
CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SCRUTINY PANEL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 7 JUNE 2018

Present: Councillors Taggart (Chair), J Baillie, Guthrie, Keogh, Laurent, Mitchell and Murphy

Apologies: Councillors

1. **ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR**

RESOLVED that Councillor Mitchell be elected as Vice-Chair for the 2018/2019 Municipal Year.

2. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (INCLUDING MATTERS ARISING)**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 22 March 2018 be approved and signed as a correct record.

3. **CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SERVICES**

The Panel considered the report of the Service Director, Legal and Governance which recommended that the Panel noted the services provided by Children and Families Services and considered the findings from the recent Ofsted inspection focussing on services for care leavers.

Following discussions with Jane White, Service Lead - Children's Social Care, Alyce McCourt, Principal Educational Psychologist and Phil Bullingham, Service Lead - Safeguarding, Improvement, Governance and Quality Assurance – it was noted that:

- Collectively the services delivered by Children and Families Services were considered to have improved since 2014. However, it was also noted that there was scope to improve performance and outcomes across the range of services, in particular the number of care leavers that were not in education, employment or training (NEET) and the educational outcomes for looked after children.
- The formal feedback from the Ofsted focussed visit to Southampton children's services would not be available until 15 June.
- The Government had recently launched a consultation exercise on proposals relating to elected home education (EHE). The rising number of EHE is a concern in Southampton.
- The Children's Commissioner had published a report on the stability of Looked After Children.

RESOLVED:

- i. That the feedback from the Ofsted focussed visit be circulated for consideration to the Panel.

- ii. That the letter regarding elected home education, which had been sent to Member of Parliament, Royston Smith, by the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills, be circulated to the Panel.
- iii. That, mirroring the report from the Children's Commissioner, the stability of the city's Looked After Children be reviewed by the Panel on an annual basis.

4. **CHILDREN AND FAMILIES - PERFORMANCE**

The Panel considered the report of the Service Director, Legal and Governance that provided an overview of performance across Children and Families Services since March 2018.

Following discussions with Jane White, Service Lead Children's Social Care, Alyce McCourt, Principal Educational Psychologist and Phil Bullingham, Service Lead - Safeguarding, Improvement, Governance and Quality Assurance – it was noted that performance continued to improve overall and that the number of Looked After Children had reduced to the level where the vast majority of children were subject to a Court Order.

The Panel also noted the performance summary from the Chair.

RESOLVED that data be provided to the Panel which indicated how many Looked After Children had been accommodated according to each type of Court Order or section of the Children's Act.