

**BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL**

<p><b>EDUCATION AND VULNERABLE CHILDREN OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 25 NOVEMBER, 2015</b></p>
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**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE EDUCATION AND VULNERABLE  
CHILDREN OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON  
WEDNESDAY 25 NOVEMBER, 2015 AT 1400 HOURS IN COMMITTEE  
ROOMS 3 AND 4, COUNCIL HOUSE, BIRMINGHAM**

**PRESENT:** - Councillor Barry Bowles in the Chair;

Councillors Sue Anderson, Debbie Clancy, Barbara Dring,  
Rashid, Valerie Seabright, Mike Sharpe, Martin Straker-Welds,  
Chauhdry Rashid and Alex Yip.

Samera Ali – Parent Governor  
Sarah Smith – Church Representative

**IN ATTENDANCE:-**

Seamus Gaynor – Link Officer  
Alastair Gibbons – Executive Director for Children’s Services  
Peter Hay – Strategic Director  
Jane Held, Chair BSCB  
Councillor Brigid Jones – Cabinet Member  
Councillor Penny Holbrook – Cabinet Member  
Louisa Nisbett – Committee Manager  
Amanda Simcox – Scrutiny Research and Policy Officer  
Sir Mike Tomlinson - Education Commissioner  
Councillor Anita Ward – Former Chair of O&S Cttee  
Benita Wishart – Overview and Scrutiny Manager

There were a number of Councillors from Rochdale Council in attendance and  
1 member of the public

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**NOTICE OF RECORDING**

308

It was noted that the meeting was being webcast for live or subsequent  
broadcast via the Council’s Internet site ([www.birminghamnewsroom.com](http://www.birminghamnewsroom.com)) and  
that members of the press/public may record and take photographs. The whole  
of the meeting would be filmed except where there were confidential or exempt  
items.

**APOLOGIES**

- 309 Apologies were submitted on behalf of Councillor Sue Barnet (Chairman), Richard Potter and Tony Stanley, Link Officer for their inability to attend the meeting.
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**MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

- 310 Councillor Mike Sharpe was informed that the query about children from parents in the armed forces suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress had been followed up.

The Minutes of the meeting held on 21 October, 2015, having been previously circulated, were confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

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**PROGRESS ON THE EDUCATION AND SCHOOLS STRATEGY AND IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

The following report was submitted:-

(See document no. 1)

Peter Hay and Sir Mike Tomlinson, Education Commissioner, were in attendance for this item and presented the report highlighting the main issues. During the discussion that ensued and in response to questions the following points were made:-

1. Safeguarding – Non regulated provision was ongoing. They were looking at how it could become regulated.
2. Councillor Martin Straker-Welds referred to the published report Friday 13 November, 2015 related to the Trojan Horse and noted that schools were out performing others including those in London. Sir Mike Tomlinson said that the article was positive and lifted the morale of schools. A high proportion of schools in Birmingham were outstanding. Peter Hay added that visits would be carried out to every new Head Teacher in Birmingham and they would be mentored. (3 in Birmingham from September).
3. In reply to a comment from Councillor Seabright, the plan might strengthen schools and avoid them being turned into an academy as they would have been previously as a failing school.
4. Councillor Yip noted that the outcomes for safeguarding were excellent. In reply to his interest in support for new Head Teachers, Sir Mike Tomlinson answered it had been recognised that it was a national challenge to appoint new Head Teachers. More talent spotting and development programmes were being done as a BCC initiative.
5. In reply to Councillor Debbie Clancy, it was reported that the Peer Review had been completed the previous week. This would be

followed by a Cabinet report early in the new year following which it would be included in the Work Programme for the O & S Committee.

6. Councillor Sue Anderson together with Councillor Bowles had attended the LGA meeting. Councillor Sue Anderson hoped that the improvements would attract more Head Teachers. Schools also needed to recognise when they needed assistance. It was hoped that all schools would join Birmingham Education Partnership (BEP) to avoid individual schools becoming isolated and the LA and Academies working together at a professional level.
7. Concerns were expressed about Children missing from school and the lack of information. Some schools were not submitting their financial returns and audits.
8. Some work would be included in the Work Programme on Children missing from Education.
9. The Chairman thanked Sir Mike Tomlinson for attending the meeting for the item.

**RESOLVED:-**

311

That the report be noted.

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**TRACKING: STRENGTHENING THE BIRMINGHAM FAMILY OF SCHOOLS**

Peter Hay presented the following progress report:-

(See document no. 2)

During the discussion that ensued the following points were made:-

1. Councillor Anita Ward was in attendance for this item and noted that the report was 2 ½ years old. The relationship of the Local Authority had changed with the increase in Academies. It was suggested that some more work be carried out prior to the decision on how to move forward.
2. Peter Hay informed that the LGA Peer review would make some suggestions for a way forward.
3. Councillor Anita Ward agreed with Councillors Seabright and Martin Straker-Welds that there was a need to reinforce with all Elected Members their responsibility for the education of children and the importance of Districts establishing links with Schools. Councillor Sue Anderson hoped that BEP could assist with schools learning to appreciate the role of Members in Schools. Councillor Yip agreed that there was a communication breakdown between schools and Councillors.

