

Decisions of the Children, Education & Safeguarding Committee

5 May 2021

Members Present:-

Councillor David Longstaff (Chairman)

Councillor Felix Byers (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Anne Clarke

Councillor Pauline Coakley Webb

Councillor Val Duschinsky

Councillor Linda Freedman

Councillor Rohit Grover

Councillor Anne Hutton

Councillor Nagus Narenthira

Councillor Julian Teare

Councillor Reuben Thompstone

1. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 30 November 2020 be agreed as a correct record.

2. ABSENCE OF MEMBERS

None

3. DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS PECUNIARY INTERESTS AND OTHER INTERESTS (IF ANY)

Councillor Anne Hutton declared a non-pecuniary interest (for all substantive agenda items) by virtue of being a Trustee of the Barnet Carer's Centre which has a contract with council for providing some of its children services.

Councillor Felix Byers declared a non-pecuniary interest in Agenda Item 8 – Covid 19 Winter Fund Scheme and Holiday Activity Fund Updates – by virtue of being a Trustee of UNITAS Youth Zone.

4. REPORT OF THE MONITORING OFFICER (IF ANY)

None.

5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND WRITTEN COMMENTS (IF ANY)

There were no public questions or comments received

6. MEMBERS' ITEMS (IF ANY)

There were no Members Items.

7. FAMILY SERVICES QUARTERLY UPDATE

The Executive Director for Children and Young People introduced the report which provided the Committee with an update on responses to the pandemic and Family Services progress against key areas. Also included in the report at Appendix 1 was the performance data.

Amongst the key highlights of the report;

- Attendance for children with a social worker for Educational Health Care Plans and for Free School Meal pupils was higher in Barnet than the national figures.
- Social workers, foster carers and the children's work force had continued to delivery face to face work with children and young people.
- All the information in the ChAT was summarised in the performance information, set out at paragraph 1.9 to 1.21. There are areas that the service continues to focus on, specifically issues around Education Employment and Training for care leavers.
- The new children's home was in the final stages of construction and handing over. Officers would be arranging (subject to the pandemic) visits to the home before the children go into that provision.

With regards to young people being educated at home the Executive Director agreed to bring back a full report on Elective Home Education to the next meeting. Included in the report would also be update the on some of the safeguarding activity.

The Committee had the opportunity to question officers and discuss the report.

RESOLVED – That the Children, Education and Safeguarding Committee note and provide comments on the performance information summarised in the report, and provided in Appendix 1.

8. COVID 19 WINTER FUND SCHEME AND HOLIDAY ACTIVITY FUND UPDATES

The Head of 0-19 Early Help introduced the report which set out the delivery progress for both the Covid 19 Winter Fund Scheme and the Holiday Activity Fund programme.

Through CWFS it was possible to delivery support to;

- 9,965 children in the December/January payment
- 9,938 in the February payment and
- 13,866 in the March Payment – which was an extension.

She informed the Committee that the scheme had been renamed the Covid 19 Support Fund, with a further extension being given, with the aim to make payment by end of May/beginning of June.

£191,643.35 had been provided to Adult Services to support adults without children. Partners such as Mencap, Age UK and BOOST provided help and support to adults and families through their offer.

The Holiday Activity and Food programme is funded through the Department of Education and is particularly targeted at children who are eligible for the benefit element of Free School Meals. The programme provides full activities with food and with educational nutrition and healthy eating to children and their families for;

- 4 days a week
- 1 week at Easter
- 4 weeks over the summer holidays and;
- 1 day at Christmas

As part of the grant there is provision for children who may not be eligible for Free School Meals but where families are on low income.

A competition was held to name the programme and a young person from Fairway School came up with BACE - Barnet Active Creative Engaging holidays, for which they were given prize.

Where possible face to face activity was provided, particularly in areas of deprivation by working closely with the Young Barnet Foundation and partners within the VCS sector. Through some of the children centres and early help hubs, children were able to access online activities if they did not have any IT access at home or space to do the activities.

The Committee had the opportunity to question officers and discuss the report.

RESOLVED -

That the Children, Education and Safeguarding Committee noted:

- 1. The progress of the distribution of the CWFS**
- 2. The progress and future plans for delivery of the HAF programme**

9. COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

There Committee noted the work programme, which would be updated to include the following item for the June meeting:

- Report on Elective Home Education

10. ANY ITEM(S) THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT

There were no urgent items.

The meeting finished at 8.03 pm