



# Rutland County Council

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Record of a meeting of the **PEOPLE (CHILDREN) SCRUTINY PANEL** held in the Council Chamber, Catmose, Oakham at 7.00 pm on **Thursday 29 November 2012**

**PRESENT:** Miss G Waller – Chairman (in the Chair)  
Mr M E Baines  
Mr W J Cross  
Mr D C Hollis  
Mr J M Lammie  
Mr M A Oxley  
Mr C A Parsons  
Mrs L I Stephenson  
Mr N M Wainwright  
Mr A S Walters

**CO-OPTED MEMBERS:** Ms P Rubinstein, Secondary Schools  
Ms S Gullan-Whur, Primary Schools

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:** Mr K A Bool, Portfolio Holder for Education and Children's Services  
Mr G Plews, Portfolio Holder for Youth, Sport and Community Safety

**OFFICERS PRESENT:** Ms C Chambers Strategic Director for People  
Miss M Gamston Democratic Services Officer  
Mr M Naylor Assistant Director – Services for People  
Ms W Poynton Assistant Director – Services for People

**APOLOGIES:** Mrs C J Cartwright  
Mrs L I Stephenson  
Mrs C L Vernon

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The Chair commenced the meeting by welcoming back Miss Gamston in her capacity as Clerk to the Panel and introduced the two new co-opted members to the Panel.

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Prior to discussion of the agenda items Ms Chambers, Strategic Director for People informed Members that the first Ofsted Annual Report and League Tables to include local authority league tables had been published; Rutland had come top for secondary education together with 6 other authorities scoring 100% and 36<sup>th</sup> out of 152 for primary education scoring 76%.

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#### **514 RECORD OF LAST MEETING**

The Record of the Meeting of the People (Children) Scrutiny Panel held on 11 October 2012, copies of which had been previously circulated, was confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

#### **515 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Miss Waller declared a disclosable interest as she was a governor at St Mary and St John CEVA Primary School.

Mrs Stephenson declared a disclosable interest in Item 8 as she was involved with the Drop-In centre in Uppingham.

#### **516 PETITIONS, DEPUTATIONS AND QUESTIONS**

No petitions, deputations or questions had been received from members of the public.

#### **517 QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE FROM MEMBERS**

No questions with notice from Members had been received.

#### **518 NOTICES OF MOTION FROM MEMBERS**

No Notices of Motion had been received from Members.

#### **519 CONSIDERATION OF ANY MATTER REFERRED TO THE PANEL FOR A DECISION IN RELATION TO CALL IN OF A DECISION**

No matter had been referred to the Panel for a decision in relation to call-in of a decision in accordance with Procedure Rule 206.

#### **520 FORWARD PLANNING**

The following items were noted as being of interest for future Panels:

- i. Transfer Arrangements of Public Health to Local Authority from April 2013;
- ii. Schools Funding Reform;
- iii. Heritage Lottery Fund Bid Submission (Oakham Castle).

#### **521 YOUTH SERVICES IN RUTLAND**

Report No. 238/2012 from the Strategic Director for People was received.

Mr Plews, the Portfolio Holder for Youth, Sport and Community Safety introduced the report. The purpose of the report, which had been requested by the Panel was to provide an overview of targeted and universal youth service provision in Rutland. Mr Plews highlighted the information on current context and delivery contained within the Rutland County Council Youth Service.

