

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & EDUCATION SCRUTINY PANEL HELD ON TUESDAY, 9TH MARCH, 2021

MEMBERS: Councillors Achilleas Georgiou (Chair), Bernadette Lappage, Derek Levy, Ahmet Oykenar and Glynis Vince

Officers: Tony Theodoulou, Executive Director, People, Peter Nathan, Director of Education, Anne Stoker, Director Children & Family Services, Ivana Price, Head of Young People & Community Safety, Rafique Ullah, Head of youth work & Development, Shaun Rogan, Head of Corporate Strategy, Harriet Potemkin, Head of Strategy & Policy, Andy Ellis, Governance & Scrutiny and Susan O'Connell, Governance & Scrutiny

Also Attending: 3 members of the public

1. WELCOME & APOLOGIES

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies had been received from Cllrs Demiral, Hockney & Calliskan.

Members commented that they were disappointed that no Cabinet Members were in attendance and felt that their attendance is important for the scrutiny function.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

The minutes of the meeting 18 January 2021 were agreed. Members requested that the recommendations from the exclusions item were referred to OSC.

The minutes of the meeting 3 February were agreed subject to a minor amendment to the final paragraph of agenda item 4 as detailed below:

OSC are asked to recommend to Cabinet that the Council should produce an action orientated mental health charter and policy and provide the resources to make changes that will support young people and staff on matters such as information, uncertainty and staff wellbeing. In producing this the Council is asked to work with the various stakeholders including the unions and the Youth Parliament and with the involvement of the Children Young People and Education Scrutiny Panel.

4. POVERTY & INEQUALITY COMMISSION

Shaun Rogan, Head of Corporate Strategy and Harriet Potemkin, Head of Strategy & Policy introduced the report:

NOTED:

1. The Poverty & Inequality Commission report was published in January 2020 with 27 recommendations. The report in the agenda pack focuses on the 10 recommendations relating to children and young people.
2. Since the report was published, the pandemic has occurred which has had a huge impact.
3. A lot of the data used to measure deprivation has a time lag. There were small increases in the % of children from low income families from 2018 and 2019.
4. Since the report was published; levels of serious youth violence; fixed term and permanent exclusions numbers and the numbers of young people who are NEET have all reduced. This is the case across London, and it is acknowledged the role of the pandemic in these figures.
5. The responses to the recommendations 7-17 from the Commission are detailed in items 15-53 in the report. There is also a further agenda report from the police on recommendation 10.
6. The budget is detailed under items 54-56 in the report.
7. It was clarified that EVA is an independent voluntary sector group and part of their remit is to bring funding into the borough of the council.
8. The work of the Commission has assisted the local authority in taking a holistic view allowing more joined up and inclusive working.

Comments, queries and questions:

- Observations were made that there are no deadlines in the report. Are there going to be key performance indicators (KPIs) for all the recommendations in the report? The report today focuses on children and young people, members were not aware whether any other scrutiny panel were looking at the other recommendations or whether Cabinet was reviewing the recommendations. Officers confirmed that there will be a first-year report published on all the recommendations and the progress made. Officers are reviewing KPIs for the recommendations that are linked to the Council Plan. It was highlighted that the issues raised in the report are long standing.
- Recommendation 7, on the Food Action Plan it was felt that more detail is needed, given the experience and the problems accessing food over the October half term.
- Following a query on which partners the Council had worked with on Enfield Stands Together and Food Alliance programme. Officers confirmed that a list of community organisation will be provided including those from Public Health. This will include details of the organisations which received grants totalling £30k.
- The report details that in 2021 the council will increase support and extend access to food and utilities. Further details on this would be helpful. Who are the families and how will this be done? Officers

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confirmed that this will be a mixture of initiatives for families on free school meals (FSM) and further developing how the council can support families who are not eligible for FSM but are struggling.

