

CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE

MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD

The meeting commenced at 4.00 pm in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool

Present:

Councillor: Alan Clark (In the Chair)

Councillors: Brenda Harrison, John Lauderdale, Shane Moore and Kaylee Sirs.

Councillor Stephen Thomas, Chair of Adult Services Committee
(Observer)

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 5.2 (ii), Councillor Marjorie James was in attendance as substitute for Councillor Jean Robinson

Co-opted members:

Jo Heaton, C of E Diocesan Representative
Mark Tilling, Secondary Schools Headteacher Representative
David Turner, Primary Schools Headteacher Representative

Young people's representatives:

Callum Reed

Also in attendance:

Healthwatch representative: Evelyn Leck

Officers:

Sally Robinson, Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services
Danielle Swainston, Assistant Director, Children's and Family Services
Mark Patton, Assistant Director, Education
Emma Rutherford, Virtual School Headteacher
Zoe McKenna, One Shop Stop Co-ordinator
Angela Armstrong, Principal Democratic Services Officer

22. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors George Morris, Jean Robinson, Alan Chapman (Special Schools Headteacher Representative) and Ruby Marshall (Healthwatch).

23. Declarations of Interest

Councillor Marjorie James declared a non-prejudicial interest in minute 28 and Jo Heaton declared non-prejudicial interests on behalf of all the Headteachers in attendance in relation to minute 28.

24. Minutes of the meeting held on 25 July 2017

Received.

25. Update of the Work of the Junior and Young Inspectors (*Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services*)

The update was deferred to a future meeting of the Committee.

Decision

That the update be provided to the meeting of the Children's Services Committee on 17 October 2017.

26. Young People Not in Education Employment or Training 2016-17 (*Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services*)

Type of decision

For information.

Purpose of report

To provide an update on the progress in relation to reducing the number of young people who are Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) or are Not Known (these are young people that the team is not able to contact) and compare this to regional and national performance. This report follows the NEET Update report presented to this Committee on 21 March 2017.

Issue(s) for consideration

The report included a breakdown of the percentage of young people (academic years 12 and 13) not in education, employment or training and whose activity was not known in Hartlepool compared to the sub regional, regional and national picture across Hartlepool, Tees Valley, the North East and England. In addition to this, a breakdown across the same area, as well as by academic age was provided for the percentage of the cohort that was not known to the Authority. Information on the number of young people not in education, employment or training by academic age and Hartlepool school attended as of January 2017 was detailed in the report. A comparison was also provided for the number of young people

not available for education, employment or training for the past 2 years and the reasons for their unavailability. Further information was provided on the number of people aged 19 and under who had been assessed as having a learning difficulty and/or disability and who were NEET or Not Known at the end of January 2017.

Details of the annual activity survey which was undertaken on 1 November each year on the progression made by young people who left compulsory education in July of the same year was included in the report. In addition, destination measures provided clear and comparable information on the success of schools and colleges in helping their young people take qualifications that offer them the best opportunity to continue in education, employment or training. Further details were outlined on raising the age of participation within further education along with the local provision available.

In conclusion it was noted that Hartlepool was experiencing a reduction of young people participating in Education, Employment and Training which was reflective of the situation of the majority of regions across the country.

The Chair welcomed the report and noted that although the number of young people who were NEET had increased, there was a lot of information to show that there was an upward trend in relation to the take up of apprenticeships and post-16 training.

A Member sought clarification on the support in place to support teenage parents in relation to education, training, college or university. The One-Stop Shop Co-ordinator indicated that work was ongoing with Children's Centres and Public Health in conjunction with health professionals and midwives to ensure the pathway of support in place was meeting the needs of teenage parents. Work was also ongoing to explore the potential of grant funding for teenage parents to assist them to attend further education. Whilst the bulk of the provision needed was for post-16 teenage parents, younger parents were supported on an individual basis along with engagement through schools with Family Support Workers. In addition to this, the Assistant Director, Children's and Family Services informed Members that a specific programme for teenage parents was undertaken through the Family Nurse Partnership which had recently transferred to the Council and was under review to ensure resources were allocated effectively and appropriate access to the programme for teenage parents was in place along with the potential to also offer sex education within schools. The Headteacher representative for secondary schools considered that the school nursing offer for Hartlepool was currently less than other local authorities in the area. A Member referred to a previous programme several years ago in relation to the prevention of teenage pregnancies which resulted in a reduction in the number of teenage pregnancies across Hartlepool. The Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services indicated that there was a substantial time-lag in the nationally reported data in relation to teenage

pregnancy, however, the latest available data showed a reducing trajectory in Hartlepool. For ease of reference, it was suggested that an update be provided to Members of the Committee to include the latest information was available.

