

NOTTINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES

of meeting held on **5 December 2012** at Loxley House

from 2.03 pm to 3.41 pm

- ✓ Councillor Parbutt (Chair)
Councillor Bryan
Councillor Culley
 - ✓ Councillor Choudhry
Councillor Dewinton (Vice-Chair)
 - ✓ Councillor Hartshorne
Councillor Healy
 - ✓ Councillor Jenkins
 - ✓ Councillor Khan
 - ✓ Councillor Klein
Councillor Molife
 - ✓ Councillor Parton
Councillor Watson
 - ✓ Councillor S Williams
- ✓ indicates present at meeting

In Attendance

- | | | |
|----------------|---|---|
| Beverley Denby | - | 3 rd Sector Advocate |
| Assim Ishaque | - | Parent Governor Representative |
| Ms T Flower | - | Aspiration Strategy Manager |
| Mr N Jackson | - | Employment and Skills Manager |
| Mr L Murray | - | Insight Manager |
| Mr J Rhodes | - | Nottingham Plan Manager |
| Mr J Yarham | - | Director Economic Innovation and Employment |
| Ms A Kaufhold |) | Overview and Scrutiny Review Co-ordinators |
| Mr N McMenamin |) | |

36 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Bryan, Culley, Dewinton, Healey and Watson.

37 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

No declarations of interests were made.

38 MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 3 October 2012, copies of which had been circulated, be confirmed and signed by the Chair.

39 CHILD POVERTY IN NOTTINGHAM

Mr Yarham, made a presentation summarising the statistical data relating to child poverty in Nottingham, the performance by the Council against key indicators and the activity taking place to support families out of the poverty cycle.

The information provided and discussed by the Committee included:

- In Nottingham:
 - 34.5% of children lived in poverty which equated to 21,000 children. This was the 9th highest rate in England. The definition of poverty for this purpose was classified as being below 60% median income before housing costs.
 - 23% of children classified as living in severe poverty and ranked 6th highest in the country. The definition of severe poverty was households where income is below 50% of median income and material deprivation is experienced namely, where adults and children lack at least one or two basic necessities.
 - 35.8% of children live in 'low income' households, effectively this applies to households which are working and claim both Child Tax Credit and Working Tax Credit. Snapshot data provided by the HMRC indicated that in Nottingham 90% of these households had incomes below £16,500 and 50% below £9,325.

Programmes to address child poverty in Nottingham included:

- The Department for Education Early Years 2 year old programme which provides 1,400 free places for 2 year olds for 15 hours per week and will start in 2013.
- The Department for Work and Pensions Working Links Programme for families with multiple issues, in Nottingham about 200 referrals have been and these families will be starting the programme.
- The Department for Communities Priority Families Programme which will work with 1,200 families over the next three years and is already being rolled out in priority wards.
- Parenting Programmes being run by the Family Community Teams which have already been attended by 475 individuals from 270 families over the past year.

- Mentoring and befriending services Homestart and Family Lives which both use volunteers to support families with children who are experiencing difficulties. These organisations offer social, emotional and practical support in the home but also at workshops and over 250 families were supported last year.
- Employer Hub - this was established to provide recruitment services for City Employers and match local people to local jobs. Since 1 April 2012, 200 individuals have found employment and this includes 43 apprenticeships.
- The Nottingham Jobs Fund was established in 2011 and has funding of £2.2 million until March 2014. This scheme was designed to encourage employers to create new jobs for unemployed young people in the City. Since April 2012, 53 individuals have received placements which brings this to 82 in total and there are 36 job vacancies currently live at the Job Centre Plus.
- In 2012, there were over 5,000 job seekers who attended the Community Jobs Fairs and these activities were predicted to generate 500+ jobs.
- The Innovation Fund – Futures (funded by the Department of Work and Pensions) is currently working with 866 young people and over 500 have been placed in learning provision or work.

During discussion, the following comments were made and additional information provided:

- Concerns were raised relating to the procurement processes of the Council and whether these provided sufficient support to local smaller businesses and voluntary sector organisations to enable them to tender for contracts or bid for grants etc. Mr Yarham confirmed that a review of procurement processes was taking place and acknowledged that these concerns were being considered as part of a range of issues. The challenge for procurement was to ensure that competing aims of supporting local business whilst still obtaining best value for money was met.
- The levels of deprivation and unemployment were long-term issues facing the city and there was no quick or easy solution to this. The Council was striving to support its local residents through a whole range of activity, including education and training, providing entry level jobs which were ring-fenced to local city residents, developing apprenticeships, as well as including contractual obligations for training and jobs for local people when awarding Council contracts organisations.
- Although the Council could not financially support families with disabled children (or otherwise) with the potential loss of income resulting from the implementation of Universal Credit, the Disabled Children's team were working with families to assess the impact.
- The additional nursery provision of 15 hours per week for 2 year olds was aimed at workless families to help support them back into work. The Early Years team

had identified 1,400 places which was close to its capacity for nursery places. These places would first be offered through an eligibility criteria to families in workless households and then if any places were left to low income families. The cost for childcare across the city averaged £160 per week per child.

