

**CHILDREN AND HEALTH  
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2011**

**PRESENT** – Councillors O’Keeffe, Desai, Entwistle, Riley, D. Smith, Solkar, Taylor, Wright, Gee, Foster.

**Also Present –**

Councillor M. Bateson	Executive Member Children’s Services
Councillor M. Khan	Executive Member Adult’s Services,
Councillor D. Talbot	Executive Member Culture, Leisure and Sport
M. Zammit	Link Chief Officer
J. Berry	Senior Supporting Officer
G. Rhodes White	Strategic Director Children’s Services
M. Bobat	Head of Service Schools and Culture
S. Tingle	Head of Service Families, Health and Wellbeing
D. Thompson	Public Health Registrar, Blackburn with Darwen Care Trust Plus
P. Harrison	Salford Diocese
F. Kershaw	Blackburn Church of England Diocese
B. Simpson	Chair of School Governor Forum
G. Rich	Scrutiny Officer

**RESOLUTIONS**

**19 Welcome and Apologies**

The Chair welcomed those present. Apologies from Councillors Mahmood, Patel, Law – Riding and Julie Slater and D. Harrison, (Executive Director of Public Health, Engagement and Partnerships).

**20 Minutes of Meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> July 2011**

P. Harrison informed the Committee that she works for Salford Diocese and not Blackburn Diocese as stated in the previous minutes.

The Scrutiny Officer apologised for the inaccuracy and informed Members that this would be altered.

**RESOLVED –**

That subject to the above amendment the minutes of the meeting held on September 21<sup>st</sup> 2011 be agreed as a correct record.

## **21 Declarations Of Interest in items on this Agenda**

Declarations of Interest received from:

Councillor Desai – Personal Interest – Agenda Items 4 and 5 – Budget update and Committee work programmes relating to Culture, Leisure and Sport - Lead Member for Culture Leisure and Sport.

Councillor Taylor - Personal Interest – Agenda Item 4 – Budget update Adult Portfolio – Employed by a service provider.

Councillor Foster – Personal Interest – Agenda Item 4 – Budget update Culture, Leisure and Sport Portfolio – Member of the Healthy Living Board who have submitted a bid for Bangor Street Community Centre.

B. Simpson - Personal Interest - Agenda Item 5 - Discussion on Children Services, the Youth Offending Team's Referral Orders and funding of Early Intervention Initiatives – School Governor and Youth Offender Panel Member.

## **22 Work of the Executive**

### **Transformational Agenda**

#### **Culture, Leisure and Sport Portfolio**

The Executive Member for Culture, Leisure and Sport informed the Committee that there had been no change to his Transformational Agenda since the previous meeting.

The Committee were provided with an update on the progress being made with the Community Centre transfers (LEI 05). The Executive Member explained that three groups had shown an interest in Bangor Street Community Centre and that there were two groups interested in Accrington Road Community Centre. Interviews had been held with the two parties interested parties, but he was unable to inform Members as to which application had been successful in winning the tender. Members were also informed that there had been interest in Mill Hill Community Centre, however the interested party have now withdrawn and the tender will now be re-advertised.

Members discussed if further cuts would lead to a reduction in the funding for Bees Cards. The Executive Member informed the Committee that there is currently a two year agreement in place on refresh between the Authority and Care Trust Plus and decisions around funding levels are made on a year to year basis. The Executive Member further informed the Committee that numbers paying for activities had increased, 52% of those accessing free activities with 48% accessing activities that cost. The

Executive Member informed the Committee that he could not guarantee free leisure activities indefinitely, and that there was a need to look at a transitional arrangement where more begin to pay. Members were informed that this year's numbers for those accessing Bees cards are currently exceeding the targets set.

