

Contact Officer: Yolande Myers

KIRKLEES COUNCIL

CHILDREN'S SCRUTINY PANEL

Monday 11th June 2018

Present:

Councillor Donna Bellamy
Councillor Lisa Holmes
Councillor Darren O'Donovan
Councillor Sheikh Ullah

Co-optees

Dale O'Neill
Fatima Khan-Shah

In attendance:

Councillor Viv Kendrick
Joanne Bartholomew, Service Director - Commercial,
Regulatory and Operational Services
Steve Comb, Head of Corporate Parenting
Elaine McShane, Service Director - Family Support and
Child Protection
Jo-Anne Sanders, Service Director - Learning & Early
Support
Saleem Tariq, Service Director - Children and Families

1 Membership of the Committee

No apologies for absence were submitted or recorded.

2 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The Minutes of the Panel meeting held on 16 April 2018 were presented and approved as a correct record.

3 Interests

No interests were declared.

4 Admission of the Public

The meeting was held in public session.

5 Draft Sufficiency Strategy

Draft Sufficiency Strategy

Steve Comb, Interim Head of Corporate Parenting introduced a report which included the Draft Sufficiency Strategy and Action Plan.

The report outlined the authority's commitment to ensure the availability of local placements to ensure that children and young people did not need to be placed at a distance from their communities. Mr Comb explained that it was challenging to

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provide availability due to the rising numbers of children in Local Authority care, but it was a statutory duty to provide sufficient accommodation for children and young people.

Members of the Children's Scrutiny Panel were asked to comment on the draft Strategy and Action Plan to contribute towards its further development.

Cllr Viv Kendrick and Steve Comb went on to answer questions from members of the panel which, in summary focused on:-

- The need for a focus on outcomes within the draft Sufficiency Strategy
- That a table with details of children in care should be produced each meeting to enable members to see progress.
- The service had introduced business meetings for local authority foster carers
- Retention and recruitment of foster carers was a national problem which needed a multi-faceted approach to resolve.
- The voice of children and young people were heard and acted upon
- Children's homes being reduced from 6 beds to 4 beds
- The rationale behind the 50% target for satisfied complaints
- The Specialist Accommodation Board
- The need for care leavers to find accommodation in more sustainable areas
- Support for parents pre-birth and the use of special guardians and connected persons fostering
- Ensuring the resource panel did not introduce delay

RESOLVED –

Members of the Panel agreed that:

- 1) Steve Comb be thanked for her attendance at today's meeting.
- 2) The receipt and content of the report including the draft Sufficiency Strategy, be noted.
- 3) That a table with statistics relating to the numbers of children in Local Authority in care should be brought to each Children's Scrutiny Panel.
- 4) That the Panel support the principles contained within the draft Sufficiency Strategy.

6 Children's Scrutiny Panel work programme

Children's Scrutiny Panel work programme

The panel considered the work programme for 2018/19 and

RESOLVED -

- 1) Sal Tariq be thanked for his attendance at today's meeting.

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2) That the proposed items on the work programme in 2018/19 be noted and agreed.

7

Future Meeting Dates

Members of the Panel agreed that they would provide details of available dates for meetings during the 2018/19 municipal year.

RESOLVED -

Members of the Panel agreed that they would provide details of available dates for meetings during the 2018/19 municipal year.