

# Decisions of the Children, Education & Safeguarding Committee

13 January 2020

Members Present:-

Councillor David Longstaff (Chairman)  
Councillor Rohit Grover (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Julian Teare	Councillor Anne Clarke
Councillor Pauline Coakley Webb	Councillor Reuben Thompstone
Councillor Linda Freedman	Councillor Felix Byers
Councillor Anne Hutton	Councillor Nagus Narenthira
Councillor Val Duschinsky	

## 1. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The Chairman of the Committee, Councillor David Longstaff welcomed all attendees to the meeting.

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 10 September 2019 be agreed as a correct record.

## 2. ABSENCE OF MEMBERS

None.

## 3. DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS AND NON-PECUNIARY INTERESTS

It was noted that Members of the Committee all declared a non-pecuniary interest in relation to Agenda Item 10 by virtue of being Council-appointed School Governors.

## 4. REPORT OF THE MONITORING OFFICER (IF ANY)

None.

## 5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS (IF ANY)

The responses to the Public Questions were published and tabled prior to the meeting. The Committee received supplementary questions from Ms Brooker, speaking on behalf of Mr Sandford, and Mr Salinger which were responded to verbally by Officers.

## 6. MEMBERS' ITEMS (IF ANY)

None.

## 7. FAMILY SERVICES QUARTERLY UPDATE REPORT

The Chairman introduced the Family Services Quarterly Update report and invited Chris Munday, Executive Director for Children and Young People to present the report.

Following the presentation and summary of the report, the Committee referred to the advocacy data in section 1.5 and queried the reasons for placing young people out of the borough.

Mr Munday informed the Committee about the descriptor for out of borough and noted that some foster carers which Family Services have worked with are based out of borough. Officers also noted that due to certain risks young people are placed out of borough on the basis of needs.

Members were informed that Looked after Children remain under the responsibility of the Local Authority and that the Care Plans for young people are reviewed on a regular basis.

Following a query about the vacancy rate for social workers, the Committee noted the initiatives to ensure the recruitment of apprenticeships and high quality social workers including the launch of the 'Return to Social Work' programme. Mr Munday also noted the emphasis on detailed qualifications and continual professional development for social workers.

Officers also noted the range of actions taken to advertise the workforce offer in Barnet as widely as possible. In addition, Members noted the work undertaken to encourage people with a wide variety of backgrounds and skill sets to come into social work practice.

In reference to the Make your Mark ballot, Members asked to receive the outcome of the consultation. Officers noted that the outcome together with Youth section survey will be reported to this Committee at its May meeting. (**Action:** Forward Work Programme)

The Committee requested information about the Looked after Children missing from placement. Officers informed the Committee about the work being undertaken with community groups, Police, Local Authorities and other partners to collaborate effectively as a multi-disciplinary partnership to confirm their location.

The Committee noted the work being undertaken to formulate a plan tailored for each child taking into account various factors such as risk and behavioural patterns in order to collectively gather intelligence.

Members asked about the actions being taken together with services across the Council, to reduce the number of young people who are not in employment, education or training.

Brigitte Jordaan Director of Children Social Care Family Services informed the Committee that a number of initiatives are taking place to reduce this figure consistently by offering a range of options for young people such as apprenticeships.

The Committee referred to the social work visits and asked how the work was being monitored and delivered. Mr Munday noted that visitations continue to be purposeful and that work will continue to be delivered on improving recordings of meetings.

It was unanimously RESOLVED:

- 1. That the Committee noted and scrutinised as above the Children's Social Care performance information provided in Appendix 1.**

2. That the Committee noted and scrutinised as above progress of performance against our corporate parenting responsibilities provided in Appendix 2.
3. That the committee noted and scrutinised as above progress of performance against our Ofsted Self Evaluation provided in Appendix 3.
4. That the committee noted new resource packs from the Local Government Association for Corporate Parenting and Support for Care Leavers in Appendices 4 and 5.

## 8. CHILDREN IN CARE RESIDING IN UNREGULATED PLACEMENTS

The Chairman welcomed the report and Mr Munday and Ms Jordaan presented the report.

The Committee requested information about the quality of services offered by the providers. Officers noted that known and trusted providers have been used for services and that checks take place conducted by the Local Authority to check the qualifications and skill level among their staff.