- Following a query from a youth parliament member on those struggling with loneliness. Officers confirmed that the wider concerns for children and young people within school initiatives on mental health had been discussed in detail at the last meeting. The Director of Education was happy to meet with the youth parliament member outside of the meeting to discuss this further.
- Regarding the 8,000 residents mentioned it was confirmed that these were identified by the government as clinically extremely vulnerable. The approach initially taken included phone calls from council officers.
- Members were advised that funding regarding the 8,000 clinically extremely vulnerable residents accessing assistance was provided by the government in three tranches. The total that the council has received is approximately £365k up to November 2020. Further funds are awaited to cover the February/ March 2021 period. This funding is in addition to the Free schools Meals funding.
- Recommendation 8, Members requested clarification where the new 12 school streets are and how many are in the east of the borough. These are listed on the Council's website and are as follows:
 - Bush Hill Park Primary on Main Avenue
 - Chase Side Primary on Trinity Street
 - De Bohun Primary on Green Road
 - George Spicer Primary on Sketty Road
 - Hazelbury Primary on Westerham Avenue
 - Keys Meadow Primary on Tysoe Avenue
 - Kingfisher Hall Primary Academy on The Ride
 - Lavender Primary on Lavender Road
 - Meridian Angel Primary on Ladysmith Road
 - Raynham Primary on Raynham Avenue
 - St Paul's Primary on Ringwood Way
 - Worcesters Primary on Goat Lane
- Details were also requested of how many play streets are in the east of the borough. It was confirmed that due to the pandemic, play streets are not active and no new play streets have been created since the Pandemic. Members were keen to understand how the east of the borough is being actively prioritised, how this is encouraged and the plans going forward.
- Recommendation 10, Members were pleased to note that the productions of Chelsea's Choice and County Lines were continuing.
- A youth parliament member was keen to understand how the police are working on the relationship with young people. It was acknowledged that there is always more that could be done. As a result of young people feeding back to schools where they felt unsafe the police have taken direct action to improve this. The Borough Commander met with young people in December starting conversations and an ongoing dialogue to develop a better understanding. The police have launched Operation Sharda using police officers in schools and working with key workers on where young people feel safe and what can be done to

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improve this. Currently awaiting first intelligence survey which will inform how the partnership responds. Ivana Price was happy to hear any ideas and facilitate ongoing dialogue with the youth parliament and will liaise outside meeting.

- What does a revamp of safer schools mean? This issue was raised as the Commission heard from headteachers that Safer Schools was not working as it could in schools, with issues identified such as officers not on duty at key times. The officers are now on duty at key times. The new police lead reviewed the use of safer schools' officers and improvements have been made
- Recommendation 11, a youth parliament member commented that it was good to see that young people were being checked up on during the pandemic and that there were many opportunities in terms of training and activities and queried how awareness of available opportunities could be increased. It was confirmed that the youth Service has invested in an online portal to better communicate with young people. The summer uni last year was offered part online and part face to face. A youth survey was undertaken on what young people attended, what did they enjoy, what were they able to access and what can be done differently or better. Any ideas on communications to young people would be welcome. The youth parliament agreed to take this back to the Youth Parliament for further discussion.
- What does the term school ready mean? Members were advised that this issue had come from concerns raised by schools that 4 years olds were not able to start learning they could not for example; dress themselves, understand English, share or play with others. There has always been a focus on early years. This has been restricted in the last year due to the pandemic. It is expected that there will be issues as children return to school.
- Who are the eligible families for the Terrific Two's? It was confirmed that these are the families in need, and this service is means tested. The Terrific Two's is not a universal service and is targeted. Contact will be made with families in arrange of ways such as through health visitors who can identify a need and signpost and encourage families to attend.
- Recommendation 13 mentions poverty proofed, what does this mean. Officers advised that the commission were given details of girl's education being impacted as they were not attending school, when they were on their period due to period poverty. This situation has now greatly improved, and members were assured that all schools ensure girls do not miss school for this issue. In 2021 will be looking at what work can be done to tackle low literacy and digital inclusion. Schools have done their best to support pupils with PC's and internet connection. The Council is working with National Literacy Trust to support early literacy some examples of advice and support are families reading stories, talking to children when out and about and educating people on how to support literacy in young people
- Concerns raised over children arriving to school hungry (breakfast poverty) as this is often reflected to Councillors. Officers advised that