A Member referred to the Tees Valley Combined Authority that was exploring the potential to create a comprehensive careers service and suggested that Officers may wish to link into this if not already. The Chair indicated that Careers Fairs were already organised through local colleges with lots of big organisations attending but extra support for careers advice was always welcome. The One-Stop Shop Co-ordinator also confirmed that there was a careers network in place that links to all schools across the Tees Valley area with career's co-ordinators for specific businesses in the area.

In response to a question from a member of Healthwatch, the One-Stop Shop Co-ordinator indicated that there was a lot more willingness with businesses to take on apprentices and it was important to track the young people undertaking apprenticeships to monitor their progress and ensure it was the right pathway for them.

The young people's representative commented that there was plenty of careers advice provided at Colleges on enrolment day with advice and support to assist students in making the correct choice of courses.

Decision

- (1) The report was noted.
- (2) That an update with the latest available data showing a reducing trajectory on teenage pregnancies in Hartlepool be provided to Committee including the latest information that was available.

27. Racial Incidents in Hartlepool Schools 2014-15 to 2016-17 *(Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services)*

Type of decision

Non key.

Purpose of report

To provide an overview of the procedures in relation to the collection and analysis of data regarding racial incidents which occur in Hartlepool schools.

Issue(s) for consideration

The report highlighted that racism included all practices, procedures, actions or behaviours that discriminate against, or disadvantage, people because of their race, colour, nationality or ethnic group, whether at

individual, institutional or cultural level. A number of examples of racial incidents that can occur were given in the report. It was noted that updated guidance materials for reporting and dealing with racist incidents were provided to Hartlepool schools in September 2015. The report included returns to the local authority in the last three years which showed the number of racist incidents reported to the local authority.

It was noted that feedback will be provided to schools in relation to the overall data and trends and that data will continue to be collected on a termly basis and analysed in order to identify trends and possible areas of concern which will then be addressed.

The Chair referred to what appeared to be a significant spike in the number of incidents between 2014/15 and 2016/17. The Virtual School Headteacher indicated that there were two things affecting the numbers which were that the demographics in Hartlepool were changing with an increase in the number of children from a range of ethnic groups attending schools and improved reporting arrangements to the local authority being in place. This increase in numbers also coincides with the circulation of updated guidance materials to schools in 2015. In relation to the increase in the number of incidents occurring within the classroom or playground, the Virtual School Headteacher confirmed that work was ongoing with schools to identify any hot spots of incidents.

The young people's representative sought clarification on how effective this reporting framework was in combating the number of racial incidents. The Virtual Headteacher indicated that the guidance issued included a section on the support provided to schools to deal with incidents along with suggested ways of dealing with the incidents and supporting victims and perpetrators. It was hoped that this advice and guidance along with the support provided to schools, would stop further incidents.

The Assistant Director, Education commented that the reasons and types of abuse behind some of the incidents would be very interesting in assisting to combat further occurrences of racial incidents. The Chair added that it would be really useful to include comparative data with statistical neighbour local authorities.

A discussion ensued on the Show Racism the Red Card initiative that was offered to schools which it appeared had a mixed take-up across the town. It was noted that some children had a different attitude inside and outside of school and it needs to be stressed that racial incidents were unacceptable both inside and outside of school.

The importance of educating and challenging adults also was discussed as it was considered that younger children learn their behaviour from adults' behaviour which can also be influenced by particular triggers such as Brexit. A Member suggested that it would be useful to look at the number of racial incidents across a calendar year and see if there were any triggers that can be identified. The Virtual Headteacher suggested

that a breakdown of the number of racial incidents could be provided on a ward by ward basis, across schools terms and by age if Members would find that useful. The young people's representative asked if information could be provided for incidents involving 16-18 year olds. The Assistant Director, Education indicated that the reporting of racial incidents from post-16 colleges was not required by law, however the local colleges could be approached with a view to collecting and reporting this data.

