

Medway Council
MEETING OF CHILDREN AND ADULTS OVERVIEW AND
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Thursday, 27 May 2010

6.40pm to 8.35pm

RECORD OF THE MEETING

PRESENT: Councillors: Andrews, Avey, Baker, Kenneth Bamber, Carr, Gilry, Val Goulden, Gulvin, Kemp (Vice-Chairman), Maisey, Maple, Royle (Chairman) and Sutton

Added members without voting rights:

Jane Heyes (Headteacher representative), Lauraine McManus (Teacher representative) and Richard Odle (Medway Youth Parliament representative)

LINK representative without voting rights:

Clare Murray

Substitutes: Councillor Griffin (substituted for Councillor Clarke)

In Attendance:	Rose Collinson	Director of Children and Adults
	Karen Kennedy	Performance Manager
	Sally Morris	Assistant Director, Commissioning and Strategy
	Gill Ransley	CAF Co-ordinator
	Teri Hemmings	Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordinator

29 RECORD OF THE MEETING

The record of the meeting held on 25 March 2010 was signed by the Chairman as correct.

30 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies of absence were received from Councillors Clarke and Smith, Helen Buckingham (NHS Medway), Jim Grogan (Roman Catholic Church representative), Sam Tutt (Youth Parliament representative) and Pat Wozencroft (Governor representative)

31 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

32 WORK PROGRAMME

Discussion

The Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordinator updated Members on changes to the work programme, which included: -

- The Health and Wellbeing Strategy would be considered at a joint meeting of this Committee and the Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 23 August 2010;
- The School Organisation Plan 2011-16 would be removed from the work programme until assessments are made on the impacts of the primary reorganisation, the academy programmes and the decisions from the schools adjudicator on four outstanding cases;
- The draft Youth Justice Plan would be brought to the next meeting of this Committee;
- A referral from Business Support Overview and Scrutiny Committee, which would be discussed under the end of year performance report.

Decision

The Committee agreed: -

- (a) to hold a work programme meeting with the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Opposition Spokespersons to identify items for the work programme and in-depth review topics for 2010-11;
- (b) to note that elections for two new parent governor representatives will take place over the summer;
- (c) to note that the Health and Wellbeing Strategy would be considered at a joint meeting of this Committee and the Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 23 August 2010;
- (d) that the School Organisation Plan 2011-16 would be removed from the work programme at this stage;
- (e) that the draft Youth Justice Plan would be considered at the next meeting of the Committee.

33 COMMON ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK

Discussion:

The Common Assessment Framework (CAF) Co-ordinator gave a presentation to the Committee on the use of CAF and its progress to date.

Members then asked officers a number of questions, which included: -

- How participation from various agencies is encouraged;

Children and Adults Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 27 May 2010

- How CAF is communicated to members of the community from black or ethnic minority groups;
- Concern that schools were having difficulty managing resources due to the time taken in completing a CAF;
- If necessary, who has responsibility for providing challenge to agencies who do not address problems recognised within their remit;
- What barriers there were to completing CAFs and why Medway had not had as many as some other authorities;
- How the success of CAFs was measured.

In response officers explained that spoken versions of the CAF leaflets were being developed in the top ten used languages in Medway and they also undertook to look at providing the information in an easy read format. In relation to resource concerns, officers explained that the partners in the Children's Trust would need to balance resources holistically and realistically across agencies and all services and that at the appropriate time, could report back with an update on this issue. Officers also confirmed that additional resourcing was being considered to help provide further support to schools, as well as to the CAF Co-ordinator, in order to try and alleviate some of the pressure on schools in completing CAFs. However, early intervention and prevention was something all agencies needed to prioritise and resource.

Decision:

The Committee noted the report and presentation and: -

- (a) recommended that the possibility of creating easy read leaflets be explored;
- (b) recommended that the Children's Trust do more to champion the use of CAF with agencies;
- (c) requested a briefing note detailing examples of good practice which would include the number of CAFs in Medway which have been completed and closed.

34 TELL US SURVEY 2009

Discussion:

The Assistant Director, Commissioning and Strategy introduced the report, drawing Members' attention to the results the survey provided against some of the national indicators that fell within the remit of the committee.

Members then asked officers a number of questions and made comments, which included: -

- Concern that some existing youth clubs were under subscribed and what the Council was doing to advertise facilities to both young people and parents and carers;

Children and Adults Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 27 May 2010

- Concern that the public transport service in Medway was inadequate and was a barrier for many young people in attending facilities;
- Concern that there was a lack of knowledge in some areas regarding sure start provisions;
- There was a lack of places for young people to 'hang out' in Medway;
- Concern that emotional health difficulties among young people could be difficult to identify as young people often become very withdrawn and do not want to discuss their issues with anyone, including friends.

In response, Officers confirmed that while there was a lot of information available in relation to facilities for young people in Medway, it was important to explore new avenues to communicate with children and their families and undertook to work with the Communications department to investigate the possibility of putting a list of facilities within Medway Matters and would also provide the information to the Family Information Service. In relation to providing information about Sure Start Centres, it was suggested that Health Visitors were key in delivering the message to new parents and undertook to work with NHS Medway to ensure Health Visitors and GPs do more in promoting Sure Start. It was also suggested that a group of Members visit some of the Sure Start Centres. Officers also welcomed the opportunity to work with the Youth Parliament to discuss ways to provide information about support for emotional health issues to young people.

Decision:

The Committee noted the report and recommended that: -

- (a) officers consider different ways of advertising youth facilities, particularly in Medway Matters;
- (b) a group of Members of the Committee visit Sure Start Centres;
- (c) officers work with NHS Medway to ensure that Health Visitors and GPs are promoting Sure Start Centres;
- (d) officers work with Medway Youth Parliament to look at ways in which information can be provided on support available for young people with emotional health issues.

35 END OF YEAR PERFORMANCE REPORT 2009/10

Discussion:

The Director of Children and Adults introduced the report, highlighting areas where improvement was required. She explained that the Business Support Overview and Scrutiny Committee had also referred some areas to this Committee for further investigation that included the cluster of indicators around vulnerable children and the attainment of looked after children and the Committee would need to consider how they wished to look at these issues when considering its work programme.

Children and Adults Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 27 May 2010

It was suggested that a lot of the indicators that required improvement were closely linked and could possibly together, relate to a small but very important group of children and young people in Medway. It was therefore felt there was a need to move away from looking at indicators individually but perhaps scrutinise them with a more holistic approach, with partners, in order to have a positive impact. In response, the Director offered to help Members with this approach by clustering some of the indicators together at the work programme meeting.

Decision:

The Committee noted the report.

Chairman

Date:

Teri Hemmings, Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordinator

Telephone: 01634 332104

Email: democratic.services@medway.gov.uk