### Adult Portfolio

The Executive Member updated the Committee on the current position of the Adult Portfolio prior to the update the Head of Service for Families, Health and Well Being informed Members that the Adult Portfolio's Transformational Agenda 'Rag Report' had been updated from the report included in the agenda. He explained that the finance team within Adult Services had mixed up elements of the efficiency work streams with other pressures within the staffing budget for the in-house remodel, this had led to green work streams being coded as amber.

The Executive Member for Adult Services updated the Committee on the current position of the Portfolio's budget. Since the previous meeting there has been no change in the situation with the TUPE contracts (ADU 02-003). He informed Members that he hoped that one provider would sign a contract in the following week; this he hoped would save 25% over a three year period. He also hoped that a further two contracts would be signed in December. The Executive Member explained that he hoped that the savings that would be made in the TUPE contracts would be seen in 2012, 13 & 14.

The Committee were updated on developments with Reablement, members were informed that the department hoped to save at least £1.9 million in this area but this would be dependant on numbers using the service on a month to month basis.

A number of questions relating to specific areas of the Adult Portfolio Transformational Agenda 'RAG' report were asked. Issues covered included:

- The remodel of community commissioning and the Independent Living Service (ADU - 01-001)
  - Reduction in payments to external providers (ADU - 02-001),
  - TUPE contracts (ADU - 02-003).
  - The time care worker spend working with service users.
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- **Remodel of Community Commissioning and the Independent Living Service (ADU - 01-001).**

Members asked if the re-model had impacted on the number and frequency of reviews for service users that were now taking place. The Head of Service explained that there had been no great reduction in

terms of numbers and frequency between the figures this year and the figures from 2010 -11, this has been helped by phone reviews and the money received from health.

Members requested that exact figures for the number of reviews that take place be brought to a future Adult Task and Finish Group.

- **Reduction in payments to external providers (ADU - 02-001)**

Members enquired as to whether there had been any implications from the judgement that had been made against Sefton Council regarding payment reductions to external providers. The Executive Member told the Committee that he was concerned by this and that he has raised his concerns with Care Trust Plus. He also explained that the Authority would not be able to reduce payments due to rising costs.

- **TUPE contracts (ADU - 02-003)**

Prior to the discussion on TUPE contracts Cllr Taylor declared an interest in this area and was asked not to take part in the conversation. It was explained to Members that some of the contracts are above market rate even at non-TUPE rates. Members enquired as to whether the change in TUPE contracts would impact on the consistency and quality of service. The Head of Service explained that they were able to measure both the reliability and the consistency of the service. The Committee were informed that consistency within the service was measured by the number of different workers that are used to provide a service to a service user; the fewer used the greater the consistency.

- **Time of Care Workers**

Members sought clarity on the amount of time that workers spent with service users in the home and whether travel time was taken out of the time paid for by a user. The Head of Service explained that it is accepted practice that if a person is receiving an hours help then 10 minutes of this is taken to cover travelling time. Members were informed of a telephone monitoring system that exists with Care Trust Plus that providers use when arriving and leaving an appointment. The Head of Service explained that the Borough is looking to move to a contract for outcomes rather than time.

Members raised the issue of use of acronyms in the 'RAG' report and requested they not be used, or for there to be a key explaining them in the future.

## Children's Portfolio

The Executive Member for Children's Services informed the Committee that the Service is on course to meet the efficiencies on the Transformational Agenda 'RAG' reports.

Whilst being on course to meet the efficiencies of the transformation service the Executive Member informed the Committee that Children's Services are still experiencing a number of pressures, these are:

- Social Care – There are currently 391 children in the system with around 750 coming through the front door.
- Money into Children's Centres – The money that has been going into Children's Centres has now been reduced.
- Legal Budget – Major pressure has also been being placed on the service's legal budget, however it is hoped that a balanced budget can still be achieved by the end of the year.

The Executive Member informed the Committee that she anticipated the severe pressures on the service to continue in the following municipal year.

The Committee discussed the importance of early intervention and the importance of finding further funding to invest in this service. The Executive Member explained that the Service had been working with voluntary agencies in order to continue and further expand its Early Intervention service.