It was highlighted that there were a lot of success stories involving refugees and asylum seekers in Hartlepool and that Hartlepool had a very good reputation for this supportive provision. The Chair noted that he was a member of the North East Migration Partnership and the Partnership had acknowledged that Hartlepool had a very big heart and had done more than any other local authority in the north east region to support refugees and asylum seekers and everyone should be very proud of that.

Decision

- (1) That Schools be supported to ensure that they meet their obligations under the Race Relations Act 1976, Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, Education and Inspections Act 2006 and the Equality Act 2010.
- (2) That the Virtual School Headteacher should continue to collect cumulative data from schools on a termly basis. This information will be collated and analysed by term, ward and age and further analysed to identify areas of concern, contribute to multi-agency monitoring and provide feedback to schools on an annual basis.
- (3) That an annual summary report be presented to Children's Services Committee including comparisons with statistical neighbour local authorities.
- (4) That the post-16 colleges in Hartlepool be approached with a view to the collation of any racial incidents that occur within their premises and for this to be collated as above by term, ward and age.

28. Priority Schools Building Programme Phase 1 - Update (*Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services*)

Type of decision

For information.

Purpose of report

On 21 March 2017, issues in relation to capacity, in particular size of the Hall space allocated to Barnard Grove Primary School in comparison to Holy Trinity CE Primary School, were raised at Children's Services Committee. It was therefore agreed that an update report be submitted on these issues.

The purpose of this report is to update Members on the capacity, in particular the Hall space at Barnard Grove and Holy Trinity CE Primary Schools.

Issue(s) for consideration

The report highlighted that Barnard Grove Primary School was built to a Published Admission Number (PAN) of 45; therefore the school was built for a capacity of 315 pupils plus provision for 26 full time equivalent (FTE) nursery children. This PAN means that the organisation of the school is such that classes will be mixed year groups and therefore the number of class bases provided suits this model. In relation to Holy Trinity CE Primary School, this school was built to a Published Admission Number (PAN) of 30; therefore the school was built for a capacity of 210 pupils plus provision for 26 full time equivalent (FTE) nursery children.

Each space was based on the capacity of the school, although a comparison of the Hall spaces at both of these schools suggest there was some disparity, plus Barnard Grove had the additional studio space which Holy Trinity did not have.

The Assistant Director, Education confirmed that the schools received the maximum space based on the budgets allocated from Priority Schools Building Programme – Phase 1 and that the spaces within the schools were apportioned at the discretion and desire of those schools individually.

A discussion ensued on the space available within the schools per pupil numbers and clarification was sought by a Member in relation to the additional £100k funding approved by this Committee as a contribution to the extensions to the footprint of Barnard Grove to create additional space. The Assistant Director, Education indicated he would seek clarification on the use of this additional funding.

Decision

- (1) The update was noted.
- (2) The Assistant Director, Education to seek clarification on the use of the £100k additional funding for the Priority Schools Building Programme – Phase 1 previously agreed by the Children's Services Committee.

29. Ofsted Inspection Outcomes: November 2016 – July 2017 *(Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services)*

Type of decision

For information.

Purpose of report

To provide a summary of the outcomes of Ofsted inspections of Hartlepool schools in the late autumn term, spring and summer terms of the 2016-17 academic year.

Issue(s) for consideration

The outcomes and areas for improvements/next steps identified by the Ofsted inspections for the following schools were detailed in the report:

Lynnfield Primary School (November 2016) – judged to Require Improvement;

Throston Primary School (January 2017) – judged to remain Good;

Barnard Grove Primary School (March 2017) – judged to remain Good;

Rossmere Primary School (March 2017) – judged to remain Good.

St Cuthbert's RC Primary School (April 2017) – judged to be Good.

English Martyrs School and Sixth Form College (May 2017) – judged to Require Improvement;

St Hild's CE Secondary School (June 2017) – judged to Require Improvement.; and

Golden Flatts Primary School (July 2017) – judged to remain Good.

In line with national trends, the overall performance of Hartlepool schools is being 'bunched' around Grade 2 (Good). The proportion of outstanding schools in Hartlepool is 1% above the latest national figures: 22% Hartlepool, 21% nationally (June 2017).

