

BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

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

14:00 hours on Wednesday 12 July 2017, Committee Rooms 3 & 4 – Actions

Present:

Councillor Barry Bowles [Acting Chair]

Councillors: Sue Anderson, Matt Bennett, Kate Booth, 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

Also Present:

Cllr Brigid Jones, Cabinet Member, Children, Schools and Families

Jill Crosbie, AD, Special Education Needs and Disabilities

Colin Diamond, Interim Corporate Director for Children and Young People

Marie Dobson, Project Manager, Education Services

Seamus Gaynor, Head of Strategic Management

Professor Geoff Lindsay, Chair, Inclusion Commission

Amanda Simcox, Scrutiny Officer

Emma Williamson, Head of Scrutiny Services

1. NOTICE OF RECORDING/WEBCAST

The Deputy Chair advised that this meeting would be webcast for live or subsequent broadcast via the Council's Internet site (which could be accessed at "www.birminghamnewsroom.com") and 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.

2. APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEE AND CHAIR

Noted the resolution of the 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 2018.

3. ELECTION OF DEPUTY CHAIR

Elected Cllr Barry Bowles as Deputy Chair to substitute for the Chair if absent.

4. APOLOGIES

Apologies were submitted on behalf of:

Councillors: Susan Barnett [Chair] and Cllr Nagina Kauser.

Samera Ali, Parent Governor Representative and Richard Potter, Roman Catholic Representative.

5. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Members were reminded that they must declare all relevant pecuniary interest and non-pecuniary interests relating to any items of business to be discussed at this meeting. If a pecuniary interest is declared a Member must not speak or take part in that agenda item. Any declarations will be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

6. TERMS OF REFERENCE

(See documents No 1)

The revised committee's terms of reference, as set out in the attached revised schedule were noted.

7. ACTION NOTES

(See documents No 2 and No 3).

RESOLVED:-

The action notes of the meetings held on the 26 April 2017 and 2 May 2017 were confirmed.

8. THE EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE IMPROVEMENT JOURNEY

(See document No 4)

Cllr Brigid Jones, Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Schools and Colin Diamond, Interim Corporate Director, Children and Young People presented the item.

Cllr Jones highlighted that they have really sharpened up practice with regards to education and safeguarding children who are out of school, such as, those being home educated.

Cllr Jones was happy to provide a report on family support and outcomes following the committee clarifying what they would want covered within the report.

An update will be provided on return home interviews as concern was expressed regarding the penultimate paragraph in the 13th June 2017 Ofsted letter (page 39 of the agenda pack). This will include arrangements for children who live outside of Birmingham:

'Less than half of the children and young people who went missing between the start of January and the end of March 2017 received a return interview. Of these, just over half were completed within 72 hours and, by the end of March, only a third had been included in children's electronic case files'.

Pages 31 – 33 of the agenda pack contained two infographics (Children's Social Care (May 2017) and Education Service (May 2017) and the May 2017 Performance Scorecard. Members requested that these figures were provided for last year for comparison purposes if possible, if not this may be something to note for next year's report.

Members recognised the progress made and thanked the Cabinet Member and Officers.

RESOLVED:-

- The committee noted the update.

9. BIRMINGHAM'S NEW STRATEGY FOR SEND (SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND/OR DISABILITIES) AND INCLUSION CONSULTATION

(See document 5)

Professor Geoff Lindsay, Chair of the Inclusion Commission, Jill Crosbie, AD, SEND and Marie Dobson, Project Manager, Education Services presented the item.

The Birmingham's Strategy for SEND and Inclusion 2017-20 has been produced by the Inclusion Commission and is currently being consulted on (9th June 2017 – 31st July 2017).

Members' comments included:

- The Mission Statement is 'To implement an efficient and inclusive system where practitioners work with families, children and young people aged 0-25, to develop trust and confidence in order to build genuine and good quality partnerships. This will be achieved by practitioners from all sectors working together collaboratively to deliver the most appropriate local provision and support'. It was felt that what was missing from this statement is that the child should be at the centre / heart of the mission.
- The strategy consultation is based on a number of assumptions, including that the needs of more children with SEN can be met outside of the EHCP and/or within mainstream schools, and that that would lead to lower costs. However there is no information on how much an EHCP and associated support costs, and no guarantee that costs will not rise or decrease.
- Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP):

- Concern that currently the resource sits with the Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP) and if the SEN Support plans does not have the resources to deliver the support then parents will go for an EHCP.
- The costs for producing an EHCP has not been provided and therefore would substituting this with another plan be any cheaper, particularly if support is still required, e.g. an educational psychologist;
- The EHCP is a statutory process with the right to appeal. The Provision Plans do not have this legal redress for when things go wrong.
- Within the budget papers (page 56 & 57 of the pack) it has been agreed to take out £100,000 from the 17+ Educational Psychologist budget by 2019/20 and £10m out of 16+ design and implement a new approach to SEND and move away from a high dependency model by 2019/20. The Committee questioned whether this was possible, especially in relation to Educational Psychologist, as are these not still needed?

Concern was expressed regarding the lack of a detailed plan to deliver the strategy. Jill Crosbie stated this would follow the signing off of the strategy.

In relation to the High Needs Grant Jill Crosbie commented that this is for building capacity, implementing reforms and reviewing the current use of the budget. They have some outlines plans and there has been some expenditure on what they are already undertaking. However, they have not got a detailed delivery plan as they are waiting for the strategy to be agreed. The Committee requested an update on an ongoing basis.

RESOLVED:-

- The Committee contributed to and noted the consultation.

10. WORK PROGRAMME

(See document 6)

RESOLVED:-

- The work programme was noted.

11. DATES FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

The dates were noted.

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

None.

13. OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

Cllr Martin Straker-Welds proposal for a working group of Members to explore a Birmingham Parents' Manifesto will be considered further at the workshop.

14. 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 15.56 hours.