

Coventry City Council
Minutes of the Meeting of Cabinet Member for Children and Young People held at
2.00 pm on Tuesday, 30 June 2015

Present:

Cabinet Member: Councillor Ruane

Shadow Cabinet Member: Councillor Noonan

Employees (by Directorate):

People: Y. Corden, L.Gosling, J. Sembi, V. White

Resources: S. Bennett, J. Newman, R. Sugars

Public Business

1. Declarations of Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

2. Minutes

The Minutes of the meetings held on 7 and 13 April, 2015 were agreed and signed as a true record.

Further to Minute 34/14, the Cabinet Member referred to his request that officers arrange an informal meeting with a Supported Accommodation provider and other relevant parties, at their venue, to consider progress in delivery against the multi-agency action plan and asked that this request be progressed.

Further to Minute 37/14, the Cabinet Member asked to be provided with a written update in relation to his request that officers investigate the possibility of commissioning or using available academic support to undertake research on the local factors contributing to Under 18 conception levels.

Further to Minute 44/14, in response to a question, the Cabinet Member noted that he and the Shadow Cabinet Member would be receiving data relating to Child Sexual Exploitation in the City on a regular basis.

3. Children's Centres and Youth Service e Petition

The Cabinet Member considered a report of the Executive Director of People which indicated that an e petition, bearing 21 signatures, had been received that asked that the "Council keep all Children Centres and Youth Services open to maintain a high quality and fully accountable Public Service, without replacing employed professionals and well trained staff with volunteers" The Petition Organiser had been invited to attend the meeting but was unable to do so.

The report indicated that the petition was in response to the pre-budget and budget reports which set out the City Centre First Savings Strategy (£5 million savings target by 2017/18) and which included Children's Centres and Youth Services.

No decisions have yet been taken regarding the closure of any of the City's Children's Centres or Youth Services and any future proposals to make changes to these services will be subject to public consultation and member decisions.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People notes the petition and that officers be requested to write to the Petition Organiser to inform them of the Council's current position.

4. **Delegation of Authority Policy for Looked After Children**

The Cabinet Member considered a report of the Executive Director of People which sought approval to the Delegation of Authority Policy, a copy of which was appended to the report.

The Policy sets out the responsibility for making day to day decisions about a child that has been passed to the foster carer or residential care workers. The Council has a legal duty to have a published Policy and guidance stipulates that the Policy should be signed by the Director of Children's Services and the Lead Member for Children.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People:-

- (1) Approves the Delegation of Authority Policy as appended to the report**
- (2) Notes that the Policy will also be considered by the Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Board (2)**

5. **Adoption Service Annual Report 2014/15**

The Cabinet Member considered a report of the Executive Director of People which detailed the activity and key performance data for Coventry Adoption Service during 2014/15. The updated Statement of Purpose for 2015 was appended to the report.

The report indicated that 70 children were adopted and 38 adopters were approved during the year and overall, the City Council paid support allowances for 132 children from 73 adoptive families. The key priorities for the service in 2015/16 were also outlined.

The Cabinet Member questioned officers on aspects of the report, particularly in relation to the contributory factors to the timeliness of decisions and how further improvements could be achieved in relation to this. The improvements already achieved through case progression discipline in court, the pre-allocation of permanency worker for all children with possible plan of adoption and senior management oversight were welcomed.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People:-

- (1) Accepts the Adoption Service Annual report for 2014/15**
- (2) Approves the updated Statement of Purpose as appended to the report**

6. Role of the Principal Social Worker for Children's Services

The Cabinet Member considered a report of the Executive Director of People which outlined the role of the Principal Social Worker for Social Worker, who was appointed in December 2014 and who has a vital role in developing, co-ordinating and representing the views and experiences of front-line social workers to the Executive Director of People.

The Cabinet Member questioned the Principal Social Worker on aspects of her role, particularly in relation to her interaction with social workers and senior management and performance management issues.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet Member for Children and Young notes the introduction of the Principal Social Worker role and the key changes that have taken place since the introduction of this role.

7. Outstanding Issues Report

The Cabinet Member noted a report of the Executive Director of Resources that identified those issues on which further reports had been requested and were outstanding, so that progress could be monitored.

8. Coventry Strategic Objectives Plan for Children and Young People Who Are Missing, at Risk of or Experiencing Sexual Exploitation

Further to Minute 44/14, the Cabinet Member considered a report of the Executive Director of People which provided an update on the Coventry Strategic Objectives Delivery Plan for children and young people who are missing, at risk of, or experiencing child sexual exploitation (CSE). The CSE Delivery Plan is a multi-agency plan which is monitored by the CSE Steering Group, who also receive regular updates on progress against the delivery plan.

The report also provided an update on the CSE Team that has now been in place for six weeks and which has focused initially on team induction. Some specialised training will be delivered to the team during June and July.

The Cabinet Member questioned the officers on aspects of the report, particularly in relation to the links with the CSE Team and other teams within the Council, for example the Troubled Families Team.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People:-

- (1) Notes the progress against the Delivery Plan as attached to the report, which is subject to on-going revision and which is a “living” document**
- (2) Notes the addition to the Delivery Plan which requires Hackney Carriage Drivers and Private Hire Drivers to have DBS checks and CSE training as part of the conditions of their licence**
- (3) Notes the updates on the development of the CSE Team**
- (4) Agrees that a letter be sent to Head Teachers and Chairs of School Governing Boards regarding completion of the CSE screening tool**
- (5) Notes data relating to CSE within the City**
- (6) Requests that officers provide the Cabinet Member with regular information in relation to CSE in an appropriate manner.**

9. Any Other Public Business

There were no items of urgent public business.

(Meeting closed at 3.30pm)