

SAFEGUARDING SUB (COMMUNITY & CHILDREN'S SERVICES) COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 16 April 2024

Minutes of the meeting held at the Guildhall EC2 at 2.00 pm

Present

Members:

Helen Fentimen (Deputy Chair – *in the Chair*)

Mary Durcan

Eamonn Mulally

Ceri Wilkins

Officers:

Chris Pelham

- Assistant Director, People, Community
and Children's Services

Rachel Talmage

- Community and Children's Services

Debby Rigby

- Community and Children's Services

Ellie Ward

- Community and Children's Services

Rachel Talmage

- Community and Children's Services

Laura Demetriades

- Community and Children's Services

Wioletta Lewandowska

- Community and Children's Services

Debby Rigby

- Community and Children's Services

Sharon Cushnie

- Community and Children's Services

Mandy Horsburgh

- City of London Police

Rhys Campbell

- Town Clerks

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Joanne Abeyie*, Ben Murphy*, Anne Corbett* and Ruby Sayed (Chair).

**Members joining remotely.*

2. MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

There were no declarations.

3. MINUTES

RESOLVED, that – the minutes of the meeting held on 23rd November 2023 be approved.

4. ADULT SOCIAL CARE SAFEGUARDING PERFORMANCE REPORT - Q3 2023/24

The Sub Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Community and Children's Services, which updated Members on safeguarding performance across the Adult Social Care Service during the first nine months of 2023/24. Members noted a detailed appendix in the non-public agenda.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

5. **CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SERVICE PERFORMANCE REPORT – Q3 2023/24**

The Sub Committee received a report of the Director, Community and Children's Services, which updated Members on performance across the Children and Families Service.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

6. **ADULT SOCIAL CARE SELF-ASSESSMENT**

The Sub Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Community and Children's Services, which presented the City of London Corporation's Adult Social Care Self-Assessment 2024, in support of the inspection of Adult Social Care Services by the Care Quality Commission (CQC). Members noted that the self-assessment shows our practice and service to residents is of a good quality but there are areas of development, around systems and processes, which could strengthen the service further. Members also noted the links to work streams around homelessness and mental health services.

During the discussion the following points were noted:

1. The Chair thanked officers for a helpful report, particularly the case studies in illustrating how this work makes a difference to people's lives.
2. There have been a number of changes in mental health care over the last few years and, whilst a lot of work is underway, there are considerable pressures on these services both locally and nationally.
3. It was suggested that carers and safeguarding be highlighted in future reports.
4. The CQC ratings in respect of residential care had been circulated separately and could be added to future reports.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

7. **CARE LEAVER OFFER**

The Sub Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Community and Children's Services, which presented the fully revised offer to Care Leavers supported by the City of London Corporation. Members noted that the input from Public Health would be added before the report is presented to the Community and Children's Services Committee. The web page would also be ready by this time, providing more accessible links. The Chair commended the extensive key features of the 23/24 offer, noting that this goes beyond all other UK offers.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted and recommended for approval at CCS, noting the addition of Public Health’s input.

8. **2023-24 CITY OF LONDON QUALITY ASSURANCE ANNUAL REPORT**

The Sub Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Community and Children’s Services, which presented the Quality Assurance Annual Report.

Members noted that, overall, the survey response had been very good. There were some issues in engaging with looked after children, as the care providers were very safety conscious. Officers would be doing more preparatory work in this area for next year.

The Chair asked about the role of the Achieving Excellence Board, which scrutinises a lot of the reports before they come to this Sub Committee. The Chair of the Board is able to support Members in their safeguarding knowledge, from an independent perspective. Members were reminded of the successful training session facilitated by the Chair of the Board about 18 months ago and the Chair (of the Sub Committee) suggested that this be repeated in the new Civic Year.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

9. **CITY OF LONDON SAFEGUARDING AND QUALITY ASSURANCE, 2023-24 PARTICIPATION ANNUAL REPORT**

The Sub Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Community and Children’s Services, which presented the Participation Annual Report.