In response to a query from the Committee, Ms Jordaan noted that in case any concerns are raised, the Placement teams will work on a Planning meeting to take action whilst ensuring that the child is supported well at all times throughout the process.

The Committee noted the support service provided to asylum seeking children and Officers spoke about the support offered from the multi-lingual team and the programme to fit children into schools as part of the new Transitional hub programme.

The Chairman welcomed the report and discussion. It was unanimously **RESOLVED**:

**That the Committee considered and noted the information in the report.**

## 9. BARNET SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN PARTNERSHIP BOARD ANNUAL REPORT 2018-19

The Chairman welcomed the Annual Safeguarding Children Partnership Board report and invited Ben Thomas, Strategic Lead for Children and Young People to present the item.

The Committee expressed concerns about the current processes but welcomed the proposed new multi-agency safeguarding arrangements as detailed in the report.

The Committee asked how the new multi-agency safeguarding arrangement will be better. Mr Thomas noted the benefits of operating through a smaller group size and noted the emphasis on performance and quality with a focus on undertaking actions and deep dives on important themes and issues around safeguarding.

Members queried about the arrangements for mental health support services for children and young people. Officers informed Members about the online counselling services offered via KOOTH.

Officers also spoke about the range of programmes available to ensure that young people can access the service provision that they need. This includes the support services in place for care leavers that do not yet fall within the adult social care service. In addition, the Committee noted the ongoing training to foster carers throughout the year to identify risks and challenging behaviour.

It was unanimously **RESOLVED**:

**That the Committee considered the report and provided comments as above prior to final approval by the Barnet Safeguarding Children's Board.**

## **10. ANNUAL REPORT ON SCHOOL FUNDING IN BARNET FOR 2020/21**

The Chairman welcomed the item and Mr Ian Harrison Education and Skills Director, Barnet with Cambridge Education summarised and presented the report.

Following a query from the Committee in relation to section 1.18 of the report, Mr Harrison informed Members about the work undertaken to work together with schools to produce balanced budgets.

Whilst responsibility lies with schools, this includes the Local Authority working with schools to monitor spending throughout the year and maintain dialogue to tackle any budget issues early on. Initiatives also includes encouraging schools to plan ahead and work closely with other schools.

In response to the request from the Committee, Mr Harrison agreed to circulate a list of schools with licensed deficits to Members of the Committee. (**Action**: Mr Ian Harrison)

It was unanimously **RESOLVED** that the **Committee**:

- 1. Noted the annual report on school funding in Barnet.**
- 2. Approved the submission of the Authority Proforma Tool (which specifies the authority's funding formula for schools) on the basis of paragraphs 1.13 to 1.31, which includes a Minimum Funding Guarantee of +1.84% and means that every primary and secondary school will receive an increase in funding per pupil of at least this percentage in 2020/21, (through the pupil-led element of the schools funding formula), while any schools gaining from the introduction of the National Funding Formula will not have their gains capped.**
- 3. Noted that the overall Schools Budget will be considered by the Policy and Resources Committee at its next meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> February 2020 for onward submission to full council as part of the budget setting process.**
- 4. Recommended to Council that any changes to the Schools Budget reasonably required as a result of the final 2020/21 Dedicated Schools Grant and Post-16 settlement are delegated for decision to the Executive Director, Children's Services in consultation with the Director of Finance.**

**11. BUSINESS PLANNING**

The Committee noted the report and it was **RESOLVED\*** that:

- 1. That the Committee noted the MTFs proposals that relate to the committee as set out in Appendix A after having considered the initial equalities impacts and refer their comments to Policy and Resources Committee for eventual decision by Full Council.**
- 2. That the Committee approved the increases in fees charges listed set out in Table 3 and refer them for noting to Policy and Resources Committee.**

\*Votes were declared as follows:

For	7
Against	4
Abstentions	0

**12. COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2020**

The Committee noted the standing item on the agenda which lists the business items for consideration by the Committee during 2020.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Committee noted the **Forward Work Programme 2020**.

**13. ANY OTHER ITEM(S) THAT THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT (IF ANY)**

None.

**14. MOTION TO EXCLUDE THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

The Chairman moved the motion to exclude the press and public. The public gallery was cleared.

**15. EXEMPT APPENDIX - CORPORATE PARENTING**

The Committee noted the exempt information.

**16. ANY OTHER EXEMPT ITEM(S) THAT THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT (IF ANY)**

None.

The meeting finished at 8.45 pm