



Rutland County Council

Catmose Oakham Rutland LE15 6HP.

Telephone 01572 722577 Email governance@rutland.gov.uk

Minutes of the **MEETING of the CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** held in the Council Chamber, Catmose on Thursday, 26th September, 2019 at 7.00 pm

PRESENT: Mr A Lowe (Chairman)
Mr P Ainsley
Mr N Begy
Mrs S Harvey
Miss G Waller (as substitute)
Mr K Bool
Mrs Irene Kearney-Rose
Mr Peter Cantley
Mr Andreas Menzies

OFFICERS

PRESENT:	Mr M Andrews	Strategic Director for People
	Ms D Godfrey	Deputy Director - Children's Services
	Mrs J Morley	Governance Officer

IN

ATTENDANCE:	Mr D Wilby	Portfolio Holder for Children's Services and Education
--------------------	------------	--

265 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Mrs Burrows and Mr French. Miss Waller attended as a substitute for Mrs Burrows and Mr Cantley as a substitute for Mr French.

266 RECORD OF MEETING

The minutes of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Panel held on 27 June 2019, copies of which had been previously circulated, were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

267 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

268 PETITIONS, DEPUTATIONS AND QUESTIONS

No petitions, deputations or questions were received.

269 QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE FROM MEMBERS

No questions with notice had been received from Members.

270 NOTICES OF MOTION FROM MEMBERS

No notices of motion had been received from Members.

271 CONSIDERATION OF ANY MATTER REFERRED TO THE COMMITTEE FOR A DECISION IN RELATION TO CALL IN OF A DECISION

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

272 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

Nominations for the position of Vice-Chairman of the Committee were sought from the Members of the Committee who were present. Mr Ainsley was nominated by Mrs Harvey and seconded by Mr Begy. No further nominations were made and Mr Ainsley received a unanimous vote in favour of his appointment.

RESOLVED

That Mr Ainsley be **APPOINTED** Vice-Chairman of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee.

273 CHILDREN'S SERVICES PERFORMANCE REPORTING

Report No.143/2019 was received from the Strategic Director for People.

Mr Wilby, Portfolio Holder for Children's Services and Education opened this item by commending the officers working in Children's Services who were working extremely hard with limited resources and, when compared with other East Midlands Councils, were performing well. The Deputy Director for Children's Services, in conjunction with the Portfolio Holder, would be focusing on further improving performance by introducing procedures that enabled officers to work 'smarter' with the limited resources that they had.

Mark Andrews, Strategic Director for People, went on to introduce the report the purpose of which was to demonstrate to the Committee a selection of key performance indicators (KPIs) relating to children's services in Rutland, with a view to some or all of these being reported to the Committee on a quarterly basis in the future.

During discussion the following points were noted:

- There were a number of acronyms used in the report and more clarification was needed for future reports.
- The figures needed to be shown in comparison to the previous year and other Councils in order to show the direction of travel and to put the data in context.
- The targets were set around the performance of services rather than the impact on beneficiaries.
- Members suggested that figures for the number of mental health assessments, the level of truancies, staff retention and the number of foster parents, also be shown.
- The virtual school head report was an excellent source of information and Members commented that in the short time that the virtual school head had been with the Council she had transformed the system.
- The next virtual school head report was being finalised and would be available in November.
- School Attendance records needed to be included as it was the Council who prosecuted parents not the School.
- A more in-depth report would be provided by officers with further explanation of the figures once the Committee had decided which performance figures it wanted to concentrate on.
- As Rutland was so small in comparison to other authorities, often the percentages reported could give a skewed impression.
- The Deputy Director for Children's Services had been in post for four months and was working on embedding a performance culture in the department with a clear management framework and performance indicators.
- Social workers were embracing the new culture and performance clinics were being held fortnightly.
- As the KPI report was finessed members would be able to see progress over time.
- The latest percentage figure for care leavers who were in Education, Employment or Training (EET) was 63%. One of the ways in which the service was supporting care leavers who were full time parents was by helping them with parenting skills as often they had had their own disruptive parenting experience. Officers wanted to get this right first rather than put pressure on them to access education. However, there were opportunities available through children's services and the Rutland Adult Learning Service and this could be on a very part-time basis or through accessing online courses.

RESOLVED:

The Committee;

1. **REQUESTED** that a training session covering Children's Services processes be delivered in advance of the next meeting of the Children and Young People Committee on 28 November 2019.
2. **AGREED** to receive another performance report at the November meeting and to then decide the delivery and frequency of Performance reports.
3. **REQUESTED** that the Governance Officer circulate the Virtual School Head Annual Report to all Members of the Council as soon as it was available.

274 FOSTERING SERVICE ANNUAL REPORT 2018/19 AND CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER AND CARE LEAVERS SUFFICIENCY STATEMENT 2017-20

Report No.151/2019 was received from the Strategic Director for People.

