

ITEM 4

Time commenced: 6:00 pm
Time finished: 7:40 pm

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE COMMISSION 15 DECEMBER 2010

Present: Councillor F Winter (in the Chair), Councillors Bolton, Davis, Higginbottom (from item 63/10) Radford, Tuplin and Whitby, Nasreen Iqbal and Maurice Lawrence

57/10 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Williams and Berry, the Strategic Director for Children and Young People (Jo Davidson), Alison Brown and David Wilkinson.

58/10 Late Items to be Introduced by the Chair

There were no late items.

59/10 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

60/10 Minutes of the meetings held on 6 October and 2 November 2010

The minutes of the meetings held on 6 October and 2 November 2010 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

61/10 Call-in

There were no items.

62/10 Gangs Review Update

The Commission received an update from Ben Meakin, Pauline Hough and Karen Johnson, of the Derby Community Safety Partnership, on a review the Children and Young People Commission had done in 2009 about Gangs in Derby.

It was reported that a Multi-Agency Gangs team had been created to intervene with Gangs in Derby and that in April 2009, there had been 220 referrals to the team in total. There are currently 110 referrals on the team database. It was added that the team had done work in schools to discourage children from joining gangs and that meetings with parents had also taken place to address parental concerns and to advise how gang related issues could be addressed.

Officers noted concerns that were raised regarding the proper engagement of schools and parents in tackling gang issues. The need to ensure that people released from prison do not get re-involved in gangs was also discussed. It was reported that measuring the effectiveness and progress on gangs in Derby were difficult but that reoffending rates could be measured and the number of people on the database classed as having involvement in a gang had halved in 2 years.

Resolved to:

- 1. note the update;**
- 2. request that the recommendations from a previous report on Gangs produced by the former Head of Scrutiny and Complaints be provided to members of the Commission**

63/10 Children's Centres

The Commission received a report from Fiona Colton, Head of Childcare and Family Learning, on the function of Children's Centres in Derby. It was reported that whilst there was no fixed delivery model for the 18 Children's Centres in Derby, all of these met the Government's core offer of providing Integrated early Years and Childcare, Child and Family Health Services, Family Support, Adult Learning and access to Jobcentre Plus, Outreach services and Families Information Services and access or signposting to appropriate child care providers. It was added that each centre identified reach number targets, which reflected the number of children each centre was hoping to have contact with and also identified through self evaluation what their most vulnerable groups were.

Members of the Commission questioned how language barriers were overcome, and it was reported that support from interpreters was available. It was reported to the Commission that whilst the implications of the Local Government Spending Review settlement were not clear, some grants were no longer ring fenced so all spending for Children and Young People would be examined. Concerns were raised that vulnerable people would be adversely affected if Sure Start was phased out and Children's Centres were to close.

Resolved to note the update

64/10 Visits to Children's Homes

Councillors F Winter, Radford and Whitby gave an oral report on their visit to Moorfield Children's home. They reported that they had been impressed by the standard of the internal accommodation and fittings in the home and had also found there to be good facilities and helpful staff. They added that they were encouraged by the positive views expressed by children in the home.

Concerns were raised regarding the poor lighting of the area surrounding the home, noting that this could cause security problems and some children had explained that

they found this area intimidating and felt vulnerable.

Concerns were also raised regarding the low numbers of children in the home that were in mainstream education and Members discussed how this could be addressed, although it was noted that there had been instances of children being academically successful outside of mainstream education.

Resolved to note the report.

65/10 Topic Review

The Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordination Officer reported that a bundle of background information was being prepared for Members to provide them with background information about the mental health services currently provided to Children Looked After. This would enable the Commission to prepare for when witnesses would be called to answer questions.

Resolved to note the update

66/10 Retrospective Scrutiny

There were no items.

Members of the Commission requested copies of a previous report that had been produced in relation to Children Looked After.

67/10 Forward Plan

The Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordination Officer reported that one item within the Commission's remit, regarding Local Authority provision of free transport to schools and to children in care, had been placed on the Forward Plan. The decision to be taken was to approve a consultation process relating to proposed changes to the current policy.

It was explained that the report author had been contacted as the Commission had not originally been included in the consultation proposals and it was subsequently agreed that the Commission would now be consulted.

Resolved to note the report

68/10 Responses to any reports and enquiries of the Commission

There were no items.

69/10 Matters referred to the Commission by Council
Cabinet

There were no items.

MINUTES END