature by the Chairman.

**D46. MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLES
TRUST BOARD HELD ON 6TH AUGUST, 2010**

Resolved:- That the contents of the minutes of the meeting of the Children and Young People's Trust Board, held on 6th August, 2010, be noted.

D47. FOSTERING PANEL 2010/ 2011 - APPOINTMENT OF COUNCILLOR

Resolved:- That Councillor Sharman be appointed to the Fostering Panel for the Municipal Year 2010/ 2011.

**D48. FORMER OAKWOOD SWIMMING POOL, MOORGATE ROAD,
MOORGATE, ROTHERHAM**

Consideration was given to a report presented by the Strategic Director of Children and Young People's Services concerning the former swimming pool at Oakwood, situated on 0.75 acres/ 0.30 hectares of land adjacent to the Oakwood Technology College. The report stated that the swimming pool was surplus to the requirements of the Culture and Leisure Service and, in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations, was proposed to be appropriated to Children and Young People's Services.

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

(2) That the former Oakwood Swimming Pool be appropriated from

Culture and Leisure Services to Children and Young People's Services at a value of £225,000, as detailed in the submitted report.

(3) That the Assistant Chief Executive, Legal and Democratic Services complete the necessary documentation.

(4) That the Director of Central Finance amend the Council's financial records accordingly.

D49. REVIEW OF DIRECT PAYMENTS

Further to Minute No. 155 of the meeting of the Cabinet Member and Advisers for Children and Young People's Services held on 7th April, 2010, consideration was given to a report presented by the Children and Families Special Needs Service Manager concerning recommendations relating to Children and Young People's Services' use of Direct Payments.

Following a review of the statutory guidance, it had become clear that it was not appropriate to align the eligibility criteria for children and young people with that used to assess adults and that they should be assessed within existing frameworks. Furthermore, Fair Access to Care Services Practice Guidance was based on the fundamental premise of independence whereas children and young people were fundamentally dependent.

Attached as an Appendix was the new documentation that had been developed seeking to clarify and differentiate between the distinct eligibility criteria that was used to assess children and young people and adults (who may be the parents/ carers of children and young people).

Following assessment, the Directorate would seek to allocate and review direct payments consistently and transparently to meet the needs of families, in line with principles of personalisation and prevention and early intervention.

Further clarification of the support available to disabled children and young people and their families had been prepared by updating the Children's Disability Team Statement of Purpose (Appendix 2) and the Eligibility Criteria for Short Breaks developed as part of the Aiming High for Disabled Children Full Service Offer (Appendix 3).

The 2010/ 11 revenue budget was £222,523 with projected outturn currently standing at £262,502, significantly lower than 2009/ 10. This reflected an improving measure of control. The

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difference would be made up from the AHDC grant.

There were currently 115 families of disabled children in receipt of Direct Payments as of 21st June, 2010. Where payments were being made for provision which was not an alternative to a Council service, these had been ceased.

Demand for Direct Payments was expected to remain high. Support from the Aiming High for Disabled Children Grant could not be guaranteed beyond 31st March, 2011. The new practice guidance would provide the necessary rigour in decision making.

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

(2) That the practice guidance for assessing eligibility for direct payments allocations in Children and Young People's Services, as now submitted, be approved for consultation.

(3) That the outcome of the consultation process be reported to the Cabinet Member and Advisers for Safeguarding and Developing Learning Opportunities for Children, prior to implementation of the revised direct payments system.

D50. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S FESTIVAL

The School Effectiveness Service Business Manager submitted a report on the first Children and Young People's Festival, held in June/ July, 2010, which had provided exciting opportunities for the children and young people in the Borough.

The School Effectiveness Service had successfully delivered celebration events during the summer term annually for a number of years. The 2010 Festival had been designed by the Service to raise the work to a new level with the particular aim of embracing all the different activities within a coherent and co-ordinated programme promoting many of the core themes of Transforming Rotherham Learning and the professional and learning cultures of the Rotherham Partnership of Schools.

The core objectives included children's creativity, community engagement, 0-19 learning, the centrality of literacy and language development in learning and the raising of aspirations. The Festival was an important contribution to fulfilling the 2008-10 Learning without Limits Partnership Plan and in demonstrating the interconnectedness of several workstreams especially new initiatives such as Inspire Rotherham.

Magna and their marketing team were very keen to work with the Service again and to raise the Festival's profile. It was proposed that the first week of the 2011 Festival would be an education show on a regional basis which would hopefully bring in additional sponsorship.

