



LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT

MINUTES OF THE CHILDREN AND FAMILIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 13 July 2010 at 7.30 pm

PRESENT: Councillor Gladbaum (Chair) and Councillors Aden, Harrison, Hector, Hunter and Oladapo, together with Mr C Akisanya (Primary School Parent Governor) and Mr R Lorenzato (Roman Catholic faith) and Dr J Levison (Jewish faith)

Also Present: Councillor Arnold (Lead Member for Children and Families), Mrs L Gouldbourne (Teachers' Panel), Ms C Jolinson (Teachers' Panel), Hank Roberts (Teachers' Panel) and representatives from Brent Youth Parliament

Apologies were received from: Councillor HM Patel, Dr Kumar and Ms J Cooper

1. **Declarations of personal and prejudicial interests**

None declared.

2. **Minutes of the previous meeting**

RESOLVED:

that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 25 March 2010 be approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

3. **Matters arising**

(i) *Item 5 – Review of the impact of locality-based social care teams*

The Chair requested that a report on the progress of the locality-based social care teams be prepared for the next meeting.

(ii) *Item 6 – Long-term projections on school places in Brent*

Mrs Gouldbourne (Teachers' Panel) asked whether staffing levels and number of school places at the Ark Academy would be maintained at their current levels to accommodate the anticipated rise in demand over the next four years. Krutika Pau (Children and Families, Strategy and Partnerships) undertook to provide further information on this.

(iii) *Item 8 – Building Schools for the Future*

The Chair asked for an update on the Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme. Krutika Pau confirmed that the programme had been halted by

the Government and that this would have a significant impact in Brent where four secondary schools had been earmarked for improvements. She added that the Council would continue to lobby MPs and the Department for Education to ensure that commitments made about the Crest Academies would be honoured.

(iv) *Item 9 – Four-year review of the work of the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee*

The Chair stated that the suggestion that meetings be held in community venues would only be useful if this encouraged members of the public to attend. Andrew Davies (Policy and Performance Officer, Policy and Regeneration) advised that more thought would be given to the suggestion, and he added that some form of press release to publicise the meeting was being considered.

4. Deputations

None received.

5. Order of business

The Chair proposed, and it was agreed, that item 9 on the agenda be brought forward to be considered immediately after item 5.

6. Children and Young People's Plan 2009/11 - progress report

Krutika Pau (Assistant Director, Strategy and Partnerships) circulated a printed copy of a series of PowerPoint slides entitled, "Children and Young People's Plan: Review and Refresh". She introduced these slides by giving some general information about the 72,000 young people in Brent. Anna Janes (Head of Planning, Information and Performance) then provided members with more detailed information about young people in the borough examining each of the five localities in turn and making comparisons between them on factors such as deprivation, health, experience of domestic violence and numbers of conceptions.

Sarah Mansuralli (Head of Partnership Commissioning Service) then discussed the implementation of Brent Council's Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) which had been published in May 2009. Members heard that it was now the duty of Children's Trusts to produce a CYPP for their local area, and that planning for the new CYPP for the period from 2011 to 2014 was under way which would adhere to the five Every Child Matters outcomes: staying safe, being healthy, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution, and achieving economic wellbeing. It was also noted that the changing political and economic context under which the new Plan would be implemented, resulting in a reduced resource base, would necessitate an annual redefinition of priorities and an attempt to preserve preventative services as far as possible.

In response to questions from members, Sarah Mansuralli explained that the Council had tried to balance the allocation of resources to preventative work as well as statutory service provision, and that it was believed that future legislative changes would mean that there would be more limited scope for the Council in the

way in which the CYPP would be compiled. Councillor Hunter noted that there seemed to be a dramatic rise in the number of young people re-offending from 21 per cent to 41 per cent in two years. Anna Janes explained that the figures had been distorted by a recent change in the method used to calculate them.

RESOLVED:

that the progress that has been made against the priorities and actions set out in the first year of a two-year Children and Young People's Plan be noted.

7. In-flow and out-flow of secondary aged pupils

Anna Janes (Head of Planning, Information and Performance) tabled a report called "Analysis of Brent's secondary school age population reported in the January 2009 school censuses of Brent and their seven neighbouring boroughs". Members heard detailed information concerning the migration in and out of the borough amongst young people of secondary school age. Anna Janes explained that the information contained in her report related to the year 2009, and that figures for 2010 would be available when two neighbouring boroughs, Camden and Hammersmith and Fulham, had submitted their data.

Hank Roberts (Teachers' Panel) asked whether any statistical information was available to show where and why an outflow of school students was taking place so that consideration could be given to what the schools affected could do to reverse the trend. He also questioned whether the numbers of school pupils being educated within or outside of Brent had been much affected by the opening of the Ark Academy or the adverse publicity after events at Copland School. Kishan Parshotam (UK Youth Parliament Member for Brent) asked to what extent changes brought in by the Academy admission rules would affect movement in and out of the borough. Anna Janes replied that these issues would become clearer after the information for 2010 had been analysed. Krutika Pau noted that this information would probably not clarify the specific reasons why parents and young people were making these choices, although it would still be useful to examine it.

