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OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 23.2.2017

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON THURSDAY, 23 FEBRUARY 2017

COUNCILLORS: Derek Levy (Chair), Katherine Chibah (Vice-Chair), Abdul
PRESENT Abdullahi, Nneka Keazor, Joanne Laban, Edward Smith.

STATUTORY 1 *vacancy (Church of England diocese representative), Mr*
CO-OPTES *Simon Goulden (other faiths/denominations*
representative), Mr Tony Murphy (Catholic diocese
representative), Alicia Meniru & 1 vacancy (Parent
Governor representative) – Italics Denotes absence

OFFICERS: Sally McTernan (AD Customer Solutions), Janet Leach
(Head of Service –JSDC), Kate Kelly (Change &
Challenge Manager), Ilhan Basharan (CREST Manager),
Nicholas Foster (Complaints & Access to Information
Manager), Susan O’Connell (Scrutiny Officer), Elaine
Huckell (Committee Secretary)

Also Attending Fazilla Amide (Chair of ‘Our Voice’ Parent Forum)

344

WELCOME & APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence had been received from Simon Goulden, Tony Murphy and Alicia Meniru.

The Chair welcomed attendees and apologized that due to ill health he would be unable to attend for the whole meeting. He would discuss item 8. – Selection of new Workstreams 2017/18, at the beginning of the meeting and then Councillor Chibah would continue as Committee Chair. For the interests of clarity the minutes are shown in the agenda order.

345

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interests were put forward.

346

SEND IMPLEMENTATION UPDATE

Janet Leach, Head of Joint Service for Disabled Children introduced Fazilla Amide who is Chair of the 'Our Voice' Parent Forum and together they presented the report.

The report described the work and remit of the Joint Service for Disabled Children (JSDC) and provided information about issues affecting the lives of families with children and young people with Special Educational Needs (SEN) in Enfield. The following was highlighted:

- The JSDC is a partnership that comprises Enfield Community Service which represents health, the Early Intervention Support Service (EISS) the specialist education team, and Cheviots Children's Disability Centre, the specialist social care team. The team provides information guidance, advice and support.
- There are social care issues and challenges, with most referrals from the poorer parts of the borough. Reference was made to the increase in referrals from Palmers Green, this was thought to be as a result of more private rental homes in the area.
- Currently the team provides support to approximately 700 children. There has been an increase in the number of referrals due to the increasing population. It is also possible to see an increase in those referred with 'complex health needs'.
- Fazilla Amide stressed the importance of having a 'key worker' who can provide support for families with newly diagnosed pre-school children. She said this 'early years' support is crucial. The intensive intervention lasts a lifetime. It promotes resilience and helps people in managing stress levels.
- Services to pre-school children with Special Educational Needs/ Disability Issues are being re-configured to reflect the deletion of the Foundation Stage Support Team.
- The number of disabled children who are Looked after Children (LAC) is 23 i.e 6.7%.
- With reference to short break grants there tends now to be less overnight breaks and more family grants which may help the family over a longer period of time.
- In order to make the most effective use of limited resources the JSDC as part of the DfE Social Innovation Fund together with 5 other Local Authorities are working to co-produce new approaches to assessment in Children's Social care. They are looking at more creative use of funds, working with parents/ schools, helping people to access the 'Local Offer' on website, and delivering training to interested parties such as health visitors and child minders.

The following issues were raised:

- Members congratulated the team on the results of the Ofsted local area SEND inspection carried out in June 2016.
- The re-configuring of services for pre-school children with SEND was raised and it was noted that the outcome of this would enable the focus for responsibility to be positioned more with teachers, and with children supported through health and care plans. Reconfiguring the service

should allow additional funds to be available for preparing children with SEND for starting school. A concern was raised that teachers would be under additional pressure as a result of the changes. The service is trying to mitigate against this, there will be a new 'whole school approach' with additional training provided.

