

PEOPLE'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

16 June 2016

Present:-

Councillors S Randall-Johnson (Chairman), E Barisic, F Biederman, A Connett, A Dewhurst, R Hannaford, A Hannan, R Hosking, R Rowe, M Squires, C Mabin and C Channon

Members attending in accordance with Standing Order 25

Councillor J McInnes

Apologies:-

Councillors A Eastman, J Mathews and P Sanders

* **1** Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 21 March 2016 be signed as a correct record.

* **2** Chairman's Announcement

The Chairman, on behalf of the Committee expressed her thanks to the Head of Education and Learning for her continued support and commitment to this Committee following the announcement of her retirement.

* **3** Public Participation: Representations

There were no representations received.

* **4** Children's Standing Overview Group

The Committee received the Report (CS/16/25) of the Groups visits to Social Care Offices on 26 April and on the meeting on 27 April 2016 which discussed, inter alia, concerns around performance areas including MASH referrals; Social Worker caseloads which aimed to be reduced to the mid-teens by September 2017; and issues around a lack of car parking and overall suitability of County Hall as Social Care offices.

* **5** Adults' Standing Overview Group

The Committee received the Report (CS/16/24) on the discussions of the Group at its meeting on 14 April 2016 focusing on key areas including Preventative work, Integrated Care and the Deprivation of Liberties Standards.

* **6** Child Sexual Exploitation Task Group

(Councillor McInnes, Cabinet Member for Children, Schools and Skills, attended in accordance with Standing Order 25(1) and spoke to this item at the invitation of the Committee).

The Committee received the reports of the Head of Children's Social Work and Child Protection on Child Sexual Exploitation (CP/16/01) and Child Sexual Abuse in Devon (CP/16/02).

The Head of Service explained that there had been evidence of significant improvements within these areas and increased close partnership working between organisations. Early protection work continued to be developed as well as work around disruption following two serious case reviews in Devon which highlighted significant areas of learning and development for Devon County Council. The Organised Crime Local Profile for Child Sexual Exploitation and Child Sexual Abuse was the first multi-agency profile that agencies had been able to work with in order to measure progress and learn more about this complex subject.

Mr N Ralph, Detective Chief Inspector in the Public Protection Unit and Chairman of the Devon Safeguarding Children's Board (DSCB) Missing and Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Sub Group, attended and spoke at the invitation of the Committee, commenting that:

- there had been significant developments in the past 18 months with better services for children in Devon;
- multi-agency engagement had greatly improved with practitioners having received training to recognise signs of CSE;
- 3,500 frontline Police Staff would have also received training to recognise the signs of CSE by December 2016;
- Barnardo's had been utilised to provide training to those in the night time economy, such as taxi drivers and door staff;
- the Devon Youth Service had completed a survey of 168 children to enhance knowledge of young people's understanding of CSE;
- Devon County Council, in collaboration with its partners, had redesigned the Missing and Child Sexual Exploitation Forums;
- more work would be undertaken with hard to reach or seldom heard groups, such as children with disabilities, who are 3.5 times more likely to experience abuse; Lottery funding had enabled a CSE worker in the Exeter Sexual Assault Referral Centre and a further three more CSE workers employed by Children's Society who would be placed around Devon;
- a multi-agency CSE disruption manual had been produced;
- the number of successful investigations with substantial convictions had increased as a result of a joined up, collaborative approach.

RESOLVED that the Child Sexual Exploitation Task Group be reconvened to receive an update on progress made against the recommendations from its initial report (CS/15/01) and the delivery of the Devon CSE Action Plan 2015/16; and the new Police and Crime Commissioner be invited to attend that Task Group.

* **7** **Internal Audit Annual Monitoring Report**

The Committee considered the Report of the County Treasurer (CT/16/47) outlining the current position against the Internal Audit Plan for 2015/16; the work undertaken and providing an overall adequacy and effectiveness of the service area's internal control environment.

* **8** **Performance Report**

(Councillor McInnes, Cabinet Member for Children, Schools & Skills, attended in accordance with Standing Order 25(2) and spoke to this item at the invitation of the Committee).

The Committee received and noted the Report of the Strategic Director, People (SCC/16/49) summarising progress, on a risk assessed, exception basis, on work being delivered by People's Services against Strategic Plan priorities to the end of the fourth quarter of 2015/16, on matters including:

- the new Adult Social Care Performance Framework which emphasised quality assurance of practice, quality and sufficiency in the market and robust information about safeguarding;
- total caseload profile;
- Devon Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) enquiries and referrals;
- quality assurance of commissioned services
- Risk Management;
- Delayed transfers of care;
- Better Care Fund;
- Education and learning;

Members' discussion points with the Cabinet Member(s) and Officers included:

- low satisfaction levels of carers within social services;
- proportion of clients using self-directed support;
- number of assessments for social care completed within 28 days;
- the number of Education and Health Care Plans (EHCP) issued within the 20 week statutory timescale and the large volume of Statements still to be transferred to EHCPs;
- attainment gaps continued to shrink;
- the number of Independent Schools in Devon judged to be good at 50% compared to the national average of 75.5%;
- the case allocation for Social Workers deemed to be extremely high which was expected to gradually decrease by September 2017.

RESOLVED that the Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee be advised that this Committee would welcome the opportunity to be represented on the Hospital Discharge Task Group.

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People's Scrutiny Committee Work Programme and Council/Cabinet Forward Plan

The Committee reviewed the Scrutiny Work Programme and determined those items of business to be included therein for its sphere of activity, having regard also to the Cabinet/Council Forward Plan. The Work Programme was endorsed.

[NB: The Scrutiny Work Programme is available on the Council's website at http://www.devon.gov.uk/scrutiny_programme.htm and the Council/Cabinet Forward Plan is available at http://www.devon.gov.uk/forward_plan]

***DENOTES DELEGATED MATTER WITH POWER TO ACT**

The Meeting started at 2.00 pm and finished at 5.05 pm