Approximately 9,000 people attended the events. Every Secondary (16) and Special (6) School participated and all but 6 of the 99 Primary Schools engaged. Colleagues from Early Years settings, the Tryline Centre, Clifton Detached Project, the City Learning Centres, Education Action Zones and the Gifted and Talented Groups were also fully engaged.

Resolved:- That a similar Festival be delivered in the summer term of 2011 subject to the necessary funds being secured.

D51. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLES SERVICES - PERFORMANCE INDICATORS QUARTER 1 - 2010/ 2011

Consideration was given to a report presented by the Performance Manager outlining the performance of the Children and Young People's Services' Directorate at the end of the first quarter 2010/ 11. The report provided analysis against targets, direction of travel against previous performance and, where possible, comparisons with the statistical neighbour local authorities and national data.

The Cabinet Member's attention was drawn to Appendix A – Performance Assessment by Ever Child Matters Outcome which provided details of performance by each Every Child Matters theme including:-

- Performance against targets (comparing outturn performance against set targets)
- Direction of travel analysis (comparing 2010/ 11 quarter 1 performance to 2009/ 10 outturn performance)
- Year to Date Performance (judged by Corporate monitoring system performance plus)
- Performance against statistical neighbours average
- Performance against national average
- Areas of success
- Areas of under performance
- An update on previous performance clinics
- Recommendations for future performance clinics

Discussion ensued on future performance clinics. It was felt that a clinic should be held on Initial Assessments.

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

(2) That the Performance Report and the accompanying Assessment and performance table be received and the performance noted.

(3) That the recommendations regarding performance clinics be approved.

(4) That the report be submitted to the Children's Trust Board.

D52. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES NOTICE TO IMPROVE - PROGRESS UPDATE

Further to Minute No. 34 of 21st July, 2010, the Performance, Information and Quality Manager reported on progress made since the Notice to Improve had been received identifying a RAG rating and a direction of travel for the areas of improvement, some areas of good performance and key risks. Also highlighted were the issues to meet the stretching targets set for the Council and its strategic partners.

There were now 29 individual actions covering the key performance measures (3 social care indicators) in addition to the operational targets around Staying Safe, Enjoying and Achieving, Leadership and Management and Capacity Building, Performance Management and Recruitment and Retention. Based on a RAG rating, the current position as at 20th August, 2010, was:-

Red	5 (including 4 new actions)	(17%)
Amber	19	(66%)
Green	5	(17%)

2 new areas had been included in relation to the action plans following the recommendations from both the Fostering and the Safeguarding and LAC inspections. Work had already commenced and action plans were in place.

The report highlighted:-

- High Risk areas (red risks)
 - o Expenditure on agency staff continued to increase - £435,922 having been spent on social workers and team managers and £31,357 for administration staff since 1st April
 - o NI59 – Since 1st April, 80.11% of initial assessments had been completed in timescales. The milestone target for October, 2010, was 85%, however as at the end of March,

2010, the statistical neighbour comparison was 71.6% and national 71.8%. The 2009/ 10 outturn for Rotherham was 75.2%. However, if the Indicator was measured against the 10 day measurement from the 1st April, it showed that 83.57% of initial assessments were carried out within 10 days as opposed to 80.11%

- Areas of Improvement
 - o NI68 – referrals which go onto an initial assessment was 79.74% which was higher than the March, 2011 target of 70%. The statistical neighbour comparison was 69.2% and 63.8% for national, the 2009/ 10 outturn for Rotherham was 73.4%
 - o The Safeguarding and Looked After Children inspection outcome was adequate and identified improvements in the Service and recognised areas of good practice
 - o Audit work continued to increase with 52 case file audits carried out in July and 300 additional NFA cases independently audited during August

The DfE had agreed up to £150,000 financial support to assist with recovery, and a further £125,000 had been secured from the RIEP to fund the work around implementation of Common Assessment Framework. The DfE funding was being used to supplement Social Work staffing resources and to employ independent staff to assist in the review and further improvement of and service quality activities. In order to strengthen financial management arrangements, all managers with budget holder responsibility attended specific training. The moratorium which had been in place since December, 2009, continued into 2010/ 11 to ensure that resources were directed to priority areas. In addition a work programme was in place to identify efficiencies and enable re-investment into priority areas.

Resolved:- (1) That the progress being made against the targets set in the Notice to Improve be noted.

(2) That the report be referred to Cabinet.

D53. INSPECTION OF SAFEGUARDING AND LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN

The Director of Resources, Planning and Performance reported that the Inspection of Safeguarding and Looked After Children had taken place between 19th-30th July, 2010.