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there are many breakfast clubs at schools and families are encouraged to send children along this also helps with literacy. Hunger is an important manifestation of poverty. Members felt that a hunger survey would be helpful. The contact centre has remained open and has received thousands of calls from residents who need help, with food and medicine throughout the pandemic

- An observation was made that Libraries during lockdown were not welcoming places, with very restricted opening. Hub Libraries could not be used. It was noted that Covid rules have meant that where it has been possible to open libraries with restrictions in place, young people under 16 have had to be supervised by an adult in a library greatly reducing how young people could access libraries for their studies. The youth parliament member stated this is true in other boroughs.
- Following a query raised officers confirmed that the planning process has begun on the reopening of libraries as we come out of lockdown. This is being shared across London to ensure consistency. The Commission's report was completed pre pandemic however study space has since been an issue due to Covid restrictions. Whilst members accepted that this is not the Council's fault this paints a different picture on this recommendation (14). Libraries use weekly digital figures, it was noted that systems are changing and was not clear how residents would be aware of this, it was felt that this information must be very clear.
- An observation was made that whilst encouraged by the outcomes would this still have occurred without the Commission's report. Officers advised that there will always be an element of conjecture, that the issues existed long before the report, but the commission report has helped focus what the local authority does.
- Recommendation 14 on exclusions members were not clear on how figures are available, when situation itself is unclear especially given the last year what effect this will have on exclusions? The Exclusions data is provided by the government and includes Enfield children in non-Enfield schools, there is a delay to getting this information. Since September 2020, only 2 young people have been permanently excluded in Enfield, this is well below our comparative boroughs. The local authority is working closely with headteachers on how best to avoid exclusions including using things such as Alternative Provision to prevent. The Director of Education will be discussing permanent exclusions with secondary school head teachers with a view to setting a target, should be zero by 2025. Some secondary school heads will want to retain their ability to exclude. The Council is providing more early intervention to try to avoid fixed term exclusions, currently having discussions with the Head of the Pupil Referral Unit and the Head of the Secondary Support Service.
- ESOL recommendation 16 shows figures for adults - are there figures for young people and are young people benefiting? Members commented that most of the work is with adults. Officers advised that the ESOL programme referred to in the EPIC update is targeted for parents in the borough who have little literacy skills in English. The Education Department have confirmed that in addition to this most

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schools provide EAL (English as an additional language) support for children and young people within their schools up until the age of 18 and usually have someone for whom this is their role/part of their role and someone within SLT who has responsibility for it. There is funding for supporting children and young people factored into the money schools receive. In relation to children, in primary schools there is lots of things in place to help children. The specialist provision in the borough where English is not the first language, is at Bishops Stortford school. Members felt it would be helpful to include data on children and young people to ensure that they have benefited from this.

- Recommendation 17. Members of the Youth Parliament commented that work experience was not available in the pandemic, and that they felt more needs to be done on this. They also felt it would be helpful to develop CV templates tailored for professions such as law, work experience etc.
- Members queried whether there was a need to reactivate a business partnership to help this. The Director of Education advised that a Skills and Employment Board is being set up which will help to develop a new skills and employment strategy and bring schools, colleges and businesses together. The role of work experience coordinator is paid for by schools as this is their responsibility. Schools do not have to offer work experience. In the past some work experience has not been good, and a much closer relationship should hopefully improve this. It was noted that there is also the white paper published this January on 'Skills for Jobs; Lifelong Learning for Opportunity and Growth'.
- Members felt that the development of the Skills strategy and the Skills and Employment board should be accelerated and queried whether this will feed into the cultural strategy. Officers confirmed that this does link with Cultural Strategy.
- Following a query officers agreed to confirm whether the schemes in Meridian Water were part of negotiations with Troubadour.
- Members raised the issue of cultural impoverishment and felt that more work is needed on this perhaps this could fit into Cultural strategy.

