

## Minutes of a meeting of the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee to be held on Tuesday, 7 June 2016 at 4.30 pm in Ernest Saville Room - City Hall, Bradford

Commenced      4.35 pm  
Concluded        5.50 pm

### Present – Councillors

CONSERVATIVE	LABOUR	LIBERAL DEMOCRAT
<b>D Smith</b> <b>M Pollard</b>	<b>Peart</b> <b>Shaheen</b> <b>Tait</b>	<b>Ward</b>

### Voting Co-opted Members

Church Representatives: Claire Parr (RC)

Parent Governor Representatives: Siddiq Ali, Gull Hussain

### Non Voting Co-opted Members:

Health Representative: Tina Wildy

Apologies: Joyce Simpson, Tom Bright and Stephen Pickles

Observers: Councillor Dunbar, Councillor Imran Khan and Councillor Val Slater

### Councillor Dale Smith in the Chair

### OPENING REMARKS

Members thanked Malcolm Sykes for the valuable work he had undertaken in scrutinising Children's Services in his role as Chair of the Committee.

#### 1.      **DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST**

In the interest of transparency all those who were school governors disclosed an interest.

**Action:**      **City Solicitor**

#### 2.      **MINUTES**



**Resolved -**

**That the minutes of the meetings held on 8 March, 30 March and 12 April 2016 be signed as a correct record.**

**3. INSPECTION OF REPORTS AND BACKGROUND PAPERS**

There were no appeals submitted by the public to review decisions to restrict documents.

**4. REFERRALS TO THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

No Referrals had been made to this Committee.

**5. INFORMATION ON 2, 3 AND 4 YEAR OLD EARLY EDUCATION PLACES IN THE DISTRICT**

The Deputy Director Education, Employment and Skills submitted **Document “A”** which reported on the take-up of early education places. Recent expansion of funding for two year olds had meant that free early education places were now available to those children living in the poorest families across the district. Evidence showed that two year olds in good and outstanding Early Years provision saw real benefits in terms of their early language skills and physical, social and emotional development. Pre-schools, nurseries, school nurseries and childminders all played a vital role.

The report provided an annual update about how the take-up of early education was progressing following on from the previous information presented to the Committee on 9 June 2015.

It was reported that giving children a good education early on gave them the best possible start in life.

Members were informed that take-up of free nursery places in Bradford was higher than the national average, but further work was needed to get more disadvantaged families to make the most of the opportunity.

It was reported that the target of having at least 80 per cent of families taking up early education places had not been achieved but the 73% who did was higher than the national average of 70% and was up from the 66% take up in the district this time last year.

Members were informed that despite the advantages some families were still unwilling to take up the offer and more work was needed to engage with these families. The areas with the lowest take up were being targeted for more intensive marketing and outreach work by both the children’s centres staff and the Families Information Service.



It was reported that the percentage of families using their free spaces varied. Shipley and Bingley saw a take up of less than 60 %. Some of the reasons for families not taking up places included thinking their child was too young, preferred children being looked after by extended family or that local nurseries were not for them.

The Ward with the highest take up was Wharfedale where almost 110% of eligible families took on free nursery places.

Members were informed that 96% of children accessing the free nursery place were in a provision graded good or outstanding. It was important that children accessed high quality provision if they were to benefit educationally. Any setting graded less than good by Ofsted was required to participate in the Local Authority quality improvement programme aimed at securing a “Good” grade at re-inspection. Nurseries judged inadequate had their funding for free nursery spaces withdrawn.

It was reported that the government was currently consulting on plans to introduce a new entitlement for up to 15 hours a week of funded childcare for 3 and 4 year old children of working parents from September 2017. Currently, all three and four-year olds in England were entitled to 570 hours of free early education or childcare a year, which worked out as 15 hours each week for 38 weeks of the year. Proposals to extend this entitlement to up to 30 hours a week from 2017 were outlined in the Queen’s Speech in May 2015.

Members were informed that Bradford had been identified as an Early Implementer Innovator for the 30 hours which was detailed in paragraph 3.1 of the report.

It was reported that four of the seven Children’s Centre Clusters were already in operation and the remaining three would come into operation in August 2016 further details were outlined in paragraph 3.2 of the report.

Members commented on the following:

- Was work taking place with nurseries that had limited spaces?
- provision needed to be more flexible and be provided before and after school and holidays etc
- Did more children attending independent, voluntary provision rather than state nurseries cause a problem?
- Was there any information on how the first set of children that took up early education places were developing?
- Needed to track the progress of children who had received early education provision to those who had not.
- What was the uptake of provision for families with disabled children?
- A further report on the progress being made with Children’s Centre Clusters was required.

In response to Members questions it was reported that:



- The service would look at areas where there was extra pressure on capacity; areas that had the most eligible children would be looked at.
- Flexible provision was something that needed looking at.
- Impact on state nurseries would continue to be monitored.
- The 2015 cohort of early education had the highest level of development; needed to look at measuring impact and tracking each funded child to assess their learning and what added value had occurred from taking up the early education offer.
- Take up of provision in some special schools was lower; additional training and support was available for such settings.

**Resolved-**

**That the report be welcomed and that a progress report on the Children’s Centre clusters be provided to the Committee later in the year.**

**Action: Deputy Director Education, Employment and Skills**

**6. RESOLUTION TRACKING 2015/16**

The Chair of the Committee submitted **Document “B”** which detailed the progress made against the resolutions passed by the Committee during the 2015-16 municipal year.

**Resolved-**

**That the Chair and Deputy Chair consult with officers on areas where resolutions do not appear to have been acted upon.**

**Action: Overview and Scrutiny Lead**

**7. COMMITTEE'S DRAFT WORK PROGRAMME 2016/17**

The Chair of the Committee submitted **Document “C”** which presented the Committee’s draft Work Programme for 2016/17.

A discussion was held on the referral from Council which asked the Committee to undertake a comprehensive and robust review of the Council’s approach to elective home education in which the safeguarding of children was central.

The Strategic Director, Children’s Services reported that he could provide a report to Members which included an overview of children who were not in mainstream education, missing education and home education at its meeting in July, which may help with the focus of the review.



**Resolved-**

- (1) That the Work Programme 2016/17 continues to be regularly reviewed during the year.**
- (2) That the Strategic Director, Children's Services provide a report to the Committee's meeting in July which includes an overview of children who are not in mainstream education, missing education and home education.**

**Action: Strategic Director, Children's Services**

Chair

**Note: These minutes are subject to approval as a correct record at the next meeting of the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee.**

THIS AGENDA AND ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENTS HAVE BEEN PRODUCED, WHEREVER POSSIBLE, ON RECYCLED PAPER

