

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & EDUCATION SCRUTINY PANEL HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 20TH OCTOBER, 2021

MEMBERS: Councillors Chinelo Anyanwu, Mustafa Cetinkaya (Associate Cabinet Member (Enfield South East)), Ahmet Oykenner, Andrew Thorp and Glynis Vince (Conservative Group Whip)

Officers:

Head of Strategic Resourcing Partnerships - Education, Head of Service - Safeguarding Adults, Complaints and Quality Assurance, Learning Consultant PSHE/RSE & External Projects, Head of Early Help, Youth & Community Safety Services, Executive Director People, and Head of Special Education Needs

Also Attending:

1. WELCOME & APOLOGIES

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and apologies of absence were received from Cllr Elif Erbil, Cllr Ayfer Orhan and Cllr Mahtab Uddin.

In the absence of the Chair and Vice Chair, Cllr Chinelo Anyanwu was nominated as Chair. This was seconded and agreed by the panel.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest registered.

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the Children, Young People & Education Scrutiny Panel held on the 8th July 2021 were agreed.

4. HOLIDAY ACTIVITIES AND FOOD PROGRAMME

Ivana Price, Head of Early Help, Youth and Community Safety Services, introduced the report and highlighted the following key points:

1. The programme was funded by the Department for Education (DfE) and a grant of £1.4m had been received for this year. The ambition was to reduce hunger and provide activities during the school holidays for children in receipt of free school meals.

2. Clear expectations had been set out by the DfE including a minimum of four hours per day, four days per week and six weeks per year. The curriculum should be of a high standard and the meals must be nutritious.

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3. The timescales were very challenging, however a successful pilot was delivered during the Easter holidays with 556 children and young people attending.

4. The team had learnt from the Easter pilot project and a steering group was brought together to plan for the summer. The main challenges were with capacity so increased work with local providers took place.

5. 19 providers were selected to deliver the summer programme, with a total of 32,581 activity spaces created. The DfE's target for engagement was 20% and Enfield achieved 22%. Most delivery took place in the more deprived areas of the borough.

In response the following comments were received from Panel Members:

1. Cllr Andrew Thorp asked if the £1.493m figure was for the entire year. Ivana Price responded to confirm that it was.

2. Cllr Andrew Thorp highlighted that if 22% accessed the programme, that left 78% that did not. It was questioned if the marketing was right, for example, if mainly through digital channels many families may not be able to access this.

In response, Ivana Price advised that there was a two-fold marketing campaign and more work was being doing locally with schools. The main issue was with the capacity of local providers and that many smaller providers could not meet the very specific requirements set out by the DfE. The team were working with them to assist on this matter and looking at providers outside of the borough. Marketing would also start earlier for the next programme.

Peter Nathan, Director of Education, added that the Covid-19 pandemic had also impacted the take up of the programme as many families kept their children at home in the fear of them mixing.

Cllr Andrew Thorp also asked if the 22% take up was evenly distributed across the borough. Ivana Price advised that more detailed analysis was being carried out. **ACTION**

3. Cllr Glynis Vince asked what happens to the remainder of the grant if it is not fully used.

In response, Ivana Prince advised that the Council only receives what it anticipates it will use. Any money not used must be given back.

5. INCREASING IN-BOROUGH SEND PROVISION

Neil Best, Head of Education Strategic Resourcing and Partnerships, outlined the report and the key points to note:

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1. Large amounts of work had been carried out to increase the quantity of SEND provision within the borough. Almost all Enfield SEND schools were at capacity. In response, ESRP had worked with the SEN Service to increase both Additional Resourced Provision and Satellite Provision to extend the number of SEND place available with the borough. However, over 600 children were currently being educated out of borough.

2. Table 5 of the report detailed the current pipeline SEN projects that were coming through. Additional new sites were now also being considered with the aim of establishing larger scale SEND provision. Sites currently being considered within the viability studies include Addison House, the former Eldon Road Tuition Centre, and a site at Bell Lane. This work was being directly supported by EMT.

3. Cabinet had recently agreed a Strategy in relation to the use of vacant caretaker's houses which will allow these building to be disposed of (where appropriate) and capital receipts targeted toward establishing new SEND provision.

In response, Cllr Glynis Vince commended Officers on their work which was echoed by all panel members.

6. SEN SERVICES - REVIEWING EFFECTIVENESS

Barbara Thurogood, Head of SEN, gave an overview of the report which detailed the effectiveness of SEN within the borough.

1. There was around a 10% growth in Education & Health Care Plans (EHCPs) year on year. The Covid-19 pandemic had played a part in this.

2. Legislative reforms were underway, and the national feeling was that they were good and welcomed. There were however issues around insufficient funding and concerns over a two-tier system where it could appear that those who were able to go to tribunal get the opportunity to have independent provision.

3. In Enfield there was strong strategic leadership, with very good support from the Chief Executive and Directors. The investment in early intervention had helped greatly. Enfield were one of the only London Boroughs to do this.

4. The team were working with schools to help achieve at least 4 additional units in primary and 4 in secondary.

5. Overall parents were happy with the service and complaints were generally low. There are good partnerships and strategic leaders.

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6. The Post 14 Team was an area of weakness therefore work was taking place to strengthen this, and this had been recognised in the re-organisation of the service.

7. Tony Theodoulou, Executive Director Place, would like the service to be put forward for a pilot of the new Ofsted Framework.

Panel members thanked officers for their hard work.

7. ANNUAL SAFEGUARDING REPORT

Geraldine Gavin, Independent Chair Safeguarding Children's Board, introduced herself stating that her job title was now outdated following the Government changes made in 2019. The area had moved away from a board to an active safeguarding partnership.

1. It was noted that safeguarding responsibilities were now shared between health, police and the local authority. The partners meet regularly to make joint decisions.

2. Geraldine acknowledged that the report was very long and detailed but demonstrates the scope of the area and the important work undertaken. A shorter version was being produced and would be shared when available.

ACTION

3. There was a good cultural change in Enfield. The business unit was very busy and under pressure however in the last year a police officer had been seconded to the unit which had allowed for access to rich data.

4. The CCG bring in some funding to assist with multi agency audits and the progress has been significant. Bharat Ayer and Sharon Burgess were thanked for their assistance on this, as well as Lisa Tait and Licia Sinnott.

5. There were active partnerships and various activity groups across the borough. Activity was driven by the business unit. The lockdowns had a big impact; although it was business as usual, it was different.

In response, panel members commented as follows:

1. Cllr Chinelo Anyanwu asked about the increase in awareness of racial abuse and whether this was outlined anywhere.

Geraldine Gavin responded advising there was a separate piece of work looking at this. There were positive links with schools and increasing in-school activity was a focus.

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There was a Safeguarding Ambassadors Group which Bharat Ayer, Safeguarding Service Manager, attends. Emerging themes were around prejudice.

The Insight Group were breaking everything down by demographics to identify those affected and where they live.

Cllr Chinelo Anyanwu asked if more detail could be included in the report, stating that teachers at Enfield County School had expressed concerns that they did not have sufficient guidance on how to deal with racism.

Tony Theodoulou, Executive Director People, understood there had been an increase in hate crime. Also, after the George Floyd murder, extensive training for schools, including Governors, had taken place. It was difficult for schools to manage as they want to avoid exclusions but there must be consequences. Tony had not received any concerns from schools and would look into this. **ACTION**

2. Cllr Glynis Vince stated that historically there had been a Youth Engagement Panel who carried out wonderful work which could be used to assist.

The officers were thanked for their work on this.

8. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The future meeting dates were noted and agreed.

The meeting ended at Time Not Specified.