

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

5.00PM – 19 JUNE 2007

HOVE TOWN HALL

MINUTES

Present: Councillor Young (Chairman); Councillors Alford, Allen, Cobb, Davis, Fryer, Peltzer Dunn (Deputy Chairman), Smart, Wakefield-Jarrett and Watkins.

Statutory Co-optees with Voting Rights: Nigel Sarjudeen – Diocese of Chichester.

Co-optees without voting rights: Carrie Britton, Mark Price and Kevin Reeves.

PART ONE

ACTION

1. PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

1A. Declarations of Substitutes

- 1.1 There were no substitutions. Clare Jackson, Sophie Ricca-McCarthy and Frank Myers sent their apologies.

1B. Declarations of Interest

- 1.2 There were none.

1C. Exclusion of Press and Public

- 1.3 The Committee considered whether the press and public should be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of any items contained in the agenda, having regard to the nature of the business to be transacted and the nature of the proceedings and the likelihood as to whether, if members of the press and public were present, there would be disclosure to them of confidential or exempt information as defined in Schedule 12A, Part 5A, Section 100A(4) or 100 1 of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

- 1.4 **RESOLVED** - That the press and public be not excluded from the meeting.

2. MINUTES

- 2.1 **RESOLVED** – That the minutes of the meeting held on 27 March 2007 be approved and signed by the Chairman.

3. CHAIRMAN'S COMMUNICATIONS

- 3.1 All members of the Committee introduced themselves and the Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

4. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

- 4.1 There were none.

5. INTRODUCTION TO THE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S TRUST

- 5.1 The Assistant Director, Quality and Performance gave a presentation on an introduction to the Children and Young People's Trust (C&YPT). He outlined a brief history of the Trust, its structure and shape, and some of the issues it was currently facing.
- 5.2 Two major policy changes in 2002/3 drove forward the move towards a Children's Trust: the service integration agenda following the Climbié inquiry; and a move towards the five Every Child Matters (ECM) outcomes. Brighton and Hove made a strategic decision to be at the forefront of these changes and in 2003 won funding to become a Children's Trust pathfinder. This set out a vision of a joined up and holistic way of providing children's services. In 2006 the C&YPT went live with the signing of the Section 31 (S31) Agreement. The Trust was a joint commissioning body (the Council and the Primary Care Trust (PCT)) that brought together all the stakeholders to look at what children and young people need.
- 5.3 Following the Joint Inspection Review 2004/5, the decision was taken to change from providing services city-wide to provide them locally in three areas: East, Central and West. These areas were also broken down into local clusters and provide Sure Start, youth and Connexions, school and community services, and safeguarding services. There were only a limited number of services delivered city-wide, for example, the leaving schools team, the equality and performance team, special needs, and fostering and adoption.
- 5.4 The major issues facing the C&YPT today were: managing the critical budget and Best Value; school admissions; the new relationship with health; and making sense of the area structure to make sure it drives forward the preventative agenda. There had been a shift in focus towards reducing the number of children

who can not live with their families and to assess why this is, and to look at the number of children excluded from or absent from school, and those not in education, employment or training (NEET).

5.5 **RESOLVED** – that the information be noted.

6. EXTERNAL MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

6.1 The Committee considered a report of the Director of Children's Services outlining the various ways in which children's services were the subject of monitoring and evaluation by national and regional government agencies, in order to assist the CYPOSC in setting its workplan for scrutiny.

6.2 The Director of Children's Services gave an overview on how the Trust is inspected and how it is monitored both in terms of delivering services and in terms of doing what local people really want. The new generation of Local Area Agreements (LAA) took the Council into a new sphere of partnership working. As a city, Brighton and Hove had a Local Service Provision Board allowing all the public sector agencies to work together to agree a set of targets and priorities for the city. These were then monitored by the Government Office of the South East (GOSE).

6.3 The role of CYPOSC needed to be considered within the wider monitoring framework. The Director of Children's Services suggested ways in which CYPOSC can exercise its role and pick up on important decisions, policies and local practises in the C&YPT and look at what is going well and not so well. Two sets of governance arrangements had been merged together within the C&YPT Board and the way in which the Council and NHS were performing could be looked at. The previous CYPOSC looked at the five ECM outcomes in turn and CYPOSC could decide to continue this and focus on each outcome and see how well the Trust was performing and what decisions were being taken in each area. Alternatively the Committee could focus on one geographical area and performance within that area.

6.4 The Committee asked questions on the role and number of school improvement advisors and were advised that they deal with whole school issues and manage a range of specialists and consultants who work with teachers to help them improve. The Committee discussed the issue of risk assessment and the Director of Children's Services explained the risks highlighted in the report. Following a comment on how local clusters can make it difficult for smaller voluntary organisations to get involved, it was agreed that this is an issue and discussions were underway with the

Community Sector Voluntary Forum. The working of the S31 Agreement was discussed and the Director of Children's Services explained that whilst some children who attend outpatient appointments are technically excluded from the S31 Agreement, they were covered by the services provided by the Agreement and a new person has recently been appointed who will look at this.