Members noted that young people are encouraged to get involved on a formal and informal basis, noting that it might take a while to build confidence. The average attendance at meetings is between 7 and 10 and there are a lot of communication via What’sApp and email groups. Members noted a recent well attend Eid Celebration supported by Social Workers and the Virtual School. The Chair advised that the non-public version of the report had included more photographs.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

10. **ADULT PRINCIPAL SOCIAL WORKER ANNUAL REPORT 2023**

The Sub Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Community and Children’s Services, which updated Members on the role and statutory responsibilities of the Adult Principal Social Worker (PSW). The officer advised that she works with various community groups, including carers, the Bangladesh Women’s Group and individuals in the deaf community, insofar as those engaged with Adult Social Care.

Members noted the offer in Children’s Services, where staff are trained in BSL and signers are used when required for both parents and children. The team work with the Deaf Parents’ Association to ensure they are connected with

national networks. The Chair suggested that if more work is required with the deaf community, then it should be escalated to the Grand Committee.

Members noted that questions on mental health had been raised at several ward motes. At the Aldersgate Ward Mote, there had been a particular focus Men's mental health and the Chair asked if a report could be presented to the Health and Wellbeing Board in the near future.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

11. **VIRTUAL SCHOOL HEADTEACHER SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT PLAN ACADEMIC YEAR 2023/2024**

The Sub Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Community and Children's Services, which updated Members on the work of the Virtual School, as set out in the School Development Plan. The officer agreed to share cohort data in the non-public part of the meeting. Members noted that young people have access to Prospects, with at least 30 having contact each year. The Chair suggested that this report should also be presented to the Grand Committee for information.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

12. **SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITY (SEND) UPDATE**

The Sub Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Community and Children's Services, in respect of the City of London's Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND) Strategy 2020–24; which set out three key outcomes to be achieved by 2024. The report provided an update on progress in implementing the second key outcome; i.e. – to ensure that all children and young people with SEND are well-prepared for and have successful transitions to adulthood.

Members were concerned at the swimming sessions at the Golden Lane Leisure Centre being halted, due to the poor condition of the pool, and the cessation of the football and gym sessions. Members noted that the Assistant Director, Commissioning and Partnerships had been made aware. The swimming sessions were part of respite care packages and officers were seeking alternative offers.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

13. **WORKING TOGETHER TO IMPROVE SCHOOL ATTENDANCE (UPDATE)**

The Sub Committee received a report of the Executive Director, Community and Children's Services, which updated Members on the work undertaken by the City of London's Education Team since September 2023, in response to new guidance, together with progress against the implementation of the Attendance Strategy.

Members noted that term-time leave had increased, particularly around Christmas. Persistent absence is mainly due to illness and the Aldgate School is managing attendance very well. There might be some connection to the

pandemic but this is monitored very carefully and the officer agreed to reference this work the next report.

RESOLVED, that – the report be noted.

14. QUESTIONS OF MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE

There were no questions.

15. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT

There were no items.

16. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED, that – under Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part I of the Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act.

Items
17 – 20

Paragraphs
1 & 2

17. CITY OF LONDON POLICE UPDATE

The Sub Committee received a report of the Commissioner, City of London Police.

18. NON PUBLIC APPENDICES

The Sub Committee received the following non-public appendices:

18.1 Adult Social Care Safeguarding Performance Report Q3 2023/24

18.2 Children and Families Service Performance - Month 6 2023/24 (September 2023)

18.3 City of London Safeguarding and Quality Assurance, 2023-24 Participation Annual Report

19. NON-PUBLIC QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE

There were 3 questions whilst the public were excluded.

20. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS URGENT AND WHICH THE SUB-COMMITTEE AGREE SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHILST THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED

There was one item whilst the public were excluded.

The meeting closed at 3.10 pm

Chairman

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