

Medway Council
Meeting of Children and Young People Overview and
Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday, 14 December 2010

6.30pm to 7.30pm

Record of the meeting

Subject to approval as an accurate record at the next meeting of this committee

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

Co-opted Members with voting rights on educational issues only:

Jim Grogan (Roman Catholic Church Representative)

Added members without voting rights on education issued only:

Jane Heyes (Headteacher representative), Lauraine McManus (Teacher representative) and Pat Wozencroft (Governor representative)

LINK representative without voting rights:

Clare Murray

In Attendance: Rose Collinson, Director of Children and Adults
Sally Morris, Assistant Director, Commissioning and Strategy
Teri Reynolds, Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordinator

611 Record of meeting

The record of the meeting held on 20 October 2010 was agreed and signed by the Chairman as correct.

612 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Smith and Sam Tutt (Medway Youth Parliament representative).

613 Urgent matters by reason of special circumstances

There were none.

614 Declarations of interest

Councillor Gilry declared a personal interest in any discussion that may take place during the course of the meeting with reference to Medway Maritime Hospital as she occasionally worked there.

615 Work programme (business management)

Discussion:

The Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordinator updated Members that a new Forward Plan had been published and included the School Admission Arrangements for 2012, which would need to be added to the 20 January 2011 meeting of the committee if it wished to consider this item as pre-decision scrutiny. In addition, it was explained that the Medway Safeguarding Children Board (MSCB) had requested that the report due to the next meeting is deferred to the April meeting. This was because Local SCBs are now statutorily required to publish an annual report and business plan which sets out a review of the previous year's activities, an assessment of local safeguarding need and a plan for future activity. Due to this change the MSCB has adapted its own timetable and the annual review and plan would not be available until the end of March. It was therefore suggested that, in future, the MSCB Independent Chair report to this committee in April and October.

A Member requested that a report on the facilities for Rivermead School be added to the work programme. The Director of Children and Adult Services suggested that the committee be forwarded a briefing note on the issue and the committee could then consider whether it required a report.

Another Member asked for an update with regard to the 14-19 Monitoring Group and when it would next meet. The Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordinator undertook to find out from the relevant officers and report back to the group.

Decision:

The Committee agreed: -

- (1) to receive a presentation on the government's schools white paper, 'the importance of teaching' at the 20 January 2011 meeting;
- (2) to disband the CAMHS Monitoring Group and the committee to receive updates where appropriate;
- (3) to set up a Countering Bullying Task Group to carry out some preparatory work ahead of the themed meeting on 1 March 2011 with regard to countering bullying and that one of the committee's Medway Youth Parliament representatives be involved in the task group;
- (4) the objective of the themed meeting on countering bullying as set out at paragraph 5.6 of the report;

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- (5) that a report on proposed School Admission Arrangements for 2012 is considered at the next meeting;
- (6) that a briefing note regarding facilities and provision at Rivermead School be circulated to the committee before the next meeting.

616 Council Plan Monitoring - Quarter 2 (performance monitoring)

Discussion:

The committee received a report, which provided an update on performance against indicators and actions agreed in the Council Plan for quarter two (July to September 2010).

Members then asked the Director for Children and Adult Services questions regarding resourcing child protection services, diplomas and feedback from Young inspectors work in relation to the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS). In response the Director stated that there was currently a national independent review with regard to safeguarding children and the final report of this was due in May 2012. There was a need to identify what interventions could be embedded for families to support them earlier in effective and safe parenting. In relation to diplomas the Director explained that there was also a national independent review into vocational education and undertook to provide information on this once the report was published.

With regard to the feedback from the Young Inspectors, the Assistant Director for Commissioning and Strategy explained that she would provide a briefing note on this issue, along with feedback on work carried out by the Young Commissioners on healthy eating.

The Chairman also congratulated The Pilgrim School for being one of the most improved schools nationally, along with All Faiths Primary School. The Director added that Medway's key stage 2 results had increased by 2%, which was a welcomed improvement but more still needed to be done to bring performance up to a better standard.

Decision:

The committee noted the report and requested further information on the independent review into vocational education, when published and for a briefing note regarding work carried out by Young Inspectors and Young Commissioners.

617 Children's Services Assessment (performance monitoring)

Discussion:

The Assistant Director, Commissioning and Strategy explained that the judgement for Medway by Ofsted, which was 'performing well', was an

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improvement on the previous year, where the service was judged as adequate. She highlighted the areas where Ofsted indicated good performance or where progress had been made. She also indicated those areas requiring improvement, as outlined in the report, and explained that actions plans would be developed to address those areas.

Members thanked the Director and staff for achieving the improved Ofsted judgement and raised concerns about future provision of sure start centres, childminding, performance in English and mathematics and sports provision.

In response, the Director stated that nursery and early years provision had demonstrated a positive impact on children's abilities and life chances and Medway had incorporated all but one of its sure start children's centres in schools to enable them to be more sustainable. In relation to child minding, strategically the council focussed efforts on groups who care for a number of children, however, did offer support for child minders, although take up was often low. In relation to performance governing bodies needed to be clear of their role and teachers needed to grasp how a subject is progressed through a student's education. The Council did provide training support for teachers but was likely to move to a position of commissioning or signposting to courses. In relation to sport, the Director referred to the Schools Sports Partnerships, which were based at Greenacre and the Howard schools. Funding for these partnerships was currently uncertain but if no central funding was provided for these then Medway schools may consider commissioning some of the services the partnerships provide.

Decision:

The committee noted the report.

Chairman

Date:

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