- It was asked how many children there were with SEND of school age. We have 1948 children and young people with SEN Statements or EHC Plans and about 650 to 700 children and young people in receipt of services and support from JSDC. It was mentioned that special schools tend to now be for children with more complex needs. As SEND needs increase there will be more children using mainstream schools, special schools would have children with more complex requirements.
- It was requested that all parents of children with SEND are kept well informed with clear communication links for children who are at both special and mainstream schools. The Cabinet Member for Education, Children's Services and Protection is to be asked to ensure that this is done.
- In light of there being less overnight stays it was asked if we are confident that parents are receiving sufficient respite care. Janet Leach said we were trying to maximise resources and there would always be a need for some overnight stays to continue however it is unlikely that we would ever be able to provide enough respite care. It was confirmed that the money provided for short break grants is not being reduced.
- It was stressed that the waiting time for paediatric assessments continues to be a concern which is due to limited paediatrician cover.
- The SEND reforms resulting from the Children and Families Act 2014 replace statements of SEND with the new statutory Education, Health & Care Plan (EHCP) it also imposes duties on Local Authorities in relation to children and young people with SEND aged 0 to 25 years. It was stated that there is an impact on resources where young people may be requiring assessments up to age of 25. We are working with our colleges and Adult Social Care. In some cases where there are low levels of SEND and young people are not eligible for Adult Social Care we would need to line up pathways for them.

AGREED

1. Overview & Scrutiny Committee NOTED the report.
2. The Cabinet Member for Education Children's Services and Protection is to be asked to ensure that there are clear communication links for parents of children with SEND who are at both special and mainstream schools

Janet Leach and Fazilla Amide were thanked for presenting the report.

347

CHANGE & CHALLENGE UPDATE

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 23.2.2017

Kate Kelly the Change and Challenge Manager introduced the update which relates to the Troubled Families programme. Phase 2 of the programme was launched nationally in April 2015. It aims to promote earlier intervention for families with multiple problems, which are a high cost to the taxpayer, the aim is to show significant and sustained progress.

The following was highlighted:

- Payment to the LA is based on results and is centred on 6 criteria with eligibility indicators within them.
- A workshop was held in August and the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) attended who have developed a practical assessment and benchmarking tool to assist Local Authorities in engaging partner agencies and to further develop action planning for ongoing service transformation. An implementation action plan has been developed for the delivery of the troubled families programme for Enfield.
- All cases that come through the Multi-agency meeting at the Single Point of Entry (SPOE) are screened and allocated to the Change and Challenge team if they meet 3 or 4 of our 6 eligibility criteria. All cases meeting 2 or 3 of the eligibility criteria are allocated to the most appropriate service to hold a team around the family (TAF) and the Change and Challenge team are tracking and evidencing outcomes.
- Train the trainer courses in the TAF process will begin in March 2017. This is to further strengthen Enfield's early help offer and will incorporate the signs of safety model.
- For phase 2 of the Change and Challenge Programme, Enfield have been asked by the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) to identify and turn around 2970 families by 2020. We have been asked to have a minimum of 859 new families coming onto the programme and 369 families to achieve continuous employment or significant and sustained progress in 2016/17. We currently have over 1500 families receiving an intervention and on the programme.
- It is necessary to identify needs quickly and ensure there is an integrated framework for dealing with families. Many families are unemployed and on benefits. Employment workshops are offered and the team has successfully engaged with 80 clients.
- Serco have the contract to be known as 'Inspiring Families' and will deliver the work programme in Enfield co-located within the Change and Challenge team.
- The number of families that have received an intervention countable under the programme up to February 2017 is 1214. Of these families the highest percentage comes from the eastern side of the borough. Just under half of families who have had an intervention under the programme are aged 18-65 with over a quarter aged 10-17.
- A family must meet two of the criteria to be eligible for the programme, only a small number would meet all of the criteria.
- By January 2017 the team had claimed for 262 families under phase 2 of the project. A large percentage of the claims were for continuous

employment, and a smaller percentage where significant and sustained progress.

Kate Kelly spoke of the challenges ahead for the team. There are continuously changing demands from DCLG, there is a need for a new family intelligence system (IT) to develop the Troubled Families programme. It is necessary for all involved services to embrace the programme. Problems are sometimes encountered with the sharing of information especially in relation to our health partners. Although it has been challenging Kate Kelly was of the opinion that the team had made some progress.

