

## **THE LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN**

At a meeting of the **CHILDREN, SCHOOLS AND FAMILIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** held on **TUESDAY, 23RD OCTOBER, 2018** at 6.30 pm in Committee Room 1 - Crowndale Centre, 218 Eversholt Street, London, NW1 1BD

### **MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE PRESENT**

Councillors Oliver Lewis (Chair), Alison Kelly (Substitute), Samata Khatoon, Nazma Rahman (Substitute), Stephen Stark, Shiva Tiwari, Abi Wood and Co-opted Members Reverend Guy Pope, Anes Bouzouina, Camden Youth Council representative

### **MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE ABSENT**

Councillors Nasim Ali, Julian Fulbrook, Anna Wright and Sharp and Co-Opted member Imogen Sharp

### **ALSO PRESENT**

Councillor Angela Mason, Cabinet Member Best Start in Life  
Councillor Abdul Hai, Cabinet Member Youth and Cohesion  
Councillor Marcus Boyland Councillor, Councillor Simon Pearson and Councillor Oliver Cooper

**The minutes should be read in conjunction with the agenda for the meeting. They are subject to approval and signature at the next meeting of the Children, Schools and Families Scrutiny Committee and any corrections approved at that meeting will be recorded in those minutes.**

## **MINUTES**

### **1. APOLOGIES**

Councillor Oliver Lewis (Chair) welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors Nasim Ali, Julian Fulbrook. Anna Wright and from Co-opted member Imogen Sharpe.

Councillors Alison Kelly and Nazma Rahman were attending as substitutes.

**To Note: All**

### **2. DECLARATIONS BY MEMBERS OF PECUNIARY AND NON-PECUNIARY INTERESTS IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THIS AGENDA**

There were no declarations made.

### **3. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

#### **Webcasting**

The Chair announced that the meeting was being broadcast live to the internet and would be capable of repeated viewing. Those seated in the room were deemed to be consenting to being filmed.

Councillor Mason, Cabinet Member for Best Start in Life commented that, it would have been preferable for this meeting to not have been scheduled during the school half term holidays because it had prevented people from attending the meeting. This comment was welcomed by the Chair and members of the committee who asked that this be considered when scheduling future meetings of this scrutiny committee.

### **4. DEPUTATIONS**

There were no deputations.

### **5. MINUTES**

Consideration was given to the minutes of the last meeting and it was

#### **RESOLVED**

THAT the minutes of the meeting held on Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2018 be approved as a correct record.

#### **To Note: All**

### **6. NOTIFICATION OF ANY ITEMS OF BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR DECIDES TO TAKE AS URGENT**

There was no urgent business.

### **7. JOINT ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CABINET MEMBERS FOR BEST START IN LIFE AND YOUNG PEOPLE AND COHESION**

Consideration was given to the first annual joint report by the Cabinet Member for Best Start in Life and the Cabinet Member Young People and Cohesion. As well as members of the Children, Schools and Families Scrutiny Committee all members of the Council had been invited to attend the meeting.

For the first part of this item Councillor Angela Mason, Cabinet Member for Best Start in Life spoke to her portfolio report that had been structured around the six strategic objectives of the Council's Resilient Families Programme. The report looked at the successes, challenges and the strong sense of care and determination

for Camden's young people to do well that underpinned all the services and partnerships supporting young people and their families.

Councillor Mason made the following responses to questions that covered all areas of her report:

- Camden Learning in partnership with schools had a key role in closing the attainment gap for Camden's disadvantaged children. There were a number of factors affecting attainment and there was a process for determining which interventions worked best for each school. The attainment gap in Camden was less than the London and national averages but there was still more to be done on education and training pathways to employment. Camden Learning was looking at how schools could be part of a network of provision to improve this offer to pupils
- The high degree of poverty amongst the working poor in Camden was ranked as the 10th highest nationally. There were a number of measures in place that had been outlined in Councillor Mason's report. The changes to the housing allocations policy to address some of the overcrowded accommodation issues for children and their families was explained. All councillors had seen cases of overcrowding amongst their constituents, there wasn't enough housing/suitable accommodation in the borough to meet the demand. It was difficult for the Council to build new homes under present government regulations
- There were measures in place to help vulnerable students and those who had been excluded from schools. Including early intervention and prevention work. There had been a decrease in the number of permanent exclusions in the borough
- Looked after children placed outside the borough were usually within a 20 mile radius of Camden. Placements were made as close to the borough as possible unless there was a safeguarding reason for a child or young person to be placed further away. All looked after children were part of the Camden virtual school, receiving support to reach their full potential while in education and training
- There was an increasing number of older children entering the care service and a service pathway more suited to meeting their needs had been developed
- There was more joined up work needed on the accommodation process for those at risk of domestic violence. Recognising needs earlier and resolving them sooner was key to this work
- There had been some challenges in getting some mothers into employability projects because there were conditionality tests that made it difficult for them

to be available for work and meet family needs. Utilising the expertise in Sure Start Centres had been very successful in reaching families

