

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE ESSEX YOUTH SCRUTINY  
COMMITTEE HELD ON 1 JULY 2010 AT 6.30 PM AT COUNTY HALL,  
CHELMSFORD**

Membership

Carrieann Adams	Christopher Lee
Paul Connolly	* Damion Lewis (Chairman)
* Aimi Garwood	* Chloe Mayes
* Laura James	Joedy Ray
Rachael Fane-Lodge	* Natasha Reynolds (Vice-Chairman)
* Heather Land	

(\* present)

The following officers were present in support throughout the meeting:

Vivien Door	- Committee Officer
Colin Ismay	- Governance Officer
Vanessa Rogers	- Youth Worker Consultant
Zoe Williams	- Advanced Practitioner, Integrated Youth Service
Samantha Ball	- Committee Assistant

Councillors J Aldridge and C Riley and Lynne Blount, Senior Advisory Teacher for Behaviour were also in attendance.

**1. Appointment of Chairman and Vice Chairman**

Colin Ismay, Governance Manager opened the meeting and asked the Committee for nominations to elect a Chairman.

Damion Lewis was nominated as Chairman by Natasha Reynolds and seconded by both Heather Land and Aimi Garwood.

Damion Lewis then appointed Natasha Reynolds as his Vice Chairman.

**2. Apologies**

The Committee Officer reported apologies for absence from Carrieann Adams, Paul Connolly and Christopher Lee.

**3. Welcome**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the Essex Youth Scrutiny Committee meeting.

**4. Update on the Last Laugh**

Colin Ismay informed the Committee that copies of the DVD had just arrived and a copy of the DVD and Teachers pack would be sent to every secondary school in Essex.

Vanessa Rogers informed the Committee that the DVD had been entered for national awards and that the film would be available on the website. The film was very different to other Anti-Bullying films. Councillor Aldridge suggested that the Essex County Council Media office should be contacted to promote the DVD to a wider audience.

## **5. Progress report on the Anti-Bullying Recommendations made by the Committee**

Councillor S Candy, Cabinet Member for Children's Services had been invited to attend this meeting. Unfortunately she had been unable to attend due to a prior engagement, and had asked Councillor C Riley to represent her. Lynne Blount, Senior Advisory Teacher for Behaviour was also in attendance to support Councillor Riley. Councillor Candy had provided a report, EYSC/01/10 addressing the Recommendations in the report. The Committee asked further questions regarding its Recommendations.

The Chairman invited Councillor Riley and Lynne Blount to speak to the Committee. Both Councillor Riley and Lynne Blount thanked the Committee for the opportunity to address the Committee.

The Committee then asked a series of questions for each Recommendation.

### **Recommendation 1**

The good work that was being done by all agencies should be fully co-ordinated to ensure maximum benefit for the young people of Essex. Agencies should work together to do everything possible to enable victims of bullying to speak out at the earliest opportunity.

**Owners:** All Local Strategic Partnership Agencies

**Implementation Review date:** May 2010

**Impact Review date:** May 2011

The Local Children's Trust Boards in South East and South West Essex recognize that addressing bullying is priority for young people across South Essex. Through our work we aim to explore how, as agencies working together in partnership, we might co-ordinate and support anti-bullying policies, strategies and projects to reduce bullying that in turn will support children and young people who suffer the impact bullying.

### **Who sits on the Staying Safe Group?**

Councillor Riley informed the Committee that the Director for Vulnerable Children, Service Managers from the Youth service, and Fire Service, Anti-Bullying Strategy Lead, Anti-bullying Coordinator, Director for Commissioning, Head of Partnerships and Business all sit on the Staying Safe Group.

**How were you ensuring that voluntary organizations were involved in sharing their good practice?**

Councillor Riley stated that the Council had been working with a number of organisations, for example, Childline, CHIPs, Stonewall, Beatbullying. The Anti-Bullying Coordinator and Strategy Lead for Anti-bullying attend a regional South East meeting which include Bedford, Hertfordshire, Northampton, Suffolk and Norfolk organised by the Anti-bullying Alliance. This group meet once a term and received presentations from a range of different organisations. If the voluntary organisation had capacity they were asked to support these Local Authorities.