At this point Bob Simpson declared an interest.

The Strategic Director for Children's Services informed the Committee that the Authority has managed to retain some of its Early Intervention Service following the restructure, and has thus prevented hundreds of families entering the statutory arena. She recognised the need for more to be done and informed the Committee that she had been working with partners, exploring possible partnership working, and had been speaking with schools about match funding within cluster areas. She is also investigating possible work with communities and neighbourhoods on this issue.

The Strategic Director for Children's Services praised her staff for their dedication and commitment to the job during these difficult times for the department.

## **RESOLVED –**

- 1) That the updates on the Transformational Agenda ‘RAG’ reports for Culture, Leisure and Sport, Adults and Children’s Services be noted.
- 2) That Adult Services provide exact figures on the number of reviews undertaken with service users and the frequency in which they are undertaken to the next Task and Finish Group.
- 3) That future Transformational Agenda ‘RAG’ reports be written without acronyms or with an explanation key

### **23 Committee’s Work Programme – Task and Finish Groups Updates**

The Chair explained that the majority of the Committee’s work is being undertaken by the Task & Finish Groups. The Chair thanked Members for their hard work within these groups, including their attendance and input at these meetings and for carrying out visits to services. However he stressed that the Task and Finish Groups still had a lot of hard work ahead of them and whilst initial opinions and potential direction for the services were being put forward, final recommendations would only be presented once the reviews have been completed.

Members received an update from each of the Task and Finish Groups and had the opportunity to look at the initial opinion and potential direction for all three groups.

#### **Adult Task and Finish Group**

The Chair of the Adult Task and Finish Group spoke about the scrutiny being undertaken around the development of the Centre for Independent Living (CIL). He explained that the project around CIL was constantly evolving and that the Task and Finish Group did not want to produce recommendations that would be out of date before the completion of the review. He stressed the importance of the need for the Task and Finish Group to work closely with the CIL Board.

The Public Health Registrar suggested to the Committee that it would be important for the Task and Finish Group to link in with HealthWatch on this issue.

#### **Culture, Leisure & Sport Task and Finish Group**

The Chair of this Task and Finish Group was not in attendance however a Member of the Group updated the Committee on the progress that has been made. He explained that the Group had questioned Officers from

both the Authority and Care Trust Plus on re-fresh and that they were impressed with the work of re-fresh and felt that it was an important service.

### **Children's Task and Finish Group**

The Chair informed the Committee that the Task and Finish Group had done a lot of work on the review to date and Members had visited both Connexions and Referral Order Panels.

The Chair also informed the Committee of a visit that he had done to a Work Club in Shadsworth and expressed concern with how the club worked. He explained that if a young person were to attend looking for support then there is no one there able to provide them with the required support and advice. The Strategic Director for Children's Services said that she was unaware as to who had responsibility for these Work Clubs but would look into the matter and explore with them if they could be run in a different way.

The Committee discussed the current situation with young people not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET). The Head of Service for Schools and Culture informed Members that the figures from the last quarter had seen a reduction in NEET by 0.1% however there had been a significant increase in the number of young people who they are unaware as to what they are doing. The Committee expressed concern with this issue and members discussed the role that schools play in targeting possible NEETs. The Executive Member for Children's Services explained that a big responsibility is being placed upon schools to give careers advice however she is concerned about the level of advice that schools will give.

The issue of apprenticeships was discussed and the Committee were informed that the Authority had just taken on 6 Modern Apprentices. The Committee were also made aware of an apprenticeship fair taking place in February 2012.

### **RESOLVED –**

- 1) That the updates from the three Task and Finish Groups be noted
- 2) That the Strategic Director for Children's Services discovers who is responsible for the work clubs and explores with them different ways of working providing advice for young people.

Signed.....

Chair of the meeting at which the Minutes were signed

Date.....