

EDUCATION, CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY PANEL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING of the Education, Children & Young People's Scrutiny Panel held on Thursday 8 December 2011 at 5 pm in the Executive Meeting Room, 3rd Floor, The Guildhall, Portsmouth.

(NB: These minutes should be read in conjunction with the agenda for the meeting).

Present

Councillors: Steve Wemyss (In the Chair)
Margaret Adair
Peter Eddis

Duncan Cope, Parent representative

49 Declaration of Members' Interests (AI 1)

Councillor Scott declared a personal non-prejudicial interest in that she used to work sometime ago in units for children with behavioural problems.

50 Minutes of the Meeting held on 7 November 2011 (AI 3)

(TAKE IN MINUTES)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 7 November 2011 be approved as a correct record.

51 Review of Targeted Support for Children and Young People who Demonstrate Behaviours that may put them at Risk (AI 4)

(TAKE IN SCOPING DOCUMENT AND ACCOMPANYING REPORT)

Mike Stoneman gave a brief overview of his accompanying report. He stated that a review was being held in line with Priority D of the Children's Trust Plan 2011-14. The aim of delivering targeted support for young people who demonstrate behaviours that may put them at risk was to provide early intervention support before they need specialist help. It was agreed that the commissioning strategy should focus on three key strands:-

- 1) To develop an integrated targeted youth support service in Portsmouth with three proposed area-based teams – north, central and south, offering support to the most vulnerable young people in Portsmouth. The three integrated teams would be geared towards specific outcomes and would focus on risk factors and provide a more comprehensive holistic and targeted approach.

- 2) To develop a range of open-access structured youth activity programmes (positive activities). The rationale behind this approach was to deliver more structured activities for young people leading to more structured outcomes. This would include opening up the provision of such activities to external providers, particularly the voluntary sector, to obtain better value for money.
- 3) To maintain and re-focus a range of specialist tier 2/3 services which will be delivered alongside the Targeted Youth Support Service. These services include: young carers service, teenage pregnancy services, youth substance misuse services, etc.

A report would be submitted to the Cabinet shortly and the proposals outlined in Section 4 of the accompanying report were being put forward. Mike referred to Section 4.1 of his report explaining that significant progress had been made with regard to the positive activities programme. Half a million pounds has been allocated to secure a broad range of exciting and innovating activities across the city. The City Council will retain the five youth centres and a reduced base line service (two evenings per week sessions). A service specification has been drawn up with the aim of contracting the new services from April 2012.

The development of the Integrated Targeted Youth Support Service has proved very challenging.

Mike referred to Section 6 of his report regarding the Integrated Targeted Youth Support Service. A hybrid model is being proposed (one of eight options that were considered). It involves 2012/13 being treated as a transition year. The largest part of the service would remain with PCC and PCC would manage the process of restructuring through a structured consultation and selection process to a size reflecting the budget available. Simultaneously, Motiv8 would be offered a one year extension to their current contract, but at a lower level funding level (details to be confirmed). The reduction in funding for Motiv8 would be in line with the level of reduction taking place in PCC (from a percentage point of view) meaning that the pain of any funding cuts will be shared more equally across the two organisations. The intention is to establish three area based teams from this restructure from September 2012. During 2012/13 a tendering process would then take place putting out the reduced-sized service, either in full or in part (for example, one area team), to tender, with a contract start date of April or September 2013.

In response to questions from the Panel the following points were clarified:-

The types of risk behaviours would include low level anti-social behaviour, alcohol and drug abuse, teenage pregnancy and repeated absence from school. It was agreed that in order to prevent young people from becoming at risk it was necessary to intervene as early as possible.

The Youth Support Service works with schools, parents and other stakeholders to improve outcomes.

The need to identify a risk before the behaviour manifests itself was acknowledged as being important and it was explained that the Youth Support Service would work with schools beginning at primary level to identify the children at risk. For example, this could be due to poor parenting or behaviour issues.

Sharon George explained that young people who were not in employment or training after school would be targeted. The Integrated Youth Support Service (IYSS) surveys Year 10 and 11 pupils. Unfocused pupils are identified and staff work intensely with them giving career guidance etc. In Year 11 every September the Service offers to work with young people who have not made plans to go to further education, employment or training. The aim is to assist all young people in making some plan as to what to do after leaving school in order to prevent them from becoming at risk.

Furthermore, the IYSS carries out a tracking service of young people who had left school every November. They work with young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) to help them to move towards some activity.

There was evidence that employment centres found it difficult to identify NEETs. It was explained that the IYSS was able to check the databases of local colleges to find out which young people were still in college.

Information Required

Councillor Scott referred to a Scrutiny Panel review undertaken about four years ago on the support available to young care leavers of which she and Councillor Adair were Panel Members. Panel members agreed that it would be useful to read this report.

It was further agreed that the following documents should also be provided to Panel Members for further reading:

- A copy of an Executive Summary of Government policy on children and young people, not in employment, education or training
- The 14-19 Partnership Board's consultation with young people on the positive activities programme
- The informal Cabinet report on the commissioning of IYSS.

Information Required for the Next Meeting

It was agreed that the following items of information would be provided at a future meeting.

- A report to include data gathered over the last five years on young people leaving school and their outcomes
- Some 14-19 trend data regarding children and young people who demonstrate behaviours that put them at risk, for example, teenage conception

Witnesses to be Invited to the Next Meeting

Liz Robinson, Principal Educational Psychologist, Carole Damper, Chief Executive of the Roberts Centre and Co-Chair of the 14-19 Partnership Board.

If either of these invitees were unable to attend the next meeting they should be invited to a future meeting. The following alternative witnesses for the 5 January meeting were: Julian Wooster, Strategic Director and Director of Children's Services and Paul Edmondson-Jones, Director of Public Health. If it is not necessary to invite these two latter witnesses to attend the 5 January meeting they should be invited to attend the next meeting.

52 Dates of Future Meetings

The following dates of future meetings were agreed:-

Thursday 5 January 2012 at 5 pm
Thursday 26 January 2012 at 5 pm
Thursday 23 February 2012 at 5 pm
Thursday 15 March 2012 at 5 pm

The meeting concluded at 6 pm.

TD/SEM
13 December 2011
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