**How were you learning about good practice in Essex County Council – how were agencies talking to each other?**

Councillor Riley informed the Committee that Essex had multi agency conferences to share information on ways to tackle anti-bullying. A number of multi-agency groups were asked to work together on a specific task to find a common solution.

**What you say was good, but how was that enabling the victims of bullying to speak up at the earliest opportunity?**

The Council was still trying to find what would make children and young people feel safe to tell. Interviews had taken place with 121 children this year and suggest that children and young people want to talk face to face but would really prefer to tell a friend rather than an adult. Most children and young people said they would want to speak privately with an adult.

Lynne Blount informed the Committee that where children and young people trust their teacher they were happy to tell them about any bullying they or a friend receives. Some companies had offered a text system nationally where children and young people could text if they were worried about bullying but the companies had found that this system did not work. One particular company said that only one child and young person used the text system each week to inform them about bullying. The Cabinet Member and officers were concerned that they could ensure that whatever we recommend actually works.

**Since we saw witnesses in October what had been done? Many of the things in your response we were told about then.**

The Committee was informed in October 2009 about things that were due to happen shortly. The Cybersurvey, for example, was planned but had only just been completed this month. Essex had trained more staff than initially expected and had spoken to more children and young people.

**How many of the 500 young people consulted were over 11 years old? (Remember EYSC consulted with 2,500)**

Councillor Riley informed the Committee that the number of children and young people consulted was much higher than 500 when the Essex Cybersurvey was included as the views of 1,452 children and young people were sought.

The breakdown for age range was:

- 10-11 years old 31%
- 12-13 years old 46%
- 14-15 years old 20%
- 16+ years old 03%

15 focus groups of 121 children and young people took place which contributed to the workbook discussion on bullying. There were no confirmed figures for this activity. This year nearly 14,000 took part in a huge survey across the whole county for both primary and secondary schools and was the largest number of children and young people consulted in Essex. The rest of the five hundred was made up from a variety of smaller groups in Short Stay Schools and from discussions Behaviour Support Staff had had with individual children in both primary and secondary schools during the course of their work.

Zoe Williams informed the Committee that there were 37,000 13 to 19 year old young people in Essex; this information was based on the Key Performance Indicator.

Lynne Blount informed the Committee that there was a national survey, TELLUS, compiled by Ofsted Inspectors, which asks 13 to 14,000 children and young people across Essex about health issues including bullying. They completed an online survey on a range of subjects from Health to bullying. Each Local Authority was compared with their statistical neighbours, for example, Hertfordshire. The data had only just been released and it shows that over the last 4 years children and young people who had been bullied at least sometimes in the last month was gradually reducing in Essex. It had reduced every year for 4 years. This was not happening in every other local authority in the country so real progress was being made. Unfortunately this survey would no longer take place as the new coalition government would not continue with it. Each Local Authority would continue with its own surveys, but these do not ask for the same information and therefore cannot be compared easily. Essex County Council's School Health Education Unit (SHEU) survey includes questions about bullying. 14,000 children and young people were surveyed this year with 10,000 last year and 9,000 the previous year. The 14,000 children and young people comprised of 8,000 from primary sector and 6,000 from secondary sector. One question asked in the SHEU survey was, "were you frightened to go to school", the percentage of children frightened to attend school had dropped since last year, 2% in primary and 1.1% in the secondary sector. Children and young people were asked, "if they felt threatened, were pushed or ganged up on", this result had reduced by 9% in the primary sector and 3% in the secondary sector.

#### **What area was consulted and when was this done?**

The Schools must remain anonymous as they were assured confidentiality. The whole of Essex was covered in this survey with just one part of Essex for the Cybersurvey. Other children were consulted from right across the whole county, wherever Behaviour Support staff was working at the time. The large survey took place in the Autumn/Spring Terms and the Cybersurvey this

Spring and published this month. Other discussions with children took place throughout the year.

The Committee was still concerned that a text system was not available to inform adults about bullying in the same way as there was for knife crime.

Recommendation 2 and 3 were taken together.

