

PEOPLE COMMITTEE**27 September 2018 at 7.00 pm**

MEMBERS: Councillor Marian James (Chair), Councillor Jenny Batt (Vice-Chair) and Councillor Chris Williams (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Lily Bande, Moira Butt, Elliot Colburn, Drew Heffernan, Annie Moral, Jane Pascoe and Mo Saqib

ABSENT Councillor(s) Martin Gonzalez

9. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chair welcomed attendees and introduced Rev'd Kevin Lewis from the Anglican Diocese, newly appointed co opted member of the Committee.

10. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTES

Apologies for absence were received from Andrew Theobald and Councillor Martin Gonzalez, Councillor Sadiq was present as substitute.

11. ANY URGENT ITEMS BROUGHT FORWARD AT THE DIRECTION OF THE CHAIR

The Chair informed the Committee that Councillor Pascoe had asked for an urgent item to be included in the meeting but this was not possible as the item was not for decision. The Chair would ensure that officers provided a briefing on the item for Cllr Pascoe and other members of the committee, if they so wished.

12. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

RESOLVED: that the Minutes of the meeting held on 14 June 2018 be agreed as an accurate record.

13. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

8. Update on the SEND Written Statement of Action.

Councillor Elliot Colburn, Pecuniary, declared he works for the South West London Care Partnership.

Councillor Jane Pascoe, Non Pecuniary, declared that she is Chair of Academies of Inspiration.

9. Meeting Statutory Requirements; the joint responsibilities of the LA and Cognus.

Councillor Elliot Colburn, Pecuniary, works for the South West London Care Partnership.

14. OFSTED FOCUS VISIT - PROTECTION OF VULNERABLE ADOLESCENTS

Jonathan Williams, Assistant Director for Safeguarding and Social Care - People Directorate (Children's Services), presented the report.

Members noted that the letter showed there had been continued improvements and the progress in Early Intervention.

Members enquired about the inclusion of gangs, knife crime and exploitation of children although the issues are reported to be low in Sutton. The Assistant Director explained that the Local Authority must remain mindful of these issues as children attend school and socialise across borough boundaries, and also that instances of these issues are reported by partners.

In response to questions, the Assistant Director replied that cost of out-of-borough placements remains a concern, and a strategy is in place aiming to prevent children entering the care system. It is shown that high cost placements have been falling annually, detailed data is available which will be reported to the Strategy and Resources committee in October.

RESOLVED: that

1. The findings outlined in the letter be noted.
2. A progress report against the three recommendations is to be presented to committee in December 2018.

15. REGIONAL ADOPTION AGENCY

Jonathan Williams, Assistant Director for Safeguarding and Social Care - People Directorate (Children's Services), presented the report.

In response to queries the Assistant Director confirmed the 10 borough adoption agency would consider adoption matching nationwide, operating in the best interest of the child. The development of a larger adoption agency would create resilience in the system and would include strong scrutiny arrangements, including monitoring of performance against adoption rates. There would not be duplication created by the new agency; both the child and the adopter will have social workers allocated as at present.

Members asked for clarification that the financial contributions would be shared fairly between the 10 boroughs. The report suggests that Sutton would pay one sixth of the costs for 10 boroughs. The Assistant Director explained to the committee that there is more work yet to be completed regarding the detailed financial arrangements for the agency but that adoption allowances would not be transferred over so the £225.5K is less than 10% of the proposed budget.

When the new agency is developed, the London Borough of Southwark would be the employer. Social workers currently working in Sutton would be offered opportunities within the new agency and in addition they would be offered opportunities in Sutton - the final choice would be for individual social workers.

RESOLVED that:

1. Sutton enter into regional adoption arrangements as part of Adopt London South.
2. Staff and finances (likely 4.36 FTE and a staffing budget of £225.5k) are transferred to Southwark who will be hosting Adopt London South on behalf of ten South London boroughs.
3. Authority be delegated to Sutton's Director of Children's Services, in consultation with the Chair of the People Committee, to make more detailed decisions around the implementation of this proposal including signing off the inter-authority agreement between Sutton and Southwark.

16. SUTTON SAFEGUARDING ADULTS BOARD (SSAB) ANNUAL REPORT

Patrick Hopkinson, Service Manager, Adult Safeguarding, Clinical Health and Occupational Therapy, presented the report.

In response to questions, the Service Manager explained that the Safeguarding Board works with vulnerable people, some social work is not with vulnerable people and is not part of the safeguarding process.

