

<b>TITLE</b>	<b>Update Reports from Chairman or Nominated Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committees</b>
<b>FOR CONSIDERATION BY</b>	Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee on 24 November 2014
<b>WARD</b>	None Specific
<b>DIRECTOR</b>	Andrew Moulton, Head of Governance and Improvement Services

## Update on Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee

### NARROWING THE GAP

This was an update on progress which the committee had asked the department to work on about a year ago. The report showed that in Foundation stage the overall gap widened marginally, however overall the percentage of pupils reaching the expected outcomes had improved by 13%; significantly, above the national average improvement of 8%;

- Key Stage 1, the gap at level 2 widened in all subjects but at Level 3 (ie more able pupils) has either closed or remained the same.
- In Key Stage 2 at Level 4+ the gaps have closed in all subjects.
- Secondary gaps closed at GCSE.

The following points were made in response to Members' questions:

- The overall proportion of pupils receiving the Pupil Premium across the Borough is 5.6%, a small minority..
- It is acknowledged that the levels of achievement in writing is an issue at several key stages, and writing is now a focus of the School improvement Officers, particularly with the Early Years Team who also work with child minders and private/voluntary/independent settings. The impact of this early intervention work will be assessed.
- School Improvement Officers identify the required improvement through the data provided, focussing on vulnerable groups, including those covered by the Pupil Premium and making preparations for Ofsted inspection.
- The numbers involved in each school are relatively small, so the School Improvement Officers know who the children are and are able to track individual performance and act as an advocate for them..
- The Pupil Premium Champions share good practice
- Headteachers have to account for how the Pupil Premium money is spent and show that it is affecting outcomes for the FSM children; this is one of the things that Ofsted look at during inspections
- The ambition is to continue to work with schools and Early Years Settings to improve attainment/outcomes, particularly for the vulnerable lower achieving children. Free Schools and Academies want to maintain relationships with community schools, and are happy to work together on a professional level.

### REVIEW OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNING BODIES – ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF A TASK AND FINISH GROUP OF TWO YEARS AGO

The following points were highlighted:

- an increase in the positive comments in recent Ofsted reports and the improvements in the outcomes of the inspections reflected the improvements in governance of schools;
- the buy-in by schools to the Authority's traded Governor Services, which provides training and gives support, was a success, with all schools on the Borough, except one Academy and one Free school subscribing to the training package;
- A recent briefing for Chairs of Governors had 45 attendees which shows a high level of engagement;

- It was noted that the Local Authority is unable to specify a time limit for Chairs of Governors' terms of office.

Comment was made that it was not possible to have numeric measures of the outcomes of many of the recommendations, but it was suggested that the next annual monitoring report could group the measurable actions.

Those who had been involved in the original review commented that during the review they had concluded that governing bodies did not seem to appreciate/understand the fundamental change in their role; and that they needed the confidence to be able to challenge their Headteacher. It was suggested that governors could be asked for feedback after training sessions and at the governors' conference.

In relation to the level of vacancies, it was acknowledged that there were always vacancies for Local Authority nominated governors. It was pointed out that under new regulations all governing bodies must be reconstituted by September 2015, with only one LA governor appointed on each governing body.

There will be a further report in 12 months' time, and we asked for it to contain SMARTer progress measures.

## **FUTURE ROLE OF WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL AS A PROVIDER OF STATUTORY SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT SERVICES**

The Task and Finish Group has met and received a briefing from Officers on the options for future provision of school improvement services. The next meeting will be on 19 November at 7.30pm when officers from other authorities which work on different models of provision will attend.

## **DELIVERING EFFECTIVE SAFEGUARDING SERVICES FOR CHILDREN – UPDATE**

The Committee received and considered a verbal report from Felicity Budgen giving an update on delivering effective safeguarding services of children.

Felicity Budgen said that in September the safeguarding services had been audited by an independent company who had stated that our practice is regularly looked at, which shows that progress has been made, through for example stronger partnerships with e.g. the Police. There is an early intervention strategy, and a 'triage' system started in August where there is a multi-agency assessment and the appropriate care offered, building on comments from recent serious case reviews. But there is still work to do.

- Recruitment and retention remain problems but there is a recruitment package and work is being done to ensure that the right people are being recruited to senior social work posts which should lead to a more consistent approach. There will be a more detailed report on staffing at the next meeting when we should see the impact of the new recruitment strategy
- Good training programmes are in place. Felicity said that the department is ensuring that social workers are aware of attachment theory – where consistency of a main carer is important. She also said that we have a balanced ratio of the

number of cases that each social worker has to deal with. Nationally the average is 25, but in Wokingham the aim is 15 for experienced social workers, though this may occasionally reach 18, and 8 for those who are newly qualified.

- The results of the audit would not have an impact on the 'red' safeguarding performance indicator, reported in the Balanced Scorecard, because that is a recording issue, not a case load issue;
- There is still high turnover of social workers, with a vacancy and turnover rate of about 30% which are filled by agency staff. The department acknowledges that this is not satisfactory as it affects the consistency required in developing good relationships with children and families;

The Executive Member said that there is a massive amount of work going on to recruit in a difficult market where people often prefer the flexibility of agency working. We need a unique selling point; but we are moving in the right direction.

