

Children and Young People Policy and Scrutiny Committee

10:00	Thursday, 07 March 2013	Committee Room 1, County Hall, Chelmsford, Essex
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NB **There will be a pre-meeting for Committee Members only at 9.30am, in Committee Room 1**

Quorum: 5

Membership

Councillor T Chapman
Councillor S Barker
Councillor J Baugh
Councillor A Brown
Councillor R Callender
Councillor J Deakin
Councillor I Grundy
Councillor E Hart
Councillor T Higgins
Councillor S Hillier
Councillor L Mead
Councillor D Morris
Councillor T Sargent
Councillor J Young

Chairman
Vice-Chairman

Vice-Chairman

Non-Elected Members

Richard Carson
Mark Christmas
Rev Richard Jordan
Marian Uzzell

For information about the meeting please ask for:

Matthew Waldie , Committee Officer

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Email: matthew.waldie@essex.gov.uk



Essex County Council

Essex County Council and Committees Information

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Please note that an audio recording may be made of the meeting – at the start of the meeting the Chairman will confirm if all or part of the meeting is being recorded.

Part 1

(During consideration of these items the meeting is likely to be open to the press and public)

Pages

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|----------|--|----------------|
| 1 | Apologies and Substitution Notices
The Committee Officer to report receipt of apologies for absence and substitution notices as appropriate. | |
| 2 | Declarations of Interest
To note any declarations of interest to be made by Members | |
| 3 | Minutes
To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 7 February 2013 (copy herewith) | 5 - 12 |
| 4 | Matters Arising/Chairman's Report | |
| 5 | Youth Strategy Groups
To receive a presentation on the work of Youth Strategy Groups from Michael O'Brien, Head of Youth Services. | |
| 6 | Youth Centres
To receive a presentation on Youth Centres from Michael O'Brien, Head of Youth Services. | |
| 7 | Safeguarding
To consider a review of the work of the Families Safeguarding Sub-Committee over the last 12 months (CYP/06/13). | 13 - 18 |
| 8 | Future Scrutiny Structure
To consider any potential issues relating to the scrutiny structure, or actual scrutiny itself, that may be of concern to Members, once any new arrangements are in place after the May elections. | |
| 9 | Urgent Business
To consider any matter which in the opinion of the Chairman should be considered in public by reason of special circumstances (to be specified) as a matter of urgency. | |

Exempt Items

(During consideration of these items the meeting is not likely to be open to the press and public)

To consider whether the press and public should be excluded from the meeting during consideration of an agenda item on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as specified in Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 or it being confidential for the purposes of Section 100A(2) of that Act.

In each case, Members are asked to decide whether, in all the circumstances, the public interest in maintaining the exemption (and discussing the matter in private) outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

10 Urgent Exempt Business

To consider in private any other matter which in the opinion of the Chairman should be considered by reason of special circumstances (to be specified) as a matter of urgency.

After a lunch break there will be a workshop session for Members commencing at 1.30pm

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE POLICY AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD AT COUNTY HALL, CHELMSFORD, ON THURSDAY 7 FEBRUARY 2013

County Councillors present:

T Chapman (Chairman)
S Barker (Vice-Chairman)
J Baugh
A Brown
R Callender
J Deakin

I Grundy
E Hart
T Higgins (Vice Chairman)
S Hillier
D Morris

Non-Elected Voting Member present:

Mr R Carson

The following Members were also present:

Councillor R Gooding	Items 1-6
Councillor R Madden	Items 1-5
Councillor V Metcalfe	Items 1-7

The following officers were present in support throughout the meeting:

Graham Redgwell	Governance Officer
Matthew Waldie	Committee Officer

The meeting opened at 10.00 am.

1. Apologies and Substitutions

The Committee Officer reported the receipt of the following apologies:

Apologies	Substitutes
Cllr L Mead	
Cllr T Sargent	
Cllr J Young	
Rev R Jordan	--

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no new declarations of interest.

3 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Children and Young People Policy and Scrutiny Committee held on 7 January 2013 were approved, subject to a number of corrections, as a correct record and to be signed by the Chairman.

4. Domestic Abuse

Members received report CYP/04/13, providing background information and an update on the business case to reduce the level of Domestic Abuse in the

County. The Chairman welcomed to the meeting Kevin Nunn, Senior Policy and Strategy Manager, who introduced the item.