- The number of pupils in the Camden school population was a changing picture but there were no directly attributable reasons for these changes
- The free school meals (FSM) offer to pupils included a breakfast club meal and lunch each day. The reasons for the low take up of FSM had been looked at in some detail to try and find an explanation for it. One thing that had helped with the take up had been the use of direct payments. Comments about the low take up of FSM had included that the meals were too small or did not meet religious dietary requirements but there were no conclusive explanations
- There was a programme of events by schools, colleges, Citizen Advice Bureaux and libraries, to provide advice to families about the implementation of universal credit and how they would be affected by the changes

The scrutiny committee then heard from Councillor Abdul Hai, Cabinet Member for Young People and Cohesion. He made the following responses to questions from the committee and members of the Council across the areas covered in his report:

- Early intervention and prevention was central to the work of the Council to ensure the delivery of outcomes for our services users. There was a key focus to address the underlining barriers and challenges through multi-disciplinary work
- European Social Funding was directly funding Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) work and would not be available post BREXIT. Other services in this area would not be affected by this funding stream. Camden had one of the lowest levels of NEET young people because of the work of the Youth and Connexions Teams
- Prevent was rated as a low concern for Camden because of the unique cross party work and united cohesive community in the borough. The approach in Camden had been to safeguard and protect our young people. Faith leaders had been supportive of the approach that had included tackling areas of extremism and having a robust policy about hate speech
- Camden's Integrated Youth Service was doing excellent work with young people and their families and supporting them into further and higher education. There were some families where we could do better and there would be a focus on making further improvement to support young people to their full potential
- There had been a climate of fear of young people that had disproportionately affected Muslim young people but areas of work to create awareness and hold people to account had helped to address some of these issues
- The Youth Taskforce that had looked at keeping Camden young people safe had represented all of the communities in Camden and young people had

played a key role in that work. There would be a report to Cabinet and a report to this committee on how stakeholders would take forward the implementation of the recommendations

- Examples of how young people were encouraged to participate and engage with their communities included - Camden Youth Council, the Youth Justice Shadow Board, Youth Safety Taskforce and Young Inspectors. They were all part of continuing to hear the voice of young people in all aspects of Camden's life

The Chair thanked the Cabinet Members for the detailed reports they had provided, for attending the meeting and the discussion and responses they had provided to the scrutiny committee.

## **RESOLVED**

THAT the report and the responses of the Cabinet Members be noted.

**To Note: All**

## **8. ANNUAL HEALTH UPDATE ON CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES**

Due to the time taken to consider agenda item 7 above, this report was taken as read and noted by the committee. It was also noted that there would be an update on children's health at the meeting in March 2019.

## **RESOLVED**

THAT the report be noted

**To Note: All**

## **9. FUNDING UPDATE AND SCHOOLS FUNDING CONSULTATION 2019/2020**

Due to the time taken to consider agenda item 7 above, this report was taken as read and noted. It was also noted that schools funding would be considered by the committee at the meeting in March 2019.

## **RESOLVED**

THAT the report be noted

**To Note: All**

**10. CHILDREN'S SERVICES' COMPLAINTS ANNUAL SCRUTINY REPORT 2017/2018**

Consideration was given to a report of the Executive Director Supporting People that provided information about complaints made to the Children's Services (Supporting People Directorate) in London Borough of Camden during the twelve months between 1 April 2017 and 31 March 2018.

In response to a question from a committee member the meeting was told that learning from the complaint process included a focus on the individual circumstances of each complaint. There was also an assessment of whether there were emerging themes in the type of complaints being made and if there was training or development opportunities to address the issues that had been raised. This assessment of complaints was included in a quarterly report to the management team as part of an auditing process.

**RESOLVED**

THAT the report be noted.

**To Note: All**

**11. CHILDREN, SCHOOLS AND FAMILIES QUARTER 1 2018/19 PERFORMANCE REPORT**

Consideration was given to a report of Executive Director Supporting People that provided a summary of performance in relation to children and young people for the period 1 April 2018 to 30 June 2018, Quarter 1.

The report included the Executive Director's judgments of performance and a summary of the key performance measures.

**RESOLVED**

THAT the report be noted.

**To Note: All**

**12. CHILDREN, SCHOOLS AND FAMILIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2018/19**

Consideration was given to a report that set out the work programme for the municipal year 2018/19.

It was noted that a report on music and the arts was listed on the work programme but not allocated to a meeting date as yet.

**RESOLVED**

THAT the work programme report be noted

**To Note: All**

**13. DATE OF NEXT MEETING AND FUTURE MEETING DATES**

It was noted that the next meeting of the Children, Schools and Families Scrutiny Committee would take place on **Thursday 6 December 2018** and the following meeting dates were also noted:

Monday 18 February 2019

Thursday 28 March 2019

**To Note: All**

**14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THE CHAIR DECIDES TO CONSIDER AS URGENT**

There was no such business.

The meeting ended at 8.45 pm.

**CHAIR**

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**MINUTES END**