

London Borough of Enfield

OSC 1st April

Subject: Referral to OSC from the Chair of the Children Young People & Education Scrutiny Panel

Director: Jeremy Chambers

Key Decision: N/A

Purpose of Report

1. This report details two referrals from the Chair of the Children Young People & Education Scrutiny Panel (CYPE).

Proposal(s)

2. Overview & Scrutiny Committee are asked to consider the following two referrals from the Chair of CYPE.
3. OSC are being asked to recommend to Cabinet the following:
 - 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. OSC are being asked to ensure that when setting the work programmes for 2021/22, the Children, Young People and Education Scrutiny Panel is asked to consider continuing with Exclusions as an item in order to fully explore and monitor the areas that need further work listed below, and at the appropriate time, OSC gives consideration to the matter being referred to Cabinet.
 - That further work currently taking place to fully understand exclusions with regards to overrepresentation in certain communities was brought back to the Panel for a report on the findings and progress of this.
 - It was recognised that schools have their own policies on exclusions, and a number of schools are academies, but members felt further work on a uniform approach across the Borough would be beneficial, and an improved process for management of pupils between schools.
 - Governor training on exclusions was highlighted by members to consider smaller group sessions with case studies. An update on the training following changes to the service would be useful.
 - Further work was needed to consider if the support available for parents and pupils throughout the process was sufficient.

- Further detail to come back to scrutiny on the CAMHS service, including the possibility/barriers to reducing the waiting time for referrals. Arrangements the service has for planning for a potential increase in referrals, and how the service is funded.
- The Panel recognised that difficulty with speech & language is a key trigger for exclusions. An update should address the challenges for the service not meeting its statutory six-week advice submission and what can be done to change this.
- The Panel would like to see an action plan for the growth in mental health issues affecting young people that are arising as a result of the pandemic both for the present and post-Covid-19. Members recognised that the events of the last months will have an enormous impact on young people's lives and may result in difficult to manage behaviour at school. The Panel should like to see all the other updated plans for managing behaviour in schools post-Covid-19.

Reason for Proposal(s)

5. Please see purpose of report.

Relevance to the Council Plan

6. One of the pledges within the Council's Plan is to support Safe, Healthy and Confident Communities along with a cross-cutting objective of achieving a Fairer Enfield where everyone is treated with dignity and respect.
7. Reduce social isolation and improve mental health by making every contact count, increasing the use of social prescribing and developing inclusive community spaces and services
8. The values of listening and learning are upheld enabling the voice and concerns of residents and communities to be heard.

Background

9. The Children Young People & Education Scrutiny Panel considered Mental health and the effects of Covid on children and young people and staff working in schools at the meeting of on the 3rd February 2021.
10. The Youth Parliament provided a written paper to the committee and members also attended the meeting to raise concerns on this issue. They detailed anxiety, stress and worry caused by uncertainty over the future and young people's aspirations for the future and the need for more information to be available to all students to help them cope. They supported the need for more action and a mental health charter and policy to support young people and were keen to work with other stakeholders on this.
11. Unions were also in attendance at this meeting and spoke of long-term issues on mental health amongst teachers and support staff. Covid 19 has caused further deterioration in mental health issues. They shared the results of a recent survey and expressed concern that more action is needed to tackle the stress, anxiety and depression and prevent professionals from

wanting to leave their profession and tackle the root causes. The unions supported a mental health charter and were keen to work with the council on this.

12. Members of the scrutiny panel felt mental health is a very important issue and the pandemic has put a huge strain on young people and teachers and support staff. The key issues identified during the debate were: information, uncertainty and staff wellbeing.
13. The Scrutiny panel felt urgent action was needed and with the support of the Youth Parliament and the Unions 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.
14. The CYPE's scrutiny Panel work on Exclusions was discussed at the meeting on the 18th January, with issues continuing from the Exclusions workstream that had previously been considered. The Panel recognised the good practice that was in place and felt that they would like to continue to monitor the progress by focussing on the areas listed in paragraph 4.
15. The bullet points cover quite a wide range of issues, and the scrutiny panel will need to give some consideration how this is planned and managed effectively at the Panels work planning session at the start of the new municipal year.

Main Considerations for the Council

16. The referral to OSC is in accordance with the Scrutiny Procedure Rules.
17. Referrals from OSC to Cabinet will be required to go through the appropriate consultation process, as detailed in the constitution.

Safeguarding Implications

18. None identified.

Public Health Implications

19. There are no direct public health implications linked to this report, but rather what happens as a result of scrutiny

Equalities Impact of the Proposal

20. Equalities impact assessments relating to recommendations that scrutiny may make will be assessed through the scrutiny process.

Environmental and Climate Change Considerations

21. None identified.

Risks that may arise if the proposed decision and related work is not taken

22. There are no risks associated with this report.

Risks that may arise if the proposed decision is taken and actions that will be taken to manage these risks

23. There are no risks associated with this report.

Financial Implications

24. Any cost implications of recommendations made from scrutiny must be contained within budgeted resources.

Legal Implications

25. The recommendations within this report are lawful and will help support the Council in meeting its statutory obligations for effective overview and scrutiny.

26. The Council has statutory duties within an existing legal framework to make arrangements for the scrutiny of its decisions and service delivery.

Workforce Implications

27. None identified.

Property Implications

28. None identified

Other Implications

29. None identified

Options Considered

30. The Overview & Scrutiny Committee, under the Council's Constitution, has the right to make comment or make recommendations to the Cabinet.

Conclusions

31. The Committee following debate at the meeting will resolve whether to refer the proposal to Cabinet.

Report Author: Claire Johnson
Head of Governance, Scrutiny & Registration Services,
Claire.Johnson@enfield.gov.uk
020 8 132 1154

Date of report 24/03/2021