Introduction

The business case was proposed under the Community Budgets proposal, which is one of 4 pilot schemes across the country. The principle is that better administration of budgets will lead to better outcomes. The second draft of the business case ties in with the decision-making process.

Of the 32,000 domestic abuse incidents recorded each year by Essex Police, about 23,000 involve children in some way, which means we can estimate that about 20,000 individual children will be involved altogether.

There is a clear link between exposure to domestic abuse and issues around child protection, so a priority is early intervention in such circumstances. A number of areas are being targeted and these are listed in the circulated paper, but Mr Nunn drew attention to some of the key proposals.

- Early detection is often possible via links with the Health Service. Dialogue is taking place with these services, to help them recognise potential problems.
- As far as housing is concerned, the current practice is normally to remove the victim from the home; but now consideration is sometimes given to removing the perpetrator, as having to relocate can cause all sorts of stress and difficulties for the victim. Clearly, this would not work in all cases, but is considered on a case by case basis.
- The management of perpetrators is crucial and Essex Police are drawing up a new perpetrators strategy.
- Developing a clear pathway for survivors, understood by professionals is seen as crucial, so, over the coming months, Essex Police, the County Council and other partners will be investing in a Central Referral Unit to facilitate the provision of help and advice to those involved in domestic violence.

Discussion

Members raised some issues, to which Mr Nunn responded.

- Concern was expressed over the prospect of not moving the family, as security, especially for any children, is a priority for survivors. Mr Nunn pointed out that any cases would be very carefully assessed on an individual basis, and that where child contact was allowed changing address rarely added to long term safety of the survivor.
- The need for buy-in from the districts was recognised. They need to be made aware of the economic impact of domestic violence (eg, on their own housing services). Each district has its own approach and the County Council needs to cooperate with them. Housing Officers have been involved in discussions to date.

- The need to provide therapy for perpetrators was recognised, to curtail their activities. There are 2,300 domestic abuse cases brought to court per year; of these, about 100 individuals complete mandated programmes. The County Council would like to extend this, but each individual course costs £2-5k.
- A question was asked about different family situations in which violence occurred. The question couldn't be answered directly, however, one statistic was available: in 60% of police domestic abuse incidents, the victim and perpetrator do not live together.
- It is not clear how male survivors fit in with the refuge system, but it is clear that 25% of police incident survivors are male, and that 6% of this group relate to male to male violence (eg, son-father). The Police do risk assessments and it is clear that male survivors have a much lower risk profile than female survivors. This is an area being looked at in more detail.
- The number of women from out of County staying in Essex refuges is about 50% of the total, but the number of Essex women in refuges out of County is also 50%, so this balances out.
- Not every district provides funding for the refuges within their own area. The County Council will be bringing district councils together to discuss joint commissioning of refuge services.
- The use of any savings made under the new arrangements will be assessed as they arise.
- Data sharing will be crucial, and the principle for this will need to be made clear as early as possible.

The Chairman thanked Mr Nunn for his attendance and helpful replies. She confirmed the Committee's wish to see progress here and asked for the following information at a future update:

- a) Information on how any savings are used
- b) Data on sharing and performance
- c) The level and nature of district council involvement
- d) Information on housing issues
- e) Information on any pilot schemes and outcomes.

It was also **Agreed** to bring the discussion to the attention of the Cabinet Member for Procurement.

5. Children's Partnership review

Members received a verbal update on the Children's Partnership Review from Roger Bullen, Head of Joint Arrangements.

It was confirmed that a review took place in September/October 2012, looking particularly at the impact of the Health & Wellbeing Board, the statutory status of the Children and Young People Plan, and guidance provided in respect of Children's Trust Boards. The intention was to ensure that future arrangements provide adequate support for the children's agenda. A wide range of stakeholders was consulted.

One conclusion is that partnership arrangements should be retained. There is no longer a need for a Children's Trust Board but there will be an Executive Board, which will report to the Health & Wellbeing Board. Locality Boards will be retained, and will report to the Health & Wellbeing Board, through the Executive Board.

There is a statutory requirement to bring the various bodies together, but considerable flexibility of approach is permitted. The commissioning elements will need to feature largely within the new arrangements and fulfil any statutory requirements. There will be an "equivalent" to the CYP Plan(a formal plan is no longer required).

The process of change is underway at present, with the new terms of reference for the Partnership Executive due to be approved shortly.