The overall proportion of Hartlepool schools judged to be good or better has decreased and is now 84% which was 3% below the latest national figure of 87% (June 2017). The proportion of good or better primary schools in Hartlepool had fallen below the national average: Hartlepool 87%, national 90% (June 2017) with the proportion of good or better secondary schools in Hartlepool having fallen below the national average: Hartlepool 67%, national 79% (June 2017).

It was highlighted that Manor Community Academy which was a sponsored academy, had yet to be inspected.

The Chair commented that he felt that some schools had been judged harshly and that the schools that had been identified as 'requires improvement' were all on a journey and the local authority would continue to support them. The Committee's ambition to have 100% of schools rated good or outstanding was reiterated. The Headteachers in attendance commented that schools were constantly aiming to raise standards and considered that there was some disparity in the data used by Ofsted as inspections consisted of a two-day snapshot of performance within schools. It was noted that all schools have some areas of outstanding practice and some areas that require improvement and the importance of ensuring children had the correct package of teaching and

learning should be the focus of schools as opposed to competition between schools' performance.

A Member sought clarification on the timing of the inspection regime for schools as some schools appear not to have been inspected for some time. The Assistant Director, Education indicated that as soon as a school was judged as outstanding, that school was exempt from regular inspections unless something catastrophic happened and/or there was a rapid decline in performance. Currently in Hartlepool there were a small number of primary schools but no secondary schools in this position. There was some concern expressed by a Member that if schools were not subject to Ofsted inspections they may consider themselves safe and coast along. One of the Headteachers in attendance confirmed that all schools were continuously working hard to improve and were continually challenging each other to improve performance through robust evaluation and support through peer-to-peer support and challenge programmes.

The Young People's representative added that despite not being subject to an Ofsted inspection, Manor Academy had been subject to internal mechanisms of inspection through its Education Trust and School Improvement Partners. The Chair commented that it would be useful if Manor Academy would share the results of this inspection regime with Elected Members.

A Member sought clarification on the reference to pupil progress from primary to secondary schools. A Headteacher present commented that primary partner schools do exceptionally well, with pupils attaining above national average standards usually. This meant that for secondary schools to demonstrate 'value added' or good progress, those pupils must attain the top grades at GCSE. The Headteacher illustrated this with an example: an (old) Level 5 pupil would be expected to attain a grade B at GCSE. To add value (to get a positive progress score) the school would need to support the pupil to attain more than a grade B, ie A-A* grades and not all Level 5 students attain this. This was a problem for all secondary schools.

The Assistant Director, Education confirmed that there would be a Members' Briefing about the new performance measures and indicators across primary and secondary schools and how they compare to previous levels on Wednesday 11 October 2017 at 5.30pm in the Civic Centre and all Members were invited to attend.

Decision

The report was noted.

30. Fostering Service Interim Report 1 April 2017 – 31 July 2017 (*Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services*)

Type of decision

For information.

Purpose of report

To provide the Committee with information relating to the activity of the Fostering Service for the first quarter of 2017. The Fostering Service is a regulated service and as such there is a requirement to provide the executive side of the Council with performance information on a quarterly basis.

Issue(s) for consideration

The Assistant Director, Children's Services reported on the Fostering Services performance for the quarter 1 April to 31 July 2017 updating the Committee on Recruitment and Retention, the work of the Placement Panel and Staffing. A further update on the developments within the service were outlined in the following areas:

- Number of children becoming looked after had increased in the third quarter;
- All new foster carers were encouraged to complete the Children's Workforce Development Council Standards for Foster Carers Portfolio;
- All foster carers were required to complete a record of training including any mandatory and bespoke courses;
- The second foster carer conference was held in June 2017 and feedback received had been extremely positive;
- Foster carer support groups continue to meet bi-monthly along with a bi-monthly coffee morning which is an informal support meeting; and
- There were plans to hold a Tees Valley event to promote fostering in September 2017.

Further details were provided within the Fostering Action Plan which was attached at Appendix A.