- The Council's Aspiration Agenda included measures to support the 4,000 children across the City with disabilities and learning disabilities to create more opportunities in terms developing skills, training and employability. A longitudinal study was being carried out with special schools and Further Education Colleges to focus on employability skills and training in their courses. It was essential to have local solutions to help adults with disabilities into work, one such initiative was Woodfield Industries which was extending its operations.
- Concern was expressed that the remit of the proposed carers hub for adults and children was too broad and prohibited smaller, voluntary organisations to tender, effectively meaning that larger, national organisations would come in and access local funding.
- Mr Yarham confirmed that the Council would be applying for the Early Intervention Grant for Anti Poverty strategies. The issue of poverty was already included in Children and Young People Plan and Family Support Strategy and integral to all the Council's plans. Levels of deprivation and poverty in the City was high and much of the core business of Children and Families was spent dealing with the impact of this.
- The Council already provided a lot of support to families through after school clubs and breakfast clubs but would not provide a post 6pm service as this effectively was babysitting and families had to make their own arrangements through family and friends.
- The purpose of the Employers Hub was to connect local people to jobs locally and avoid them being outsourced, it was not to support Small, Medium Enterprises to maintain their flexibility. It was open to all businesses working in Nottingham including the larger national organisations such as Asda as well as both Universities.
- The official source of data relating to poverty was obtained from national organisations such as the Department of Work and Pensions. In order to break down the levels of poverty by ethnicity in the City an analysis of free school meals data could provide some figures for pupils aged 5 to 16 year old. Other data requested by members included the possibility of accessing postcode data from Job Centre Plus in Bulwell to analyse whether local people were actually getting those jobs. There was also interest in exploring the priorities in the top five wards and the impact of projects such as BEST in Aspley, the Renewal Trust in St Anns and the Meadows Partnership Trust, and how this could be shared and
- One success was the reduction in teenage pregnancy levels in the City which was attributable to the multi-agency work with partners, providing unbiased advice on contraception etc. This was part of the Aspiration Agenda and a task and finish group was reviewing the work of the projects and to identify any gaps

over the past five. It was difficult to access outcome data as once individuals reached a certain age it was harder to keep a track of them.

- The level of churn in the City was high ie people moving out across the boundary in to the suburbs of the County. This was not a new phenomenon and despite the two Universities people generally moved out of the City as their employment prospects and housing expectations etc improved. It was confirmed that 20% of all secondary school pupils living in the City actually went to schools in the County which had a detrimental impact on the Aspiration Agenda and performance data for local schools.
- Mr Yarham confirmed that the City was considered a leading light nationally in relation to its procurement procedures which included contractual clauses for training, apprenticeships and employment for local people. Currently a review of procurement processes was being undertaken to ensure that the City was still obtaining best value when awarding contracts etc.

RESOLVED

(1) the Director of Economic Innovation and Employment was asked to provide further statistical information relating to:

- (a) the number of people who had attended the jobs fair in the City but also those which took place in Neighbourhoods;**
- (b) the level of churn that took place in the City;**
- (c) an analysis of the outcomes for teenage mothers as they progressed through education.**

(2) the committee expressed interest in exploring the Council's procurement policies and procedures for obtaining best value and outcome of the review that was currently underway and how these supported local businesses.

(3) that the appreciation of the Committee for the presentation and information provided by Mr Yarham and his colleagues be recorded.

40 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR FOR THE CALL-IN PANEL

RESOLVED that Councillor Parbutt be appointed as Chair for the remainder of the municipal year.

41 PROGRAMME FOR SCRUTINY

Further to minute 33 dated 3 October 2012, the Committee considered and approved the proposals in the report of the Head of Democratic Services, copies of which had been circulated, as summarised below:

RESOLVED

- (1) that the follow up actions being taken by the Overview and Scrutiny Review Co-ordinators as detailed in Appendix 2 be noted;**
- (2) that approval be given to amend the title of the scrutiny review panel 'How is the changing relationship between schools, academies and the Council being managed and who will be responsible for educational performance outcomes for children?'**
- (3) that the Committee noted that the topic for the next meeting in January 2013 will be the Nottingham Growth Plan.**