

Education & Children's Services Scrutiny Sub-Committee

MINUTES of the OPEN section of the Education & Children's Services Scrutiny Sub-Committee held on Wednesday 6 July 2016 at 7.00 pm at Ground Floor Meeting Room G01A - 160 Tooley Street, London SE1 2QH

PRESENT: Councillor Jasmine Ali (Chair)
Councillor James Barber
Councillor James Coldwell
Councillor Jon Hartley
Councillor James Okosun
Councillor Catherine Rose
Lynette Murphy-O'Dwyer

OTHER MEMBERS PRESENT:

OFFICER Dick Frak, Interim Commissioning Director, Southwark Council
SUPPORT: Caroline Gilmartin, Director of Integrated Commissioning, Southwark CCG
Dr Kirsten Waters, Consultant in Public Health
Barbara Hills, General Manager, Guy's & St Thomas' Hospital Trust
John Fowler, Policy Manger , LGiU.
Nina Dohel, Director of Education
Alasdair Smith, Director , Children , Families and Adult Services
Julie Timbrell, scrutiny project manager

1. APOLOGIES

1.1 There were apologies for absence from Councillor Lucas Green.

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

2.1 There were no urgent items of business.

1. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS

- 3.1 The chair Jasmine Ali reported that she had a new job with TACT, working on policy for children and adolescents.

1. CHILDREN'S PUBLIC HEALTH - PROPOSAL TO REDUCE SERVICES

The chair invited Dick Frak, Interim Director of Commissioning Children's and Adults' Services, Southwark Council; Caroline Gilmartin Director of Integrated Commissioning NHS Southwark Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG); Dr Kirsten Watters, Consultant in Public Health, Lambeth and Southwark Public Health Team and Barbara Hills, General Manager, Community Children's Services, Evelina London, Guy's and St Thomas' Hospital Foundation Trust to present.

Dick Frak spoke about the reduction in Public Health grant from central government, and the consequent proposal from the council and CCG to cut school nursing and health visiting. Last year the Public Health grant was cut by 1.6 %, this year there is a 2.4% cut. The grant is about £22 million a year. Other cuts are being made to sexual health and troubled families.

Guys and St Thomas were inspected last year and the service was found to be good. This is not about the quality; solely about less money. Dick Frak and Barbara Hills explained that currently there are 77 posts, and the service is looking at a reduction to about 57 or 58. School nurses would lose of about 5 posts. The reduction will take us back to the numbers we had around 2015 & 15 as there was an increase in funding during a "call to action" for Health Visiting. The service reduction will not affect existing families and children, but will impact on early risk identification, which we have tried to mitigate.

RESOLVED

Caroline Gilmartin spoke about 5 million GSTT programme working with children. A briefing paper will be requested requesting more details on this, particularly on the overall spend.

A number of members asked for clarification on why there is a planned 6% cut, but a quarter of staff are predicted to go. Officers will come back with more figures.

The chair noted the equality impact assessments circulated today by email and tabled, and requested any additional information like this.

LINK TO LIVESTREAM / VIDEO

<http://bambuser.com/v/6353379>

1. POLICY CHANGES IN EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES

John Fowler, Policy Manager, Local Government Information Unit (LGIU) gave a policy briefing on changes the government is planning to Adoption, Care Leavers and the

schools academy programme.

RESOLVED

Members and officers present thanked John for the presentation and John offered to provide a written briefing based on his presentation, and this was welcomed.

LINK TO LIVESTREAM / VIDEO

<http://bambuser.com/v/6353424>

1. WORK PROGRAMME

The chair moved a discussion with the Southwark Youth Council to the beginning of the meeting. Suléy Muhidin, Community Participation Officer, and a member of Southwark Youth Council were invited to speak. They explained that the youth council recommended three topics:

- Bullying
- Young people and mental health
- Sexual health and relationship awareness

The young person gave a brief presentation on bullying with assistance from the Community Participation Officer. The young person recommended bullying ambassadors in schools as a good practice. Bullying ambassadors are senior students who go around schools and help to tackle behaviour. The participation officer reported back on a conversation that had taken place with the youth council. Young people thought that bullying was an inevitable part of culture and so efforts are needed to help young people to deal with this so it does not escalate and lead to suicide or other negative outcomes. A member commented that it is considered important to prevent bullying in many ways: bullying behaviour, culture and also by working with targets of bullying. The young person identified transition to secondary as when bullying particularly occurred.

There was a conversation about the lack of education, information and support around all three issues identified: sexual relationships, bullying and mental health, and the best place for this to happen is schools, however schools are often reluctant to deal with these issues and sometimes do not see this as their remit. A member of the audience who works in a secondary school spoke about the pressure of time given the emphasis on academic achievement and exam pressure. She suggested the home as the first place and empowering and training parents, and commented that many parents are not aware of problems. There was a conversation about the best place to hold discussions. The participation officer spoke about the stigma associated with talking about difficult issues. He was asked about alternative avenues to deal with bullying, other than schools, and he suggested youth clubs. An officer mentioned a phone application that enables young people to access school nurses, which is a good way to assist boys.

The chair mentioned the previous years review on mental health, and that there were recommendations included in this to tackle bullying.

The committee returned to the work programme , towards the end of the meeting, and identified the following themes:

Looked after children, care leavers and the Local Offer

Care covenant: How will the principles in the government's vision are delivered locally?

Local Offer: both presently and the new one for planned for care leavers (request a briefing).

Safeguarding and children at risk

Looking at public health cuts and if they will impact on children at risk negatively

Bullying & Mental Health

Follow up the bullying recommendations in the mental health review

Democratic engagement

Look at Brexit, and democratic engagement of young people in schools

Academies

Look at the PTFA proposed legislative changes and how it will impact on parental governance & engagement in schools.

Admission & places: with particular reference to the south of the borough and the capital programme.

Accountability: look at conflict of interest e.g. Joseph Rowntree issues

Forced Academisation and the impact on the 63 grant maintained schools. How should the council encourage the 63 schools to respond, in particular looking at these approaches?

- Maintaining the integrity of council support service to stop their withering and consequently schools opting for Academisation
(particularly small schools)
- encouraging the formation of local academy networks

- Consider the different governing models schools could adopt (foundation, voluntary, maintained) and the impact these models would have on staying under local authority control or becoming an academy and the future ownership of land.

RESOLVED

The chair and project manager will develop a draft work programme based on the above and send this to the members via email for comment.

LINK TO LIVESTREAM/VIDEO

Southwark Youth Council discuss topics: <http://bambuser.com/v/6353349>

Committee discuss work programme:

- part 1 : <http://bambuser.com/v/6353461>
- part 2: <http://bambuser.com/v/6353466>
- part 3: <http://bambuser.com/v/6386342>