

EDUCATION & CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the Education & Children's Services Scrutiny Sub-Committee held on Tuesday 30 June 2015 at 7.00 pm at Ground Floor Meeting Room G02B - 160 Tooley Street, London SE1 2QH

PRESENT: Councillor Jasmine Ali (Chair)

Councillor Sunny Lambe
Councillor James Okosun
Councillor Sandra Rhule
Councillor Charlie Smith
Councillor Kath Whittam

**OTHER MEMBERS
PRESENT:**

**OFFICER
SUPPORT:** Rory Patterson, Director, Children's Social Care
Jay Stickland, Director of Adult Social Care
Julie Timbrell, Scrutiny project manager
Peta Smith, Commissioning Manager
Patrick Shelley, Head of Youth Services
April Bald, Head of Service MASH

1. APOLOGIES

1.1 There were apologies for absence from Councillor Lisa Rajan.

**2. 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 Councillor Kath Whittam mentioned she had a child with autism.

4. **AUTISM STRATEGY**

The chair invited Peta Smith, Commissioning Manager, and Jay Stickland, Director of Adult Social Care, to present the paper attached.

The committee then raised the following questions and issues:

- Members raised concerns with the range of people, particularly parents and carers, who had been contacted and the location used for consultation. In particular, concerns was raised that there was an over emphasis on established groups, an over reliance on Cambridge House in Walworth as a location, and consultation events were only scheduled during the day. Members said as a consequence only a certain type of parent would attend. Members recommended evening events in other parts of the borough. Officers responded that so far there had been 1300 hundred comments from about 700 people. They said they had been guided by Parent & Carers, who suggested day time in Cambridge House, but they will be responding to feedback and offering evening events. Officers said that they will also be thinking about how to use technology to get a diversity of feedback.
- Members said that schools are good, however moving into adulthood was an issue, including accessing Further Education, supported living, and supported employment. Officers agreed and said that there will be focus on transition and the department has asked for a peer review on this, in recognition that this area needs strengthening.
- A member asked if there would be a review of the diagnostic pathway, and asked if this is a problematic area to address. Officers responded that the strategy is being done with CCG and there are discussions on training for GPs.
- Officers were asked if the strategy will be considering the needs of people with more complex needs. Officers responded that there will be more consultation with people with mild autism but those with more needs will already have

relationship with the council as they will be using services.

- Officers were asked about consultation with the general public. Members said that to integrate people with autism there will need to be awareness raising in the working place and community, and therefore the wider public need to be engaged. Officers said that modelling inclusive behaviour by staff is one way of creating an integrated culture. Officers commented that members were raising the need for an accessible borough. They spoke about 'Wand' - which is a card that promotes more accessible provision. Members asked about training for frontline staff and officers confirmed the strategy would contain training for council officers working with the public, for example housing services.
- Members asked for reassurance that the timetable would not slip again and officers gave assurances that it would not.

RESOLVED

The committee recommended officers:

- Consult with a wider group of parents & carers, not just established user groups, and ensure that events are held at a range of times, including evening, and in a range of locations, not just Walworth.
- Particularly consider transition from children to adult services.
- Engage with the wider public, community and universal services.

The draft strategy will be considered by the committee.

VIDEO - OPENING THE MEETING & AUTISM STRATEGY

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F4txA8oS-oU&list=PL_maFEOk7e9jdS9Rqm7Rg4h1yvMFOj442

5. AN OVERVIEW OF THE 'YOUTH OFFER'

Patrick Shelley, Head of Youth Services, introduced the report on the Youth Offer.

The committee raised the following questions and issues:

- Could Adventure Play cease to be the responsibility of the Youth Service? The officer confirmed this was being consulted on as part of proposals to re-organise the service.
- How is the impact of the Youth Service measured? In particular how many Looked After Children engage with the service and how are positive outcomes assessed? The officer offered to supply data on the number of Looked After Children worked with and also provide some case studies on the impact of services, particularly for children in care. The service hold a summer programme, which is bespoke for children in care.
- How are young people engaged in evaluating the service? Has the organisation 'Practical Participation' ever been used or online methodologies? The officer said at the moment the service use social media to promote services. The service is looking at employing a virtual youth worker. The service conducted a satisfaction survey, and the results were good.
- How do people refer to Fast Forward? The officer said that young people with SEND, or their parents/ carers, can self refer.
- Are Southwark Pilgrims still delivering a youth service? The officer said that the budget constraints meant this service was no longer commissioned by the council; one of the rationals was that the council prioritise services that work out of schools.
- How are youth grants decided? There is a commissioning process conducted with young people being part of the decision making on which providers are awarded grants. How open is the service to a range of providers? Commissioning is open to any provider with a local connection.
- There was a discussion about when services were most needed, and Transition was noted as a time of vulnerability. The needs of children in care and children with SEND were highlighted.
- Members indicated that they would like to hear the views of young people, and that the Youth Council was suggested.

