

Minutes of the Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board

18 December 2023

-: Present :-

Councillor Law (Chairwoman)

Councillors Fellows and Nicolaou

Non-voting Co-opted Members

Adrian Woon, Devon and Cornwall Police

Mike Cook, Voluntary and Community Sector and Alternative Provider (Education)

(Also in attendance: Councillors Bye)

18. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Twelves and Hayley Costar (who was represented by Adrian Woon).

19. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Sub-Board held on 23 October 2023 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairwoman.

20. Youth Justice Service

The Youth Justice Service Manager, Jon Ralph, outlined the submitted report on the progress made in implementing the Youth Justice Service Improvement Plan and responded to the following questions:

- what percentage of young people using the Service were in education or employment;
- how did attendance compare to the national picture;
- what was happening with prevention work and youth activities;
- how did the community sector feed into prevention;
- did the audit of offending rates demonstrate that reoffending rates had reduced;
- how long has the CAMHS worker been in post;
- was the regular access to forensic CAMHS temporary and how did this link to the support from the psychologist;
- what have partners done to help bring forward suitable accommodation to deliver Youth Justice Services in Torbay;
- what was the current situation with the Upton Pavilion; and

- were the numbers of people coming into the Service going up and what was the reason for this.

Members acknowledged that the Youth Justice Service now had in place a full time Child and Adolescent Mental Health (CAMHS) Officer which would enable young people requiring support to be referred to them.

Resolved (unanimously):

1. that the Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board notes the contents of the submitted report;
2. that the Director of Children's Services be requested to work with the Head of the Youth Justice Service to see how they can work more closely with other partner services, the community and voluntary sector at an earlier stage to help young people integrate into community services and help the Youth Justice Service to balance their capacity to deliver preventative and statutory services to reduce youth offending; and
3. that the Director of Children's Services be requested to write out to the statutory partners for youth justice to see if there is any suitable accommodation for youth justice work in Torquay, Paignton and Brixham.

21. Exclusions and Absence

The Head of Vulnerable Pupils, Dan Hamer, outlined the submitted report which provided an update on exclusions and absence and responded to the following questions:

- the secondary schools had high numbers of exclusions and suspensions, what was being done to support the schools to reduce these numbers;
- how were children who were on part time timetables or educated other than at school reflected in the statistics;
- support and training was being provided to school governors, was similar training offered to Councillors who were also governors so that they can understand the issues and what the schools should be doing to reduce numbers of exclusions and suspensions;
- had anything changed at Brixham College to impact on their increase in exclusions;
- do Police colleagues share data on exclusions and suspensions and was there a link with antisocial behaviour and referrals to the Youth Justice Service;
- some schools were taking a trauma informed and restorative practice approach was this being rolled out across all schools;
- does the Council know what extent the new duties had impacted on schools being downgraded by Ofsted; and
- isolation rooms were being used in schools rather than suspensions or exclusions what was being done to monitor the impact of this.

Resolved (unanimously):

1. that the Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board notes the recommendations to the Children's Continuous Improvement Board as follows:
 - i. Recognises the challenges in the local area and the ongoing work.
 - ii. Promotes school inclusion across all council activity to secure better outcomes for children, families and the community.
 - iii. Has a regard to children and young people's sense of belonging when making decisions.
2. that a training session be provided to Councillors who are school governors or who wish to be school governors on exclusions and suspensions and their roles and what the schools should be doing.

(Note: after consideration of the item in Minute 21, Councillor Fellows left the meeting which resulted in the meeting not being quorate in accordance with Standing Order B3. In accordance with Standing Order B3.2 the remaining items would be included on the agenda for the next meeting for Members of the Sub-Board to formally note their content.)

Chairwoman