In summing up the Chair requested that as the annual report is prepared the issues raised at this meeting are reflected upon. It was suggested that the report includes KPIs, details of how targets will be measured and a roadmap of how the Council will get there. Officers agreed to take away the feedback

5. VULNERABLE CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE YOUTH PROVISION & ENVIRONMENT

Ivana Price, Head of Young People & Community Safety introduced the report.

NOTED

1. There is a statutory duty for the local authority to ensure sufficient provision for young people aged 13-19. There have been challenges on the interpretation of what is sufficient.

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2. The Youth offer in Enfield is delivered through a mixed economic model including the council's dedicated Youth service Provision, and a range of targeted youth service provision in partnership with a range of third sector providers.
3. Table 1 in the report details the resourcing funding of youth services. It was highlighted that the funding level was significantly decreased after 2016/17 and has been slowly rebuilding since 2019. Additional funding is detailed within the report and there has been a significant investment in rebuilding, regenerating buildings.
4. Table 2 in the report details funding timeframes and provides a flavour of the diversity of youth provision.
5. A map is included on page 5 of the report of where youth centres are placed in the borough. This shows that these are, in general, in areas of high levels of deprivation and areas that are most impacted by serious youth violence. Clarification was provided on the index; the numbers are; the numbers of victims within a given timeframe, and the figures in brackets are the number of wards.
6. Table 3 provides an illustration of usage and attendance of the centres. These are pre Covid figures, in response to a query as to whether these numbers are good or bad, members were advised that based on the level of funding these are good.

Comments, queries and questions:

- Youth parliament members felt that the communication could be improved on what is available, including better promotion to attract and reach out to more young people.
- Following a query on table 3 it was confirmed that these figures relate to individual attendance. Members were disappointed at the number of young people attending.
- An observation was made that some physical facilities such as the Alan Pullinger Centre need to be improved and would like to see investment in redevelopment or relocation of facilities, in the case of Southgate there is no community hub. Perhaps mixed-use development could use section 106 monies be used holistic developments. Officers advised that the Youth Offer needs to be in safe, good quality facilities. Ponders End and Craig Park are very good modern facilities, others it was acknowledged need an uplift.

6. REOPENING OF SCHOOLS

Peter Nathan, Director of Education provided a verbal update advising that this has been going well. There was a very well attended briefing with Head teachers on Friday.

Primary schools have been delighted to go back. Secondary schools need to undertake 3 tests in 2 weeks, so this is a phased return. Some schools started their testing early. A further briefing with Secondary Heads will take place tomorrow and with all Heads on Friday. Two issues have come out so far; concerns from parents on testing and the website the results needed to be loaded onto had crashed.

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Members raised concern on parents outside school gates, not social distancing and standing in larger groups. Officers advised that schools have limited powers outside of the school gates, but this issue will be fed back to schools and to public health

Concern was also raised that Easter follows only a few weeks after schools going back which may not help the settling in process at schools. Officers advised that schools will be taking into consideration reintroducing children to normal lessons and normal discipline. They will also take into account that some children may have experienced bereavement or be anxious about returning to school.

7. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

It was noted that future dates will be agreed at annual council.

This was the last meeting of this Panel thanks were given to the officers, young people attended and the members of the Panel for their contributions and participation throughout the year.

The Chair advised that Cllr Lappage was standing down from her role very shortly and expressed his thanks to her personally and acknowledged her work and commitment during her time both at the council and across London. Other members also recorded their thanks to Cllr Lappage.

The meeting ended at Time Not Specified.