
CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SCRUTINY PANEL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 26 JULY 2018

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

Apologies: Councillor Guthrie and Appointed Members Catherine Hobbs and Rob Sanders

5. **APOLOGIES AND CHANGES IN PANEL MEMBERSHIP (IF ANY)**

The apologies of Councillor Guthrie and Appointed Member Rob Sanders were noted.

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

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 7 June 2018 be approved and signed as a correct record.

7. **EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC - CONFIDENTIAL PAPERS INCLUDED IN THE FOLLOWING ITEM**

RESOLVED the Chair moved that in accordance with the Council's Constitution, specifically the Access to Information Procedure Rules contained within the Constitution, the press and public be excluded from the meeting in respect of any consideration of the confidential appendices to the following item.

Confidential appendices 3 and 4 contain information deemed to be exempt from general publication based on Category 2 of paragraph 10.4 of the Council's Access to Information Procedure Rules. It is not in the public interest to disclose this because it is likely to reveal the identity of an individual.

Appendices 1 and 2 contain confidential information under paragraph 10.3 of the Council's Access to Information Procedure Rules. Information was given to the Council by a Government Department on terms which forbid its public disclosure or information which cannot be publicly disclosed by Court Order.

8. **PRIMARY OVERVIEW - KEY STAGES 1 AND 2 PERFORMANCE**

The Panel received and noted the report of the Director of Legal and Governance which recommended that the Panel noted the provisional Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 results.

Following discussions with Councillor Paffey, Cabinet Member for Aspirations, Schools and Lifelong Learning, Hilary Brooks, Director of Children and Families and Derek Wiles, Service Lead – Education it was noted that:

- The provisional results were predominantly positive, testament to the quality of schools and teachers in the City, but a number of concerns were raised.
- At Key Stage 1 Southampton performed on par with comparators when considering expected levels of performance but had fallen behind when factoring in 'greater depth' results.
- At Key Stage 2 there were strong improvements in the percentage of Southampton pupils achieving the expected standard in reading, writing and maths combined.
- Significant progress had been made with regards to the percentage of Southampton pupils that had achieved the High Standard in Maths at Key Stage 2. The support provided by the Solent Maths Hub and the engagement with Shanghai maths teachers were identified as contributory factors in the improved performance.
- Concerns were raised about the poor performance relating to the percentage of pupils that had achieved the High Standard in Writing at key Stage 2. The Panel were informed that improving performance in this area would be a priority moving forward.
- The Panel commented on the wide variations in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 performance outcomes across Southampton schools. Additional support was provided by School Improvement Officers to schools identified as needing extra support. In addition peer to peer support had been utilised whereby high performing teachers in a subject supported a cluster of schools to improve outcomes.

9. **EARLY YEARS PROVISION**

The Panel received and noted the report of the Director of Children and Families which recommended that the Panel noted the overview of Early Years provision in the City.

Following discussions with Councillor Paffey, Cabinet Member for Aspiration, Schools and Lifelong Learning, Hilary Brooks, Director of Children and Families, Derek Wiles, Service Lead – Education and Anne Downie, Team Manager, Early Years and Childcare, it was noted that:

- An increased number of eligible 2 year olds in Southampton had not received the early years offer;
- A number of providers had opted to accept 3 and 4 year olds through the extended offer rather than eligible 2 year olds. This was partly explained by 2 year olds being more expensive because they required a higher ratio of staff to children;
- Difficulties recruiting suitable staff had limited the ability of some providers to expand;
- The take up of childminders was still a concern. For some 2 year olds this was the most appropriate setting and the Council would continue to promote the use of childminders;
- Budget pressures had resulted in the Council reducing the level of available support to early year's settings in Southampton. There were concerns that this would have an impact on Ofsted ratings and Early Years Foundation Stage results moving forward;

- At the Partnership event in May 2018 champions for each cluster hub had been identified. It was envisaged that these hubs would encourage collaboration by providers across a geographical area supporting initiatives such as shared training and shared bank staff;
- Reflecting the financial pressures being experienced by a number of providers, concerns were raised about the long term viability of the sector in Southampton.

10. **CHILDREN AND FAMILIES - PERFORMANCE**

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

The discussion focussed on the need to reduce the pressure on the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) by:

- Encouraging universal services to utilise their safeguarding processes more effectively;
- Strengthening the Early Help offer to enable the service to act quickly to support children thereby preventing the need to escalate cases to safeguarding services; and
- Recruiting experienced social workers to work within the MASH.

It was noted that analysis would be undertaken to better understand the issues identified above.

The Panel also noted the Performance Summary from the Chair and the response provided by the officers.

RESOLVED that the Panel receive an update on progress made addressing the factors that were creating pressure on the MASH at the next Panel meeting.