

LOCAL GOVERNMENT SELECT COMMITTEES - Progress Report: 2010-2011

SELECT COMMITTEE: Children and Young People

DETAIL OF SELECT COMMITTEE WORK

Select Committee role	Action/s	Outcome/s	Estimated impact / influence
<p>1. Scrutinising the work of the Executive and the County Council as an organisation</p>	<p>a) The Children and Young People Select Committee provided Members to serve on the Joint Panel that reviewed the provision of therapy for Children with Special Educational Needs. This review required scrutiny of the Special Educational Needs service within Children’s Services and of the NHS.</p> <p>The Committee will continue to monitor progress against its recommendations.</p>	<p>a) The final Report went to the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 27 July 2010 and to this Committee on 14 July 2010</p>	<p>a) The review was characterised by senior management as providing the best opportunity in years to resolve a long standing issue over which no progress had been achieved.</p> <p>The recommendations of the Report were accepted in full by the Department and NHS Hampshire. The Joint Child Health Commissioning Board (JCHCB). The formal response stated that “The JCHCB commits itself to taking forward the joint therapy review recommendations within an agreed action plan with clearly identified timescale and project deliverables.”</p> <p>The impact for children with special needs should lead to improved outcomes and opportunities. The impact for the CC, if recommendations are followed, could lead to a reduction in numbers of tribunals and associated costs, and a reduction in costs associated with having to purchase places in ‘out of county’ schools in order to get the needed therapy as part of educational provision.</p>

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<p>2. Questioning and exploring areas of interest and concern</p>	<p>There has been consideration of various topics at the quarterly Select Committee Meetings</p> <p>April 10</p> <p>a) Hampshire Children’s Trust: developing children’s partnerships</p> <p>b) Children in care</p> <p>c) Reducing teenage conceptions</p>	<p>a) Members considered the report which outlined progress in delivering improved outcomes as established in the Children and Young People’s Plan</p> <p>b) Members considered the report, learning that children in care had experienced some improvement in stable placements, but corporate parenting, placement choice and other areas identified were areas for improvement.</p> <p>c) Members considered the report, learning that in many cases teenage conception was a generational experience within families, often linked to educational attainment and poverty.</p>	<p>a) raised non-executive Member understanding of developments and provided opportunity for them to provide constructive comments to the Director of Children’s Services.</p> <p>b) Committee Members gained greater understanding of services provided by the County to some of their constituents and the complexity of arrangements related to care of children and young people, thus enhancing their roles and ability to contribute.</p> <p>c) In gaining better knowledge about this issue, it increased the competence of Members in understanding Council services and the aspects of society and groups that the County helps, as well as how to engage and influence within their own localities as County Councillors.</p>

	<p>July 10</p> <p>d) Young People Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEETs)</p> <p>e) Joint Review of Therapy Services for Children with Special Educational Needs</p> <p>f) Annual review of the Children and Young People's Plan</p>	<p>d) Members considered a report regarding young people who were not in employment, education or training. Members learnt that Hampshire's approach was proactive, innovative and quite effective, though the challenge was persistent. Most NEETs were transient, ie. in between jobs or waiting for education or training to start, however a core existed of young people who were in that position for longer; these were the ones that required more assistance.</p> <p>e) The Committee considered the report which was briefly summarised by the Review Panel Chairman, Cllr Anna McNair Scott. The report was welcomed by both the NHS and CS for its approach and for its recommendations which were subsequently accepted in full.</p> <p>f) The Committee considered the report which summarised progress made against the outcomes in the Plan.</p>	<p>d) Members, in gaining greater understanding of the issues, could, with confidence assert the County was proactive and effective in this area. They could also be better informed ambassadors for the County Council vis-à-vis their constituents and in locality contexts.</p> <p>e) The recommendations of the report were accepted in full by the NHS and CS. The Hampshire Joint Child Health Commissioning Board has committed to taking forward the work. Provided the work is put in place, it should be cost effective and provide children with special educational needs with a consistent level of therapy input that is integrated with their special educational provision.</p> <p>f) Members noted that apart from the budgetary pressures on Children's Services, the report identified issues around increasing numbers of vulnerable children and that needs assessments were required for cases of child poverty.</p>
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<p>3. Monitoring the strategic management of performance</p>	<p>Monitoring of the following areas:</p> <p>The Children and Young People Select Committee monitors the strategic management of performance of the Department through two types of agenda item:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Consideration of the Annual review of the Children and Young People’s Plan (and its mid-year update) b) Consideration of the revenue and capital budgets each year. A briefing day is also given to Members to support this activity. 	<p>Members provided constructive challenge to the Officers, identifying where they consider there to be operational, policy or financial risks to delivery of the Council’s objectives.</p>	<p>As the Committee increasingly engages with the Department, it is believed that Members’ views and contributions are being welcomed and thus inform the Department’s thinking and future plans. There is reason to believe the Committee’s ‘influence’ is increasingly welcomed.</p>
<p>4. Pre-scrutinising recommendations from the Decision Programme</p>	<p>Consideration of decision lists relating to Children’s Services are considered at the Chairman’s agenda planning meetings.</p> <p>Either the Chairman or Vice Chairman attends the Executive Member’s briefing or decision days.</p>	<p>Members either ‘pre-scrutinise’ recommendations such as those in the budget sessions, or proposed plans in the Annual Children and Young People’s Plan, or else individual items can be debated as ‘live scrutiny’ at the quarterly meetings.</p>	<p>The Executive Member has the assurance that the Committee will ‘tease out’ potential risks or concerns related to the budget or other issues in the Decision Programme.</p> <p>The Executive Member also has the option of inviting the Committee to consider policy options in depth and offer advice to him and the department.</p>

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5. Monitoring the impact of external agencies on the people of Hampshire	Review of Therapy Provision for Children with SEN	Members on the review panel evaluated the role and impact of therapy services normally provided by the NHS	Necessary investigation of an issue which requires effective and reliable interaction between County run services and the NHS. Estimated impact of the review – promise of much improved joint working and better therapy provision for children with SEN.
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6. Site visits relevant to the remit of the committee.	<p>Therapy review: Members of the Review Panel visited several County special schools, a special unit at a secondary school, a unit at Totton College and Treloars school and college.</p> <p>Assistant Executive Member for Education: Arranged a visit for a community college in Hamble which some members of the Committee took advantage of.</p>	<p>Members visited the facilities and spoke to Heads and school staff to gain insight into the situation regarding therapy provision for children receiving Special Needs Education</p> <p>The intention of the offer was to update Members on the functioning of secondary schools today and the issues they face.</p>	<p>The visits were an invaluable assistance in helping the review panel reach considered and informed views.</p> <p>Good Member development opportunity, improve effectiveness of Members in their select committee role.</p>