

Schools, Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 12th July 2017

SWOT Analysis – Cllr Brigid Jones, Cabinet Member Children, Families and Schools

<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stable Leadership. • Education improvement plan Years 1 and 2 delivered. We have a much more coherent, improved and robust set of services. • The 17/18 Education Improvement Plan contains robust plans for each of the 21 service areas. • Children's Social Care we have stable and manageable caseloads, agency use down (although still too high) and staff turnover this year, and is focused on its agreed improvement plan. • Ofsted have acknowledged significant progress and well-motivated staff. • Birmingham Education Partnership demonstrating impact on school improvement and holding all schools together. • Whistleblowing policy in place and working effectively in enabling staff and partners to raise concerns. • Birmingham Curriculum Statement led by the Council and welcomed by schools. UNICEF Rights Respecting Award work recognised nationally. • Corporate parenting more embedded with mentors, business sponsorship for awards, Council tax exemptions. • BCC's communications with and relations with schools much stronger. 	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusion in schools is weak in this city. Our population of children out of mainstream provision is unsustainably high. • Whilst practice in individual areas is good, the overall SEN system is weak. Inclusion Commission now consulting on its plans after 9 months work. • Children's Social Care - still variable quality of practice, delays in care proceedings and in some areas insufficient care planning for young people in residential placements. • Corporate Parents; greater focus needed on securing apprenticeships and other opportunities. • Recruitment and retention of experienced social work practitioners. • Educationally, large gaps remain between the most advantaged and most disadvantaged young people. • Uncertainty in national government policy makes it hard to plan service delivery.
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New forms of school improvement funding available and BEP has submitted bid. • The Early Years Health and Wellbeing contract now out for consultation presenting an exciting new way to redesign the multiple services more coherently. • We are moving to a shadow Children's Trust for children's social care in September 2017. • Improving partner relationship through BSCB and Early Help & Safeguarding Partnership – new 'Right Service, Right Time' partner document. 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trust development must not become a distraction from the improvement agenda. • The Early Years Health and Wellbeing offer doesn't have the budget it once had, and as such services in some places may reduce. • The Early Years Education sector is facing budget pressures and services will need to adapt. Purdah has led to delayed implementation and threats to budget savings required • Schools are under massive budget pressures even though the new national funding formula is not in the government's legislative programme • Significant savings challenge in children's social care and related services.