### **Recommendation 2**

Agencies should pool funding or seek sponsorship to create a confidential 'Bully Text Alert' service that enables:

Victims to report bullying and gain support

Young people who witness bullying to report it anonymously

Bullies who want to stop to find support

This should be promoted via "flagpens" or cards to all children and young people in Essex and link to support offered through existing services, including police, health & youth services.

**Owners:** All Local Strategic Partnership Agencies

**Implementation Review date:** May 2010

**Impact Review date:** May 2011

### **Recommendation 3**

The Young Essex Assembly should be consulted in the development of promotion and marketing of the 'Bully Text Alert' service. They should consult with other young people to ensure the design was young people friendly.

**Owner:** Executive Member for Children

**Implementation Review date:** May 2010

**Impact Review date:** May 2011

**The text service idea was very important to the young people we consulted with and a key feature in our film. In recommendation 2 you say you arranged a meeting and it was cancelled. When was the next meeting to take place?**

**Had you spoken to other existing services that offer this to see if it could be used in Essex?**

Lynne Blount informed the Committee that more research was required before investing in this project. Beatbullying a very well respected organisation had produced some research which suggests that children and young people do not use text services to report bullying in any large numbers. Essex County Council's research with a number of children and young people this year also suggests that children and young people would much rather talk face to face with an adult. More research needs to be completed before a decision was made and explore who offers this service. Some organisations would be losing funding because of the recession and it would be easier for us to check this out after September and make appointments with organisations that were still funded. Beatbullying, for example, would not provide this service because their research says it doesn't work. If Essex sets up a text system it would be piloted in a small area of Essex first to ensure it works.

**Could it not be a free text that goes to Connexions Direct or Childline?**

That was a possibility but with the change of government and the recession it was unknown which organisations would still have funding. Essex would need to wait until the autumn term before it could make a decision to start discussions with any available companies.

**The young people we spoke to really liked the idea that the text service would be confidential and anonymous as this was one of the main issues about bullying. We told them that our recommendations were going to be taken seriously and that getting involved could make things change. Were you taking it seriously?**

Councillor Riley informed the Committee that Essex was taking its recommendations very seriously and was investing the research. Essex County Council had a duty to safeguard children and young people in Essex. The Cabinet Members and officers were all very passionate about the safety of children and young people.

Councillor Riley informed the Committee that it would need to receive further information from Sean Russo, Student Behaviour & Safeguarding Officer, Passenger Transport regarding Recommendations 4 and 5. The Committee Officer would contact Sean Russo for further information.

#### **Recommendation 4**

Schools and Passenger Transport should require all school transport operators to use and monitor CCTV and adopt the best practice standards set by the best of the operators in Essex.

**Owner:** Executive Member for Children

**Implementation Review date:** May 2010

**Impact Review date:** May 2011

**Your response seems to have missed the point. In October the transport witness stated that school buses that had CCTV had seen a reduction in bullying and poor behaviour on the bus. We were suggesting that ECC said that companies commissioned to provide school buses had to have CCTV. Could that be done?**

Passenger Transport had continued to hold meetings with Schools/ Operators and have identified specific problems/issues. Key Meetings have been held with:

- Thurstable School & Network Colchester
- Notley High School & Flagfinders
- Tendring Technology College & Hedingham Buses
- Helena Romanes School & Don's (Op for 2010/11 year)

Further meetings with School or Operators take place individually where necessary. All Operators have been encouraged to include CCTV as part of the Quality section on their Tenders and Passenger Transport actively look for the provision of CCTV as an additional benefit and value of the contract.

Passenger Transport sourced funding for CCTV for two problem routes (one route into Thurstable and one into Notley High). CCTV was funded as the

vehicles were also used to serve members of the public on bus routes so the benefits extend to the wider community. Operators were continually encouraged to provide CCTV to raise the quality of their services.