Members raised that safeguarding is 'everyone's business' and that all staff and contracted staff should receive safeguarding training. The Service Manager outlined the online safeguarding training which is available to all staff and Councillors, noting that safeguarding training is mandatory for frontline staff. The Safeguarding Board includes a range of stakeholders and partners, including representatives from the voluntary sector, and includes work with families in its programmes.

Members asked that robust arrangements are in place involving all partners in cases of cuckooing, and that all vulnerable people affected by cuckooing, including those living and using the surrounding area, are considered in the arrangements.

In response to queries, the Service Manager outlined that a robust monitoring system has been developed, which includes all partners sharing intelligence and working together to address issues raised if information emerges that a care home is at risk of closure. In the event that a care home closes, the partners will work together to provide early information to residents and families.

RESOLVED: that

1. The achievements of the Sutton Safeguarding Adults Board in 2017/18 were considered and commented on.
2. The priorities of the SSAB for 2018/19 be endorsed.

17. UPDATE ON THE SEND WRITTEN STATEMENT OF ACTION

Fiona Phelps, Assistant Director Education and SEND presented the report.

Members discussed that communication is a priority. The Assistant Director outlined the communications taking place between all stakeholders and noted that the Written Statement of Action (WSOA) is on the Local Offer page of the council's website which has been shared widely with partners. Stakeholders including education settings, health partners, social care partners, Cognus, parents, carers and young people have been involved in the development of the WSOA.

Members asked how the work outlined in the report is spread through all schools to which the Assistant Director responded that the WSOA workstreams have headteacher representatives on them from all sectors, and that she, LBS staff and Cognus staff are attending a wide range of forums (eg Heads, SENCOs) to disseminate the work required and the work taking place. As schools have a legal duty to meet the needs of their pupils, Sutton and Cognus staff are and will be working with schools to support them to do this more effectively.

Members asked for confirmation of the date when the resource pack and publicity around the Early Identification Pathways (Paving the Way) would be available, Bob Harrison, Services Director, Cognus confirmed the resource pack would be available by the end of November and that publicity material was already available.

In discussion relating to the high needs block Members requested explanation as to why another consultant needed to be engaged. The Assistant Director outlined that the work would focus specifically on high needs provision across all sectors including early years and post-16, areas not covered by consultants who have been engaged previously. Additionally, it was noted that previous consultants' work had not resolved the issues, whereas this is in the Written Statement of Action and therefore must be completed.

The Assistant Director gave information that work is being completed to create a process to ensure panel decisions are communicated more effectively and efficiently to families and schools. Five SEN Case Officers are now enrolled on the NVQ level 4 BTec national SEN Casework Award.

Members expressed concerns about the changes in the Local Offer website: the Assistant Director explained that the Local Offer Website is being reviewed with the involvement of the Sutton Parent Carer Forum. This is being supported by investment from Cognus.

Members expressed thanks to the Assistant Director for the work completed to date.

An amendment to the recommendations was motioned by Councillor Colburn and seconded by Councillor James: to add that an updated progress report is provided to this Committee in December.

RESOLVED: that the progress that has been made to date is noted, the work that is being undertaken to deliver the Written Statement of Action (WSOA) since its publication on 23

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July 2018 is endorsed and that an updated progress report is provided to this Committee in December.

18. MEETING STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS; THE JOINT RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE LA AND COGNUS

Bob Harrison, Services Director, Cognus provided a presentation to the Committee.

Members requested reassurance that Cognus would be financially viable within three years. The Services Director responded that the original plan for the Cognus spin out had been that the company would be financially viable within three years, this timing for financial viability has been brought forward. The Services Director then assured the members that there is a strong business plan in place which has been signed off by the Shareholding Board and that the model used has not created debts or loans within Cognus. Cognus now has a strong and experienced leadership team in place at all levels. Key performance indicators (KPIs) for the innovation Fund have been developed and are being considered by the Department for Education.

In response to questions from Members, the Assistant Director (Education and SEND) drew their attention to work being carried out with the SENCOs in mainstream schools, to support them in the delivery of Education Health and Care (EHC) plans.

Members asked for detail of the percentage figures provided within the report and asked if future data provided to members could also include the raw data. The Services Director agreed this would be done and mentioned in relation to data that Cognus has reported KPIs to the Local Authority, although the current KPIs are being refined.

RESOLVED: that

1. the content of this report and the outcomes/impacts delivered in carrying out the statutory duties be noted.
2. guidance and support as to where opportunities to strengthen collaboration for the benefits of residents can be realised will be offered.

19. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will take place on 6 December 2018.

The meeting ended at 9.27 pm

Chair:

Date:

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