The Inspection had been very positive and had resulted in an overall

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rating of Adequate with some elements rated as Good. They key recommendations for Safeguarding were:-

For Immediate

- Ensure that all recording, including assessments, recording of meetings and within case files, incorporates up-to-date and key information and identifies risk and protective factors
- Improve the effectiveness of strategy discussions and child protection plans and the active review of these by core groups and child protection reviews and the quality of recording including details on what action was to be taken

For Next Three Months

- NHS Rotherham and Rotherham Foundation NHST should ensure that within A&E services there was access to suitably trained and qualified children's nursing staff when children and young people were seen in the department
- NHS Rotherham should ensure that A&E staff at Rotherham Foundation NHS Trust had access to and use the electronic System 1, to ensure that children and young people could be easily identified if they were already known to social care services
- Improve the quality of social care supervision so that staff received the right level of challenge, development and support
- Ensure that the workforce training and development plan clearly identifies how it would meet the development needs of all staff
- Update the protocol for children missing from home, care and education to reflect the new national guidance

Key recommendations for Looked After Children were:-

For Immediate

- Strengthen the role of the virtual head by ensuring that the work of the School Improvement and Effectiveness Team was more focussed on supporting and challenging schools to improve the attainment of looked after children
- Develop the independent visiting service to ensure that all eligible children were able to have access to an independent visitor

For Next Three Months

- Strengthen the capacity of the independent reviewing officer service to ensure that all children and young people were effectively supported in making a contribution to their care plans and that care plans were robustly challenged

Resolved:- Resolved:- (1) That the report be received and the key recommendations to be implemented noted.

(2) That the report be referred to Cabinet.

D54. INSPECTION OF FOSTERING SERVICES - SUMMARY OF THE REPORT AND ACTION PLAN

The Interim Services Manager, Provider Services, submitted a report summarising the main findings of the Ofsted inspection of the Fostering Service undertaken during the week commencing 21st June, 2010.

The overall judgement was 'Satisfactory' with 'Good' being achieved in:-

- Helping children to be healthy
- Achieve well and enjoy what they do
- Make a positive contribution
- Achieving economic wellbeing

The report highlighted many aspects of the work of the Service that were identified as providing good support to children in foster care including:-

- Good support to children and young people, including care leavers, by the Looked After Children's Nurse and the Health Support Worker
- Staying Safe – the Service worked effectively in placing children with carers who were an appropriate match and took care to monitor and support when placements were made outside carers' approval terms
- Get Real Team – offered very good support
- Families Together Service – offered good, individualised and flexible support
- Improvement in practice in respect of the assessment of family and friends carers

The Inspectors also identified:-

- A number of areas in which practice needed to improve
- A number of areas they considered undermined the Service's

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capacity to keep children safe

- The delay in some young people being allocated a Leaving Care Personal Advisor and the consequent delay in producing a Pathway Plan

Resolved:- (1) That the Fostering Service Inspection report and action plan arising therefrom be noted.

(2) That the report be referred to Cabinet.

D55. REARRANGEMENT OF 16-19 RESPONSIBILITIES: IMPLICATIONS OF CHANGES TO FUNDING AND FUNCTIONS FOR LOCAL AUTHORITIES

On 20th July, 2010, the Secretary of State for Education announced that some of the functions transferred to Local Authorities under the 'Apprenticeship Skills and Learning Act' December 2009 were to be reassigned with effect from 1st August, 2010. The Assistant Head of School Effectiveness Service, submitted a report setting out the background and revised arrangements in the context of the direction of education policy and the implications for the Authority.

The Apprenticeship Skills, Children and Learning Act, from 1st April, 2010, enacted:-

- Dissolution of the Learning and Skills Council
- Establishment of the Young People's Learning Agency
- Creation of the Skills Funding Agency
- Requirement of local authorities to organise into sub-regional clusters for the purpose of planning post-16 provision
- Requirement of local authorities to establish Regional Planning Groups

Further changes had been introduced from 1st August, 2010:-

- Young People's Agency would directly fund provision for:-
 - o Young people aged 16-19 or 19-25 subject to learning difficulty or disability assessment in GFE colleges, SFCs, FE in Higher Education, local authority providers, private and charitable providers and independent specialist providers
 - o Young people aged 10-18 in Young Offender institutions
 - o Learners in open Academies
- "Lagged" basis for funding
- No plans to introduce in-year funding adjustments
- In-year contract adjustments for independent providers where

necessary

- No requirement for sub-regional and regional planning groups

The YPLA would continue to provide funds to local authorities to pass onto maintained SSFs for Young Apprenticeships and Education Business Partnerships and funding would transfer from the Department for Education to the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills for funding 16-18 Apprenticeships. The SkFA would fund providers for the delivery of Apprenticeships and local authorities would have a crucial role in securing provision for learners with learning difficulties and/ or disabilities.

