

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & EDUCATION SCRUTINY PANEL HELD ON TUESDAY, 27TH SEPTEMBER, 2022

MEMBERS: Councillors Elif Erbil, Gunes Akbulut, Ahmet Oykenner, Andrew Thorp, Adrian Grumi, Nelly Gyosheva, Suna Hurman (Deputy Mayor) and Ruby Sampson

Officers: Anne Stoker (Director Children & Family Services), Sharon Burgess (Head of Safeguarding Adults & Quality), Bharat Ayer (Safeguarding Service Manager), Angela Bent (Head of Service Practice Improvement & Centre of Excellence), Cheryl Headon (Head of Schools Traded Services), Elise Merchant (Business Support Manager), Suzanne Connolly (Governance Officer)

Also Attending: Cllr Abdul Abdullahi (Cabinet Member for Children's Services), Press Officer

1. WELCOME & APOLOGIES

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

All members were present.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following declarations of interest were received:

Cllr Andrew Thorp, Cllr Abdul Abdullahi and Cllr Suna Hurman each declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 6 in which they had children attending Enfield schools and eating school meals.

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the previous meeting were **AGREED**, subject to a correction to Cllr Abdul Abdullahi's title which should read Cabinet Member Children's Services).

4. ANNUAL SAFEGUARDING REPORT

Cllr Abdul Abdullahi, Cabinet Member for Children's Services, introduced the report which set out the achievements and challenges over the last year. It was noted that the report covered adults and children, however this panel was just to look at children.

Sharon Burgess, Head of Safeguarding Adults & Quality, thanked the panel for the opportunity to consult on the report, and Bharat Ayer, Safeguarding Services Manager, then highlighted the following key points:

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1. The aim was to identify current and emerging risks from three areas:
 - Insight Groups led by the police
 - National Reviews
 - Safeguarding Ambassadors (youth engagement).
2. The annual report must meet legal requirements for both children and adults.

In response, members thanked officers for the detailed report and commented as follows:

1. Cllr Thorp queried the layout and format of the report asking why adults and children's were not separate in two different reports. Officers advised they had been in the past however the report had become very long. This would be considered for next year.
2. Cllr Thorp requested for the figures on page 33 to include percentages
ACTION for Bharat Ayer.
3. Cllr Erbil asked for more details on Safeguarding Ambassadors. Officers advised there was one group currently, with up to 12 attending in each cohort. They were looking to engage with other groups run by youth support services, as well as involving peers.
Members would welcome the opportunity to meet some of the Safeguarding Ambassadors **ACTION** for Anne Stoker.
4. Cllr Hurman felt increased advertising should take place around Safeguarding Ambassadors, for example in schools.
5. Cllr Akbulut was interested in the current number of children in need as the report data was for March 2022. Officers said there had been an increase in referrals.
6. Cllr Grumi asked about the number of completed assessments within 45 days which had decreased compared to previous years. Anne Stoker, Director Children & Family Services, stated that the figure was improving however there had been a nationwide issue with the recruitment and retention of social workers. The impact of Covid-19 was also still causing issues.

5. SELF-EVALUATION FRAMEWORK (SEF)

Cllr Abdul Abdullahi, Cabinet Member for Children's Services, introduced the report emphasising the excellent work of the department despite there being many challenges.

Angela Bent, Head of Service-Practice Improvement & Centre of Excellence, highlighted the key points from the report. Members extended their thanks for the clear layout of the report and then commented as follows:

1. Cllr Thorp asked if there were any current successes based on the 22/23 priorities. Officers stated that the middle managers development programme for service managers had been very successful and would be rolled out further. Enfield Talks had been launched with the first meeting

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planned for October 2022. Also workforce recruitment was converting students into Social Worker Apprenticeships.

2. Cllr Akbulut raised concerns around the shortage of social workers and their caseloads. Officers acknowledged this issue, however the issue was nationwide with many leaving the profession. Support for staff was available, for example through the Employee Assistance Programme. There was also trauma support and time allocated to promote wellbeing. There were experienced managers and advanced practitioners to provide support, and teams worked well together.
3. Cllr Nelly asked about staff managing the culture within the borough. Anne Stoker advised that there was a wide range of diversity within the social worker team with the main aim being to ensure the family understand why they need support. Sometimes an interpreter was required.

6. **QUALITY & CONSISTENCY OF SCHOOL MEALS ACROSS THE BOROUGH**

Cheryl Headon, Head of Schools Traded Services, introduced the item highlighting the five key parts of the service as:

- The children
- The chefs
- The community
- The schools and parents
- Supply partners.

Members thanked Officers for the report and commented as follows:

1. Cllr Thorp felt that the report did not match the work programme as it did not include other traded partners. This may need to be revisited at a future meeting. **ACTION** for Cllr Erbil to consider.
2. A discussion took place around portion size and items running out. Officers stated it was impacted by items being pre-ordered, absences, parental control over choice and trends on the day. Issues were always investigated and reviewed.
3. Cllr Oykenner was interested in the number of schools choosing other providers and their reasons. **ACTION** for Cheryl Headon.

7. **WORK PROGRAMME 2022/23**

NOTED the work programme for 2022/23.

8. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

NOTED the dates of future meetings as follows:

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Wednesday 2 November 2022
Tuesday 10 January 2023
Thursday 23 March 2023

All meetings commence at 7pm.

9. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

The Committee agreed to passing a resolution under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, excluding the press and public from the meeting for any items of business listed on part 2 of the agenda on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act (as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006).

10. PART TWO ITEM - CONTAINING EXEMPT INFORMATION

11. QUALITY & CONSISTENCY OF SCHOOL MEALS ACROSS THE BOROUGH

Following the Part 2 discussion the confidential report of Cheryl Headon was NOTED.

Actions:

1. Cllr Abdullahi to look at all suppliers of school meals across the borough to identify quality, quantity, nutritional value and feedback from children/parents, possibly via the Schools Forum.

The meeting ended at 8.45 pm.