

## NOTTINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

### CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

**MINUTES of the meeting held at Ground Floor Committee Room - Loxley House, Station Street, Nottingham, NG2 3NG on 20 March 2018 from 11.01 am - 12.11 pm**

#### **Membership**

##### Present

Councillor Sue Johnson (Chair)  
Councillor Azad Choudhry  
Councillor Patience Uloma Ifediora  
Councillor Brian Parbutt  
Councillor Andrew Rule  
Councillor Chris Tansley

##### Absent

Councillor Josh Cook  
Councillor Mohammed Ibrahim  
Councillor Neghat Khan

#### **Colleagues, partners and others in attendance:**

Councillor David Mellen - Portfolio Holder for Early Intervention and Early Years  
Helen Blackman - Director of Children's Integrated Services  
Clive Chambers - Head of Service – Safeguarding and Quality Assurance  
Jane Garrard - Constitutional Services  
Alison Michalska - Corporate Director for Children and Adults  
Kate Morris - Governance Officer  
Sophie Russell - Head of Children's Strategy and Improvement

#### **45 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Councillor Josh Cook – Personal  
Councillor Mohammed Ibrahim – Personal  
Councillor Neghat Khan – Council Business

#### **46 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS**

None.

#### **47 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 January 2018 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

#### **48 HOUSING ISSUES FOR 16 AND 17 YEAR OLDS**

Councillor David Mellen, Portfolio Holder for Early Intervention and Early Years introduced the report on Housing Issues for 16 and 17 year olds to the Committee. Along with Samantha Danyluk, Service Manager for Children and Families, and Clive Chambers, Head of Children in Care they highlighted the following points:

- (a) Following comments from Ofsted in January 2017 Nottingham City Council's response to 16 and 17 year olds presenting as homeless has evolved to ensure a consistent approach across the various routes of referral;

- (b) Children's Duty Team now responds to all assessments of young people presenting as homeless and development sessions have taken place within the team to ensure a consistent approach;
- (c) other changes include:
  - the introduction of a manual tracker, which records details about each young person, the actions taken and outcomes in each case. This is then audited on a regular basis by the Service Manager to ensure that a consistent approach is maintained;
  - refresh of the guidance and policy relating to multi-agency pathway referrals. This document is currently being consulted on;
  - introduction of the Vulnerable Persons Panel which is collaborative working between Housing and Children's Services. This panel runs fortnightly and allows early consideration of individuals at risk of eviction and allows support to be put in place to reduce the risk of eviction taking place.
- (d) Targeted Family Support is working with young people and their families to improve relationships and keep them in the family home. This support is ongoing and allows parents and young people to build resilience which works towards decreasing the chances of the young person becoming homeless;
- (e) 86.5% of young people leaving care in Nottingham are judged to be in suitable accommodation. This is higher than statistical neighbours and in part thanks to the productive relationship with housing providers and the additional support offered;
- (f) those young people who are in custody at the time of leaving care are judged to be in unsuitable accommodation so it will be very difficult to reach 100% target for suitable accommodation;
- (g) unaccompanied minors who come into care are supported to achieve their immigration status. Whilst their immigration status remains unresolved they are not eligible for social housing and housing benefits. If they leave care whilst their immigration status remains unresolved, their housing costs are met through the No Recourse to Public Funds budget;

The committee asked a number of questions and during discussion the following points were made:

- (h) Many of the accommodation providers in Nottingham also have key workers for residents. For 16 and 17 year olds who move into this kind of accommodation Children's Services provide support until they are 18, the Key Worker also provides support ongoing after they turn 18. This support includes advice on benefits and help claiming them as well as support with practical skills;
- (i) there are robust checks in place to ensure that children are safe in care placements. There has been a significant change recently to children being cared for in smaller residential settings rather than larger institutions. These smaller residential settings are subject to unannounced inspections twice a

year. Foster carers are required to undergo at least 6 months of training and assessment as well as police checks before a child is placed with them;

- (j) for private residential settings there are regular quality assurance checks and challenge to ensure that each child's care plan is being followed and all necessary extra support is provided;

**RESOLVED to note thanks Councillor David Mellen, Samantha Danyluk and Clive Chambers for their attendance and to note content of the report on housing issues for 16 and 17 year olds.**

#### **49 CHILD POVERTY**

Councillor David Mellen, Portfolio Holder for Early Intervention and Early Years introduced the report on Child Poverty in Nottingham. Sophie Russell, Head of Children's Strategy and Improvement gave a presentation, highlighting the following points:

- (a) National data indicates that there is a higher percentage of children living in poverty in Nottingham than the national average. Nottingham City is also 4<sup>th</sup> on the list of most deprived cities. Across the city 11 wards have higher than average poverty;
- (b) there is a correlation between poverty and the demand for Children's Services and it is estimated that 58% of service demand in Nottingham is as a result of child poverty;
- (c) to combat the physical, practical and emotional impact of poverty on children, Nottingham City Council is doing the following:
- Ensuring access to high quality education from early years through to Key Stage 5
  - Ensuring access to free, or cheap Breakfast Clubs in the majority of primary schools
  - Offering support for families to ensure children have school uniforms
  - Continued investment in early help and interventions (early help services, Small Steps Big Changes, parenting programmes)
  - Running the Priority Family Programme with a focus on financial resilience
  - Commissioning of financial vulnerability and welfare rights services through the Advice Nottingham Consortium;

Following questions and discussion the following additional information was given:

- (d) School uniform grants are available for children who attend a local authority maintained school. The grants are available when the child is 5, 8, 11, 13 and 15. Academy schools should also have provision for uniform grants;
- (e) looking at other authorities where Universal Credit has been rolled out, it will have an impact on families. There is a variety of work taking place locally to offer advice and support to those families likely to be most significantly affected;

- (f) Nottingham Community and Voluntary Sector is engaged in a large piece of work around tackling food poverty, and part of the focus of this work is “holiday hunger” where a child is hungry in school holidays as there is no free school meal provision. This effect is likely to increase with recent announcements from central government around free school meal provision;

**RESOLVED to thank Councillor David Mellen and Sophie Russell for their attendance, and to note the content of their report on Child Poverty in Nottingham and the work taking place to tackle the issue.**

**50 CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2018/19**

Jane Garrard, Senior Governance Officer introduced the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee Work Programme for 2018/19. There was some discussion around items that could be considered or added as a result of discussion at this meeting.

**RESOLVED to note the content of the Work Programme 2018/19.**