

Time commenced - 6.00pm

Time finished - 8.00pm

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE COMMISSION  
26 JANUARY 2010

Present: Councillor Bolton (Chair)  
Councillors Ginns, Higginbottom, F Khan and R Khan  
Nasreen Iqbal  
In attendance: Councillor Allen

### 39/09 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Williams, Alison Brown, John Honey and Kirit Mistry.

### 40/09 Late Items

There were no late items.

### 41/09 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

### 42/09 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 3 November 2009 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

### 43/09 Call-in

There were no items.

## Items for Discussion

### 44/09 Voices in Action

The Commission received a report and verbal update from the Voices in Action Annual event which was held in November. It was reported that the three topics covered at the event were Bullying, Jobs and Money and New and Emerging Communities. The Young people that were at the Commission commented that they had been impressed with the pledges that had been put forward but there were still questions to be answered.

A young person questioned whether children who had arrived in the Country needed to learn a second language when they were not confident in English.

It was reported that the final decision would be decided by the School as the funding was delegated to them but it could be something that the Local Authority could influence if needed. It was noted that all children that required extra support would be assessed and it provided if the case warranted it.

Concern was expressed by a young person about the number of jobs relevant to the 13-16 age range that were advertised on the Connexions Website. The Corporate Director for Children and Young People reported that Connexions had felt upset by the comments and it was suggested that the young people contact Connexions directly as they were keen to address the issue.

The Commission noted that they were impressed with the pledges received and as a group would continue to make sure that they were fulfilled.

The Chair thanked the young people for attending and providing the update.

## 45/09 Revenue Budget Scrutiny

The Commission considered a report from the Corporate Director of Children and Young People detailing the Revenue Budget Proposals for 2010/11 – 2012/13. The Corporate Director for Children and Young People invited Members to make comments on the budget proposals which fell within the Commission's remit.

The Chair noted that the recently published Lamb Report considers that the current system for the assessment of special educational needs to be inadequate and too variable between Local Authorities. It was reported that to address the increase in numbers of children diagnosed with autism and recommendation by the report that Local Authority staff attend all assessments requires an appointment of an additional Inclusion and Assessment officer. The Commission were also informed that the existing performance measures on SEN already needed to improve.

Councillor Higginbottom commented that the Council should consider offering more support to staff who wish to foster children such as maternity and paternity leave similar to that which is available for normal parents. The Commission agreed that this could encourage more staff to foster and adopt children which would not only provide decent homes for our looked after children but could also impact on the number of children being placed in external placements and thereby reduce pressure on children and young people services budget.

The Commission considered a proposal to save £35,000 per year from 2011/12 onwards for social development and inclusion to explore ways in which the service could be delivered more effectively. Although this was a non-statutory service, it was stated that without the services there is significant risk of failure to meet statutory indicators and including a widening of the attainment gap for Traveller, Gypsy and Roma communities.

**Resolved to endorse the budget proposals to Cabinet. However, Members recommended the following amendments to the proposals:**

- 1. Members supported the proposal of an additional Inclusion and Assessment officer post;**
- 2. Members felt Safeguarding needed to be kept very high up on the agenda following the publication of the Lord Laming report and the findings within it;**
- 3. Members thought the Council should consider offering more support to staff who wish to foster children such as maternity and paternity leave;**
- 4. Members recommended the social development and inclusion service should continue to be provided and that the savings of £35,000 were relatively small compared to the level of risk of exclusion;**
- 5. Members agreed that raising attainment levels within all the schools needed to be a priority and not budget driven.**

## **46/09 Capital Budget Scrutiny**

The Commission considered a joint report of the Corporate Director of Corporate and Adult Services and the Corporate Director of Resources detailing Capital Budget Proposals in 2010/11 – 2012/13. The report detailed the proposed uses of available funding in the allocations that were specific to the Children and Young People's department.

Members queried the progress on Building Schools for the Future programme but were reassured by the Corporate Director for Children and Young People that the funding was fully secure.

**Resolved to note the proposed Children and Young Peoples' Capital Programme for 2010/11 to 2012/13.**

## **47/09 Work Plan**

The Commission considered a report from the work programme which provided details of the introduction of the Performance Support Group.

Members requested that rather than carry out any further topic reviews, briefings be provided at the next meeting of the Commission on the Education Physiology Service and the Children's Trust Board.

## **50/09 Retrospective Scrutiny**

There were no items identified.

## 51/09 Forward Plan

The Commission agreed to receive a report on the World Class Primary Schools at the next scheduled meeting.

## 52/09 Responses to any reports and enquiries of the Commission

The Commission received a report from the Corporate Director for Children and Young People detailing the response to the recommendations from the Commission. It was noted that the Council Cabinet had resolved to request officers in consultation with the Community Safety Partnership to produce for a future meeting a detailed response which describes current activity. The Corporate Director for Children and Young People reported that there had recently been funding awarded to the Council to provide a range of activities for young people on a Friday and Saturday evening. It was noted that the activities varied across the City depending on their locality.

The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People informed the Commission that Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Service provided a youth engagement scheme which involved being trained at the fire station in a disciplined environment.

**Resolved to note the response.**

## 53/09 Matters referred to the Commission by Council Cabinet

There were no items identified.

MINUTES END