**Prefects seem like an interesting idea but how were they selected? What responsibilities would they have? Why do you think bullies would listen to them? What training would they have? It was a lot to ask of a student to monitor and maybe have to deal with bad behaviour. How would they be protected?**

Passenger Transport do not appoint Bus Prefects or Monitors, although certain schools have appointed the students, therefore the school takes responsibility for the student. Some schools appoint a Bus Monitor for every school year. Passenger Transport asks schools that when they appoint these students to these roles that the Students remain anonymous to protect them and advise schools not to police vehicle as could put students in danger. The Bus Monitors report on the drivers and other student's behaviour and the timetable.

These Bus Monitors have identified a few incidents when CCTV had not been checked regularly, the CCTV was then looked at and identified the problem. This highlighted the need to contractors to check their CCTV on a regular basis.

#### **Recommendation 5**

Schools and Passenger Transport should classify reported incidences of bad behaviour on school transport operators; including a specific bullying classification.

**Owner:** Executive Member for Children

**Implementation Review date:** May 2010

**Impact Review date:** May 2011

**What were all the 'ban' categories?**

**Was this Ban system the result of our recommendation, because in October at the witness day the man said that they didn't have separate categories for incidents?**

Passenger Transport introduced Ban categories this Academic Year as a pilot project and would review this by the end of the year to see if any amendments or extra categories need to be introduced. So far we have the following category classifications:

- **BANT – Ticketing Issue;**
- **BANS – Standing, always out of seat etc;**
- **BANP – Anti-Social Acts towards passengers;**
- **BANL – Littering, Smoking etc;**
- **BANH – Discrimination (Racism etc);**
- **BAND – Anti-Social Acts towards Driver;**
- **BANB – Bullying sustained;**
- **BANO – 'Other'.**

**Recommendation 6**

All new teachers and professionals working with young people should receive anti-bullying training that was updated regularly and co-ordinated to give the same messages. This should include training around positive relationships, body image and assertiveness skills.

**Owner:** Executive Member for Children

**Implementation Review date:** May 2010

**Impact Review date:** May 2011

**At the conferences you mention, which were last year, we found a school to work with us on the film project. What other new work had happened?**

Councillor Riley informed the Committee that Essex had two large conferences on Cyber bullying and Homophobic bullying and had increased the number of Anti-Bullying lead professionals in school to 58% of schools, this figure was rising every month. The Anti-Bullying lead professionals receive information on bullying and how to prevent it. Over 1400 staff had been trained in schools and within the Local Authority to ensure that more people promote the anti-bullying message. The primary Behaviour Support staff had been trained to deliver cyber bullying awareness training for all parents. A number of parents had been trained including a group who did not speak English. Schools had been helped to set up peer mentoring schemes. Essex had responded in 24 hours to any concern from a parent with support for the school, the parent and the young person until the situation had been resolved. Information had been provided to school SEMCO's (Special Needs Coordinators) at cluster meetings and had helped a number of schools develop and review their Anti-bullying Policies.

**Many of the young people we spoke to say that teachers do nothing about bullying and adults don't understand. We show this in our film. How would you involve young people in teacher training and how was this put into practice?**

Officers would use the DVD in training. Most of the other DVDs used in training also had children and young people in them. Some were very powerful and some teachers get very upset when we show them.

**We really hope our DVD/ training resource would be used to train teachers as well as used with young people in schools. Was this likely?**

Yes this DVD would be used to train teachers.

Zoe Williams asked how young people could become involved in training teachers. Lynne Blount informed the Committee that it would be difficult to include young people to train teachers as some schools would not like the public to know that they were attending anti-bullying training, as schools perceive that the public would think that there was a lot of bullying taking place at particular schools. Whereas the evidence illustrated that where schools take anti-bullying training the amount of bullying within the school reduces. Schools were independent of the Local Authority and cannot be forced to do anything. The Local Authority could offer advice but the school does not have to accept it.



**Recommendation 7**

The Schools, Children and Families Directorate should ensure the adoption of best practice across all schools. This would include all schools ensuring that their anti-bullying policy was openly displayed and that it was clearly explained to all pupils, their parents/carers and professionals. This should include sanctions for bullying, rights of appeal and pastoral support available for both the bullied and bullies.

