

## Education & Children's Services Scrutiny Sub-Committee

MINUTES of the OPEN section of the Education & Children's Services Scrutiny Sub-Committee held on Monday 18 January 2016 at 7.00 pm at Ground Floor Meeting Room G02A - 160 Tooley Street, London SE1 2QH

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**PRESENT:** Councillor Jasmine Ali (Chair)  
Councillor Lisa Rajan  
Councillor Sunny Lambe  
Councillor James Okosun  
Councillor Sandra Rhule  
Councillor Charlie Smith  
Councillor Kath Whittam  
Martin Brecknell  
Lynette Murphy-O'Dwyer

**OFFICER  
PARTNER  
SUPPORT:** & Francouis Boudouin SGTO Youth Forum  
Kheron Kenardo Creative Futures/ SGTO Youth Forum  
Billy Harding SGTO Youth Forum  
Fumi Coto SGTO Youth Forum  
David McLean SGTO Youth Forum Campaigns & Research  
Officer  
Sam Bailey – Youth Futures  
Julie Timbrell, Scrutiny project manager  
Sam Bailey – Youth Futures  
Boyhood to Manhood

### 1. APOLOGIES

1.1 There were apologies for absence from George Ogbonna.

**1. NOTIFICATION OF ANY ITEMS OF BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIR DEEMS URGENT**

2.1 There were no urgent items of business.

**3. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS**

3.1 There were no disclosures of interests or dispensations.

**4. MINUTES**

**RESOLVED:**

The summary of decisions of the meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> October 2015 were agreed as a correct record.

**5. INTERVIEW OF THE INDEPENDENT CHAIR OF SOUTHWARK SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN'S BOARD, ANNUAL REPORT & SERIOUS CASE REVIEW**

**RESOLVED:**

- The committee recommended that the care leavers service work with third sector organisations to help to improve the proportion of care leavers in education, training or employment.
- The Safeguarding board will provide the work plan of the shadow board of young people
- The chair will present on the committees work on FGM at the Safeguarding conference on FGM in March.
- A note will be sent of the committee's discussion to the Safeguarding Independent chair.

**6. YOUTH SERVICE BUDGET**

**RESOLVED**

The chair will :

- ask the cabinet member responsible for budget if the timetable can be amended so that more young people could attend the 2 February Overview & Scrutiny Committee budget meeting and hear what is being said about the budget for children and young people's services.
- feed back the key points of the discussion to cabinet lead (see attached issue log)

## 7. YOUNG PEOPLE'S VOICE

These minutes cover the combined session on both Item 7: Young People's voice: comment on demise of Kids Company and the following Item 8: Voluntary & Community groups working with young people:

- Young people flying under the radar / without status
- Demise of Kids Company and alternative provision

Fuma Coto from SGTO Youth Forum said that since Kids Company shut down she has not spoken to anybody. She added that and while she was able to go forward building on the support she had received from her Kids Company mentor , and because she was part of other groups and so did have opportunities , she was concerned about other people who did not have such a network. She commented she did receive a hamper at Christmas because of her former link with Kids Company.

Kheron Kenardo from Always Creative said that he had also not been contacted following the end of Kids Company. He reported that he had been contacted by the media, which showed that his contact details were readily available. He said that he is in contact with over 50 young people who were former users of Kids Company and many of those have also not been contacted. He added that some of the young people he knows from Kids Company are at high risk from sexual exploitation and gangs.

Fuma said she was particularly concerned about young mothers.

A Boyhood to Manhood worker reported that her organisation was given some money to engage with young people following the ending of Kids Company. She said many of the young people they came across did either have problems with their immigration status or were reluctant to engage. She explained that some people they came across were going to Kids Company for the wrong reasons: for cash. Boyhood to Manhood workers reported that they had wanted a list of young people from the council; however they did not receive that.

A member remarked that the Strategic Director, David Quirk Thornton, had indicated that although Kids Company had provided a list of many young people, after a series of meetings , Kids Company had not provided a list of young people 'without status' .