A Member sought clarification on whether there was any commonality within the reasons that children become looked after by family members. The Assistant Director, Children's Services indicated that whilst there was no real commonality, substance misuse was the main recent issue behind children becoming looked after along with domestic violence and parental mental health. A discussion ensued on the potential to prevent such issues and the Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services referred back to the previous discussions around the support

provided to teenagers who have a child and then go on to have more children which creates pressure on the family. More proactive decision making around family planning and the consideration of the implications of having more children needs to be emphasised as preventative measures, it was noted as the challenges of meeting the needs of large sibling groups who become looked after were noted. The Chair indicated that in recognition of substance misuse being such a problem in Hartlepool among young people, the Leader of the Council had requested a review of the Council's Drug and Alcohol Strategy in the coming months.

Decision

The report was noted.

31. Savings Programme 2018-19 and 2019-20 – Children's Services (*Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services*)

Type of decision

Budget and Policy Framework

Purpose of report

To enable Members to consider proposals to achieve further savings in 2018-19 and 2019-20.

Issue(s) for consideration

The Assistant Director, Children's and Family Services presented the report which included the proposals for delivery of savings in the Children's and Family Services Division as part of the 2018/19 budget process, the risks associated with the proposals and the considerations which had been taken into account in developing them.

The report included a breakdown of expenditure as well as details of outcomes/outputs. The proposed contribution from the Children's Services Division for 2018/19 was £540K. Details of how the savings would be achieved were provided as detailed in the report and included £500k from Children's Services and £80k from Education. Members were referred to the risk implications, financial as well as staffing considerations, as set out in the report.

The Assistant Director, Children's and Family Services emphasised that the proposals were cutting back core services and that every effort would be made to mitigate redundancies through voluntary redundancy.

The Chair commented that the current savings required were unprecedented and absolutely unsustainable in the longer term. It was highlighted that the Association of Directors of Children's Services and

the Local Government Association were lobbying Central Government in relation to the future funding of children's services. It was suggested that the Chair write to the Secretary of State for Education expressing the Committee's concerns for the sustainability of children's services, including front line services.

In relation to the Children's 5 to 19 activities, the Chair proposed that the Finance and Policy Committee consider extending the funding for this service for a period of 6 months from 1 April 2017 as a matter of urgent business at the meeting on 18 September 2017. This would be funded from the Family Poverty Reserve at a cost of £64k. It was expected that at the end of this 6 months, the Young People's Foundation would be established and have secured ways to draw down funding for the provision of sustainable youth services for the future. The Committee were supportive of this proposal but stressed that the Council cannot keep providing this funding with the maximum that can be provided being an additional six months and that the Foundation must be in a position to fund services in the longer term.

In response to a request for clarification, the Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services, confirmed that the proposed income generation would be across a range of services including room hire and conference facilities at the Centre for Independent Living and the Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning. There was some concern expressed by a Member that this income would potentially result in a reduced income at other Council premises.

The Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services confirmed that the Council do have trading services to offer and the provision of the education psychology service operated as a successful trading service. Officers were always looking for opportunities to deliver trading services in what was quite a crowded market.

A Member highlighted that there might be an opportunity for the Council's catering service to provide meals for elderly and disabled individual who require a meal to be served at home. The Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services indicated she would share this information with the Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods who was responsible for the school catering service.

Reassurance was sought by a Member that the provision of the children's early intervention service would not be affected by the deletion of the two vacant posts referred to in the report. The Assistant Director, Children's and Family Services commented that she could not give reassurance as this was a cut to the service. This reduction would place additional pressure on the current workforce as the need to support children was increasing. This would mean that families receive less support.

The Chair concluded that Children's Services needed a cash injection to ensure the service provision required was properly funded to prevent the

service arriving at a crisis point.

Decision

- (1) The report was noted and the above be used to formulate a response to be presented to the Finance and Policy Committee on 20 November 2017.
- (2) That the Chair send a letter to the Secretary of State for Education outlining the Committee's concerns with the future funding of children's services.
- (3) That an urgent item of business be submitted to the Finance and Policy Committee on 18 September 2017 to provide 6 months of funding for the provision of children's 5-19 activities totalling £64k to be funded from the Family Poverty Reserve.
- (4) That the Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services raise the potential of the provision of meals to elderly and disabled individuals by the catering service located at the Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning.

32. Any Other Items which the Chairman Considers are Urgent

None.

The Committee noted that the next meeting would be held on Tuesday 17 October 2017 at 4.30 pm in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool.

The meeting concluded at 6.10 pm

P J DEVLIN

CHIEF SOLICITOR

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