

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE POLICY AND  
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD AT COUNTY HALL, CHELMSFORD,  
ON THURSDAY, 3 SEPTEMBER 2009**

**Membership**

* J Aldridge	* D Morris
* J Baugh	R Pearson
* A Brown	* C Riley
* L Dangerfield	J Schofield
* J Deakin	* M. Skeels substitute for T Sargent
* Mrs. M Hutchon (Vice-Chairman)	* K Twitchen (Chairman)
* S Mayzes	* J Young
(* present)	

**Non-Elected Voting Members**

Mr. O Richards	* Reverend P Trathern
Mrs. V Sadowsky	* Mr. R Carson

The following officers were present in support throughout the meeting:

Janet Mills	- Committee Officer
David Moses	- Head of Member Support & Governance
Graham Redgwell	- Governance Officer

Also Present: Councillors Callander, Knapman, Metcalfe and Naylor.

The meeting opened at 10.15 am.

**59. Apologies and Substitution Notices**

The Committee Officer reported the receipt of the following apologies:-

**Apologies**

Cllr T Sargent  
Mr Owen Richards  
Mrs. Veronica Sadowsky

**Substitutes**

Cllr M Skeels

The Chairman advised the meeting that Veronica Sadowsky had taken up an appointment with Essex County Council and, as such, she was no longer eligible to be a non-elected member of this Committee. A letter of thanks for her sterling work and excellent contribution would be sent to her on behalf of the Committee.

The Chairman also advised that the existing Membership of the Committee would be changing, as Councillor J Schofield would be leaving the Committee.

Members noted the information.

**60. Declarations of Interest**

The following declarations of interest were recorded:

Councillor J Baugh	Personal interest (i) as a Founder Member and regular volunteer of the Braintree Community Youth Project (ii) his Son was a Qualified Social Worker
Councillor J Aldridge	Personal Interest (i) as a Member of the Corporate Parenting Panel
Councillor D Morris	Personal Interest (i) as a Member of the Mid Fostering Panel (ii) as a member of the Scout Movement
Councillor C Riley	Personal Interest (i) as a Member of the Corporate Parenting Panel (i) as a Member of the NE1 Fostering Panel
Councillor M Hutchon	Personal Interest (i) as her Son worked within Essex County Council Legal Services (ii) as her Daughter-in-Law worked within Essex County Council Social Care
Rev. Paul Trathern	Personal Interest (i) as in his role with the Church he had direct contact with children and young people.

**61. Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting of the Children and Young People Policy and Scrutiny Committee held on 2 July 2009 were received and signed as a correct record.

**62. Safeguarding Children**

The Committee received and reviewed the Safeguarding Children Report 2<sup>nd</sup> draft, (CYP/17/09), which set out the background of this scrutiny work and the Committee's findings and proposed recommendations.

A Member raised concern that had there had only been a short time to read the draft report and that the draft report was not available to the public. The Committee was advised that the draft report was considered work in progress; and that the final version would be available to the public.

The Chairman welcomed Councillor Peter Martin, Deputy Leader and Lead Member for Children's Services, and Graham Tombs, Director of Schools, Children and Families, to the Committee meeting and invited them to give comments upon the report.

Councillor Martin commended the Committee upon its comprehensive report and updated Members upon the work that was currently being undertaken in response to the original APA and Inspectors reports.

In answer to a number of questions from Members, Councillor Martin advised the Committee as follows:

- A review of the membership and reporting mechanisms of the Essex Safeguarding Children Board, (ESCB) was currently being undertaken.
- Work was currently being undertaken to improve communications between the Board and District and County Council Members.
- There was an intention to ensure a high level Membership from District Councils to include Chief Executives and Directors in future.
- Although it would provide better continuity, appointment of the ESCB on a three year contract, rather than on a one year contract, may not be possible.
- With regard to serious case reviews, Essex County Council was keen to promote that lessons learnt are implemented.

Graham Tombs outlined how there had been a significant improvement in the recruitment and retention of Social Workers. The Committee was advised that the current recruitment and retention package was now showing positive effects, with a number of agency Social Workers now asking to join Essex County Council. It was suggested that Connexions could be invited to promote social work as a career choice to young people.

Members again applauded the Salvation Army's approach to working with children and felt that this good practice should be shared with other voluntary organisations and should be used as a benchmark. A number of Committee Members involved with the voluntary sector indicated how their organisations dealt with this issue.

The Chairman thanked Councillor Martin and Graham Tombs for their comments.

A few minor amendments were made to the report.