Kheron commented that he does have a list and a network that could have helped. He commented that the hampers that Fuma referred to came from a Lambeth food trust, that the details they had of former people who used Kids Company. He said that the people who received these hampers, many of whom were young mothers, very much appreciated these . The high value of placed on these by the young

mothers and other recipients demonstrates the great need that is out there. He commented that Lambeth Council put in place a good arrangement to contact and support former users of Kids Company.

Boyhood to Manhood workers emphasised that they had a limited 8 week project to go out and work with young people and their remit was more general and not focused on particular young people. The worker also commented that their organisation had started around the same time as Kids Company, however Boyhood to Manhood, like other local community groups, did not get funding at the scale that Kids Company had formally received. They commented that if they had received that amount of money then they would have had much more capacity. Boyhood to Man also commented that Kids Company was not linked in with the wider community and voluntary sector and workers were never seen as local events.

Kheron commented in the figure of £80,000 which was reported to have been made available and asked for more clarity on the spending. He referred to the report published in the previous scrutiny papers [this says that the Cabinet Office approved £82,500 to support Southwark and the local voluntary sector <http://modern.gov.southwark.gov.uk/documents/s57291/Report%20on%20Kids%20Company.pdf>]

Boyhood to Manhood workers emphasised that although they were given some additional funding via this pot, the amount and short time frame of the project limited their capacity.

Kheron said that this is another example of where consultation with young people would have been really important to plan an effective response. Members commented that this would have been difficult for officers to undertake given many of the young people who were former users of Kids Company were not known.

There was discussion amongst the committee on the need to provide clarity on immigration status and the support available. A member commented that children in need were always entitled to statutory help, whatever their immigration status. However, other members cautioned that the age and previous dealing with immigration authorities might impact on the support available and the risk of deportation. The committee thought it would be helpful for former users of Kids Company to receive clear information on their status and rights, opportunities to receive statutory support or other help to regularise their position. Helpful information might then be able to be distributed via the networks that the young people present had referred to.

The committee discussed the steps the Strategic Director had outlined that the council had taken to provide support for former users of Kids Company. A member commented that this had not been successful for the young people mentioned here. Another member commented that he was concerned that about the young people referred to and the problems reported, particularly given the problems of contacting people, particularly if the council did not receive all of the contact

details. He asked the young people if they were willing to be a conduit. Kheron responded that we absolutely would be and also commented that often young people only trust their peers. He added that Creative Futures was very much developing a peer support network and undertook to assist in getting in contact with people associated with Kids Company.

SGTO Youth Forum officer said that the forum representatives at the recent cabinet meeting had requested a regular round table meeting with the lead member for children's services to do things like this.

The Youth Futures worker suggested that it would be very helpful for young people and youth groups to come together. She also flagged up that her organisation was also provided with some funding to do some additional work with young people following the end of Kids Company. She commented that there is a growing and large volume of young people attending the Youth Futures club nights, with increasingly higher needs. Youth Futures are having problems finding affordable premises.

Boyhood to Manhood commented that Kids Company also had a duty to ensure that the young people were adequately signposted to alternative support when their service ended, and that Kids Company bears half the responsibility for any failures in this happening adequately.

The chair summed up by saying she will be briefing the strategic director, David Quirke Thornton, based on the notes of this session.

## **RESOLVED**

- Request a clear briefing from officers to provide clarity for former Kids Company users who are experiencing problems with their immigration status. The purpose is to enable young people to be clear on their entitlement to statutory assistance, and any help available to regularise their immigration status and receive support.
- The chair will raise the issues discussed on Kids Company with the Strategic Director immediately following the meeting.

## **8. VOLUNTARY & COMMUNITY GROUPS WORKING WITH YOUNG PEOPLE**

This item is was taken with item 7 – see above minutes.

**9. FGM REVIEW**

**RESOLVED** The interim draft report will come to the next meeting.

**10. WORK PLAN**

The workplan was noted.