

BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY (O&S) COMMITTEE – PUBLIC MEETING

10:00 hours on Wednesday 25th July 2018, Committee Room 6 – Actions

Present:

Councillor Mohammed Aikhlaq (Chair)

Councillors: Diane Donaldson, Charlotte Hodivala, Shabrana Hussain and Alex Yip.

Also Present:

Councillor Kate Booth, Cabinet Member for Children's Wellbeing

David Bishop, Head of Service, Birmingham City Council

Andy Couldrick, CEX, Children's Trust

Seamus Gaynor, Head of Executive, Children's Trust

Dawn Roberts, AD, Early Help, Children's Trust

Sarah Sinclair, Interim Assistant Director, Children and Young People (Commissioning)

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) and that members of the press/public may record and take photographs except where there were confidential or exempt items.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

No declarations of interest were made.

3. APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEE AND CHAIRMAN

- (i) Noted the resolution of City Council appointing the Committee, Chair and Members to serve on the Committee for the period ending with the Annual Meeting of the City Council in 2019:

Labour (5): Councillors Mohammed Aikhlaq (Chairman), Safia Akhtar, Diane Donaldson, Shabrana Hussain, Lucy Seymour-Smith.

Conservative (2): Councillors Charlotte Hodivala and Alex Yip.

Liberal Democrat (1): Councillor Morriam Jan.

- (ii) Elected Cllr Diane Donaldson as Deputy Chair for the purposes of substitution for the Chair, if absent, for the period ending with the Annual General Meeting of the City Council in 2019.

4. APOLOGIES

Apologies were submitted on behalf of: Councillors Safia Akhtar, Morriam Jan, Lucy Seymour-Smith.

Apologies for lateness were submitted on behalf of Cllr Shabrana Hussain.

5. TERMS OF REFERENCE

Noted the Terms of Reference: To fulfil the functions of an Overview and Scrutiny Committee as they relate to any policies, services and activities concerning the Children's Trust, vulnerable children, corporate parenting and other child social care and safeguarding functions of the Council.

6. CABINET MEMEBR FOR CHILDREN'S WELLBEING

Cllr Kate Booth, Cabinet Member for Children's Wellbeing, attended and stated that Cllr Jayne Francis, Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Culture would like to have also attended and will come to a future meeting.

The Cabinet Member confirmed that feedback from the Ofsted inspection into SEND is expected in September 2018. The Ofsted monitoring visit regarding children in care will be covered in the Children's Trust presentation.

7. CHILDREN'S TRUST

Sarah Sinclair, Interim AD, Children and Young People (Commissioning), provided information on the performance framework and governance arrangements. The relationship with the Trust and Council is set out in the contract. The Council holds the Trust to account with Cllr Kate Booth being the Lead Member. Professor Jon Glasby is a Non-Executive Director appointed by the Council. The Director of Children's Services is the responsible senior officer. The contract with the Trust is for an initial five year term with the option to extend to another five years.

Andy Couldrick, CEX, Children's Trust, provided information that included children in care statistics, core Children's Services and improvement priorities. There have been regular Ofsted monitoring visits which take place in between full inspections.

The Chair informed Members that he had met with Andrew Christie, Chair of the Children's Trust and it was mentioned that the workforce strategy was key to success. Other issues are whether governance is fit for purpose and fostering and adoption.

A question was raised with regards to staff morale, as the previous O&S Committee was concerned the transition may have a negative effect. Members were informed

that a staff survey had been undertaken. This had a low response rate with the key message being that staff were reserving judgement as to whether the Trust will make a difference. Another staff survey will be undertaken where it is hopeful that there will be a bigger response rate and positive feedback.

Andy Couldrick presented the contract key performance indicators for May 2018. The discussion included:

- The contractual and performance of the Trust is monitored monthly through the Operational Commissioning Group. There are ultimately penalties if performance is not met.
- There are also quarterly meetings that include the Leader, Deputy Leader, Lead Member, Chief Executive and Chair of the Trust, and the DfE Commissioner as necessary.
- There will also be bi-monthly reports on quality of practice.
- Scrutiny to hold the Lead Member and Director of Children's Services to account. Although the Children's Trust will continue to attend Scrutiny and Members visits are being organised.
- As the Trust is a Council wholly owned company reports have to be presented to the Cabinet Committee - Group Company Governance.
- Each key performance indicator has a target and a tolerance level. The Council and Trust will review the targets within the year and this includes whether these are the right targets. If Members have a formal view on these then a recommendation can be made to the Lead Member. This then may lead to a variation of contract.
- There are other performance indicators that sit below the key performance indicators.

The Chair suggested that Members received the monthly key performance report.

Andy Couldrick presented the 'Children who go missing' paper. This is in response to the previous Committee's Children Missing from Home and Care Inquiry. Members were informed that there has been a lot of activity with the Police around strengthening the front door, the Child Sexual Exploitation/Missing Co-ordinators are now Exploitation Co-ordinators and they have appointed 24 Forward Thinking Early Help Staff. In addition there is now a Vulnerable Adolescents Board.

Members were informed that in the last 12 months on average 107 children go missing a month within Birmingham. Members queried about Birmingham children who are placed out of city who go missing and also requested a breakdown of first time and repeat missing episodes.

Dawn Roberts and David Bishop presented the 'Attendance and Children out of School' paper. Members requested further information on the exclusion data analysis. This includes reasons for the large increase in female exclusions in 2016/17.

With regards to the concern regarding primary exclusions, Members were informed that they were mirroring the secondary model approach to improve this. Also, they had established a new triage and panel arrangements for vulnerable children and young people not in full time education to improve attendance, reduce exclusions and identify those without a school place. This included a new partnership with Housing to assist children in getting back into education who are in temporary accommodation. In

addition, Housing and the Trust will have a triage panel arrangement to discuss individual cases where families were at risk of homelessness or were in temporary accommodation.

RESOLVED:

Update noted. Further information requested:

- The number of Birmingham children who are placed out of the city who go missing and a breakdown of first time and repeat missing episodes;
- A breakdown of first time and repeat missing episodes for Birmingham children placed in Birmingham.

8. WORK PROGRAMME

Members are undertaking a visit to see the 'front door' on 19th September 2018.

Councillor Yip would like Travel Assist as an item.

9. DATES OF MEETINGS

The following dates have been proposed for Wednesdays at 1000 hours.

2018	2019
• 19 September (this will be a visit)	• 16 January
• 17 October	• 13 February
• 14 November	• 13 March (this will be a visit)
• 12 December	• 17 April

RESOLVED:

The proposed dates were noted.

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

None.

11. OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

None.

12. 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.

The meeting ended at 12.15 hours.