- 6.5 **RESOLVED** – to thank the Director of Children's Services and his team for the report and to note the report.

7. SUMMARY OF OFSTED REPORTS

- 7.1 The Committee considered a report of the Director of Children's Services concerning the outcome of the Ofsted inspections which had taken place in the Spring and Summer Terms 2007.
- 7.2 The Assistant Director, Learning and Schools, introduced the report which explained the Ofsted process and the timescales, and contained a summary of recent Ofsted inspections.
- 7.3 The Chairman noted that the Committee would continue to write to congratulate schools who receive outstanding reports. She also stated that in the future, individual Ofsted reports would be circulated to Committee members to enable any issues arising from each report to be discussed.
- 7.4 The Committee considered Varndean School which was judged to be a good school that provided value for money, but there were some real problems around managing behaviour in and out of school. The question was asked whether the fact that Hove Park students needed to get the bus to school was having an effect on the school and it was replied that the initial unsettling effect has now been overcome. There was a discussion about the timescales for Ofsted reports and the fact that schools are now only given two days notice before an inspection. Following a question on progress on Whitehawk Primary School and Patcham High School since the last CYPOSC meeting, it was reported that Whitehawk was visited by the Inspectors last week and is making satisfactory progress and would have a full inspection in October 2007. Patcham High School was due to be inspected in a few days and the Assistant Director, Learning and Schools, was satisfied that progress has been made.
- 7.5 In answer to questions on what form intervention into schools takes and what has happened since St Bartholomew's CE Primary School was issued with a Notice to Improve, the Committee was told how an action plan was drawn up that is approved by Ofsted, and that St Bartholomew's is making very good progress

and has had a lot of support.

7.6 RESOLVED –

- (1) To write to Stanford Infant School to congratulate them on their outstanding report. JA/JR
- (2) To note the position of Whitehawk Primary School, Patcham High School and St Bartholomew's CE Primary School which had received Notices to Improve and are now making satisfactory progress.
- (3) That the Committee's comments on the Ofsted reports be referred to the next meeting of the Children and Young People's Trust Board.

8. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S PLAN ANNUAL REVIEW

- 8.1 The Committee considered a report of the Director of Children's Services which gave an update on the annual review of the Children and Young People's Plan (C&YPP), including consideration of the Fourth Quarter Performance Report and outlining changes to the structure and reporting arrangements for the C&YPP.
- 8.2 The Assistant Director, Quality and Performance, explained that the way in which the Trust was assessed kept developing. The self evaluation of the Children and Young People's Plan was set out in the report, which also refers to Ofsted's national parameters. The red, amber, green (or RAG) ratings were developed a few years ago to see if the Council was on track to deliver its targets. There were 113 different indicators with 47% of those green, 27% amber, 14% red and 13% either with too little data or this is the first time they were recorded. The three main targets within the red indicators were: reducing the number of looked after children; reducing the number of children not in education, employment or training (NEET); and reducing the level of school exclusions. In response to a question, the Assistant Director explained that permanent exclusions have already been reduced from forty two to fifteen by early intervention and preventative measures.
- 8.3 CYPOSC discussed the best way forward in considering the performance figures - whether to: look at red indicators; select hotspots in relation to each ECM outcome; look at ambers and greys as well as reds; or to set up a sub group to examine the issues. Following a question, the Assistant Director, Quality and Performance, explained that the Children's Trust had recognised that the working relationship with the children's services sector of the community and voluntary sector (CVS) had become a

concern. The elected CVS representatives had withdrawn to produce a paper examining the causes and making practical recommendations about how to strengthen partnership working. A constructive dialogue was ongoing.

- 8.4 **RESOLVED** – That an informal meeting be arranged to consider further what, if any, performance indicators should be examined by a future meeting of CYPOSC.

9. FORWARD PLAN AND WORK PROGRAMME FOR CYPOSC

- 9.1 The Chairman introduced the work plan with its theme of vulnerable children and asked for any other items to be included. It was suggested that the Committee look at the City Academy proposals at Falmer. The Chairman requested that if anyone had any other items for inclusion in the work plan that they contact the scrutiny officers.

- 9.2 **RESOLVED** –

(1) That the work plan be noted.

(2) That a report be requested for a future meeting of CYPOSC on the City Academy proposals for Falmer.

10. ANNUAL REPORT OF OSOC – CYPOSC'S CONTRIBUTION

- 10.1 The Committee considered a report of the Chairman of the Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Committee concerning the annual report for 2006-07 and CYPOSC's contribution.
- 10.2 The Chairman stated that she would present the final report to the Overview and Scrutiny Organisation Committee (OSOC) and then to Council. The report was commended and the Chair of the previous CYPOSC was praised for his work moving the Committee forward to take on its wider remit.
- 10.3 **RESOLVED** – that the report be forwarded to OSOC for inclusion in its annual report.

11. ITEMS TO GO FORWARD TO COUNCIL

- 11.1 **RESOLVED** - that the report on CYPOSC's contribution to OSOC's annual report go to Council via OSOC.

The meeting concluded at 7.00pm

Signed

Chairman

Dated this

day of

2007