

GATESHEAD METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

FAMILIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING

Thursday, 7 March 2024

PRESENT: Councillor M Hall (Chair)

Councillor(s): D Burnett, L Caffrey, B Clelland, K Henderson, H Kelly, K McCartney, E McMaster, J Mohammed, L Moir, R Mullen, A Ord, M Ord, D Robson, D Weatherley and Rachel Walton

APOLOGIES: Councillor(s): D Bradford

F123 MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held 18 January 2024 were agreed as an accurate record.

F124 PREVENTING YOUTH CRIME AND SERIOUS VIOLENCE

The Committee were presented with a report concerning the development of the Gateshead Local Action Plan for Serious Violence. The Committee were also given sight of the Gateshead Local Area Profile (Serious Violence) and the Northumbria Serious Violence Response Strategy 2024 – 2029. The report was adapted from a previous version submitted to the Community Safety Board.

The Committee felt that meaningful input could only have been given at earlier stages of this process. It was believed that the strategy was quite lengthy and didn't have clear goals or definitions of who is targeted by the report. The Committee also found that there was no definitive consultation with the voluntary sector or Locality Workers.

RESOLVED

- i. The report was noted.
- ii. Families OSC will be made aware of when Community Safety Board updates are going to Housing, Environment, and Healthy Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- iii. For data to be brought to a future meeting regarding domestic violence figures and the rates related to violence of women against men.

F125 ANNUAL PROGRESS UPDATE ON CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE IMPROVEMENT PLAN

The Committee received a presentation and report giving an overview and progress update in relation to areas identified for improvement from Ofsted Inspection activity and quality assurance work and to highlight our key areas of

focus for improvement following an internal annual Self-Assessment.

Previous inspections in 2019 and 2021 have judged services as “good”, with improvements in 2021.

Information was given to the Committee on work that has been done based in previous inspection findings and what the outcome of these actions have been. Outcomes have included:

- Audit agreeing that the quality of supervision has improved.
- Robust plans for children and continually ensuring that contingencies are in place to avoid drift and delay.
- Significant changes supporting a more intensive offer to children. Data says that **96%** of children in out of borough placements have a Personal Education Plan.

The presentation also outlined how Childrens Services are preparing for Ofsted’s inspection and reviewed priorities for 2023/24.

The Committee discussed children being home educated, the development of new children’s homes, and the Regional Fostering Hub.

RESOLVED

- i. The Committee noted the report.

F126

OVERVIEW OF VIRTUAL SCHOOL ANNUAL REPORT

The Committee received a report providing a progress update on the Key Performance Indicators (KPI) of attainment outcomes, attendance, and suspensions for children in their care for the academic year 2022 – 2023.

The following strengths and key actions were also brought to the Committee’s attention:

Strengths

- KS1 Gateshead children are performing above the national average in RWM combined.
- Gateshead’s CIOC have performed better than National CIOC across all KS2 indicators in 2022.
- NCER data for 2023 Key Stage 4 indicates an Attainment 8 score of 19.4 compared with the National figure of 18.6
- There have been no permanent Exclusions for the last three years.
- Gateshead’s attendance is better than National CIOC in all the

indicators.

Key actions

- Fixed Term suspensions require a further reduction. Through analysis look at schools with high numbers, CIOC with more than 1 FTE, and reasons for suspension. Work with schools to reduce number of fixed term suspensions further.
- Virtual school will continue to monitor attendance of all cared for children to ensure all achieve 95%
- Virtual school new structure with additional capacity. Implemented in December 2023 in part internal recruitment and external by April 2024
- Virtual School Governing Board established with clear Terms of Reference and a range of internal and external stakeholders
- Further develop interventions in conjunction with Designated Teachers to support all key areas to maintain in line with national performance and close the gap with all children.
- Fixed Term suspensions require a further reduction. Through analysis look at schools with high numbers, CIOC with more than 1 FTE, and reasons for suspension. Work with schools to reduce number of fixed term suspensions further.
- Continue to monitor attendance of all cared for children to ensure all achieve 95%
- New EPEP implemented and used by the virtual school casework team to ensure appropriate targets are set and reviewed.

The Committee discussed attitudes towards children in virtual schooling from Head Teachers, methods of identifying whether children have any SEND needs, and trauma informed care in the classroom.

RESOLVED

- i. The Committee noted the information provided in the report.

F127

HUB INVESTMENT CHANGES AND SERVICE DELIVERY

A presentation was given to the Committee on the Gateshead Music Service and the Music Hub Investment Programme.

An update was given on the work of the service. Gateshead Music Service works regularly with 95% of schools and is in contact with all schools. It delivers over 200 hours of teaching a week, engaging with over 10,000 children and young people.

In 2022, Gateshead Music Service applied for a grant with Local Authority partners to secure funding for the new North East Music Hub. Announcement of this outcome will be given on 24 April 2024.

Where schools have limited funding for music access, Gateshead Music Service supports schools to apply for grants, including the Tesco Music Grant. The Glasshouse International Centre for Music has also begun a SEND inclusion group as part of their weekend school.

RESOLVED

- i. The Committee noted the presentation.

F128 WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee received an update on the 2023/24 Work Programme.

RESOLVED

- i. The Work Programme was agreed.

F129 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

No other business was raised.

Chair.....