



Leicester
City Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the
CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND EDUCATION SCRUTINY COMMISSION

Held: TUESDAY, 7 DECEMBER 2021 at 5:30 pm

P R E S E N T :

Councillor Gee (Chair)
Councillor Cole (Vice Chair)

Councillor Batool
Councillor Crewe

Councillor Riyait

Councillor Pandya
Councillor Pickering

Standing Invitees (Non-Voting)

Joseph Wynglendacz

Union Representative

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1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Janet McKenna and Carolyn Lewis.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

AGREED:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Children, Young People and Education Scrutiny Commission held on 19 October 2021 be confirmed as a correct record.

4. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair informed the Commission that due to Officer availability, the items would be taken out of agenda order.

The Chair paid tribute to Councillor Ratilal Govind, who had passed away the week before.

5. PETITIONS

The Monitoring Officer reported that none had been received.

6. QUESTIONS, REPRESENTATIONS AND STATEMENTS OF CASE

The Monitoring Officer reported that none had been received.

7. UPDATE FROM WORKING GROUP ON THE UNDER ACHIEVEMENT OF 'BLACK CARIBBEAN' AND 'WHITE BRITISH WORKING-CLASS' PUPILS OF SECONDARY SCHOOL AGE IN LEICESTER

Councillor Cutkelvin, Assistant City Mayor for Education and Housing, introduced the item. It was noted that this was an update from the working group lead by Councillor Cole, looking at the under achievement of 'Black Caribbean' and 'White British Working-Class' pupils of secondary school age in Leicester.

Sue Welford, Principal Education Officer, presented the item, it was noted that:

- The working group had representatives from community groups and education leaders.
- The first focus of the working group was developing a diverse curriculum in secondary schools, good practice in other Authorities was being researched and it was hoped this could be rolled out at the beginning of the next academic year.
- Racial literacy training was another area of focus, looking at supporting schools who struggle in the area. This work would be done on a school-wide level.
- This work would be pulled together with a race equality mark, enabling schools to focus on good outcomes.
- The 'Everybody's Welcome' work was already ongoing in primary schools and it was hoped this could be expanded.

In response to Members' questions, it was noted that:

- All but 4 schools in the city were involved in the work. Independent and faith schools had not yet been approached.
- Intergenerational work had not yet been considered but would be considered going forward.
- Written materials on this work would hopefully be available around the summer term.
- Schools Governors were a key part of driving the work forward, it was hoped that they would attend the racial literacy training in an online capacity.

- The unique characteristics of each school in the city presented a challenge in delivering the work.

AGREED:

1. That the Commission notes the update.
2. That the Commission requests a further update on this work in the next municipal year.

8. COVID-19 UPDATE AND VACCINATIONS IN LEICESTER SCHOOLS

Sue Welford, Principal Education Officer, presented the update, it was noted that:

- There had been further changes to guidance relating to schools, including mask wearing in communal areas.
- The Covid rate for 11-16s was the highest of any age group in the city, but the rate was average for core cities.
- There had been class closures due to the lack of staff, perpetuated by a lack of supply staff.
- Vaccination rates for pupils remained low, with only a third of pupils having received a first dose.

In response to Members' questions it was noted that:

- The lack of uptake for pupil vaccines was thought to be partly due to concerns around the vaccine, but largely due to not being able to fill in the online consent form. Work was ongoing to make the consent form easier to access.
- The Leicester Partnership Trust hadn't been given any additional resources to deliver the Covid vaccination effort. Meaning that flu vaccines and other vaccines were less available.
- The delay in schools receiving CO2 monitors was an issue in helping ventilation in classrooms.
- Schools individual risk assessments were important for ensuring ventilation in classrooms.

9. LOCAL AUTHORITY DESIGNATED OFFICER ANNUAL REPORT 2020/21

Caroline Tote, Director of Social Care and Early Help, presented the item, it was noted that:

- This was an annual report on the Local Area Designated Officer (LADO), responsible for supporting employers across the city understand their safeguarding responsibilities.
- LADO could provide advice and guidance in cases of concern in relation to safeguarding.
- LADO would also be involved in the process of Child Protection Investigations.

- In a investigation relating to a position of trust, the balance of probability can be used to make a decision.