The following points were raised during discussion:

- i. That the report made encouraging reading;
- ii. That more precise detail would have enabled Members to assess more fully the impact of the service and any impact on the budget;
- iii. That further information was requested on the following:
  - a) contacts per venue
  - b) targeted provision
  - c) average number of attendees and ages
  - d) accredited outcomes
- iv. That for anti social behaviour to be classed as such it has to be reported, categorised and recorded as anti social behaviour. It was noted that there were no reported incidents for Oakham and officers undertook to look into this;

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7.27pm – Mr Baines joined the meeting

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- v. That the report stated that Uppingham and Oakham North East had been identified as problem areas in a report commissioned in March 2011 to look at teenage pregnancy rates in the county. However, the ward map used in the report although produced in 2010 used data from 2005-2007 which showed the conception rate for these areas as being significantly lower than England. Clarification was sought on this issue and officers advised the Panel that they would endeavour to get more up to date information;
- vi. That the problem of anorexia/eating disorders amongst teenagers including pupils at Oakham and Uppingham Public Schools should perhaps be considered. Councillors voiced concern over possible causes of eating disorders including pressure to reach higher levels of education, peer pressure and teenage magazines;
- vii. That the mobile “Rutland Wanderer” had proved to be success in areas where there was no centre based provision ;
- viii. That there was an ongoing debate on whether universal services should still a key part of the work that Youth Services undertook or whether should be just targeted services. It was acknowledged tat many local authorities had already trimmed back on universal services;
- ix. That financially Youth Service provision had seen a year on year reduction in funding.

In summary, the Chair stated that more data was required and that this should be broken down by particular vulnerability of groups; if young people with eating disorders were being targeted; how many engaged in each activity and if rural isolation was a problem. Members of the Panel were keen to know what was not working so, what needed to improved and how this could be achieved.

**Agreed:**

**That Scrutiny Panel noted the information provided within the report.**

**That Mr Naylor would action points iii, iv and v and the**

**information would be made available to Members.**

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7.50 pm Mr Plews left the meeting and did not return.

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## **522 Q2 BUDGET MONITORING REPORT**

Report No. 214/2012 (Financial Management Report 2012/13 Quarter 2) from the Strategic Director for Resources was received. Ms Chambers, Strategic Director for People introduced the report.

Members were advised that the forecast overspend for young people's services of over £370k for the year end as at the end of quarter 2 was now predicted to be £260k for the end of the financial year.

Two areas of overspend within the young people's budget were highlighted, staffing where agency staff had covered vacancies and absences due to the associated risks with the vacancy and the successful Aiming High service for disabled children and their families.

During discussion it was noted that:

- i. Aiming High – looking to increase the budget for next year and also looking at the eligibility criteria and bringing in line with neighbouring authorities;
- ii. The year on year increase of expenditure on Special Educational Needs (SEN) Transport and whether it would be more cost effective to provide provision within the county. Ms Chambers advised Members that the needs of each child were assessed and where possible the service was provided in the county however it was not always possible for the needs to be met so an Out of County placement was required. The number of children that required the service was dependent on the number of SEN statements issued and children reaching the end of their education, modelling showed a reduction in required services in a couple of years;
- iii. That the contracts for provision of SEN Transport by taxi companies were subject to the council's open tender process and that the Transport Task and Finish Group had looked at the provision of home to school transport including SEN and their recommendations would be considered at a joint meeting with the Places Scrutiny Panel in January/February 2013;

## **523 Q2 PERFORMANCE REPORT**

Report No. 216/2012 (Performance Management Report – Quarter 2 2012/13) from the Chief Executive was received.

It was noted that the percentage of child protection cases which were reviewed within required timescales stood at 72.7%. Members were advised that three conferences were late during quarter 1 because of processing errors in calculating timeframes. Quarter 2 performance had improved to 100%.

**524 Q2 SAFEGUARDING REPORT FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE  
2012/13**

Report No. 234/2012 from the Strategic Director for People was received. The Assistant Director – Services for People, Ms Poynton, introduced the report and noted that there were two parts to the report, the performance report and the draft Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) report written by the Independent Chair.

The following points were raised during discussion:

- i. That reduction in the percentage of referrals going onto Initial Assessment was due to the change of definition and work undertaken to ensure that the correct cases went onto assessment;
- ii. That not all referrals for a Common Assessment Framework (CAF) were made by Children's Services and therefore were not necessarily shown in the figures provided in the report;
- iii. That administrative staff not directly engaged in day-to-day safeguarding and agency staff were appropriately trained and qualified;
- iv. That all hospital emergency departments had a dedicated safeguarding nurse responsible for referring concerns to the home local authority duty team.