The Chair asked that the information for 2010 be circulated when it was available.

RESOLVED:

that the contents of the report be noted.

8. Brent Youth Parliament overview report

Kishan Parshotam (UK Youth Parliament Member for Brent), Petergaye Palmer (Brent Youth Parliament Member) and Priyesh Patel (Brent Youth Parliament Member) introduced a review of the work of the Brent Youth Parliament (BYP) and outlined the many activities which had been undertaken. They explained that BYP members had agreed four terms of reference: to be the voice of young people in Brent; to have a say in decisions that are usually made by adults and to influence policy; to promote the work of BYP and celebrate the achievements of young people; and to work with the UK Youth Parliament and influence national policy.

Kishan Parshotam and Pertergaye Palmer explained that the activities undertaken by BYP members in the previous year had included consultation exercises on the introduction of the new youth website, BMyVoice, and on changes to local NHS services for young people; work with councillors and attendance at Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings to ensure that young people's views were made as widely known as possible; participation in interview panels to recruit staff working with young people; assistance with the development of Brent's Children and Young People's Plan for 2009-2011; and events such as the Brent Youth Oscars and Generation X-Factor. The Committee was also told of the progress of the "Break the Stereotype, Fix the Impression" campaign and of BYP's future plans.

Mrs Gouldbourne commended the BYP representatives for their presentation and for their commitment and dedication to BYP. Andrew Davies suggested that input from BYP would be helpful when setting the work programme for the Committee.

RESOLVED:

that the achievements of BYP in its third year be noted and applauded.

9. Education standards in Brent 2009

Members considered the report already circulated which detailed the performance of school students in the borough in 2009. Faira Ellks (Head of School Improvement, Achievement and Inclusion Management Team), Fiona Deegan (Secondary Strategy Manager) and Nitin Bakrania (14-19 Coordinator) explained to the Committee in detail the achievements and areas for concern at each of the Key Stages. Faira Ellks then advised that provisional results for the current year looked encouraging.

In response to questions, Faira Elks explained that the school results for the 2009-2010 academic year would be available in 2011, although a provisional report could be issued earlier which would inform members of trends. She added that, of the two secondary schools which had been given notice to improve, one in particular had made very good progress, and that the number of primary schools in the borough giving serious concern had fallen to two.

RESOLVED:

that continuing improvements in education standards in Brent be noted.

10. School places update

Krutika Pau circulated a report with the title, "School places verbal update." Members heard information on the number of school places available at the start of the 2010-2011 school year. She explained that at 9 July 2010 there had been a net shortage of 185 primary school places, and that although the situation for secondary school transfer at age 11 had improved due to the opening of the Ark Academy, the new places would not impact on other year groups until the school had taken children in all year groups, a process which which would take another four years. The Chair asked whether there would be any additional funding to increase the number of school places. Councillor Arnold (Lead Member for Children and Families) explained that £14.7 million had been received under Primary Capital

Funding to enable the creation of extra primary school places in September 2010. She added, however, that the Council's plans for secondary school expansion and improvements had been severely affected by the Government's cancellation of the Building Schools for the Future programme.

RESOLVED:

that the report and information contained in the verbal update on school places be noted.

11. **Work programme**

Members considered a table of suggested items for future meetings of the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee which was circulated.

Members agreed that no update report on the Buildings Schools for the Future programme would be presented to the Committee's next meeting as the programme had been cancelled. In addition, Andrew Davies suggested that the Healthy Relationships Task Force and the Council review of Special Educational Needs would be left on the programme and dealt with at some point in the future. Members agreed to this.

RESOLVED:

(i) that the following items be included in the agenda for the next meeting of the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

- Recommendations of the report of the safety on the journey to and from schools task group;
- Plans for the future of the 16-19 education sector following the disbanding of the Learning and Skills Council;
- An update on the work within schools to provide additional support for Somali pupils through the extended schools programme;
- A report on the progress of the Council's locality-based social care teams; and
- A report on the Brent Youth Service.

(ii) that the work of the youth offending task force be continued.

12. **Date of next meeting**

The Committee heard that discussions were taking place to revise the overview and scrutiny structure, with proposals to delete some of the existing committees and select committees and for others to be re-titled, and that these proposals were due to be put to the Council meeting on 13 September 2010. In the meantime, the Council's meetings calendar showed that the next meeting of the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee was scheduled for 20 October 2010.

At the suggestion of the Chair, it was agreed that the next and future meetings of the Committee would start at 7.00 pm.

13. **Any other urgent business**

None.

The meeting closed at 10.00 pm

H. GLADBAUM
Chair