**Owner:** Executive Member for Children

**Implementation Review date:** May 2010

**Impact Review date:** May 2011

**What does 'restorative justice' mean and what were the methods you use?**

Lynne Blount informed the Committee that "restorative justice" was a way of helping children and young people to resolve the issues they face themselves with adult support if necessary. When children and young people were asked why they did not tell anyone they were being bullied the vast majority of them said, "Because I'm frightened it would make it worse if they were told off and/or severely punished". The "support group" method used in Essex follows the same principals as restorative justice; if you hurt someone you had a responsibility to put the situation right. Others also had a responsibility to support the children and young people who were upset. Sometimes Behaviour Support Teachers work with the whole class, children and young people and parents, it would depend on the incident. It was more complicated when children and young people with Special Educational Needs were bullied. There was a lot of evidence that it works well in both primary and secondary schools. Every Secondary School had a Secondary Behaviour Support Worker who was linked to the school.

**What does happen to bullies as so far the young people we had spoken to said that nothing happens, which was why no one ever says anything?**

Sometimes schools do take action but were unable to inform anyone due to confidentiality, on other occasions nothing was done. This was not necessarily because teachers do not want to do something but some of them were frightened that if they take a particular action it might make it worse and they were right about that, certain actions taken by adults could make it much worse. That was why training and working with teachers and Learning Support Assistants was so important. Teachers and Learning Support Assistants were shown how to use the method and then were observed putting it into practice to ensure that it was practiced correctly.

**What support was there for a bully to stop bullying?**

The "support group" approach in Essex helps children and young people to develop empathy skills, understanding how their behaviour affects others; they need to learn this before the bullying stops. The vast majority of children and young people who bully lack empathy skills, they do not understand the impact of their behaviour on others. Sometimes the children and young people who bully need help to develop their own social skills; these skills could be

taught in school. The Behaviour Support Service helps teachers to run these programmes of support.

**What support was there for families of bullies and victims?**

Home School Liaison Workers within Behaviour Support help families by visiting the home and provide information. Also if a parent was very concerned about bullying and feels that the school could do more they could telephone Contact Essex to give the basic details. The parent would then be contacted by a member of the Behaviour Support Team who would contact the school to offer support. Schools could refuse the support, however, most do not and the Behaviour Support Teacher would support both the school and the parent until the situation was resolved.

**In our recommendation we suggested that all schools should display their anti-bullying policy clearly and explain it to pupils and parents so they understand. Why couldn't this be achieved?**

85% of schools now had an updated Anti-bullying policy. This should be available to parents, and parents and children and young people should be consulted on it as recommend in the training. Schools must by law have a policy and parents could ask to see it.

Councillor Aldridge informed the Committee that some schools publish their Anti-Bullying Policy in the school foyer and some had it on their websites. All School Governors should be aware that every school should have an Anti-Bullying Policy. School Governors were given Anti-Bullying training. Councillor Aldridge suggested that as each school had a link on the Essex County Council website that they should be encouraged to publish their Anti-Bullying Policy on this website as Essex County Council managed the website. The Governance Officer would organise this.

**Recommendation 8**

All schools should have an effective CCTV surveillance system monitoring inside and outside the school.

**Owner:** Executive Member for Children

**Implementation Review date:** May 2010

**Impact Review date:** May 2011

**How do you encourage the schools to had CCTV?**

**You say there were more than 32 schools that had CCTV, why couldn't you ask the others to find out how many more had it?**

Councillor Riley stated that he was disappointed that only 32 schools had CCTV in their schools but informed the Committee that as CCTV was funded from the school's own budget the Local Authority could not ask schools to have CCTV when it was very costly. As bullies would find a quiet corner of a school which was not covered by CCTV cameras this was not a total deterrent for bullies. There was no evidence that this was 100% effective and it was also expensive.

**Recommendation 9**

Anti-bullying should be on the Personal, Social, Health and Economic education (PSHE) curriculum, to include positive relationships, peer pressure, body image and assertiveness skills. This should be co-ordinated from the range of agencies currently offering in-school training.

**Owner:** Executive Member for Children

**Implementation Review date:** May 2010

**Impact Review date:** May 2011

**What was the seal curriculum?**

SEAL was the Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning. Every school had access to this information which cover bullying and relationships amongst others. There was, however, no legal requirement for schools to use the information but many do.