The officer recommended also speaking to young people who used the service, and noted that although the service supports the Youth Council, this did not mean that the young people were necessarily active users of Youth Services, as any young person could put themselves forward for election.

RESOLVED

The Head of the Youth Service will return, and concentrate on Transition.

A copy of the survey and results will be provided

Case studies of young people and how they have benefited from Youth Services will be provided, and this will include examples of work with Looked After Children.

The committee will talk with a group of young people who use youth services.

VIDEO - YOUTH OFFER

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jBDLcjOjANK&index=4&list=PL_maFEOk7e9jdS9Rqm7Rg4h1yvMFOj442

6. FGM

Rory Patterson, Director, Children's Social Care and April Bald, Head of Service MASH, presented the report on FGM.

The following questions and issues were raised:

- A member commented that media reports of the work to tackle FGM in the inner London boroughs indicated that Newham Council is doing particularly well. Officers said that one of Newham's strengths is their outreach work. Southwark Council have recently recognised that to be effective more community engagement is needed because although statutory agencies are following protocols, there are low numbers of young women and families being engaged.
- How many women have undergone FGM? Officers responded that work is being done to collect data to get a more accurate baseline, which is important to establish.

Midwifery services report that between 4-6% of woman giving birth have had some form of FGM.

- Has there been a conviction for FGM and how is the law being used? One FGM conviction was started on a doctor, but this was not successful. Civil Protection Orders are being utilised to prevent parents carrying out FGM on girls at risk. This is effective at preventing parents carrying this out, as it sends out a strong signal that this practice is illegal and unacceptable.
- Officers commented that the model used to tackle Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) was being replicated to tackle FGM – in particular gathering data and disruption.
- If FGM happened to an older child would younger children be taken into care? Officers reported that older children, who have undergone FGM, have reported that younger siblings are at risk and as a result children have been taken into police protection, while an investigation was carried out. Children at risk are tracked.
- Border controls are giving out warning and protection packs, particularly during risk periods, such as holidays. Officers spoke about national work to develop a data base with a tracking system which can be used by different health and social care partners to identify children at risk. They spoke about FGM and safeguarding. Officer said that partners are looking at sharing protocols that will be assessable be on universal services There is local work to look at steps that can be taken to develop this if national guidance is delayed.
- A member suggested engaging with and tackling the older generations in communities where FGM is practiced, particularly grandmothers and aunts, who are often influential in perpetuating the practice. The member asked how much energy is invested in communicating with older people and engaging them in a dialogue over the reasons they may have to justify the practice, for example health. He advocated engaging with the community and giving a message that FGM is not culturally appropriate for the 21st century. Officers commented that creating a space for honest dialogue around difficult subjects can be very useful in

enabling behaviour change.

- Members asked if passports could be taken away from people who could carry out the practice, given it is a criminal matter? Officers advised that Civil Protection Orders are middle ground, which balance civil liberties with the need to safeguard children. They remarked that the children at risk are frequently from families with good parents, and the children are only at risk for FGM, rather than living in abusive homes, so there needs to be a proportionate response.

RESOLVED

A scrutiny in a day methodology will be employed, on September 15th. Members will be consulted on the best time, after the meeting.

Officers will be invited to suggest who would be well placed to give evidence and contribute to the day.

Survivors, the faith community and BME groups will be approached to attend.

Embassy representatives from countries where the practice is common will be invited.

VIDEO - FMG

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DcHQFHDx5U0&index=5&list=PL_maFEOk7e9jdS9Rqm7Rg4h1yvMFOj442

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c3NE-S87lqg&list=PL_maFEOk7e9jdS9Rqm7Rg4h1yvMFOj442&index=6

7. WORKPLAN

RESOLVED

A presentation will be requested on apprenticeships, traineeships and employment support from officers.

There will be a continuing focus on further education & tertiary education.

A presentation will be sought on the Local Offer, with a specific request for statistics on how many people are using the website, and tracking

through.

The mental health review, which is being conducted in conjunction with Health Communities scrutiny sub-committee, will look at the role of mental health champions.

VIDEO - WORKPLAN

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vMCxwIV0v9k&index=7&list=PL_maFEOk7e9jdS9Rqm7Rg4h1yvMFOj442

CHAIR:

DATED: