

## **EDUCATION, CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND LEISURE SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE**

MINUTES of the Education, Children's Services and Leisure Scrutiny Sub-Committee held on Tuesday 23 April 2013 at 7.00 pm at Ground Floor Meeting Room G01A - 160 Tooley Street, London SE1 2QH

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**PRESENT:** Councillor David Hubber (Chair)  
Councillor Chris Brown  
Councillor Sunil Chopra  
Councillor Rowenna Davis  
Councillor Lisa Rajan  
Councillor Rosie Shimell  
Councillor Cleo Soanes  
Colin Elliott  
Lynn Charlton

**OTHER MEMBERS  
PRESENT:**

**OFFICER  
SUPPORT:** Kerry Crichlow - Director; strategy and support.  
Sam Fowler - Schools for the Future project director  
Paul Stokes - Community Sport Manager  
Adrian Whittle - Head of Culture, Libraries, Learning and Leisure  
Colin Gale - Free Healthy School Meals project lead  
Rosie Dalton-Lucas - Health and Wellbeing Manager  
Jin Lim - Assistant Director Public Health consultant  
Julie Timbrell - Scrutiny project manager

### **1. APOLOGIES**

- 1.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillor The Right Reverend Emmanuel Oyewole.

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

2.1 There were none.

**3. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS**

3.1 There were no disclosures of interests or dispensations.

**4. MINUTES**

4.1 The Minutes of the meeting held on 25 February 2013 were agreed. The Draft Minutes of the meeting held on 12 March have been published.

**5. REVIEW: BULLYING**

5.1 The chair invited Scott Freeman and Dan Raisbeck from Cybersmile to present.

5.2 They explained that Cybersmile is a service for children, young people and adults. There is a website, a helpline and Cybersmile offer counselling and do workshops in schools.

5.3 Cybersmile explained that when they go to schools they tackle emotional detachment, by making children aware of the emotional damage they can cause.

5.4 They work with parents and reported that there is often a huge generational gap, and parents who don't understand social media may just confiscate equipment, rather than supporting the child in dealing with the problem.

5.5 Cybersmile reported that when they first approached Brighton the local authority originally said that cyber-bullying was not a problem. Their first priority is emphasising the scale of the problem and how incidents of cyber-bullying are leading to self-harm, eating disorders and suicidal ideas.

5.6 There is a Cyber-bullying awareness day coming up on 21 June. Cybersmile summarised their approach by explaining that they work to raise the profile of the problem and help

organisations such as schools deal with the issue effectively through workshops and by helping schools to develop appropriate policies.

- 5.7 The chair thanked Cybersmile for their presentation and invited the committee to ask questions. A member asked how prevalent the problem is in the UK and Cybersmile said that there has been a recent survey and results are due out in about a month.
- 5.8 Cybersmile were asked if they had worked in Southwark and they responded that they had not but they would like to promote their services locally, including the education pack and workshops. The Head teacher representative offered to help promote this to local schools.
- 5.9 A member asked about their work with parents and Cybersmile said that there is a section just for parents on the website and they also do workshops, however attendance is a bit hit and miss. Members suggested going via the relationship with schools and Cybersmile reported that they are working with a schools in Brighton where parents and teachers are working together to tackle the problem. They explained that they have the volunteers and the most update to date research with a big push for this work coming soon.
- 5.10 Cybersmile were asked about their online presence and they explained this includes online training teacher and a social media following. They reported that a designer is working on t shirts which will be promoted online.
- 5.11 A member asked at what age children become vulnerable to bullying and Cybersmile said that young people can start going online as early as 6, and remarked that it is worth thinking about privacy settings at a young age. Cybersmile explained that problems with sexting and sexual blackmail often relate to privacy settings. Bullying can take place on lots of different sites, including gaming and social media. There are some particularly problematic sites where children are encouraged to do something sexually explicit and then unknown to them a video is recoded and the target is later blackmailed.
- 5.12 Cybersmile commented that often there is a need for very time consuming work to be done liaising between parents and schools to resolve incidents and consider policies. Cybersmile reported because this such time consuming work

a special role that is needed, which they are looking to create. The chair and members thanked Cybersmile for their presentation

- 5.13 The chair invited Jennifer Blake from Safe 'N' Sound to present. Jennifer explained her project is based in based in Peckham and provides support to young people involved in knife crime and other anti-social behaviour.
- 5.14 She explained that she is a mediator and works with Trident. She explained that young people who are involved in gangs are also involved in types of bullying, whether as victims or perpetrators or both. She reported that there is a high level of bullying in schools and that there are instances of boys using sex with other boys to intimidate. Girls are also subject to intimidation to join gangs. There are also instances where children are bullied to hold knives.
- 5.15 Jennifer reported that it is difficult to work with schools as many do not want to admit the existence or scale of the problem. She said she understands that schools have more and more emphasis on social work, when they often see their core role as academic.
- 5.16 A member asked what age range her project works with and she said that Safe 'N' Sound work with 7 to 16 year olds or 18 year olds if the young people are in college. A member asked her what activities Safe 'N' Sound undertake. She said that she talks to schools about the scale of the problem and emphasised that many schools do not want to recognise the problem: the first hurdle is admitting the problem then they can get support.
- 5.17 Jennifer explained that the project works with schoolchildren on a one to one basis, often with young people not going school. A member queried the extent of boys raping boys and asked how long this has been going on for and how pervasive she thought it was. Jennifer said she works close to the ground and is aware of instances, these are not new and this has been happening in prisons for a while.
- 5.18 A member commented that often young people feel that the perpetrators are not punished enough and witnesses and targets also have concerns about being identified. Jennifer said that there are protocols to protect young people and went on to refer to a case recently where a young man was murdered. She said that the project worked to support young

people to give evidence. She agreed that the punishments should be more serious.

- 5.19 Jennifer was asked how many young people the project worked with and she said they receive a referral once a day. This will often involve a number of issues, such as sexual abuse. Members asked how young people know about the service and she explained that young people often come through word of mouth and self refer. Quite often they present as housing problem but as Safe 'N' Sound delves deeper they find this is not really the case.
- 5.20 A member asked if the young people Safe 'N' Sound works with go on to help in the project and Jennifer said that many do progress to become mentors.
- 5.21 Jennifer was then asked if Safe 'N' Sound have done any work with Southwark Youth Council (SYC) and she responded that SYC are a new cohort and she is always trying to work with young people who are vocal. A member pointed out that they are young people who are in schools and suggested they might be bridge. Jennifer agreed. Another member suggested that some of the Safe 'N' Sound young people could get on SYC.
- 5.22 Jennifer was asked about Safe 'N' Sound's relationship with the council and she explained that the project used to be in a Southwark building, but they are no longer there. She said that they could not get funding and afford the rent, however now the project is subletting and has obtained funding from the Safer Southwark Partnership. She said that the project works closely with Southwark police – she would like to replicate this close working relationship with the council.

## **RESOLVED**

Cybersmile will forward a survey on the extent of cyber-bullying when this becomes available.

## **6. FAMILY ACTION AND HOMESTART**

- 6.1 The chair invited Deborah Boyd and Carolyn Martin from Home-Start Southwark and Family Action Southwark to give a presentation, attached to the minutes.
- 6.2 The chair invited the committee to ask questions and a

member asked how easy it was to get volunteers and they responded that it is easy to recruit and but they do have a problem with retention, and this is mainly to do with job centre requirements. They explained it cost £2000 to £3000 to train a volunteer.

- 6.3 A member commented that good parenting was important and the project workers agreed, commenting on the importance of providing early support to parents, which will then enhance the emotional wellbeing of the babies and young children in their care. They said that this is long term work.
- 6.4 A member asked if they check for older children and the project workers said that they do always keep older siblings in mind and build bridges for older children, but it is harder with older children. They reported they provided a volunteer mentor for a 14 year old. The father's initiative is working with children up to the age of 11.
- 6.5 A member commented that Southwark as landlord seems to be hindering the work of volunteer projects and recommended working with community engagement to improve working relationships.

## **7. OLYMPIC AND PARALYMPIC LEGACY**

- 7.1 The officers Paul Stokes, Community Sport Manager and Adrian Whittle, Head of Culture, Libraries, Learning and Leisure presented the three reports, which covered :
- Data detailing which sports activities have seen any increase in participation as a result of the Olympics in order to judge what sports are most popular.
  - An overview of volunteering inspired by London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games
  - An investigation into the impact the London 2012 Olympics and Paralympics on community sport and physical activity for young people aged between 8 and 24 years in the London Borough of Southwark
- 7.2 Officers highlighted that that swimming, cycling and athletics have all seen increasing rates of participation. The Olympics

& Paralympics inspired young people to do more and try new sports. Key issues for increasing participation were adult support, adequate provision and the availability of coaching.

- 7.3 Members reported that Southwark Youth Council have highlighted communication and marketing as an issue. Young people have suggested better use of social media, and that they see these as key marketing platforms. Officers agreed this needs to be improved and reported that they are consulting young people. They are looking for devolution of social media platforms to relevant officers so that they can start using social media tools more effectively.
- 7.4 A member commented that Southwark have a great gymnastic team, however the team say they find it hard to recruit locally. She commented that this team is very inspiring so something is very wrong if the team is not known about locally. Officers responded that Southwark do have a "get active" website which has been launched and is getting well used locally; there is a 77 % increase on hits to the platform. Members asked if it was possible to find out what demographic were using the site and officers said this was not possible but the council is working with Sports England who can do more segmentation. The council is using the "get active" marketing programme to do targeted promotion.
- 7.5 Officers were asked how far away Southwark is from delivering the athletics track and they responded that the council have raised considerable finance and can now do some of the design work.
- 7.6 A member commented that Southwark Youth Council recently did a deputation which raised the issue of personal safety when accessing sports provision. The member commented that she is pleased that the council undertook to work with the young people to address their concerns.
- 7.7 The chair thanked the officers for the quality and thoroughness of the reports.

## **8. MONITORING OF CABINET MEMBERS' REPORTS IN RESPONSE TO REVIEWS - OBESITY AND SPORTS PROVISION**

- 8.1 The chair invited officers Rosie Dalton-Lucas, Health and Wellbeing Manager and Jin Lim, Assistant Director Public Health consultant to present the report circulated with the papers. They noted that the committee made 55 recommendations and there is a detailed response to the committee's top 15.
- 8.2 The chair invited questions and a member commented that academies don't have to follow national nutritional standards. The officer responded that the cabinet member has written to all the schools to request nicely that they do meet these standards, given the council is funding the Free Healthy School Meals scheme.
- 8.3 A member asked how much interaction there is with urban farms and the officers respond that although there are some links with schools, there were more opportunities that could be exploited by the council.
- 8.4 Members asked about the role of volunteers and take-up of the programmes mentioned, including Change 4 Life and the programme of targeted support facilitated by Bacons College to support 25 schools with high levels of obesity. The officer confirmed that programmes always look for interaction and the involvement of volunteers. Officers reported that about 15 schools have registered, however others may have used materials provided as a resource.
- 8.5 Members asked about targeted work with obese children and officers reported that three fairs have been held for children who were very obese, with varying levels of success in engaging families. There is a list of 500 families who were contacted, 300 of whom were spoken with, and of these about 50 were engaged. The scheme gave vouchers for local stores which give discounts on healthy food. These proved very popular with parents.
- 8.6 The chair thanked officers for the report and asked them to return in a year.

#### RESOLVED

The committee will review implementation of the recommendations in a year.



