



Rutland County Council

Catmose Oakham Rutland LE15 6HP
Telephone 01572 722577 Facsimile 01572 758307 DX 28340 Oakham

Record of a Meeting of the **PEOPLE (CHILDREN) SCRUTINY PANEL** held in the Council Chamber, Catmose, Oakham at 7.00pm on **Thursday 13 February 2014**

PRESENT: Miss G Waller (Chairman, in the Chair)
Mr M E Baines
Mrs C Cartwright
Mr J M Lammie
Mr J Munton
Mr M A Oxley

CO-OPTED MEMBERS: Miss R Conway Representative of Young People in Rutland
Mr R Dustan Representative of Young People in Rutland
Mr P Goringe Diocesan C of E
Ms S Gullan-Whur Primary Schools

OFFICERS PRESENT: Mrs J Difolco Head of Service – Stronger Communities
Miss M Gamston Support Officer
Mr K Garcia Head of Service – Lifelong Learning
Ms D Greaves Accountant
Miss K Knowles Support Officer
Mr M Naylor Assistant Director – Services for People
Ms W Poynton Assistant Director – Services for People

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Mr K Bool Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People
Mr A S Walters

APOLOGIES: Mrs Figgis, Miss Loomes, Ms Rubinstein and Mr Wainwright

753 RECORD OF MEETING

The record of the People (Children) Scrutiny Panel held on 14 November 2013, copies of which had been previously circulated, was confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

The record of the Special People (Children) Scrutiny Panel held on 16 January 2014, copies of which had been previously circulated, was confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

754 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

In respect of item 7, Learning and Achievement Strategy, the following declarations of interest were made:

- Miss Waller stated that she was a governor at a school subject to the strategy; and
- Ms Gullan-Whur stated that she was a governor at Leighfield Primary School.

755 PETITIONS, DEPUTATIONS AND QUESTIONS

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

756 QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE FROM MEMBERS

No Questions with Notice were received from Members.

757 NOTICES OF MOTION FROM MEMBERS

No Notices of Motion were received from Members.

758 CONSIDERATION OF ANY MATTER REFERRED TO THE PANEL FOR A DECISION IN RELATION TO CALL IN OF A DECISION

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

SCRUTINY

759 LEARNING AND ACHIEVEMENT STRATEGY (SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT STRATEGIC PLAN)

Report No. 47/2014 from the Director of People was received.

The Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People, Mr Bool introduced the report, the purpose of which was to inform the Scrutiny Panel about the changing policy, guidance and statutory responsibilities that inform the role of the Local Authority in relation to educational outcomes for children and young people; and to propose a new strategic approach to learning and achievement and to delivering school improvement.

During discussion the following points were noted:

- i) Concerns were raised by the panel as to the lateness of the report and why some members had not even received the papers in time. Members felt that they were unable to scrutinise the report effectively because of this. The Assistant Director for People, Mr Naylor, apologised to the panel for the lateness of the report and explained that it was important to ensure that the panel received the report for discussion at this meeting rather than leaving it until the next meeting.
- ii) Members were concerned about staffing levels and the limited resources that will be needed. The Assistant Director for People, Mr Naylor, explained that officers were doing some detailed work around resource implications to support this strategy and that Cabinet was supportive of the pressures on the team.
- iii) Members felt that the strategy around the role of the governors and the role of the Local Authority with governors was weak.
- iv) Ofsted trends should be fed back into the process as there seems to be a lack of structure in the strategy.
- v) Members asked who the partnership board that was mentioned in 5.4 of the report would consist of. The Assistant Director for People, Mr Naylor, confirmed that a discussion around this needs to be had with Schools, the Local Authority, governors and the Diocese to establish partners. There was also concern around the annual 'self evaluation' as not being effective because of the fact that it is self evaluation in its nature.