4. It was noted by Councillor Anita Ward that the Cabinet Member, Councillor Brigid Jones regularly attended the O & S Committee to respond to issues and this was welcomed by the Committee.
5. Councillor Seabright noted that some Districts had still not appointed Corporate Parent Champions. Peter Hay said that a joint workshop with BEP was planned.
6. Peter Hay informed that the Safeguard Plan and Education Action Plan would be submitted to the City Council the following week.

312

**RESOLVED:-**

That the recommendations be agreed.

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**BRIMINGHAM SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD (BSCB) ANNUAL REPORT**

The following report was submitted:-

(See document no. 3)

Jane Held was in attendance for this item. A presentation was made to the Committee. During the discussion that ensued the following points were made:-

1. Councillor Bowles noted that it was difficult to work out some of the graphs as they were in black and white and asked that colour copies be considered taking budget restraints into consideration.
2. In reply to Sarah Smith, Jane Held informed that the Community and Engagement Group had engaged with a number of groups to do mapping work in the City.
3. Councillor Dring referred to a letter received from the BSCB regarding the Licensing Policy. Jane Held responded that there was no question of them being disassociated and undertook to look at the wording in the letter.
4. Councillor Seabrook expressed concerns about the impact of the cuts to the Police Service also the involvement of young people with the Corporate Parenting Board. Jane Held answered that the attendance of the police was a matter for debate across the 7 LA's. Attendance of the police and level of representation had been agreed since the report. Also the outcomes and views of young people would be reported to the Board.
5. Councillor Sue Anderson referred to page 83 and stated that a lot of the report on the work on CSE was negative. She wanted to ensure that issues raised previously were not forgotten in light of the new recommendations. Jane Held informed that a lot of priorities had been delivered. There would be step forward over the next 6 months.

6. Councillor Bowles welcomed the Councillors from Rotherham Council who were present at the meeting.
7. Samera Ali raised the issue of Children's Voices. Jane Held confirmed they were listening to the issues important to young people and considering how to move forward. They would take on board the need to engage the appropriate young person.
8. The Annual Business Plan, 'Getting to Great 2015/16' and most recent monitoring report will be circulated to Members.

313

**RESOLVED:-**

That the report be noted.

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**TRACKING: CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION (CSE) DELIVERY OF TRAINING AND AWARENESS RAISING ON CSE RECOMMENDATIONS 1-7**

The following progress report was submitted:-

(See document no. 4)

Alastair Gibbons presented the report. Councillor Anita Ward was in attendance for this item and congratulated the Committee for the work. It had been nationally recognised and won 2 awards. She placed on record her thanks to Peter Hay, Officers and Partners involved in compiling the report. During the lengthy discussion that ensued the following points were made:-

R01 – Rotherham Council website to be looked at. BCC's website was being reviewed also a link to the 'See me hear me' website.

R02 – Peter Hay suggested good practice of CSE training in schools be brought back to the Committee. More to be done on raising awareness in schools with parents. The issue of bullying via Smartphone was raised.

R03 - Briefing sent to schools about monitoring to be sent to Members.

R04 – Concerns were raised about home schooled children and children missing from site.

R05 -Cllr Anita Ward was now the BCC Member on the West Midlands Fire Authority and happy to assist.

R06 - Birmingham Licensed drivers and operators only. There were missed opportunities with companies Corporate Social Responsibilities (CSR). Not enough work was being done with hotels, hospitals staff etc also bus drivers. Jane Held undertook to add buses to the work programme.

R07 – It was felt that there should be compulsory awareness training for Members. It was suggested that a Corporate Parenting and CSE agreement should be signed by Councillors when they are elected to office. This should be

taken back to the corporate leadership. Peter Hay said the Corporate Management Team would shortly be looking at the training.

314 **RESOLVED:-**

That the recommendations be agreed as 3 – not achieved progress made and that the report be noted.

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**EDUCATION AND VULNERABLE CHILDREN O & S COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2015/16**

The following work programme was received and noted:-

(See document No. 5)

315 **RESOLVED:-**

That the Work Programme be noted.

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**DATES AND TIMES OF MEETINGS**

316 It was noted that future meetings were agreed for the following Wednesdays at 1400 hours in the Council House :-

09 December  
20 January **2016**  
10 February  
23 March  
20 April

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**REQUEST(S) FOR CALL IN/COUNCILLOR CALL FOR ACTION/PETITIONS RECEIVED (IF ANY)**

317 None were received.

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**OTHER URGENT BUSINESS**

318 Councillor Bowles reminded members about the Market Place that was collecting presents/money for children and undertook to send an email as a reminder.

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**AUTHORITY TO CHAIR AND OFFICERS**

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**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 1638 hours.

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CHAIRPERSON