

CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
Monday 6th November 2023

PRESENT – Councillor Sylvia Liddle (in the Chair) Councillors McCaughran, Gee, Gibson, Raja and Jackson.

YOUNG PEOPLE REPRESENTATIVES – Fatima Asif, and Faisal Ahmed (Youth Forum representatives).

ALSO PRESENT – Executive Member – Julie Gunn, Officers – Jo Siddle, Emma Ford, Michelle Holt, Imran Akuji, Andrea Sturgess and Phil Llewellyn.

RESOLUTIONS

15. Welcome and Apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and made reference to recent political changes at the Council, which meant that Councillors Ali and Salma Patel were no longer on the Committee.

Apologies were received from Councillor Julie Slater.

16. Minutes of the meeting held on 4th September 2023

The Minutes of the meeting held on 4th September 2023 were submitted for approval.

It was noted that the Glossary of Terms had been circulated to all Members of the Committee, and that the information requested on Special Guardianship Orders had also been circulated to all along with the answers to the questions raised by Youth Forum representatives about the Wellbeing Champions at the last meeting. The Chair requested an update on future funding for the Wellbeing Champions, which Jo Siddle agreed to arrange

Under Matters Arising, Jo Siddle and Emma Ford advised that the Council was a pathfinder in relation to Fostering Recruitment Hubs and referenced differences in payments between the public and private sector, as well as giving information on Supported Accommodation for under 18's, which was now OFSTED regulated, and reassured the Committee that children were placed in regulated accommodation wherever possible, and if this was not the case, it would be for a very short period and the Chief Executive would be advised. The recently established Regional Fostering Recruitment Hub would also help ensure more foster carers were available. Councillor Julie Gunn welcomed the development though pointed it out will not fix all the challenges. She referenced the need for a cap to be introduced to stop private providers charging whatever they liked.

RESOLVED – That the Minutes of the meeting held on 4th September 2023 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

17. Declarations of interest

No Declarations of interest were made by Members of the Committee.

18. Youth Forum Update

The Youth Forum representatives verbally reported on recent events and activities including :

- Participation in the Summer Programme and residential visit.
- Interview training for Young People.
- Attendance at the recent Children and Young People OSC to present on the Young Inspectors Programme
- Youthforia – which focussed this time on Black History Month and types of racism.
- Forthcoming attendance at the Annual Sitting at the House of Commons, where the next campaigns would be voted on.
- Involvement in consultation on the new Darwen Youth Centre.
- Plans for the next Climate Change event in February

RESOLVED- That the updates be noted.

19. Changes to Corporate Parenting Meetings

Imran Akuji verbally updated Members on ongoing discussions to strengthen Corporate Parenting governance arrangements, following discussion between the chair, chief executive, director and executive member and also recommendations from the recent Peer Review .

Potential models had been reviewed, and it was suggested that the Corporate Parent Executive Board and Corporate Parenting Specialist Advisory Group (CSPAG) merge to form a new Corporate Parenting Panel, which would involve Members, Officers and key partners.

Changes were subject to Full Council approval, and the LGA would be involved in delivering training, and it was anticipated that the next scheduled meeting of the CSPAG would be a training session (January 10, 2024).

Members commented on the need for the new Panel to reinforce scrutiny and challenge other areas of the Council, to ensure full corporate responsibility, and to challenge key partners, as well as adding value.

The Chair also commented on the need to ensure consistency of representatives were possible.

RESOLVED – That the update be noted.

20. Local Safeguarding Assurance Partnership Update

The Committee received a presentation, which had been circulated in advance to all Members of the Committee and update on the progress of the Local Safeguarding Assurance Partnership (LSAP) since the update presented to the June meeting of the Committee from Jo Siddle and Emma Ford.

The presentation and update highlighted:

- The previous Pan-Lancashire Board Structure
- The Governance Review, which decided there would be three place based partnership models, with BwD CSAP priorities being Contextual Safeguarding, Neglect and Domestic Abuse, Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews would be undertaken by each local partnership, and the Child Death Overview Panel would remain Pan-Lancashire and hosted by the Lancashire Business Unit.
- Proposed Structure
- Visions and Aims

- Principles – 1. The child’s lived experience is central to effective safeguarding, 2. Partners, communities and families are working together to deliver on safeguarding, and 3. Confident, competent practitioners, skilled in trauma informed practice, professional curiosity and the sharing of information are able to identify and meet safeguarding need.

- Forward Plan
- Considerations
- Meeting Schedule

Much of the last six months had been focussed on the JTAI and Action Plan and embedding of the new arrangements. The first meetings of the sub-groups would be held during November 2023.

The new BwD Business Unit would be in place on 1st January 2024. The Business Unit had a number of key tasks, including involvement in development of a new website, and the Learning and Development offer.

Members commented on the improvements already been seen of the move to a place-based approach, which gave more assurance.

Jo Siddle, in response to a question on links with ex partners and sharing of information, advised that the links had continued, with monthly meetings still taking place, which also involved both Cumbria local authorities, with shared learning still being shared across the Pan-Lancashire footprint.

RESOLVED – That the update be noted.

21. Date of Next Meeting

It was noted that the next meeting of the Committee would be held on 12th February 2024, where the main agenda item would be scrutiny of the School Improvement Strategy. The Committee also agreed that there would also be an agenda item on Academic Outcomes.

The Chair also requested that, following on from the recent LGA training, that key performance dashboards should be attached to reports wherever possible, and also that reports be circulated much earlier to the Committee.

Signed:

Date:

Chair of the meeting
at which the minutes were confirmed