## **SCHOOLS PERFORMANCE – OFSTED REPORTS**

The Committee received copies of the summaries of recently published Ofsted inspection reports on

- Whiteknights Primary School –overall rating 2 'good'; previous rating 3 'requires improvement'
- Winnersh Primary School – outcome of the first monitoring inspection following judgement in May 2014 that the school required improvement. Effective action being taken to tackle areas requiring improvement; further actions suggested.
- Oakbank Secondary School - outcome of the first monitoring inspection following judgement in May 2014 that the school required improvement. Effective action being taken to tackle areas requiring improvement; further actions suggested

## **CHILDREN'S SERVICES PERFORMANCE INDICATORS – BALANCED SCORECARD**

All but two are green, with one orange due to the Ofsted report of Oakbank. Indicator 6 - *Safeguarding: % of referrals that are repeat referrals to Children's Social Care* was still red. The explanation given in the report that this was a technical issue around reporting arrangements was accepted.

## **COMMITTEE'S FORWARD PROGRAMME**

The following amendments were made to the existing forward Programme of work:

- January - add the Local Safeguarding Children Board's report on the 'Effective arrangements to safeguard children'
- January – the safeguarding update report to focus on the impact of the recruitment and retention strategy
- March – the safeguarding update to focus on the impact of the Early Help Strategy.

## **Report of the Community Partnerships Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

The Committee met on Monday 27<sup>th</sup> October 2014 for an Extraordinary Meeting to consider Amenity Vehicle Provision and again on Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> November 2014 to conclude its review of Amenity Vehicle Provision and to consider draft Terms of Reference for a review of Outside Body appointments.

Representatives of the towns and parishes who received visits by the Amenity Vehicle were invited to the extraordinary meeting with some 12 of the towns/parishes being represented. From their statements it was clear that the service was valued by them on behalf of their residents. But it was also clear that the service did not serve the whole Borough, no other Berkshire unitary provides such a service, it is not a statutory service, no separation of waste is possible therefore it all goes to landfill at significant and growing expense, that trade waste cannot easily be excluded, some sites have been identified as being 'high risk', and the Council was not complying with the 2011 Waste Regulations in providing the service. The Committee noted the wide disparities between the contributions made by the various parishes. The Committee resolved that the Executive be advised that the amenity vehicle service is still required but various aspects of the service are unsustainable and require further investigation.

The Committee considered how it would approach its review of Outside Body appointments with members on Outside Bodies somewhat surprised to hear that Democratic Services maintained a Directory of Outside Bodies that runs to 72 pages. We noted that this Directory notes that there is no absolute definition of an Outside Body and will examine any potential overlap between 'Other Bodies' who are not required to report annually to Council and 'Outside Bodies' who are (but not all appointees did so.) As many appointments were to Outside Bodies where the Council either pays a subscription of a grant, the Committee requested information as to how much was paid to each Outside Body. The Committee will then consider the appropriateness of continuing representation as well as the criteria for inclusion of a 'Body' where the Council is, or perhaps should be, represented. The Committee agreed the Terms of Reference for its review and this will be addressed by the next meeting of the Committee.

**David Sleight**

Chairman

13<sup>th</sup> November 2014

## Report of the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The Committee met on 18 November. Councillor Ken Miall was elected Chairman for the remainder of the municipal year. The agenda included the following:

- *Update on Royal Berkshire Hospital – (from CCG as commissioners)* – The Nurse Director of the Berkshire West CCGs provided information on and answered Members' questions on:
  - Any areas of performance where the CCG had or had had concerns and action that the Trust was taking to make improvements e.g. Referral to Treatment Waiting Times, Diagnostics and Cancer Wait Times.
  - The Trust's progress against the action plan developed following the Care Quality Commission inspection in March;
  - Quality of patient care;
  - How the CCG was working with the Trust's new Chief Executive
- *A&E attendance of Wokingham residents aged in their 40s-60s* – Dr Milligan from the Wokingham CCG provided information on Emergency Department analysis and Operational Resilience and Capacity Planning. Members were informed that those under 4 and those over 65 were the age brackets with the highest number of attendances at the Emergency Department.
- *Consultation on charges for social care services* – HOSC will submit a response to this consultation.

The Committee's next meeting is 19 January. Agenda items will include:

- *Adult Safeguarding Annual Report 2013-14* –The Committee will scrutinise achievement against aims identified.
- *Briefing on effect of pollution on public health and wellbeing in Wokingham Borough* – following a scrutiny suggestion from a member of the public, Members will receive a briefing on the effect of pollution on public health and wellbeing in Wokingham Borough, to determine whether this is an issue of concern for the Borough.
- *Workforce* – The Committee has requested an update on primary care workforce and views on increasing use of non GP healthcare staff.
  
- The Care Act Task and Finish Group will begin work at the end of November.

**Councillor Ken Miall, Chairman of Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

## **Report of the Corporate Services overview and Scrutiny Committee**

The Committee met on Monday 10 November to consider the May 2015 election counts and how Wokingham Borough Council learns as an organisation. Each of these generated lots of interest and questions.

The General Election count will follow the close of polls with the result declared as soon as possible thereafter, likely to be after 5am. Because the timing of the end of the count is not known and to give counters adequate rest it is planned to hold the count for the local elections on the Saturday. This will also mean that working Councillors will not have to take another day off work.

The Director of Finance and Resources, Graham Ebers and the Chief Executive, Andy Couldrick gave a presentation on the processes being adopted in the Council to further improve the way we learn and go about business including the customer experience. Councillors were supportive and feel that we should be included in the programme to help ensure it becomes embedded and rolled out.

The date of the January meeting has been moved to 27 January. This falls between the date of publication of the Executive paper on the Planning Enforcement Local Plan going out for Consultation and the date of the Executive meeting. This will allow the Committee the opportunity to comment on the Plan to the Executive Member prior to the Executive meeting.

At the January meeting we will also review the Wokingham Town Car Parks Strategy, Council Car Parks Strategy, Commuter Parking and the business case for the Wokingham Town Centre regeneration.

Norman Jorgensen