

Minutes of a meeting of the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on Wednesday, 3 February 2021 at 4.30 pm in Virtual remote meeting

Commenced 16.30
Concluded 19.30

Present – Councillors

LABOUR	CONSERVATIVE	LIBERAL DEMOCRAT AND INDEPENDENT GROUP
Choudhry Humphreys S Khan Mullaney	Winnard Pollard	Ward

Councillor Winnard in the Chair

Apologies: Cllr Sajawal.

9. ALTERNATE MEMBERS (Standing Order 34)

No alternate members.

10. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

No declarations were made for matters under consideration.

11. INSPECTION OF REPORTS AND BACKGROUND PAPERS

No requests were received to remove the restriction on a report or background paper.

12. REFERRALS TO THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

No referrals were received.

13. PROTECTING CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS AT RISK OF EXPLOITATION

The report provided an update to an also built on the report presented to the Executive on 5 November 2019 and more recently to the Executive on 9 November 2020.

Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee members heard from

Officers that this was a strategic response to all forms of exploitation in Children and Adults and also how partners from the Working Together to Safeguard Children, the Bradford Safeguarding Adults Board; work to drive improvements across the District and to hold agencies to account for their work in their area.

Moreover, Officers also explained that the Districts strategic response to tackling exploitation was centred around:

- Identify and understand the nature and scale of the themes involved;
- Prevention, Education and Awareness;
- Safeguarding vulnerable people, groups and communities;
- Effective leadership and governance;
- Disrupt and Prosecute;
- Communication, Engagement and Empowerment.

Members were keen to understand the issues relating to the sustainability of funding and the risk of losing funding to projects.

In response, Officers highlighted there were projects such as those supporting very vulnerable people who were on the fringes of criminal activity and serious organised crime. Such projects had been funded entirely in the last two years by Government grants, the Early Intervention Youth Fund and from the Community Safety Partnership. Members also learned that all grants were finishing by the end of March 2021, however in response to members,

Officers did state that they were exploring external sources of funding and a more long term approach to funding such key projects was required; as this important area of work was increasing.

Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee Councillors wanted to know if any element of this strand of work was included as part of the Children's Services Budget.

Officers from Bradford Councils Children's Services replied by saying that this strand of work was a part of the overall Children's Services budget and that they were looking further at shared budgets.

However, members did indicate that this work was of a statutory nature and that this work required more sustainable approach to funding.

Resolved-

- (1) That all officers and external speakers be thanked for their contribution.**
- (2) That officers are requested to explore and identify alternative and sustainable sources of funding for the delivery of the projects.**
- (3) That a further report be presented to this Committee in 12 months.**

Action: Chief Executive

14. POST 16 EDUCATION

This report provided Councillors with an update on the Post-16 provision in the District, along with progress with the implementation of the Post-16 review and the impact on participation and outcomes.

Officers from Bradford Councils Children's Services informed members that the Post-16 education has undergone considerable reform in recent years and that National reforms had changed the curriculum, the accountability framework and funding across the full range of provision available to young people.

Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee members were disappointed and concerned at the attainment levels for level, aged 19 year olds.

In response, officers stated that some young people at age 16 were driven, however if by the age of 16 somebody had not reached level 1 for English and Maths, it would be extremely difficult for them to increase their grades in three years. As well as this, officers also highlighted that when compared against other Local Authority areas, Bradford was behind.

Furthermore in response to members as to whether this related to a quality in provision for Post 16, officers suggested that there was good provision available in Bradford for Post 16, however this needed to be examined across all areas and the new Attainment Strategy for the District was going to be fundamental here in moving forwards and making significant improvements.

In addition to this, Councillors were in agreement that that the level 3 outcomes were not good enough and Councillors were seeking clarity as to whether the suggested pathways for young people were the most suitable ones.

Children's Services Officers were in agreement with members in relation to the issue raised and expressed that it was paramount that young people did not make the wrong choices, that would also stop them from undertaking the most appropriate Degree and then moving successfully into Post 18 destinations. Members were made aware by officers, that guidance to Young

People was critical here and that Children's Services were bringing the Guidance Service, back in-house.

Councillors were disappointed to note that the take-up of apprenticeships had decreased and wanted to know why this was the case.

Here, officers stated that this was because the decrease in apprenticeships was largely due to the current COVID19 pandemic and that Children's Services officer were having conversations with local apprenticeship providers to increase the number of apprenticeships across the District. Moreover, the academic demands of apprenticeships at level s is higher now and now five good GCSE's including English and Maths were required to obtain an apprenticeship place.

Resolved-

That the Committee keeps an Overview of this area.

Action: Strategic Director, Education

(Matt Findull - 01274 439572)

15. CHILDREN'S SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - WORK PROGRAMME 2020/21

The Overview & Scrutiny Lead went through the work programme for the Children's Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee, as well as the programme of detailed Scrutiny Review that the Committee has agreed to undertake.

Members discussed and agreed that as this Committee has a duty and responsibility for scrutinising the budget in relation to Children's Services, that the Children's Services budget should be presented and considered by members of Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee, at future meetings.

Resolved-

That Members amended the work programme and agreed that the Budget for Children's Services should be considered by the Committee in the future.

Action: Overview and Scrutiny Lead

(Mustansir Butt – 01274 432574)

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