

**BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL**

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

**14:00 hours on Wednesday 8 February 2017, Committee Rooms 3 & 4 –  
Actions**

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**Present:**

Councillor Susan Barnett [Chair]

Councillors: Sue Anderson, Kate Booth, Barry Bowles [Deputy Chair], Debbie Clancy, Julie Johnson, Chauhdry Rashid, Martin Straker Welds and Alex Yip.

Other Voting Representatives: Sarah Smith, Church of England Diocese

**Also Present:**

Cllr Diane Donaldson, Hodge Hill District Corporate Parent Champion

Cllr Roger Harmer

Cllr Brigid Jones, Cabinet Members for Children, Schools and Families

Cllr Ewan Mackey

Cllr Waseem Zaffar, Cabinet Member, Transparency, Openness and Equality

Cllr Margaret Waddington

Suwinder Bains, Partnership and Engagement Manager

Debbie Currie, AD, Child Protection, Performance and Partnership

Jaswinder Didially, Education & Skills Infrastructure Senior Officer

Lucy Dumbleton, School Organisation Manager

Seamus Gaynor, Head of Strategic Management

Jacqui Kennedy, Acting Strategic Director, Place Directorate

Andy Pepper, AD, Children in Care Provider Services

Amanda Simcox, Research & Policy Officer, Scrutiny Office

Benita Wishart, Overview & Scrutiny Manager, Scrutiny Office

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**1. NOTICE OF RECORDING/WEBCAST**

The Chairman 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](http://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. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were submitted on behalf of:

Councillors: Matt Bennett and Shabrana Hussain.

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

## **3. ACTION NOTES**

(See document No 1)

### **RESOLVED:-**

The action notes of the meeting held on the 25 January 2017 were confirmed.

## **4. PROGRESS ON THE BIRMINGHAM CHILD POVERTY COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS**

(See document No 2)

Cllr Susan Barnett informed the committee that they were being updated on the progress with the recommendations rather than being asked to assess their progress, as this was not a scrutiny report but a report of the Child Poverty Commission.

Councillor Waseem Zaffar, Cabinet Member, Transparency, Openness and Equality; Councillor Roger Harmer; Jacqui Kennedy, Acting Strategic Director, Place Directorate and Suwinder Bains, Partnership and Engagement Manager provided an update on the progress made.

Members requested the following were also considered in relation to the recommendations:

- Rec 12: free school meals are also needed for those that have no recourse to public funds.
- Rec 11: whether free transport rather than 'subsidised' transport could be explored and care leavers should also be included.
- Rec 24: whether this could be extended to care leavers up to the age of 25.

The Cabinet Member encouraged the committee and councillors to champion the recommendations.

### **RESOLVED:-**

- Progress was noted and the committee to receive a further update at their committee meeting in July 2017 (to include an impact assessment) and thereafter at six monthly intervals.

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

(See document 3)

The Chair informed the committee that there had been a request for call in for the 'Proposal to Expand Moor Hall Primary School by Enlargement' decision and this will be discussed as item 5.

Cllr Ewan Mackey and Cllr Margaret Waddington had requested the call in as they felt it met the following criteria:

- 4 - the Executive appears to have failed to consult relevant stakeholders or other interested persons before arriving at its decision;
- 5 - the Executive appears to have overlooked some relevant consideration in arriving at its decision;
- 6 - the decision has already generated particular controversy amongst those likely to be affected by it or, in the opinion of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, it is likely so to do;
- 8 - there is a substantial lack of clarity, material inaccuracy or insufficient information provided in the report to allow the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to hold the Executive to account and/or add value to the work of the Council;
- 9 - the decision appears to give rise to significant legal, financial or propriety issues.

Cllr Brigid Jones, Cabinet Member, Children, Schools and Families; Jaswinder Didially, Education & Skills Infrastructure Senior Officer and Lucy Dumbleton, School Organisation Officer advised why the decision was made and provided details of the consultation.

### **RESOLVED:-**

The Committee resolved unanimously (by a vote of 10 votes to 0, with no abstentions) to call-in the decision for reconsideration by Cabinet, on the grounds of:

- 8 - there is a substantial lack of clarity, material inaccuracy or insufficient information provided evidenced by the range of issues Members sought clarity on and the uncertainty remaining, particularly about the effect on other schools and sufficiency;
- 4 - the Executive appears to have failed to consult relevant stakeholders before arriving at its decision, because having published an intake of 60 for 2017 without sufficient caveats it appeared that the decision had been made prior to consultation and thus the consultation was flawed.

## **6. CORPORATE PARENTING INQUIRY**

(See document 4)

Andy Pepper, AD, Children in Care Provider Services clarified that being a corporate parent needs to be about the Councillors and what Councillors can do and not just about the list contained within the Corporate Parenting report. The more Councillors speak to young people the more Councillors know how they want to be involved. This

could be championing children in care interests and handing out fostering and adoption leaflets.

The monitoring visits were clarified and it was suggested that Councillors develop a relationship with the homes before they visits. The staff were also happy to support Councillors on the visit. It would also be great if Councillors could visit those children placed outside of Birmingham.

Cllr Diane Donaldson, Hodge Hill District Corporate Parent Champion has visited the children's homes in her district and met children in care at their Winter Ball. Cllr Donaldson was happy to assist other Districts who had a large number of children homes with their visits.

Debbie Currie, AD, Child Protection, Performance and Partnership outlined the role of the Independent Review Officer (IRO) and requested Councillors promote the IROs role with other parts of the Council.

**RESOLVED:-**

- The evidence gathered today would be used for the Corporate parenting Inquiry.
- The one page overview of the role of the IRO to be forwarded to Members.

**7. WORK PROGRAMME 2016-17**

(See document 5)

The work programme was discussed.

**RESOLVED:-**

That the work programme was agreed and:

- The Inclusion Commission report may not be ready for the 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2017 committee meeting. If this is the case then another meeting may need to be held to discuss the Inclusion Commission and the Disability Service for Children items.
- An item regarding young people and housing has been added to the 26<sup>th</sup> April 2017 committee meeting. This may form a topic for discussion at City Council.
- Dave Hill, the new Children's Social Care Commissioner for Birmingham to be invited to attend a committee meeting in the new municipal year.
- Members to have informal meetings to discuss the Corporate Parenting Inquiry report and dates will be e-mailed. The final report will be presented to 4<sup>th</sup> April 2017 City Council meeting.

**8. DATES FOR FUTURE MEETINGS**

The dates were noted.

**9. OTHER URGENT BUSINESS**

None.

**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 17.02 hours.