

# **Children and Young People's Services Select Committee**

**12 September 2018**

## **Children and Young People's Services Select Committee Business Planning Group**

### **Report by the Chairman of the Business Planning Group**

#### **Executive Summary**

Each Select Committee has a Business Planning Group (BPG) to oversee the Committee's work programme and prioritise issues for consideration by the Committee. This report provides an update of the last meeting of the outgoing BPG held on 6<sup>th</sup> June 2018, setting out the key issues discussed.

#### **Recommendations**

1. The Committee is asked to endorse the contents of the report.

#### **1. Declarations of Interest**

- 1.1 None.

#### **2. Background/Context**

- 2.1 The BPG met on 6 June 2018, members in attendance were Mr Cloake, Mr High, Ms Lord and Mrs Mullins. Mrs Hall gave apologies.

#### **3. Developing a Sustainable Workforce**

- 3.1 Deborah Myers, Director of Education and Skills gave the following update on the recruitment and retention of teachers:

- Recruiting to teaching posts has been challenged by media attention, which has made the profession appear undesirable. Particular subjects are harder to recruit to than others.
- This is a national problem. The Education and Skills directorate is working to reposition teaching as an attractive profession in West Sussex, this has included recruitment fa

- 3.1.1 Annie MacIver, Director of Children and Family Services, echoed that the recruitment and retention of experienced social workers and Heath Visitors had been equally challenging.

#### **4. Education and Skills Update**

- 4.1 The BPG heard the following updates from the Education and Skills directorate:

- Interim data from the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stages 1 and 2 will be available in September.

- In the academic year 2019/20, every child *nationally* will have gone through the newest national curriculum.
- The draft School Effectiveness Strategy had gone out for consultation. The new strategy will be ready in time for the Autumn term, and the outcomes will be considered at the September Children and Young People's Services Select Committee.
- An Ofsted inspection of the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) service had taken place. The report was issued in the form of a letter to the County Council which highlighted both strengths and areas for consideration. Deborah confirmed that the Education and Skills directorate was cognisant of these areas and that they were working to continue to improve standards.

## **5. Children and Family Services Updates**

5.1 The BPG heard the following updates from the Children and Family Service:

- Ofsted inspected the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) in the Spring. The overall conclusion was positive in that no children were found to be unsafe. This is good considering the volume of referrals.
- There were some areas of capacity difficulty within the MASH. The demand had come from expected areas as outlined in a social mobility report. The MASH would be permanently staffed from July 2018, holding no vacancies or agency provision.
- Annie explained the good outcome from the Ofsted inspection could also be attributed to the correct and well-functioning relationships with partners.
- A priority for the service is what happens to those after the engagement with the MASH, such as children found to be in need of protection.
- Annie was confident that quality assurance was being correctly applied in terms of reviewing cases of children in need, particularly those that had been open for in excess of 12 months. She also added that a fundamental element for the service relied on information coming back from families that care for children to ensure the correct level of support and stability.
- IPEH has acted as a very successful bridging mechanism, however the service understand that the volume and demand of children in need continues to grow. Volume and demand will be watched carefully, as will the impact of welfare reform.

## **6. West Sussex County Council Member Survey on Scrutiny**

6.1 The BPG considered the Member Survey on Scrutiny. The following comments were made:

- The figures are largely similar to last year
- The Member Day for Start of Life was both well attended and well received.
- Lower attendance of members at Member Days and training sessions is a little disappointing.
- Members noted that a good, clear presentation was much more accessible and easier to understand than a dense and complicated report.

- Perhaps officers could be approached for their feedback about the scrutiny at Select Committee – would they like more focussed questions to ensure the best possible use of the Committee’s time?

## **7. Work Programme Planning**

### **7.1 Forward Plan**

7.1.1 The BPG did not identify any decisions in the Forward Plan for preview by the Committee. It was however noted that an item on Integrated Child Psychology had been delayed and therefore removed from the Forward Plan, but that it would be revisited.

### **7.2 Plan the September Committee meetings**

#### **7.2.1 Future Meetings:**

- Developing a Sustainable Workforce for West Sussex
- The Committee requested that the School Effectiveness Strategy outcomes and final document be considered at the September meeting of the Committee.

### **7.3 Consider the latest Corporate Risk Register:**

7.3.1 The BPG did not identify any priority areas for scrutiny or review.

### **7.4 Consider potential suggestions for the work programme:**

- The BPG to consider how the County Council can support maintained schools who receive a double 'Requires Improvement' judgement from Ofsted, following the recommendation from June’s Committee meeting.
- Better Change.
- The BPG agreed the Committee’s work programme as at appendix A, with the additions above.

## **8. Implications**

8.1 There are no resource, risk management, Crime and Disorder Act or Human Rights Act implications arising directly from this report. However, many of the substantive reports to the Committee will have some implications and a Equality Impact Report will be included in appropriate substantive reports to the Committee.

### **Michael Cloake**

Chairman

Children and Young People’s Services Select Committee Business Planning Group

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**Background Papers:** None

**Appendix** – Work Programme for Children and Young People’s Services Select Committee.