

Scrutiny Annual Report: April 2014 to March 2015

Select Committee: Children and Young People

Report of Chairman: Councillor Ray Bolton

Reviews undertaken / outcomes being monitored: In considering the budget proposals for 2015/16, the Committee expressed concern about the proposed reduction in funding for short breaks for disabled children. The Committee established a Task and Finish Group to understand the Short Breaks Service and its budgetary framework in the context of the service budget for Children with Disabilities, to consider the possible effect of the proposed cut on parents and the children that use the Short Breaks Service, to explore what alternatives are available for families and how the service could be managed more efficiently. The Group reported in July 2014, with final recommendations forwarded to the Executive Lead Member for Children's Services.

Call-in of Significant Executive Decisions: A potential call-in of the decision to commence public consultation on proposals to implement a new short break delivery programme was considered but, following a vote, rejected.

Scrutiny of Budgets and Performance: The Committee has continued to monitor the 2014/15 revenue budget over the period and considered the Children's Services revenue budget for 2015/16, recommending approval by the Executive Lead Member for Children's Services.

The Committee received the Ofsted inspection of Children's Services for children in need of care and protection, which was rated as 'good' and 'outstanding' against all 22 criteria.

Questioning and exploring areas of interest and concern:

Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services

The Committee received an overview of this service from the provider, Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust, and commissioners, following the forwarding of this topic from the Health and Adult Social Care Select Committee. Members also heard from Healthwatch Hampshire, who noted a high level of satisfaction with the service, but frustration in relation to how it is accessed. Members discussed and questioned a number of the issues raised in the course of the item, including in particular the increase in referrals, waiting times, specialist training for staff, and the number of child specialist therapists available. It was agreed that this topic, and the issues raised as part of it, be reviewed at a future meeting.

Hampshire Ethnic Minority and Traveller Achievement Service

The Annual Report for this service was reviewed by the Committee, where progress was noted in particular against key stage 2 and GCSE results.

Public Health in Schools

The Committee reviewed the key aspects of the delivery of the Healthy Child Programme for 5-19 year olds.

School Place Planning

An overview of planning for school places, including the admissions process and management of waiting lists, was heard by the Committee. Members learned that provision was being made for an additional 8000 primary school places over the next three years, which would require a process of consulting with schools on expansion requirements, as well as agreement as part of the Capital Programme. Members resolved to review the strategy for secondary school placements once available, and to receive a monitoring item on primary school places, specifically in relation to the capital programme.

Upcoming topics: Potential topics for the 2015/16 year, other than those monitoring items described above, include:

- School place planning
- Child Safeguarding
- Public Health in schools
- Special Educational Needs and Disability reforms
- Teenage Pregnancy