

## **BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL**

# **SCHOOLS, CHILDREN AND FAMILIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY (O&S) COMMITTEE – PUBLIC MEETING**

**13:30 hours on Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> February 2018, Committee Rooms 3 & 4 – Actions**

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### **Present:**

Councillor Susan Barnett (Chair)

Councillors: Sue Anderson, Matt Bennett, Kate Booth, Barry Bowles, Debbie Clancy, Shabrana Hussain, Julie Johnson, Chauhdry Rashid, Martin Straker Welds and Alex Yip.

Other Voting Representatives: Evette Clarke, Parent Governor Representative and Sarah Smith, Church of England Diocese Representative.

### **Also Present:**

Councillor Carl Rice, Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Schools

Jill Crosbie, AD, Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

Colin Diamond, Corporate Director for Children & Young People

Natalie Loon, Corporate Parenting Support Officer

Andy Pepper, AD, Children in Care Provider Services

Amanda Simcox, Scrutiny Office

Emma Williamson, Head of Scrutiny Services

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## **1. NOTICE OF RECORDING**

The Chairman advised that this meeting would be webcast for live or subsequent broadcast via the Council's Internet site ([www.civico.net/birmingham](http://www.civico.net/birmingham)) and that members of the press/public may record and take photographs except where there were confidential or exempt items.

## **2. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were submitted on behalf of:

Councillor Mike Sharpe.

Other Voting Representatives: Samera Ali, Parent Governor Representative and Adam Hardy, Roman Catholic Diocese Representative.

## **3. ACTION NOTES**

The action notes of the meetings held on 8<sup>th</sup> January 2018 and 17<sup>th</sup> January 2018 were confirmed.

#### **4. CABINET MEMBER UPDATE**

Councillor Barry Bowles and Councillor Martin Straker-Welds declared they had been appointed as Cabinet Advisors to the Children, Families and Schools portfolio. The Chief Legal Officer is to advise whether there will be a conflict of interest.

Councillor Carl Rice, Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Schools informed Members of his priorities:

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

The fragmentation of the schools system (maintained schools and academies etc) and the need for an integrated family of schools.

The achievement of children and this includes both educational achievement and resilience.

There will be a workshop with the Birmingham Education Partnership (BEP) in March for all elected members.

The Birmingham Domestic Abuse Prevention Strategy 2017 – 2020 went to Cabinet yesterday and this will go to full Council. 41,000 people are affected in Birmingham.

The portfolio budget has a £2.6m overspend for this year and most of this is attributable to Travel Assist.

Nearly £3m is spent looking after children where adults have no recourse to public funds.

There is a need to improve reporting arrangements for Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) for particular communities.

There has been a third Ofsted visit.

The Children's Trust has operational independence however Scrutiny and the Cabinet Member need to be involved in key decisions.

The 2018/19 Council budget has prioritised children services as much as it can.

Ways in which as many Councillor as possible are involved in Corporate Parenting is being explored.

Members expressed concern regarding the implementation of the early years contract. Concern was also expressed that Child Protection Plans were being ended too early and there appeared to be no trajectory for this within the letter from Ofsted.

Members commented on the Birmingham Education Services Delivery and Improvement Plan 2017-18 targets and the Cabinet Member stated he would be interested in including challenging and realistic targets.

It was queried why the service delivery plans on the Council's website were last year plans. Also, there wasn't an eligibility criteria for short breaks in the local offer and it was suggested that the Council could use something similar to Richmond's criteria. The Cabinet Member stated he would write to the Committee to inform when these have been put right.

#### **RESOLVED:**

Update noted.

## **5. CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD ANNUAL REPORT**

Andy Pepper, AD, Children in Care Provider Services and Natalie Loon, Corporate Parenting Support Officer presented the item.

The annual report presented today was in response to recommendation six in the Committee's Corporate Parenting Inquiry. Also as per recommendation two, the menu of involvement that was completed by Councillors would be developed into a corporate parenting handbook for new Councillors at the beginning of the year.

Members were informed that a group of senior officers chaired by the Corporate Director for Children & Young People is being set-up to assist directorates across the Council participating in the corporate parenting agenda.

Councillor Barry Bowles stated he had e-mailed Councillors on the Committee an example of a report Councillors who are school governors can request from their school. Councillor Susan Barnett declared a non-pecuniary interest as she is the Chair of the Virtual School Board. Members queried how many Councillors were school governors.

There is a continued national shortage of foster carers for children and young people and Members queried whether private fostering agencies should be at the job fairs held within the Council House. Members were informed that they were working on getting smarter at marketing the financial package and an alternative funding model is being explored.

Members were impressed with the officers 'can do' attitude and there were so many things that we should be really proud of, for example, the Council does not charge care leavers council tax and the Children and Care Council (CiCC) and Care Leavers Forum had won awards.

### **RESOLVED:**

The Corporate Parenting Annual Report is noted.

## **6. WORK PROGRAMME**

It has been agreed with the opposition leads on the committee that the April committee meeting would be cancelled.

The Chair would discuss with the Corporate Director for Children & Young People the attendance of head teachers at the March committee meeting.

### **RESOLVED:**

The work programme is noted.

## **7. DATE OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

Noted.

**8. REQUEST(S) FOR CALL IN/COUNCILLOR CALL FOR ACTION/PETITIONS**

None.

**9. OTHER URGENT BUSINESS**

The Chair informed Members that nominations are open for two parent governor representatives on the committee. This is for a four year term of office – until 30<sup>th</sup> April 2022. The closing date for nominations is 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2018.

**10. AUTHORITY TO CHAIRMAN AND OFFICERS**

**RESOLVED:**

That in an urgent situation between meetings the Chair, jointly with the relevant Chief Officer, has authority to act on behalf of the Committee.

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The meeting ended at 15.47 hours.