The following issues were then raised:

- It is necessary to engage with families who may be 'hard to reach' - we promote the message that employment programmes are organised to help get them back into work, we encourage people to gain confidence for them to move forward. This may be done by sending flyers/ letters to clients about workshops available and arranging for work coaches to be present at 'drop- ins'. We offer one to one or group sessions.
- The team is working with families where domestic violence has been identified. Difficulties were discussed about proving sustained progress if police call outs continue. It was stated that with some cases where intensive work has been put in place and an injunction has been obtained it is only where a perpetrator is arrested or the victim moves that progress can be made, and the intervention can be shown to be successful. This is due to police call outs being a measureable outcome.
- Councillor Smith referred to a recent report published in relation to the first phase of the programme which raised the question at a national level as to whether the programme had been beneficial or not. He asked if the claims submitted as shown on page 6 of the report referred to Phase 1 of the programme and did the smaller sector shown on the pie chart refer to those people who have moved into employment?. Kate Kelly stated that the chart showed claims submitted for Phase 2 of the programme and said it was the larger sector of the pie chart that referred to people who had moved into employment. She confirmed that the large majority of claims submitted showed people moving into employment.
- In Phase 2 of the programme there are additional requirements from Phase 1. Additional outcomes must now be evidenced. There must be an assessment reflecting the needs of the whole family and then an action plan that reflects the issues raised in the assessment. The administration of it is quite labour intensive and all details and evidence provided is in depth.

AGREED

Overview and Scrutiny noted and agreed the recommendations in the update report presented by the Change and Challenge Manager.

Kate Kelly was thanked for her report.

348

UPDATE ON PERFORMANCE - COMPLAINTS, FREEDOM OF INFORMATION AND MEMBERS ENQUIRIES

Sally McTernan introduced the report which provides details of complaints handling and performance for 2015/16.

Nicholas Foster presented the update and highlighted the following:

- The Central Complaints and Access to Information Team was created in December 2015. Prior to this, each department would handle their own complaints locally. The aim is to ensure that the customer is put at the centre of what we do.
- Complaints handling is now reorganized into a central hub. The team also deals with Freedom of Information requests and also Members Enquiries. As there are sometimes overlapping cases, this can help to avoid duplication.
- The Council housing complaints procedure, which had been a three stage procedure, is now two stage as it has been aligned with the council's (two stage) procedure. The ICT system is quicker with more concerns logged. The new complaints policy promotes early resolution of complaints to resolve matters without the need to go through the formal complaints process.
- The 'e learning' toolkit aims to ensure the 'tone' used by officers is correct and that the approach is consistent. The team will be using the insight from 'complaints' to help drive change in services.
- The online channel for tracking complaints went live in April 2016 with centralisation and recording in a central place – this probably accounts for the higher number of complaints recorded for last two quarters.
- During April 2015 to March 2016, 81% of first stage complaints were answered within the 10 working days timescale which is consistent with other London Boroughs. This compares with the previous year of 67%.
- As part of improvements in the way complaints are managed and a more rigorous approach to assessing requests for final stage investigations, there has been a reduction in the number of Final Stage complaints. These complaints are usually complex matters requiring in-depth investigation previously carried out by senior managers across departments. They are now done by the Complaints and Access to Information Team.
- Complaints can be escalated to the Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) and during 2015/16 the LGO issued 157 decisions regarding complaints and enquiries received in respect of Enfield Council. Of these cases 33 resulted in investigations of which 25 were upheld, this rate was in line with neighbouring boroughs.
- Moving forward, the Complaints and Access to Information Team would continue to support departments, focusing on training to ensure replies are provided correctly and promptly.

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 23.2.2017

The following questions/ issues were then raised

Q. What area creates the most complaints?

A. The most complaints tend to come from – Council tax, benefits, housing allocations, flytips, and waste. Of the 33 LGO cases that resulted in investigations most were housing issues.

Q. I understand that when there was a move to hubs a number of emails/ issues were left outstanding in particular the planning service?