**The Committee Agreed:**

- (i) The final draft of the report; and
- (ii) That the report be proof read by Councillors Deakin, Hutchon and Skeels before being published.

**63. Corporate Scorecard Update**

The Committee received the latest Corporate Scorecard (CYP/18/09), and noted that there had been two referrals to the Committee. The referrals related to the following performance indicators:

**1. Percentage of pupils at the end of KS3 making levels progress in Maths between KS2 and KS3.**

Graham Tombs explained that the result against this indicator was 58% rather than the required 62%. However this indicator had now been discontinued from the national performance indicator set and no further targets had been set.

## **2. Percentage of Young People on the Books of the Essex Youth Offending Service who have re-offended with an offence relating to Drugs or Alcohol.**

With regard to this indicator the result for 2008/09 was 7.74%, narrowly missing the 7.29% required target. The Committee was advised that, as a result of additional resources being directed to this area, there had been some improvement in re-offending rates, with young people now more willing to attend and complete training courses rather than re-offending.

Members noted that no further action regarding these indicators was required at this stage.

In answer to Members questions Graham Tombs advised the Committee as follows:

- Information showing actual pupil numbers rather than percentages could be made available to Members.
- Although the first indicator had now been abolished, teacher assessments were still being monitored.
- Focusing on improvements in schools continued across key subject areas.
- Some schools needed more support than others. Where this was the case, school improvement plans would be put in place and there was a scheme which shared the skills of good Head Teachers who would provide support where necessary.

The Committee **agreed** that, in relation to the first performance indicator, the Director of Schools, Children and Families would provide Members with a report giving details of actual pupil numbers rather than percentage figures.

## **64. CRB/ISA/Registration/Vetting and Barring Scheme**

The Committee received report (CYP19/09) and a presentation outlining the proposed set up of the national Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) Registration Scheme, from Patrick Sturch, ISA and Safeguarding HR Consultant and Janet Stevenson, Disclosure Manager.

The Committee was advised further guidance was due on how certain aspects of the new scheme (including checks on elected Members) were to be implemented. Members would receive a written update on this as soon as the guidance was available. It was noted the new arrangements, which would be implemented over the next five years could potentially cover 11 to 12 million people nationally.

In answers to Questions from Members the Committee was advised that:

- The new registration cost £64 per person over the age of 18 year of age and was 'portable'.
- The CRB check cost £31 for a standard check and £36 per person for an enhanced CRB check. These were not portable; therefore if a person worked in two different organisations undertaking the same work then two CRB checks would be required.
- Any person that came into contact with children or vulnerable adults would need to be registered including the following people:
- The rules would apply to specific care workers, people with roles with children or vulnerable adults, School Governors (would come into force on 1<sup>st</sup> November 2009), Child or Vulnerable Adults specific portfolio holders, and Elected Members.
- There was no distinction between the Statutory and voluntary sector workers, as all would need to be registered.

The Chairman thanked the presenters for their clearly written report and their informative presentation.

## **65. Child and Adolescent Mental Health (CAMHS) Interim Report**

The Committee received and noted the first CAMHS interim report (CYP20/09) setting out the work undertaken so far by a Heath Overview and Scrutiny Committee Task and Finish Group. The Group proposed to undertake some more work on the subject.

During discussion the following were noted.

- The new arrangements for Tier 2 services in Tendring.
- The difficulty in obtaining Tier 3 services.
- Significant resource issues which had prevented TASC teams from providing a speedy service were being addressed.
- The need for early intervention in schools.
- The need to recognise that family background was not always the reason for children having problems.
- 25% of children in Braintree were receiving help.

The Committee **Agreed:**

- i) That the Chairman of the HOSC be asked if a joint CYP and HOSC Task and Finish Group could be set up to review the CAMHS Overall Business Case.

The following Members expressed an interest in belonging to the Group:

- Councillor Stephen Mayzes
- Councillor Jude Deakin
- Councillor John Baugh
- Councillor Margaret Hutchon (was already appointed by the HOSC)

- ii) That some follow up work on the Healthy Schools Report would be required in due course.

- iii) With regard to Recommendation 4 of the CAMHS report, the proposed Schools Children and Families guidance document should also include information on how children and young people with mental health issues physically present themselves.

## **66. Dates of Future Meetings**

The Committee noted the dates of future meetings as set out and noted that future meetings may comprise:

- Meetings in private
- Meetings in public
- Working groups
- Sub-Committee meetings
- Outside visits

Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> October 2009

Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> November 2009

Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2009

Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> January 2010

Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> February 2010

Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> March 2010

Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> April 2010

The meeting closed at 12.25 pm.

Chairman