- vi) Members felt that membership to the Task and Finish group mentioned in 6.1 of the report might be difficult to gain and that a better approach would be for the portfolio holder and directors to take responsibility for fast and effective delivery.
- vii) The Chairman, Miss Waller, summarised the overall view of the panel on the report. The report was too long and the language used in the report was not written in plain English. There were no clear objectives and the strategy was weak. The scrutiny panel was not mentioned as a process in the report and neither was the political process itself. Miss Waller would be sharing these concerns with Cabinet.

AGREED:

That the contents of Report 47/2014 be noted.

760 OFSTED REPORTS ON THE INSPECTION OF COTTESMORE PRIMARY SCHOOL AND THE PARKS SPECIAL SCHOOL

Report No. 44/2014 from the Director of People was received.

The Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People, Mr Bool, introduced the report, the purpose of which was to provide an overview of the Ofsted Inspection reports relating to Cottesmore Primary School and The Parks Special School, Oakham.

During the discussion the following points were noted:

Cottesmore Primary School

- i) Members discussed the impact of the large turnover of pupils at the school as being a possible contributing factor for results in the Ofsted report. The school was linked to the military which needed to be factored into any plans that the school had.
- ii) Members expressed an interest in listening to the Head Teachers' explanation on the difficulties that the school dealt with due to the volatility of pupil numbers.
- iii) Members felt that they needed to understand that the implication on children's attainment levels were constantly moving due to parents being employed in the military forces.
- iv) Members expressed an interest in the chair of governors from schools coming to speak with the panel when Ofsted results were published. The Chairman, Miss Waller, asked the Portfolio Holder, Mr Bool, if officers could consider this request.
- v) Members highlighted the need of support and training for governors closer to home and the need to focus on how to attract more people to become governors. The Chairman, Miss Waller, asked that the issue around governance and training to be part of the Learning and Achievement Strategy moving forward.

The Parks Special School

- vi) The general consensus was that the Ofsted officer who inspected the school did not have the appropriate background and that perhaps one officer wasn't enough. That the officer didn't observe enough lessons and that the ones they did were not typical of the lesson at that school.
- vii) The Ofsted inspector accepted that the school was addressing a number of areas with the support of the local authority and would be satisfied with an update. Rapid improvements were likely to be made.
- viii) Members were concerned about the report being in the public domain and asked if proactive work around reassuring parents was going on. This was confirmed and it was also suggested that assuming the school gets a positive follow up visit from HMI, they put this information up on their website.

AGREED:

That the contents of Report 44/2014 be noted.

761 EARLY INTERVENTION AND PREVENTION PROGRESS UPDATE

Report No. 37/2014 from the Director of People was received.

The Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People, Mr Bool, introduced the report, the purpose of which was to provide an update on the progress made within early intervention services since the Ofsted Inspection for the Protection of Children in January 2013. The Ofsted report focussed on the role of the early intervention services and the need for them to have a robust offer and interface with social care.

During discussion the following points were noted:

- i) The Peer Challenge Review 25-27th February would be looking into the robustness of the Authority's systems.
- ii) There were close working relationships with agencies through the Families First Strategy and the Children's Board.
- iii) Members were advised that a single assessment process would be available soon.
- iv) The Chairman, Miss Waller, suggested that the Adolescent Task and Finish group could deal with the concern members had around engaging public in helping to ensure that vulnerable children and young people did not slip through the net of early intervention.
- v) The Chairman, Miss Waller, asked for clarification around the information on page 46 of the report around the number of families receiving support from the Changing Lives programme and if there were sufficient resources in place if the number of families exceeded the target of 30. It was confirmed by officers that there was an intention to consider 30-40 families and share resources.

AGREED:

That the contents of Report 37/2014 be noted.

762 INFORMATION REPORT ON THE RUTLAND ADULT LEARNING SERVICE

Report No. 43/2014 from the Director of People was received.

The Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People, Mr Bool, introduced the report, the purpose of which was to provide an overview of the Rutland Adult Learning Service 2014-15 as requested by the People (Children) Scrutiny Panel. The report also included a summary of the strategic intentions of the service for the period 2014-16 and proposed changes and developments currently being addressed by the Council.

Leaflets on the Rutland Adult Learning and Training were distributed to the panel.

During discussion the following points were noted:

- i) There were over 100 apprenticeships for 16-23year olds
- ii) The apprenticeships were funded by the skills funding agency
- iii) A wider range of courses could be offered by a subcontractor and the procurement process resulted in a good response nationally. There had been good feedback from employers that they are happy to engage in the process.

- iv) Chairman, Miss Waller, felt that post 16yrs education and training needed to be revisited and stated that she would converse with Mr Naylor about this.

AGREED:

That the contents of Report 43/2014 be noted.

763 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORT – QUARTER 3 2013/14

Report No. 36/2014 from the Chief Executive was received.

Children and Young People Portfolio Holder, Mr Bool introduced the report, the purpose of which was to report to Cabinet on the Council's Performance for the third quarter of 2013/14 and the year to date.

During discussion the following points were noted:

- i) Members felt that the results of the overall performance indicators against target were good.
- ii) With reference to the number of year 11 leavers participating in further education being below target. The panel was informed that the number was down to cohort numbers only.
- iii) The disproportionate number of ethnic minorities in care was highlighted and it was explained that the figure was due to one asylum seeker being recorded and then the following month (December), four asylum seekers had arrived in Rutland.

AGREED:

That the contents of Report 36/2014 be noted.

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9.25pm Miss Conway and Mr Dustan left the meeting and did not return.

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764 FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT REPORT 2013/14 QUARTER 3

Report No. 31/2014 from the Director of Resources was received.

Children and Young People Portfolio Holder, Mr Bool, introduced the report the purpose of which was to inform Cabinet on how Council was performing against its revenue and capital budgets and report a forecast year end outturn position as at the 31 December 2013.

During discussion the following points were noted:

- i) Page 126, cost code 4216. Short Term Placements. Variance due to one residential assessment / placement with a further two children accommodated in December. Residential placement now ended.
- ii) Page 127, cost code 4220. Family Support Services. Variance was due to court ordered contracts. This will be monitored over the year.
- iii) Page 124, cost code 5325. Governor Training. Officers were to provide more information around the CFBT contact outside of the meeting.
- iv) Page 103, Adult Learning including clawback by the Skills Funding Agency.
- v) Page 116/117, Schools Budget. Forecasted overspend on the High Needs Block to be managed by School Forum.

- vi) Page 121, cost code 5535, North Luffenham Pre School. Zero budget as self-funding.
- vii) Page 121, cost code 5366, Children's Workforce Development. External funding received several years prior. Ongoing discussion on how to progress.

AGREED:

That the contents of Report 31/2014 be noted.

765 STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER

Report No. 41/2014 from the Director of Resources was received.

The Chairman, Miss Waller, introduced the report, the purpose of which was to update the People (Children) Scrutiny Panel on the current status of the Risk Register.

During discussion the following points were noted:

- i) Members highlighted the large number of amber risks within the report.
- ii) Chairman, Miss Waller, will be taking the concerns back to Cabinet.

AGREED:

That the contents of Report 41/2014 be noted.

766 WORK PROGRAMME 2013/14 AND REVIEW OF FORWARD PLAN

- i) Members welcomed the opportunity to revisit the Learning and Achievement Strategy. Chairman, Miss Waller, suggested that this report be seen again with amendments before it goes to Cabinet.

767 ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

The Chairman, Miss Waller, stated that she had been trying hard to secure a date for key players in the Harrington College to present to the panel. She stated that they had agreed in principle to attend, a date was to be arranged.

768 DATE AND PREVIEW OF NEXT MEETING

Thursday 24 April 2014

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The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 9.52pm.

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