A. There was a phased approach when matters were automatically transferred so people continued to deal with issues raised and no items were left outstanding.

Q. With reference to the housing cases upheld by the Ombudsman it would be interesting to know the issues raised?

A: These were predominantly around delays and decisions around homelessness.

A concern was raised about the percentage of Final Stage Complaints responded to within 30 working days – shown as 35% for 2015/16. Councillor Smith referred to a formal complaint that took 9 months to answer. It was stated that this was an area that required improvement and this is now happening. – Figures for Q3 final stage complaints show 90% were responded in time. This is probably because before managers were responding to final stage complaints in addition to their other duties. This is now done by the Complaints and Access to Information Team.

It was noted that the Council's target is to respond to 92% of First Stage complaints within 10 working days, however looking at the actual results for the last six quarter figures it was questioned whether this was a realistic target. It was confirmed that an action plan is being prepared and the team is consulting with other departments – they would then check whether the target was unrealistic.

It was stated that the response to Members Enquires has improved especially in relation to Housing. It was noted that 'service requests' were not included in the complaints statistics.

Confirmation was given that the target for responses to Members enquiries is 8 working days.

NOTED

Overview & Scrutiny Committee noted the report and Sally McTernan and Nicholas Foster were thanked for presenting it.

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 23.2.2017

Ilhan Basharan, CREST Manager presented the Equality and Diversity report which set out the achievements/ challenges for the Council by departments. It also provides a profile of Enfield's population and the make-up of the Council's Workforce. Information has been taken from Departmental Strategic Plans (SDPs). It was noted that the SDPs are signed by the appropriate Director.

This draft report is currently out for consultation. The final report would be published by 31 March 2017. It is anticipated that the final report would not include items that are not strictly equality issues. The report gave the nine protected characteristics which aim to protect people from discrimination as – age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, sexual orientation, religion or belief and marriage and civil partnership.

Ilhan Basharan highlighted the following:

- The report features key achievements including equality impact assessments that have been completed and any resulting action plans.
- The report also highlights key challenges for services
- Work is still on-going on the SDP for Health, Housing and Adult Social Care. It is to be completed in the near future.

The following issues were raised:

- The Chair said it would be useful to see a final version of the report.
- It was confirmed that the consultation was also with staff.
- Equality Impact Assessments are on a rolling 3 year programme but another would be done should there be changes or reconfiguration of the service.

The Chair referred to the disability profile given for the Enfield Council workforce which states that 4.1% of employees have declared that they have a disability, this compares with 7.2% of the working population in Enfield. It was asked if this was a cause for concern? Ilhan stated that the workforce should broadly be reflective of the population. If there is significant under representation of a profile category then this should be looked at more closely. It was noted that the Enfield Council Workforce has twice as many women as men, however this is not the case at higher management levels.

It was stated that Human Resources monitor categories at different grades and have arranged learning and development opportunities to target under represented people.

AGREED

1. Overview & Scrutiny Committee noted the report.
2. A copy of the final report to be circulated to Members of Overview and Scrutiny Committee..

ACTION: Ilhan Basharan

Ilhan Basharan was thanked for presenting the report.

350

AGENDA PLANNING AND WORK PROGRAMME

The Work Programme was **NOTED**.

351

SELECTION OF NEW WORKSTREAMS 2017/18

The process for considering the new four work- streams for 2017/18 is to begin and would be decided at the next Business meeting of Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 21 March 2017. A list of suggested items is to be circulated prior to the meeting and may include subjects from the London Scrutiny Network. **ACTION:** Andy Ellis, Scrutiny Officer

352

MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS HELD ON 10 JANUARY, 17 JANUARY & 19 JANUARY 2017

The minutes of the 10 January 2017, 17 January 2017 and 19 January 2017 were **AGREED**.

353

DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Call – In meeting – Wednesday 1 March 2017 – Approval of Cycle Enfield Proposals for the A1010 South

Business Meetings – Tuesday 21 March 2017 (Additional meeting) and Thursday 27 April 2017.

Provisional Call-In dates

- 12 April 2017

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