Concern was expressed by Members about the limited information received on Children's Partnerships to date.

The Committee **Agreed** that, once the new arrangements have been confirmed, Mr Bullen should be asked to:

- Produce a chart showing the future structure of children's partnership arrangements
- Produce a paper giving further explanation of these
- Report regularly to meetings of the Committee on progress.

The Chairman thanked Mr Bullen and looked forward to receiving his report.

It was **Agreed** that those involved in planning the induction process for Members after the May election should be asked to incorporate a session on the subject in the induction programme.

6. Analysis of 2012 school performance

Members received report CYP/05/13, providing information on performance levels in Essex schools in 2012. The Chairman welcomed to the meeting Tim Coulson, Director for Education and Learning, who introduced the item.

The Essex results are in line with the national average and, in general, results have improved, also in line with the national average. The wish is that Essex should be in the top quartile, so considerable improvements are required in a number of areas.

Particularly noted was the judicial review of the English GCSE grading exercise, which has impacted negatively on the results. Also noted was poor performance overall in the new Phonics Test for children entering Key Stage 1.

Mr Coulson then responded to Members' concerns and questions and indicated that:

- The County Council would like to follow up these results school by school. About 60% of Essex schools are rated good or outstanding, which is below the national average. In a national comparison, Essex came bottom of the 4th division (out of 5)
- 180 schools are in the “satisfactory” category. Their standards must be raised, so every one of these has been offered a written analysis, consultancy on their improvement plan and Ofsted-type assessments
- Primary schools have seen more success. There have been 45 Ofsted inspections since September 2012. Half of those previously graded satisfactory have moved to good; one third have remained the same; 6 have dropped to unsatisfactory – these last are being looked at very closely. Mr Coulson did not believe in the necessarily overriding effect of geographical and demographic elements, citing examples of both good and poor performers within the same area.
- Evidence does not suggest that Nursery education is poor, as the proportion of nurseries rated good or outstanding (85%) is above the national average. However, there are two big issues:
 - i. The transition from nursery to primary school; this does not seem to work very well, with continuity poor.
 - ii. The relatively low take-up of nursery provision. Nationally, the assumption is that 90% of 3 year olds will take up their free 15 hours per week; in Essex the figure is 84%, and this shows when they begin primary school. The challenge is to increase this take up, particularly with those families less likely to do well.
- With regard to the Pupil Premium, the money is not ring-fenced and so can be used in any way the school wishes, but there is an expectation that schools should be able to demonstrate what they are doing to raise pupils’ performance levels.

Concerns were expressed by Members over standards of writing and literacy, and over the way teachers were regularly obliged to enforce changes in curriculum . Mr Coulson agreed these were a real issue for schools, but he suggested that there is an increasing importance given to accurate spelling and there is greater expectation in the actual results of teaching rather than the particular teaching process itself.

The importance of good leadership was also commented upon. Mr Coulson confirmed there are development and support programmes, especially for head and deputy head teachers in the early stages – a particularly important time. The Council also offers support to governing bodies wishing to make appointments, should they wish to use it.

The Chairman thanked Mr Coulson for his contribution. She asked him:

- i. To supply the figures once more, but broken down to show data at a much lower level
- ii. To come back to the Committee (or any successor body), to report on the outcome of the Judicial Review and its implications on the data submitted today.

7. SEN Task & Finish Group

Councillor Higgins confirmed that the Task & Finish Group is due to meet again in March. She asked Members to provide responses to the questionnaire produced by the County Council, to assist them in their work. *[Details sent to all Members by the Governance Officer.]*

8. Safeguarding

Members received a brief oral report from Councillor Hillier, as a Vice Chairman of the Families Safeguarding Sub-Committee.

She confirmed that the Sub-Committee had a stocktaking meeting in January, and that a fuller report would be produced for CYP and COP shortly.

9. Forward Look

The agenda items already agreed by the Committee for the next meeting were reaffirmed.

For March 2013 it was agreed that there would be three substantial items:

- Youth Centres
- Youth Strategy Groups
- YEA work streams.

It was noted that this meeting would probably require an afternoon session to cover all items, and that some representatives of the YEA would be in attendance for some of the time. Members were asked to reserve a full day in their diaries.

The Chairman proposed, and Members **Agreed**, that there should be no meeting in April, as it would fall in the lead-up period to the County Council elections on 2 May.