The Chair raised the issue of substitution for a Cabinet member on the LSCB. Ms Chambers stated that she was not aware of an alternative arrangement for lead members and undertook to raise the question.

**Agreed:**

**That Scrutiny Panel noted the content of the report.**

**That Ms Chambers would raise the question of alternative arrangements for lead members on the LSCB.**

**525 SAFEGUARDING ADOLESCENTS – TASK AND FINISH GROUP**

Report No. 237/2012 from the Strategic Director for People was received. The Chair introduced the report, the purpose of which was to provide background to the Safeguarding Adolescents Task and Finish Group and to look to nominate members for this group.

The Chair advised that the co-opted governor members were automatic members of the group and requested that they notified her by email if they wished to take their place.

The membership of the Task and Finish Group will be:

Mr Wainwright (RAC)  
Mrs Stephenson (Cons)  
Mr Walters (Others)

The Chair undertook to contact Mrs Figgis, Mrs Cartwright and Mr Begy with regard to the remaining places available for Conservative members. The Chair

indicated that if required and with the agreement of Mr Begy, she would be a member of the group.

**Agreed:**

**That Scrutiny Panel agrees the term of reference for the Task and Finish Group**

**That the co-opted governor members would notify the Chair if they wished to be members of the Task and Finish Group.**

**That the Chair would contact Mrs Figgis, Mrs Cartwright and Mr Begy regarding the remaining places available on the Task and Finish Group.**

**526 CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES PLAN PROGRESS REPORT**

Report No. 231/2012 from the Strategic Director for People was received. The Assistant Director – Services for People, Mr Naylor introduced the report. The purpose of the report was to present the final version of the Children, Young People and Families Plan 2012-15 and advise where changes had been made since the original draft was presented to this Panel in July 2012.

During discussion it was noted:

- i. That the role of mental health had been emphasised in the plan;
- ii. That the development of the plan meant that some the original dates specified would need to be revised;
- iii. That work was ongoing;
- iv. That this was a strategic plan underpinned by areas of work to improve the lives of children and young people;
- v. That the Panel would welcome a list of key actions/outcomes under the priority headings.

**Agreed:**

**That Scrutiny noted and accepted the amendments made to the Children, Young People and Families Plan 2012 – 15.**

**That a report on the key actions/outcomes under each priority heading would be brought to this Panel.**

**527 EDUCATION FUNDING REFORM**

This had been covered earlier.

**Agreed:**

**That this would be an item on the February 2013 agenda.**

**528 ADOPTION ANNUAL REPORT**

Report No. 235/2012 from the Strategic Director for People was received. The Assistant Director – Services for People, Ms Poynton, introduced the report. The purpose of the report was to update Scrutiny on the developments in the Adoption Service and report on last year's activity.

During discussion it was noted:

- i. That under the new arrangements with Leicestershire, Rutland's contribution had increased to £49,000 and enabled the Adoption team to recruit an additional social worker. Ms Poynton undertook to advise Members of the amount of the previous year's contribution;
- ii. That Members required more information on the service being received by Rutland. Ms Poynton undertook to report back to Members;
- iii. That Members queried whether following the introduction of the 2011 Statutory Guidance adoptions numbers had risen, remained static or fallen. Members were informed that a significant increase/decrease would not be expected in Rutland due to the low numbers involved;
- iv. That every child in Rutland that needed to be adopted had been or was in the process of being.

**Agreed:**

**That Scrutiny Panel noted the contents of the Annual Report 2011-2012 and the developments.**

**That Ms Poynton would action points i and ii and the information would be made available to Members.**

#### **529 ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS**

No additional items of business had been notified to the Chairman.

#### **530 DATE AND PREVIEW OF NEXT MEETING**

Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> January 2013 – 7.30pm (Budget)

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The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.57pm

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