## **9. COMMUNITY RESTORATION FUND**

- 9.1 The chair invited the officers Stephen Gaskell, Head of Strategy and Nick Wolff, Senior Strategy Officer to present on the Community Restoration Fund and Youth Fund (the report was circulated with the agenda of the previous meeting and tabled again at the meeting). The Head of Strategy explained that this presentation will focus on the employment scheme, as both programmes are very broad, and youth employment is the area the committee has expressed most interest in.
- 9.2 The Senior Strategy Officer explained that many of the programmes seek to overcome the disadvantage that young people face when going into a labour market because of their lack of experience and knowledge. He explained that the council has commissioned a number of initiatives, on top of Job Centre Plus, which focus on employment skills and economic development.
- 9.3 These are quite varied and include setting up a retail 'pop up' shop for training in the Horniman museum. The second phase focused on the lack of experience many young people have and helped people to do work placements. 500 people were supported with 139 getting places on work placements.
- 9.4 The officer explained that they do not have a problem with engagement and there are a wide variety of participants with different needs. He gave two examples; one participant had a 1st class honours degree in electronics but he did not get through interviews so the initiative provided support developing confidence and social skills. Another participant was an artist who had dropped out of college. He got a work placement, became more reliable, and returned to education.
- 9.5 Overall the number of young people claiming benefit is going down, but the long term rates of unemployment are going up. He said some people are going through work programmes for 18 months but are still not able to secure employment.
- 9.6 The chair invited the committee to ask questions and commented that Southwark Youth Council spoke about the difficulties they had experienced in accessing good quality

work experience. He asked how the council can help and officers responded that this is about developing relationships with employers.

- 9.7 Officers were asked about tracking and noted that 62 people gained employment out of the entire cohort. Members asked officers if they are considering doing things differently and they responded that the council are looking at maintaining support for longer in order to give advice and they are also considering using mentors.
- 9.8 A member commented that the “Mind Your Own Business” event was a very good achievement.
- 9.9 Officers were asked how much they consider the needs of employers and the wider economy, for example growth areas like green technology. The officer responded that that they do consider the needs of the local employers. A member commented that he read that 80 were people studying hairdressing but there are not the jobs - there is a mismatch.
- 9.10 A member recalled the feedback the committee had received from Southwark Youth Council that often work placements are things like stacking shelves, which are not high quality. Officers responded that the council is looking for high quality placements. He explained that they do ask for feedback from participants and support is also given. There is a vetting process. Short training is also delivered either before, during or after so there is a package.
- 9.11 The head- teacher representative commented that when schools organise training the employers are guided with a programme; she asked if the council required this. The officer responded that there is not a common structure but the council do make certain requirements of employers, including the obligation to deliver a training element.

#### RESOLVED

Members recommended officers work with Southwark Education Business Alliance

## **10. REVIEW: UNIVERSAL FREE HEALTHY SCHOOL MEALS**

- 10.1 The chair noted the response from Kids Company and commented that he was pleased to receive more details on the Lancashire initiative that provides a supper and homework club. However, on the second point, it was not clear from the information provided that the national statistic that used to provide a nutritional measure had indeed been dropped. The third query had not been addressed.
- 10.2 The chair invited comments on the progress report on Free Healthy School Meals and a member noted the report said that all primary school settings were offered the opportunity to take up a curriculum based programme on health from an organisation called PhunkyFoods. He commented that in school slang 'Phunky Food' means food that has gone off, or is not good, and so this might not be the best branding!

### **RESOLVED**

Kids Company will be contacted to ask for details of any partnerships that Kids Company is developing in Southwark as part of their Plate Pledge programme.

## **11. ROTHERHITHE SCHOOL AND SOUTHWARK FREE SCHOOLS**

- 11.1 The chair invited Sam Fowler, Schools for the Future project director, to comment on the report. He started by saying that some of the assumptions did not come to pass. Previous advice that the Education Funding Agency (EFA) had acquired the former Bermondsey campus of Southwark College on behalf of Compass School was inaccurate. A developer has acquired the site, and is still looking to support Compass, but the University Technical College is more uncertain. Members asked where the site was and officers explained this was the former Kings site near Half Moon Lane.
- 11.2 Members asked if Compass school is offering places to parents and if this is risky. The officer agreed there are some risks; the developer has made agreement with the school, but signing up for school places is still a leap of faith by parents. The officer was asked if it goes wrong would the council have

an obligation to find alternative places and he confirmed that the council would, because every child has a right to a place. Officers explained that they would work hard to fulfil this duty.

- 11.3 Members commented that they had seen adverts up for the Oasis school and officers responded that this is in Lambeth, but officers will be consulting with colleagues there.

## **12. REVIEW: LOCAL AUTHORITY ROLE IN EDUCATION**

- 12.1 Evidence on the review will be sought from the Southwark school governors association and the Head teacher's executive, both of whom meet in June.