Dawn Godfrey, Deputy Director for People – Children’s Services introduced the report the purpose of which was to provide the Committee with information on the activity of the fostering service and how the local authority was meeting its statutory sufficiency duty in relation to children looked after and care leavers.

During discussion the following points were noted:

- Members requested information on the number of new foster parents, not just the total number, as they wished to see how effective the recruitment process had been.
- The 15 Rutland foster families referred to in the report included families where there was a single parent as well as couples.
- Potential foster parents who had been through the Council’s training sometimes declined to take children with more challenging needs as they did not have the skills, or the inclination to develop those skills, to look after them. Additionally there were instances where work commitments meant that they could not take, for example, a younger child who was not attending school.
- Foster parents received a retainer whilst waiting to foster and the full allowance when they had a child placed with them.
- There were currently no Unaccompanied Asylum Seekers (UASC) 16 and over placed with Rutland Carers. For religious and cultural reasons, most UASC were placed in Leicester or Loughborough
- Members were pleased to see that a ‘staying put’ option was available to children aged 18-21 years old in order for them to remain in their placement. Foster Carers received a lodging allowance which was lower but which resulted in a better outcome for foster children.
- From a current cohort of 31 care leavers, there were 22 young people engaged in employment, education or training and of these, 5 were enrolled in university and completing their degrees. This equated to 16.1% which compared to a national average of only 6%.
- In the past 12 months Rutland Schools had received regular training and meetings with the Virtual School Head in order to improve and monitor the quality of the approach to Children in Care. Some designated teachers were new to the role and officers had to ensure that they were fully aware of what they needed to do.
- The forthcoming Virtual School Head Annual Report would address many of the concerns expressed.
- RCC funded laptops for Rutland Children looked After (CLA) but it was very clearly dependent on educational need, progress and attainment.

RESOLVED:

The Committee:

1. **NOTED** the contents of the Fostering Service Annual Report 2018/19 and the Children Looked After and Care leavers Sufficiency Statement 2017-20.
2. **ENDORSED** the actions planned in relation to the focus and direction of travel of future fostering recruitment.

275 YOUTH OFFENDING SERVICE

Report No.148/2019 was received from the Strategic Director for People.

Mark Andrews, Strategic Director for People, introduced the report the purpose of which was to update the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee on the Youth Offending Service contract and the statutory functions commissioned through Leicestershire County Council. The report also provided the Committee with information on the current service specification and delivery arrangements, including the preventative work provided through the contract.

During discussion the following points were noted:

- Community Safety came within the remit of the Adults and Health Scrutiny Committee but Members asked whether it would be better suited to the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee. Officers felt that there were pros and cons for both camps as there were very few young people in the justice system but there were undoubtedly more links between young people and Anti-Social behaviour. The Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee were well placed however to review how resources were being used and allocated to prevent offending.
- On a cost per head basis the Youth Offending Service did not seem to offer value for money but when compared to setting up and running a Rutland only service it was very good value.

RESOLVED

The Committee:

1. **NOTED** the arrangements for the delivery of Youth Offending Services in Rutland.
2. **REQUESTED** that a report on how resources were being used and allocated to prevent youth offending be brought to a future meeting of the Committee. The report was to consider whether the Council's Early Help Services met needs.

276 REVIEW OF THE FORWARD PLAN AND ANNUAL WORK PLAN

The Committee reviewed the Forward Plan and discussed substantive items for inclusion in the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee Annual Work Plan.

During discussion the following points were noted:

- Last year, the Task and Finish Group report on Mental Health had recommended that Resilient Rutland report back to the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee to give an update on the progress and impact within schools that their project had had. Private schools had the resources and a structure in place to offer a level of pastoral support that Rutland state funded secondary schools could not and so Members felt it was important for the Committee and residents to be able to see how the lottery grant monies were being used to promote resilience in schools.
- Officers requested that Members be specific about what they wanted included in the reports for the sport and transport items listed within the draft work plan.

- It was noted that a report on Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) High Needs Funding had come before the Committee in March 2019 but new Members of the Committee wanted to see a further report in order to review progress of the project.

RESOLVED:

The Committee,

1. **AGREED** that Resilient Rutland would be invited to report to the Committee at the end of this municipal year, allowing time for the project to 'bed-in' and to accommodate delays to the project schedule.
2. **AGREED** that Councillor Begy would supply Officers with the scope for the report on sport for children.
3. **REQUESTED** that the Governance Officer circulate copies of Report No.55/2019: Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) High Needs Funding for background information before scoping work for a future report.

277 LEICESTERSHIRE AND RUTLAND LOCAL SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD ANNUAL REPORT 2018-19

Report No.145/2019 was taken without debate.

The Committee **NOTED** the report.

278 ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

No other urgent business was received.

279 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Thursday, 28 November 2019 at 7pm.

---oOo---

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.40pm

---oOo---