

Coventry City Council
Minutes of the Meeting of Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Board (2)
held at 2.00 pm on Thursday, 12 October 2017

Present:

Members: Councillor M Mutton (Chair)
 Councillor S Bains
 Councillor R Brown (substitute for Councillor D Kershaw)
 Councillor J Lepoidevin
 Councillor A Lucas
 Councillor P Male
 Councillor C Miks
 Councillor K Mulhall
 Councillor P Seaman

Cabinet Members and Councillor B Kaur
Deputy Cabinet Member Councillor E Ruane
Present:

Employees (by Directorate):

People J Gregg, G Holmes, J Newman, L Pardy-McLaughlin,
 M Rose, P Smith

Apologies: Councillor J Clifford
 Councillor D Kershaw
 S Hanson, K Jones and R Potter

Public Business

18. Declarations of Interests

There were no Disclosable Pecuniary Interests.

19. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 14th September, 2017 were approved.

Further to Minute 14/17 'Children's Services Redesign' members requested an all member briefing seminar on the proposed changes within wards.

20. Improving the Quality and Performance of Social Workers

The Scrutiny Board considered a briefing note of the Deputy Chief Executive (People) which informed the Board of progress regarding improving the quality and performance of social workers who provide early help and protection for children in need, or children looked after, children placed for adoption and young people preparing to leave care. Social workers within the fostering service provide direct assessment and family placement services to foster carers.

The briefing note detailed the following:

- Recruitment
- Social work pathway
- Social work Academy
- Social work teaching partnership
- Social work accreditation
- Performance of social workers

The Scrutiny Board discussed the following:

- Comparisons with other authorities
- Exit interview information
- Accreditation and pathways
- Agency workers
- Support through studying
- Potential retention offers including rotation, transfers, sabbaticals
- Audits

Members were interested that the average career length for social workers was 8 years.

It was agreed that information about exit interviews and audit information would be shared with members.

RESOLVED that the Scrutiny Board noted the report and requested a further progress review in 6 months or earlier.

21. **Creation of a Regional Adoption Agency**

The Scrutiny Board noted a briefing note of the Deputy Chief Executive (People) which provided an overview of the proposal to create a Regional Adoption Agency via a shared service arrangement with Solihull Metropolitan Council, Warwickshire County Council and Worcestershire County Council. This new Regional Adoption Agency to be known as Adoption Central England (ACE). Cabinet would be asked on the 31st October 2017 to approve that Coventry City Council enters into a shared service arrangement alongside the three other local authorities to undertake the majority of functions of the City Council relating to adoption.

The Scrutiny Board questioned officers on the following:

- Sharing services
- Further detail
- Ofsted
- Financial implications
- Adoption support services

The Scrutiny Board requested that the Cabinet Report be circulated.

22. **Outstanding Issues**

The Scrutiny Board noted the Outstanding Issues.

The Scrutiny Board noted the communication the Carers Trust had made with a local school to identify and offer support to Young Carers.

23. **Work Programme**

The Board noted the additional meeting arranged for 14th February, 2017.

24. **Any Other Business**

There were no other items of business.

(Meeting closed at 3.30 pm)