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KIRKLEES COUNCIL

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Friday 6th January 2017

Present: Councillor Julie Stewart-Turner (Chair)
Councillor Cahal Burke
Councillor Gulfam Asif
Councillor Ken Sims
Fatima Khan-Shah - Statutory Scrutiny Co-optee

In attendance: Councillor Masood Ahmed, Cabinet Member - Community Cohesion & Schools
Val Flintoff, Learning Partner (System Leadership)
Lee Hamilton – Prevent Co-ordinator

Observers: Councillor Richard Smith Councillor Masood Ahmed,
Cabinet Member - Community Cohesion & Schools
Val Flintoff, Learning Partner (System Leadership)
Lee Hamilton
Fatima Khan-Shah
Councillor Richard Smith

58 Membership of Committee

All Members of the Committee were present.

59 Minutes of Previous Meeting

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held of 28 November 2016 were agreed as a correct record subject to the inclusion of the procurement of the White House Centre as a decision under Minute number 55.

60 Interests

No interests were declared.

61 Admission of the Public

It was agreed that all items be considered in public session.

62 PSHE curriculum in schools

The Management Committee received a report which provided an overview of the PSHE curriculum within schools, focussing on the PREVENT elements of this work. Val Flintoff (Learning Partner), Lee Hamilton, (Prevent Co-Ordinator) and Councillor Masood Ahmed, Cabinet Portfolio Holder attended the meeting for this item.

In introducing the item Val Flintoff explained the current position regarding Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education. It was noted that it was a non-statutory subject which could be included in both primary and secondary curriculums. It was noted there had been discussions at select committee level in Parliament about making some aspects of the curriculum statutory, in particular those focussing on safeguarding and sex and relationship education.

In addition to PSHE there is also a requirement at secondary level for citizenship education. Some schools choose to merge citizenship education with their PSHE teaching. PSHE relates to health and wellbeing and is about educating young people on living in the wider world.

Val Flintoff informed the committee that it was hoped by the end of April that a programme of study on PSHE would be available to all schools within Kirklees. The programme had been developed by Kirklees council officers and covered from key Stage 1 to Key Stage 5. The Management Committee was informed that there were a variety of approaches to PSHE education in schools. It was acknowledged that curriculum requirements squeezed the amount of time available for PSHE and whilst it was non-statutory, there was a risk that some schools would not include time within the curriculum. Some schools had an hour in the curriculum every week or in some cases perhaps a half day per term so that there could be more in depth teaching and learning on PSHE related issues.

There followed a discussion on how equipped schools were to deal with some of the challenging safeguarding conversations. An example was given of the post 'Brexit' fall out that had led to playground conversations that were inappropriate. There was discussion on the approach taken to PREVENT work in schools including at a primary level which was about respect, understanding difference and feeling ok to be yourself. Teachers wanted to address issues but needed to have the competence and confidence to handle difficult conversations in an appropriate way. It was noted that the volume of formal PREVENT referrals was minimised if the suggested local authority approach was effectively implemented within schools.

The Committee suggested that further opportunities could be made available to parents to understand the work going on in schools and their role in supporting that ethos at home. Councillor Ahmed referred to the SPICE programme which had looked at drugs and alcohol awareness and had included a session with parents to reinforce understanding and messages.

The Management Committee welcomed the support being provided to schools on appropriately including PSHE within curriculums. It was noted that the funding that subsidised the work was coming to an end in April 2017.

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The Management Committee learnt of a 2 year programme to develop schools so that they could attain charter school status. Beacon schools could provide support to others in relation to PSHE education programmes, and act as hubs of good practice in Kirklees.

The Management Committee recognised that a broader discussion was required regarding the future of PSHE education within Kirklees including the role of the local authority and schools. It was suggested that current national discussions may lead to further guidance on statutory requirements. The Management Committee agreed to have a half day session on PSHE in the new municipal year.

RESOLVED -

(1) That Councillor Ahmed, Val Flintoff and Lee Hamilton be thanked for attending the Committee to discuss PSHE issues.

(2) That the work being undertaken within schools, particularly the primary sector concerning PSHE guidance and support be welcomed.

(3) That officers explore how information can be cascaded to School Governors to ensure they are also aware of the offers to school around PSHE curriculum.

(4) That a further half day session on broader PSHE issues be held in the new municipal year.

63 Scrutiny Referral Request - Bus Gates Petition

The Management Committee considered a request that had been submitted as part of a petition to Council raising concerns on the impact of bus gates within Huddersfield town centre. The petition, on behalf of Huddersfield Town Centre Action Group had expressed concerns about 'the falling levels of foot fall and trade in the town centre because of bus gates'. The petition had requested that a scrutiny investigation be carried out, as well as a strategic assessment, into the consultation process that led to the implementation of the scheme.

The report continued to outline the decision of Council on 14 December 2016 to establish an all party working group to undertake a broader strategic review to explore all facets of town centre development.

Councillor Richard Smith and Ailsa Devlin attended the meeting to put forward their views on the request. Ms Devlin asked if the committee would look at the effectiveness of the process and the spirit of the consultation exercise.

In considering the request the Management Committee acknowledged that the working group would be established however they did not feel that this should prevent scrutiny from carrying out a focussed piece of work to look specifically at the bus gates project.

It was proposed that a short, focussed piece of work be undertaken to look at the following areas;

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- the rationale for the introduction of bus gates
- the promotion of proposals
- the consultation process
- feedback from the consultation process
- lessons learned.

The conclusions of any scrutiny piece of work would focus on the evidence provided to the committee.

The Management Committee agreed to consider a terms of reference for the work at its next meeting.

RESOLVED -

(1) That a focussed piece of Scrutiny work be undertaken to look at the bus gates project. The work to consider the rationale for the project, the development of proposals and consultation and identify any lessons to be learned.

(2) That a Terms of Reference for the work be presented to the next meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee.

64 Date of Next Meeting/ OSMC Work Programme

The Management Committee considered arrangements for future meetings and its work programme. It was noted that the next meeting would be held on the 23 January 2017. In respect of the work programme Cllr Stewart-Turner identified 3 areas of implementation within the intervention and prevention programme, that the management committee would be scrutinising. These were;

- Approach to Communities (including Comoodle)
- Services for Young People
- Vulnerable People and Preventing Homelessness

It was agreed that the meeting of the Management Committee scheduled for the 27 March 2017 be extended to 2.00pm to include consideration of these 3 new areas of work.

The Management Committee confirmed its intention to have a half day discussion on PSHE in the new municipal year.

RESOLVED -

(1) That the work programme, including the agenda issues for consideration at the next meeting of the committee, be noted.

(2) That the next meeting of the committee be held on 23 January 2017 at 9.30am.

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(3) That strands of the early intervention and prevention programme on communities, services for young people, vulnerable people and preventing homelessness, be scheduled for the March meeting of the Committee.

(4) That the meeting of the committee scheduled for 27 March 2017 be extended until 2.00pm to allow for additional agenda items.

(5) That a further half day discussion on PSHE be arranged in the new municipal year.