

# **CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND EDUCATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (SPECIAL)**

**(Committee Rooms 1/2 - Port Talbot Civic Centre)**

**Members Present:**

**30<sup>th</sup> July 2015**

**Chairman:** Councillor A.R.Lockyer

**Vice Chairman:** Councillor H.N.James

**Councillors:** A.Carter, Mrs.J.Dudley, M.Ellis, P.Greenaway,  
R.G.Jones, J.D.Morgan, Mrs.S.Paddison and  
Mrs.L.G.Williams

**Co-opted Non Voting  
Members:** A.Hughes

**Officers In Attendance** A.Jarrett, Mrs.A.Thomas, C.Millis, J.Hodges,  
J.Haeney and Ms.C.Gadd

**Cabinet Invitees:** Councillors P.A.Rees and P.D.Richards

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## **1. REVIEW OF YOUTH CLUB PROVISION**

The Committee received the report on progress implementing the approved changes to the current allocation of youth clubs to enable continuity of the service within the context of current budget limitations, as detailed within the circulated report.

It was recognised that there had been some impact on the Service with budget reductions, however, the Service had undertaken a lot of work to negate this and the value of youth clubs was recognised.

Members were provided with an overview of current provision and what changes had been made. It was highlighted that a review was being undertaken of youth club provision across Neath Port Talbot with a view of ensuring a more equitable spread across the area. A full report on the review would be brought to the meeting of the Committee in October. Youth Support Services were currently being analysed to help inform a county

wide mapping exercise and it was noted that some population analysis had been undertaken which would be cross referenced with other information such as the Multiple Index of Deprivation. This information would assist in assessing which young people were accessing clubs and whether it was representative of the young people in the area. It was highlighted that the Youth Service was more than just youth clubs and it provided a wide range of services.

The Committee highlighted that, as recognised in previous meetings, there were imbalances in youth club provisions across the County Borough. Members noted that in some areas youth provision was available from other providers and this should be taken into consideration during the mapping process and should be included in the future report. Members highlighted that in the sustainability of the different groups needed to be taken into consideration as some organisations would be reliant on grants and fixed funding. Members noted that the Youth Service should consider ways to assist other provisions in the community as they can help to deliver services and access funding not available to the Council. It was highlighted that this work was already undertaken and Officers informed Members that where possible alternative models of provision was considered. It was also recognised that community profiling should be undertaken more regularly as a lot of provision was historic.

In relation to the Youth Club in Bryncoch, Members queried what the minimum staffing levels were and was the preferred night based on the choice of the young people who attended. Officers explained that minimum staffing levels would be based on the size of the club and requirements of the venue and as a general rule the minimum levels would be three members of staff. It was confirmed that the preferred night was based on the choice of young people in the area. It was noted that the Deputy Worker in Charge posts had been removed across the Service, as the post was not required.

Members queried if the changes that had been made to Youth Clubs had had an impact on antisocial behaviour and it was suggested that the Service worked with the Community Safety Team to include this information in the forthcoming report. It was highlighted that the role of the Service was not just to provide activities it also had a safeguarding role, which was why it was important to try and target as many young people as possible. It was noted that it needs to be ensured that youth clubs were fit for purpose and meet the needs of young people. Members asked how children and young people's views were being sought and Officers informed them that surveys were being completed in a number of ways. This included surveys that could be completed online or face to face, the Service had noted that some young people preferred to answer questions on a one to one basis so they could give their views more openly. It was suggested that surveys could be

undertaken in schools to gather the views of a broader range of young people. Members requested that care was taken in gathering views not to raise expectations or for information to be misinterpreted about decisions that had already been taken.

It was queried if the Youth Service still trained young people in the Junior Leader Award. It was confirmed that this was the case and there was a bank of youth workers that had been trained up through this scheme. Members requested that information regarding levels of qualifications offered to young people and those completed to be included in the future report. It was noted that the Service had been struggling to find drivers for the Rolling Zone, however, this had been resolved with two new Youth Workers being trained up as drivers.

Following scrutiny, it was agreed that the report be noted.

## 2. **PRE-SCRUTINY**

The Committee scrutinised the following matters:

### Cabinet Board Proposals

#### 2.1 Children and Young People Services – Proposed 2015-16 Performance Reporting Arrangements

The Committee received the report to inform Members of the performance reporting obligations to Welsh Government during 2015-16 and the revised suite of quarterly performance indicators for Children and Young People Services. The report also sought Members' approval of the selection of priority performance indicators for 2015-16, as detailed within the circulated report.

It was explained that the first recommendation to agree the suite of 2015-16 Performance Indicators would be a decision for the Cabinet Board. The second recommendation to select the key priority indicators to be reported to the Committee would be a decision for the Scrutiny Committee.

Members were informed that previously 28 performance indicators and eight priority performance indicators were reported to the Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet Board. The Service had received notification from Welsh Government of reporting obligations for 2015-16. Welsh Government aimed to lessen the burden on local authorities in the run-up to the introduction of a more outcome

focussed set of performance measures developed to support the implementation of the Social Services and Well Being (Wales) Act during 2016/17. The revised reporting obligations would be reflected in the quarterly report of performance information and the proposed suite of indicators was noted by the Committee. Officers informed Members that the full suite of performance information would still be collated for internal reporting arrangements to the management group.

It was highlighted that Children's Services had been removed from the Serious Concerns Protocol and the Committee had previously asked if the priority indicators remained fit for purpose in light of the significant changes to the Service. Members were keen to ensure that the scrutiny of the right priority indicators added value and appropriate areas were being considered. Members were presented with a shortlist of key indicators that provide evidence as to whether functions within the service were performing to the required level. Members were invited to decide on which indicators from the shortlist they wanted as priority indicators. It was noted that there would need to be some pattern to the indicators chosen rather than indicators being considered in isolation to provide enough information to Members.

Members discussed the different options in depth and put forward their preferences. Officers provided them with advice regarding which indicators complemented each other and would provide useful information. It was also noted which indicators would be reported on a quarterly basis and which would only provide limited information. It was highlighted that the priority indicators would assist in focussing the work of the Committee. They would allow Members to further drill down into areas, consider the story behind the data and the quality of the work undertaken.

From the list of 14 potential priority indicators to be reported to the Scrutiny Committee the Committee agreed on the following 8 indicators:

1. Average number of children's cases held by qualified social workers across the Service.
2. Staff supervision rates to include qualified and unqualified workers.
3. The number of social work vacancies across the Service.
4. Number of Looked After Children. Including the number of children who have been discharged from care and then subsequently re-admitted.
5. The number of Foster Carers approved by Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council.

7. The number of cases ‘stepped down’ from Children and Young People Services to Team Around the Family.
9. The number of cases held within the Service categorised by status – child protection, looked after or child in need.
14. The percentage of children looked after during the year with a Personal Education Plan within 20 school days of entering care or joining a new school in the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March.

The reporting arrangements were agreed where by sets of four indicators would be reported at alternate meetings. The first set would include the indicators that related to the workforce and work demand (indicators 1, 2, 3 and 5) and the second set would include the indicators that related to aspects of performance of the Service (4, 7, 9 and 14). The priority indicators and reporting arrangements would be reviewed in six months by the Committee.

Following scrutiny, the Committee was supportive of the proposal - the suite of 2015-16 Performance Indicators to be report to Children, Young People and Education Committee - to be considered by the Cabinet Board.

**CHAIRMAN**

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