**How do you encourage and offer guidance for schools to teach about anti-bullying relationships in PSHE?**

There were a small team of Healthy Schools Advisors who advise schools. Schools could achieve Healthy Schools Status and at least 85% of schools had achieved this. When a school was inspected by Ofsted it was one of the things that the inspectors look for to see that the school was demonstrating that they were keeping children and young people safe, if they cannot do this they could fail the inspection. This was not statutory work and any non statutory work may not be funded in the future due to the Government cut backs.

**There was no mention of our DVD / teaching pack, yet Diane Le Count said it would be going into all schools – why?**

Colin Ismay informed the Committee that the first DVDs had been received two days ago. He would liaise with service areas as to how to take this forward to distribute the DVDs into schools the best time to do this would be at the beginning of a new term, September 2010.

**Recommendation 10**

All schools should record and report incidents of bullying, including pupil absence due to bullying and make this information available.

**Owner:** Executive Member for Children

**Implementation Review date:** May 2010

**Impact Review date:** May 2011

**What happens when teachers were bullying pupils – was that recorded?**

Schools should record this and deal with it under Safeguarding procedures it was taken seriously.

**Do you know why schools don't want to record bullying incidents? Was it because they may look bad?**

It was a very difficult issue for schools. Whilst many schools want to do this they were concerned that the information may become public by using the Freedom of Information Act. Schools with the highest recorded incidents of bullying were doing a much better job dealing with bullying than others where

children and young people did not want to report it. Unfortunately others outside schools may not understand that a school that had worked hard to make it safe to tell could be perceived as failing to deal with it. It was not a legal requirement currently for schools to record incidents although that could change with the new government. A pilot scheme had recently been set working with a group of 10 schools as an Incident Recording Group. It was hoped that these schools could be encouraged to share this form with other schools.

**What happens when parents make complaints? Should we recommend that young people should tell their parents to make more complaints?**

Complaints should be directed to the school in the first instance. Each school should have a published complaints procedure. If parents were unhappy with the response from a school they could phone Contact Essex. Behaviour Support Staff would then be contacted and would offer support to the parent, children and young people and the school. Schools could refuse the support and then there was nothing that the Local Authority could do. Schools were completely autonomous. Parents and children and young people would have the opportunity to speak to Ofsted Inspectors when they visit the school regarding their concerns.

**How could schools put in place anti-bullying policies when they don't know how many or what types of bullying they had in the school?**

Schools should know what types of bullying they had in school especially all those who took part in our large survey this year but they may need to be reminded by the school council or other groups of children and young people as well as by Behaviour Support Staff. 85% of schools do know because they had Healthy School status and they cannot get this without knowing about bullying.

**Recommendation 11**

Existing Peer Mentor schemes in schools should be evaluated and developed in other schools, based on 'what works'.

**Owner:** Executive Member for Children

**Implementation Review date:** May 2010

**Impact Review date:** May 2011

**Why was evaluation so expensive? This should be standard practice for the professionals running it to see if it works!**

A large number of schools had peer support schemes in Essex. External researchers would need to be bought in to evaluate this work which would be costly as Behaviour Support staff and many others in Essex had legal responsibilities within their job roles so would not have had the time to do this. Schools often evaluate their own practice by talking to children and young people about how it was working for them.

**What was the 'gate keeping' group?**

The Gate Keeping Group was made up of Local Authority officers and Headteachers and Union representatives. It was set up to ensure that only

vital information was sent out to schools because Headteachers were overloaded with paperwork. This group decided what could and could not be sent to schools by the Local Authority to ensure that Headteachers were not overloaded.

**What was the point of running a mentoring scheme if you don't evaluate it?**

Schools should be evaluating their own practice. When Behaviour Support Staff talk to children and young people they had asked about the school schemes. Ofsted Inspectors may ask children and young people about their schemes as part of the Inspection.

