

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

11 JANUARY 2017

PRESENT

Councillor M. Young (in the Chair).

Councillors R. Bowker, C. Boyes, K. Carter, M. Cordingley (Vice-Chairman), Mrs. P. Dixon, J. Holden, D. Hopps and D. Western

Also Present

Cllr Mrs L. Evans - Executive Members for Transformation & Resources
Cllr M. Hyman - Executive Member for Children's Services

In attendance

Jill Colbert - Interim Corporate Director, Children, Families & Wellbeing
Anne Birch - Interim Director Standards, Quality and Performance
Peter Forrester - Head of Governance
Dominique Adcock - Interim Senior Solicitor
Jane Bryan - Secondary School Improvement Advisor
Fiona Wright - Head Teacher, St Antony's Catholic College
Chris Gaffey - Democratic and Scrutiny Officer

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors S. Adshead and J. Harding

28. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 16 November 2016, be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

29. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made by Members.

30. CLOSING THE GAP TASK & FINISH GROUP UPDATE

The Committee received a report of the Executive Member for Children's Services providing Members with an update on the progress made against the recommendations of the Closing the Gap Task and Finish group review. The Executive Member for Children's Services addressed each recommendation individually, advising what actions had been taken to date.

Members continued to feel that recommendation 1 had been misinterpreted, as the recommendation was made in relation to all children of pre-school age, not just children in care. The Interim Corporate Director, Children, Families and Wellbeing advised that Trafford had the highest performance across the region in this area, with 99 per cent of two year olds in a good or outstanding setting.

Members welcomed the progress made on the collaborative work undertaken as part of recommendation 2, but were disappointed to learn that the funding requested as part of recommendation 3 had not been agreed. The progress made

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against recommendation 4 was noted, and the Executive Member for Children's Services reiterated his desire to attend one of the resilience workshops mentioned in recommendation 6.

The Committee discussed the letter sent to parents as part of recommendation 7 and whether this had been successful in identifying children eligible for Pupil Premium funding. The Interim Director Standards, Quality and Performance agreed to review the Pupil Premium data and circulate the findings to Members. It was suggested that more innovative schemes should be considered in an attempt to raise Pupil Premium take up even further.

Members welcomed the reduction in the attainment gap, but were in agreement that more work was required to reduce this even further. The Executive Member for Children's Services agreed, and assured Members that this would remain in sharp focus.

The Chairman requested that an update on the attainment figures be brought back to the Committee in a year's time.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the report be noted.
- 2) That a progress update on reducing the attainment gap be brought to the Committee in a year's time.

31. ALL AGE HOME TO SCHOOL TRANSPORT UPDATE

The Committee received a report of the Executive Member Children's Services. The report provided Members with an update on progress against the recommendations made as part of the Scrutiny Committee's Task and Finish Group review of the All Age Travel Assistance Policy. The report also provided an update on the impact of the new policy, which came into effect on 1st June 2016, with full implementation from 1st September 2016.

Members discussed the contract retendering process, as well as the upcoming review of the journey mapping system. Members were advised that although the current software was comprehensive, regular upgrades were required to ensure that the systems in place remained up to date.

Members were advised of the statutory requirement to have the full and final policy in place by May 2017, and the Interim Corporate Director, Children, Families and Wellbeing agreed to present this to the Committee following its completion.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

32. ANNUAL DELIVERY PLAN 2016/17 - Q2 PERFORMANCE REPORT

The Committee received a report of the Executive Member for Transformation and Resources providing a summary of performance against the Council's Annual Delivery Plan, 2016/17, covering the period 1 July 2016 to 30 September 2016.

Whilst discussing the public perception of how antisocial behaviour and crime were dealt with by the Police and the Council, it was suggested that this should be a topic for review by the Committee. The Executive Member for Transformation and Resources agreed to provide Members with a written explanation of how the perception is currently measured.

Members discussed the Council's sickness policy and statistics, as well as the ongoing issue with delayed transfers of care. The Interim Corporate Director, Children, Families and Wellbeing acknowledged that Trafford's performance in this area required improvement, but reminded Members of the ongoing challenges faced by the Local Authority. Trafford's average patient age of 72 coupled with the loss of funding received in previous years placed a significant strain on services, and Members were advised that demand was up by 40 per cent from the previous year. Significant work continued to be undertaken in an attempt to tackle the issue, with an agreed action plan in place with providers. The Interim Corporate Director, Children, Families and Wellbeing agreed to provide Members with information on how Trafford were performing in this area compared to other Local Authorities.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

33. BUDGET SCRUTINY REPORT TO EXECUTIVE

The Scrutiny Committee's Review of the Executive's Draft Budget Proposals for 2017-18 was brought to the meeting for information. The report and its recommendations would be considered at the Executive meeting scheduled for 23 January, 2017, and a response would be provided in due course.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

34. SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee received a report of the Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee setting out the updated work programme for the 2016/17 municipal year.

Members requested that an item on Police & Crime be added to the Scrutiny Committee work programme. Members also requested that a 'watch-list' be developed, which would enable the Committee to keep apprised of any issues that may need to be reviewed by Scrutiny.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the report be noted.

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- 2) That an item on Police & Crime be added to the Scrutiny Committee's ongoing work programme.

The meeting commenced at 6.30 pm and finished at 7.50 pm