It was also suggested that the first meeting after the Elections, which was scheduled for Thursday 6 June, should be aimed at providing an update on issues relating to children and young people. This should particularly benefit any new Members. It was also noted, however, that there would probably be changes made to the overall structure of the scrutiny committees after the elections and that the suggestion might need to be carried forward to a new structure and on a different date.

10. Date of next meeting

The Committee confirmed the date of the next scheduled meeting as Thursday 7 March 2013. This will be held at 10.00 am in Committee Room 1, with a Members' pre-meeting at 9.30am.

The meeting closed at 12.00 noon.

Chairman

Children and Young People PSC meeting 7 March 2013 CYP/06/13

FAMILIES SAFEGUARDING SUB-COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2012-13

The Families Safeguarding Sub-Committee was established in February 2012 under the following Terms of Reference, agreed at its inaugural meeting:

1. To exercise the powers of the Children and Young People's (CYP) and Community and Older People's (COP) Policy & Scrutiny Committee (P & SC) in holding the following to local democratic account in respect of any safeguarding matter, affecting children, adults, communities, older people and families:
 - Executive Member for Children's Services
 - Executive Member for Adults Services
 - Executive Director of Schools, Children and Families
 - Executive Director of Adult Services
 - Essex Safeguarding Children Board (ESCB)
 - Essex Safeguarding Adults Board
 - Essex Health & Wellbeing Board
2. Seeking to advance interaction between the two areas, to achieve better efficiency, especially with regard to transitions.
3. To call any individuals or organisations as witnesses that the Sub-Committee deems relevant to its activities.
4. To receive reports and monitor the Corporate Scorecard insofar as it relates to safeguarding and to make recommendations for consideration by the two Policy & Scrutiny Committees.
5. The Sub-Committee is empowered to fill any vacancies in its membership, or co-opt appropriate people as members or advisers, subject to ratification by the next meetings of the CYP and COP P & SCs.

The Sub-Committee is a sub-committee of both the CYP and COP P & SCs and, therefore, is accountable to the two P & SCs; and these two P & SCs will take up any recommendations made by the Sub-Committee. Membership is shown in Appendix 1.

One of the first tasks established by the Sub-Committee was to develop a Tracker document which identifies issues to be resolved in relation to safeguarding issues under both children's and adult services. The issues highlighted are given a RAG status and are followed through until progress is such that a 'Green' status can be presented with confidence. The Tracker has enabled the Sub-Committee to hold both services areas to account, and where necessary seek witnesses to attend the Sub-Committee to provide evidence of improvement.

The annual plans of both ESCB and the Adult Safeguarding Unit have been presented to and scrutinised by the Sub-Committee, and quarterly updates on the Action Plans of both have been reviewed throughout the year. Quarterly performance updates from children's social care have been reviewed and Members receive the quadrant reports on a monthly basis for the quadrant which they represent.

Consideration of a Serious Case Review led Members to the conclusion that there was, perhaps, a tendency for those children placed outside the County to be forgotten. Also whilst it was agreed that most of the faults uncovered by the case in question were covered by the Ofsted Inspection Arrangements for Children in Care there was a concern with regard to how frequent inspections were undertaken. As a result of this the Sub-Committee tasked the Chairman to correspond with the Cabinet Member for Children's Services as it was agreed there was a need for Members to be able to visit Children in Care in appropriate circumstances; at the same time it was agreed that the Sub-Committee should lobby the Cabinet Member so that they could have access to case files. The Sub-Committee will continue to lobby for both requests.

Key issues and the Essex response to the Rochdale case were considered by the Sub-Committee, due to a young person from Essex being a victim of sexual exploitation having been placed in solo care Rochdale. The Sub-Committee heard that Essex County Council would undertake its own review regarding its care for the young person which would be extended to include the commissioning of residential placements outside the County, children missing from care procedures and Essex's responsibility to other young people placed by other Local Authorities within Essex. All of which have implications in-line with the letter from the Sub-Committee to the Cabinet Member for Children's Services. Essex County Council want to ensure that the shortfalls in the Rochdale case would not be repeated in Essex and each quadrant needs to have regular meetings to share information in relation to young people who may be at risk of exploitation.