**What was a 'workbook activity' and was it relevant to young people, which was what we were looking at?**

The work book consists of a whole range of questions from staying Healthy to bullying. Diane Le Count and Lynne Blount contributed to the questions on your behalf, for example, asking how children and young people wanted to tell if they were being bullied and also if it would help if teachers regularly asked children and young people to score out of 10 how safe they were. Most children and young people said it would help but they wanted it to be confidential and away from other pupils. Some of the children and young people said they would rather talk face to face with someone than any other way, the number of children and young people taking part was quite small so further research would need to be completed.

**How could this learning / good work be shared with other schools to help them set it up?**

The new government had suggested that schools graded as 'Outstanding' by Ofsted should support others to develop best practice. There were no details about exactly when and how that would happen.

**Did you mean 'children', as in under 11's what about young people? This scrutiny was about setting up services for them.**

Services were provided for both children up to 11 years old and young people.

**Recommendation 12**

The Health Care in School, South Essex Pilot Scheme should be recommended as an example of best practice to the other Primary Care Trusts in Essex.

**Owners:** Chairmen of the Primary Care Trusts

**Implementation Review date:** May 2010

**Impact Review date:** May 2011

Information was being sought on this Recommendation.

**General information**

**We need to feedback to the young people we consulted with and we feel that none of our recommendations had been taken onboard. From these recommendations' and the information we got last October what had changed?**

The recommendations were not published and provided to us until December. Work had already taken place with further work continuing every day. All Behaviour Support staff work to keep children and young people safe in school and to increase the confidence of both parents and teachers in schools to prevent and deal with bullying. The Behaviour Support Staff evaluate every piece of work they do. Nearly all 1400+ adults had been trained showed an increase in their confidence scores to deal with bullying effectively after the training. The County was making real progress to reduce bullying in Essex and the data gathered illustrated that Essex was better than some other Local Authorities. We would continue to do our utmost to fulfil some of your expectations over the next few months.

Vanessa Rogers informed the Committee that when this Committee took evidence from Essex Police, who said that, they had more evidence of verbal and physical bullying than cyber bullying. Lynne Blount informed the Committee that children and young people from Year 6 upwards had been approached on internet sites regarding sexual, homophobic and death threats. Generally boys felt fine but girls felt more affected by this as girls tend to start rumours on internet social networks. Under 13 year olds had face book accounts even though it was illegal.

Councillor Aldridge informed the Committee that their questioning had been good but they may not have received the answers they wanted due to the economic down turn and Government cut backs. The DVD and Teachers pack would be sent to every secondary school and could be taken on board by each school council to ensure that schools take this work on board.

## 6. Summary

Colin Ismay thanked Councillor Riley and Lynne Blount for their honest answers and hoped that the Committee had learned a lot and been reassured. The Committee **Agreed** that:

- i) The Committee Officer would contact Sean Russo for information on Recommendations 4 and 5;
- ii) That the fear of bullying remains a crucial issue to the young people of Essex and should not be forgotten or lost even in times of financial constraints and public service reorganisations;
- iii) That Local Authorities work together to collect and analyse information regarding anti-bullying (SHEU), to enable them to compare and contrast across Local Authorities now that the national TELLUS statistics had been disbanded;
- iv) Add school policy information onto the Essex County Council website which include their anti-bullying policies;
- v) Continue to feed information into schools and raise awareness amongst Governors to get the message across;
- vi) CCTV, the Committee still felt that CCTV was a good deterrent in both schools and on school buses. Some further scrutiny work could be done on the benefits or otherwise of CCTV;
- vii) The Committee stood by its original recommendations and requested that the Children and Young People Policy and Scrutiny Committee

- should continue to monitor the implementation of its recommendations and any outcomes;
- viii) Greater use should be made of the YEA and Youth Councils to better understand young people's response to advice on avoiding cyber-bullying and why it does not appear to work;
  - ix) Essex County Council Media office should be contacted to promote the DVD to a wider audience.

Colin Ismay thanked the members of the Committee for their commitment and dedication to young people in South Essex by

## **7. Date of Next Meeting**

As this was the final meeting for this group there would be no further Committee meetings.

There being no further urgent business, the meeting closed at 8.40 pm.

Chairman