In response to Members' questions, it was noted that:

- In terms of feedback, LADO was included in general quality assurance, but not on a regular basis. Any feedback gathering would need to include a broad picture.
- One area that LADO needed strengthened links with was the voluntary sector.
- The reason for an increase in referrals from the voluntary sector wasn't clear but was seen as positive.
- There weren't figures relating to referrals regarding CLA.
- It was expected that fostering services would have contact with LADO.
- An increase in referrals relating to fostering could be explained by the increased time at home over the pandemic period.
- There was no backlog of cases, but cases could take a while due to being Police led.
- LADO covered those paid and volunteered to be in a position of trust, investigations relating to parents and carers were covered by a separate Child Protection process.
- During the Covid lockdown, work had been done to ensure wellbeing for vulnerable children.
- Serious case reviews were available to view online and showed the lessons to be learnt from serious cases relating to safeguarding.

AGREED:

1. That the Commission notes the report.

10. DYSLEXIA SUPPORT IN SCHOOLS

Sue Welford, Principal Education Officer, presented the item, it was noted that:

- The focus for identifying those with dyslexia was focused on what was going on in the classroom.
- Pupils with dyslexia required different levels of support depending on the severity of the case.

In response to Members' questions it was noted that:

- The official numbers of CYP with dyslexia were only for diagnosed, meaning that the number of CYP with dyslexia was higher than official.
- The diagnosis process took weeks or months due to an evidence gathering process, the main assessment could be done in one day.
- The Service typically responded to concerns raised by schools, so took a reactive rather than proactive approach. This meant that schools needed to be able to identify signs of the condition.

- It was felt that the best place for dyslexic CYP was mainstream schools.
- A consultation had recently completed on SEND funding for mainstream schools. The new funding model proposed would be child centred. There weren't a large number of dyslexic CYP who would trigger top-up funding.
- Parents looking for a private diagnosis was often due to capacity issues at schools.
- A training offer was available to schools to help them in this area.
- Some training was offered for parents and carers in this area.

AGREED:

1. That the Commission notes the report.

11. AUTISM AND ADHD SUPPORT IN SCHOOLS

Sue Welford, Principal Education Officer presented the report, it was noted that this was similar to the previous report, looking at the whole process of diagnosis and support.

In response to Members' questions it was noted that:

- There were about 1,000 CYP on case loads in this area in the city.
- The Service worked in partnership with national charities such as the Autism Education Trust.
- Support was available for parents through the process of diagnosis and a range of training was available post-diagnosis. Due to CYP aging with the Service, strong relationships were often built with parents. The SENCO network was also available to support families.

AGREED:

1. That the Commission notes the report.

12. OFSTED INSPECTION - UPDATE

Councillor Russell, Deputy City Mayor for Social Care and Anti-Poverty, introduced the item. It was noted that the recent Ofsted inspection was the cumulation of years of work to improve CYP Services.

Martin Samuels, Strategic Director of Social Care and Education, presented the item, it was noted that:

- The inspection process was rigorous, with the main interest of inspectors being individual families.
- The full report was only 9 pages long and was easily digestible.
- The result of the report was a 'Good' rating, with the Council having the second-best rating in the region. The best rating in the history of the

Council.

- The inspectors stated that they could not see any impact of the Covid pandemic on service delivery.
- The inspectors saw an enormous commitment to Leicester in the services inspected.
- The report deemed the ambition to be Outstanding to be realistic and achievable. This ambition was not to receive a positive Ofsted rating, but to make a difference for CYP in the city.

Members of the Commission congratulated the Service on the outcome of the report. Members thanked the City Mayor for sticking through previous difficult reports and making the right choices to improve the Service.

It was noted that areas for improvement raised in the report were already identified in the divisional 3-year plan. Other Local Authorities who did well in areas identified for improvement would also be contacted to find good practice. It was noted that the report stated these areas as being good but needing a little bit extra to take the Council to Outstanding.

13. WORK PROGRAMME

Members of the Commission were invited to consider content of the work programme and were invited to make suggestions for additions as appropriate to be brought to future meetings.

14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

It was noted that West Gate School had been successful in its attempt to revoke the academy order placed upon it having received a 'Good' Ofsted rating.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 7.54pm.