The Sub-Committee has considered the updated Essex approach to dealing with Domestic Violence, which, it is anticipated will be funded through Whole Place Community Budgets. The backlog of DV1 forms being processed by Essex Police has given rise to the establishment of a domestic violence review by the Essex County Council Policy and Strategy Team. The Sub-Committee heard that there are in excess of 30,000 domestic violence incidents each year recorded in Essex, and 23,000 of these have children involved; all of these are referred to Social Care. Essex Police do a good job of getting data, but of necessity rely on officers with generalist skills, rather than those trained in safeguarding. One-quarter of the total victims are male, but the true figure may be greater as males are much less likely to contact the Police.

Kent County Council has established a Central Referral Unit, which brings together all agencies. Essex is seeking something similar to this, a multi-agency hub, where victims would have access to a trained professional and which would serve as a contact for front line workers. There were some sensibilities which would have to be addressed

and dealt with, but these should not prove impossible. It was suggested that Sub-Committee Members should visit the Kent CRU, to see it in action.

Following the report to the Sub-Committee both the CYP and COP P & SCs have received updates on the Domestic Violence Strategy and heard the particular aims of the Strategy as developing a Perpetrator Strategy - although there are 2,300 trials, only 100 convicted perpetrators go on programmes to address their abusive behaviour. Essex would like to have 640 places on these courses; Accommodation - this is one of the three most important issues to victims (along with what will happen to the children and money). This requires input at a district level; more services to victims of abuse, to help them break the pattern of returning to abusive relationships; and greater overall awareness, leading to earlier intervention (research suggests that many victims take five years of abuse before they contact the Police).

Following moderate concerns raised by the Care Quality Commission (CQC) in relation to Safeguarding at Basildon and Thurrock University Hospital the Sub-Committee invited the Chief Executive and the Director of Nursing, who has responsibility for Safeguarding to attend the Sub-Committee in December. Unfortunately, the Chief Executive became unavailable on the day, however the Director of Nursing was able to speak to the Sub-Committee about the hospital's Action Plan which targets training, awareness and escalation. Unannounced observational visits are now made, to monitor compliance. The Sub-Committee has been invited to undertake a visit to the Trust. The Sub-Committee is committed to look at Safeguarding issues within all other Essex acute hospitals.

At a non-quorate meeting of the Sub-Committee in January 2013 consideration was given to the work undertaken by it over the last year (Appendix 2). Two versions of the Tracker document (the first, February 2012 and the second, January 2013) were considered and the number of issues on the document has dramatically decreased, thus showing that the Sub-Committee's monitoring of these issues to achieve improvement and efficiency has been successful. Ongoing monitoring of Corporate Scorecards and Action Plans has also had a positive effect, as has bringing together officers from Adult and Children's Services at individual meetings. The Sub-Committee also considered the direction it should take in the forthcoming year, subject to the Scrutiny Review.

County Councillors are welcome to receive copies of the minutes of these private meetings on request.

FAMILIES SAFEGUARDING SUB-COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Cllr R Madden (Chairman)

Cllr S Hillier (Vice-Chairman)

Cllr J Baugh

Cllr A Brown

Cllr T Higgins

Cllr J Reeves (resigned, 18 October 2012)

Cllr C Riley

Cllr T Sargent

Cllr T Chapman (*ex officio*)

Cllr W Dick (*ex officio*)

FAMILIES SAFEGUARDING SUB-COMMITTEE WORKLOAD SINCE INCEPTION

2012-13

16 February: Terms of Reference

15 March: Tracker, ESCB, Adult Safeguarding Annual Report and Action Plan

19 April: Ofsted Inspection Arrangements for Children in Care, Quarterly Performance Update (Children's Social Care), SCR Rebecca Watkins, Tracker

24 May: ESCB Report (Simon Hart), Tracker

19 July: Rochdale Case, Adult Safeguarding issues, Meeting with Team Leaders, Performance Update (Children's Social Care)

20 September: Domestic Violence Strategy for Essex, Performance Update (Children's Social Care), ESCB Annual Report, Tracker, Joint Inspections of Children's Services, Corporate Parenting Panel update, National reports involving Safeguarding issues

18 October: Safeguarding Essex: SAFE Project, ESCB Update, Member Visits to Children's Residential Homes (letter from the Cabinet Member), Tracker

20 December: Basildon & Thurrock University Hospital CQC Report on Safeguarding, Performance Update (Children's Social Care), Tracker

31 January: Non-quorate Workshop meeting