Resolved:- That the implications of the changes to governance arrangements be noted.

D56. THE WELCOME OFFER TO VULNERABLE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

The Head of School Effectiveness submitted an updated assessment of progress in relation to the schools' element of the strategy following a strategic overview of the initiatives by the Chief Executive's office.

In summer 2009 the management of services to ethnic minority pupils and students was formally transferred from the Inclusion Directorate to Schools and Lifelong Learning, in particular School Effectiveness. The School Effectiveness Services had established a Vulnerable Groups Team led by an Assistant Head of Service (AHOSE). The AHOSE was able to deploy a small but very capable Primary and Secondary Ethnic Minority Achievement Teams each led by a Curriculum Adviser for each phase.

The staffing of both Teams had benefited from the deployment of colleagues previously based at the Kimberworth Welcome Centre. The work of ethnic minority achievement embraced both the needs of newly arrived pupils and support for advanced learners. The numbers of newly arrived children from EU countries continued to grow locally despite the economic context which has led to a reduction in arrivals/ stayers elsewhere in the country.

It was essential that the urgency of the needs of EU migrant pupils were met but that the Service also focussed effectively on the needs of other vulnerable groups. To date, SES would identified the following as the core benefits of the new "Welcome Offer" developed during 2009/ 10:-

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- A more efficient and effective deployment of the available staffing to school needs
- A more coherent induction process for newly arrived children on the site of the school they will attend longer term
- A strategy which built capacity in schools rather than encouraged reliance on an external service which could never be sufficient to the scale and range of challenges
- More productive partnership working between schools and between schools and the local authority
- Improved strategic co-ordination between ethnic minority approaches and other programmes designed to address under achievement
- Significantly improved schools' engagement
- Important new work in community cohesion
- Existing and innovative practice

Investment in the enhanced service had been achieved through a remodelling of existing SES and CYPs budgets and additional funding from contingency to meet acute needs. A review was currently in place to assess continuing needs and the sustainability of resources particularly in light of reduced staffing across SES from April, 2011, when National Strategies funding ends and Government cuts to local authorities increase in impact.

Resolved;- (1) That the report be received.

(2) That the progress made in the introduction of the "Welcome Offer" in the context of continuing challenges to schools and the local authority in meeting the needs of this group of pupils be noted.

(3) That the drive to encourage all schools to continue to develop their provision in addressing the needs of these acutely vulnerable pupils and their families be endorsed.

(4) That the good work of the Vulnerable Groups Team in this urgent and important area of work be recognised.

(5) That the continued development of a co-ordinated strategy across all the appropriate Council services on behalf of this vulnerable group be supported.

(6) That the issue be referred to Cabinet.

D57. THE IMPACT OF THE REVISED OFSTED INSPECTION FRAMEWORK 2009

The Head of School Effectiveness submitted a report on the impact

of the revised Ofsted Inspection Framework introduced on 1st September, 2009.

The new Framework had received a controversial reception from schools, professional associations and local authorities because of the perception that it was being applied unevenly across the school system to the particular disadvantage of schools serving underprivileged communities.

During 2009/ 10 Rotherham had received inspections whose outcomes were:-

Phase	Number of Inspections	% Outstanding	% Good	% Satisfactory	% Inade
Primary	30	10%	30%	40%	20%
Secondary	3	0%	0%	100%	0%
Special/ PRU	4	50%	0%	50%	0%
All	37	14%	24%	46%	16%

There was evidence that inspections were targeted on the most vulnerable schools. A number of Rotherham primary schools had been placed in Ofsted categories of concern in the spring term but, since this time, 4 had had exceedingly positive HMI monitoring visits. Primary schools during the summer term were more positive with a number of satisfactory schools moving to good. Satisfactory outcomes were achieved in the 2 secondary schools inspected in the autumn term both of which recorded their best ever GCSE results in 2009.

Resolved- (1) That the report be received.

(2) That the implications for schools of the new Framework and its potential impact on the performance profile of the Local Authority be noted.

(3) That the Cabinet Member continue to assess the impact of the revised Framework and its effect on Rotherham schools and Local authority support services.

D58. HEALTH, WELFARE AND SAFETY PANEL - VISITS OF INSPECTION

Consideration was given to a report of the visits of inspection made by members of the Council's Health, Welfare and Safety Panel, on Friday, 18th June, 2010, to (i) Aston Fence Primary School and (ii)

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Rockingham Primary School. The report listed the issues noted by the Panel members.

Resolved:- That the report be received and appropriate action be taken in response to the issues noted.