CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE’S SERVICES
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

At a meeting of this Committee held on
1 March 2010

(Present) Councillor Smith (Chairman)
Councillors Hargreaves, Martinez-Williams, Roughley,
Seddon, E Sheldon, Taylor (Vice Chairman)
and Stephanie Topping

Reverend D Hall - (Church of England)

(Not Present) Reverend T Neylon - (Roman Catholic)
Mrs A L Wellens Herron - Parent Governor (Primary School)
Ms J A Webster - Parent Governor (Special School)

47 APOLOGY FOR ABSENCE
An apology for absence was received from Reverend Neylon.

48 MINUTES
* Resolved that the minutes of the meeting held on 18 January 2010, be
approved and signed.

49 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FROM MEMBERS

<table>
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<th>Item</th>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Response from the Executive on the Scrutiny Review of Governing Bodies</td>
<td>Councillors Hargreaves, Martinez-Williams and Seddon</td>
<td>Declared a personal interest in the item.</td>
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Councillor Stephanie Topping entered the meeting during discussion on the following item.

50 RESPONSE FROM THE EXECUTIVE ON THE SCRUTINY REVIEW OF CHILD AND ADOLESCENT MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES (CAMHS)

A report was submitted which informed Members that at a meeting of Executive held on 24 February 2010, a response and action plan had been presented in response to issues raised by the Committee with regard to the Scrutiny Review of Emotional Wellbeing including Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) which had been presented to the Executive on 22 April 2009.

The Executive had resolved to note the report and approved the action plan attached at Appendix 1 to the report.
The Director of Children and Young People’s Services was present to outline the response and answer questions from Members. It had been a comprehensive review covering a very complex area of work. Since the review was undertaken, a great deal of work had been taken forward in this area, and it was possible to outline a comprehensive set of actions which had been completed.

It was acknowledged that there had been a very significant delay in bringing a response back to Executive to approve. The Director of Children and Young People’s Services apologised formally to the Children and Young People’s Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the delay. However, the recommendations in the report had been fully addressed and the actions completed were set out in Appendix 1 to the report.

Members suggested that information regarding Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) should be sent out to all Governors. The Director of Children and Young People’s Services agreed that a refresh article could be circulated via the Governors bulletin.

* Resolved that:

1. the report be noted;
2. the Director of Children and Young People’s Services be thanked for her attendance; and
3. a progress report on the recommendations be submitted to a meeting of the Committee in 9-10 months.

Councillor Stephanie Topping here declared a personal interest in the previous item and the following item.

51 RESPONSE FROM THE EXECUTIVE ON THE SCRUTINY REVIEW OF GOVERNING BODIES

A report was submitted which informed Members that at a meeting of the Executive held on 24 February 2010, a response and action plan had been presented in response to issues raised by the Committee with regard to the Scrutiny Review of Governing Bodies that had been presented to the Executive on 28 October 2009. The Executive had resolved to note the report and approved the action plan attached at Appendix 1 to the report.

The Assistant Director, Achievement and Inclusion and the Governor Development Officer were present to outline the response and answer questions from Members.

The comprehensive review had addressed a wide range of issues and made a number of recommendations. These had been carefully considered and, where possible, actions had been put in place to address the recommendations.

In a small number of areas it was considered to be difficult to implement the recommendation in full, either (a) because the Local Authority was unable to enforce an action in full for all Governors/Governing Bodies or (b) because the statutory framework made this difficult and where this applied an explanation had been given.
Members discussed the complexity and volume of paperwork associated with Governing Body meetings alongside time constraints and suggested an Executive Summary of each term meeting to give an appraise of the agenda. Members also suggested that a prompt sheet of questions for Governors informing them of the type of questions they may wish to ask.

The Governor Development Officer informed the Committee that the report would be submitted on the agenda of each school Governing Body in the Summer Term and to the Governors Forum on 15 June 2010.

* Resolved that:

(1) the report be noted; and

(2) the Assistant Director, Achievement and Inclusion and the Governor Development Officer be thanked for their attendance.

The meeting was adjourned during discussion on the following item at 10.30 am and resumed at 10.45 am due to a Fire Alarm.

52 FOUNDATION STAGE RESULTS

A report was submitted on the Foundation Stage Results following a request at the last meeting of the Committee in relation to a borough wide view of the gap in the foundation stage results and the gap between boys and girls. The Assistant Director, Achievement and Inclusion and the Early Years Manager of Quality and Inclusion Team were present to outline the report and answer questions from Members.

The report detailed that in St. Helens a number of strategies had been introduced to raise practitioners’ awareness of the vulnerability of boys and to address the gap between the attainment of boys and girls.

The Early Years Quality and Inclusion Team were also focussing more on the analysis of data to inform decisions about training, the level of support needed by individual schools and setting and to drive quality improvement across the Early Years Foundation Stage in both the maintained and non-maintained sector. A particular focus for this data analysis included identifying those children who were most vulnerable to under-achievement, including boys.

* Resolved that:

(1) the report be noted; and

(2) the Assistant Director, Achievement and Inclusion and the Early Years Manager of Quality and Inclusion Team be thanked for their attendance.
53  UPDATE ON PREVIOUS ITEMS

(a) Social Worker Retention

A report was submitted which informed Members of the reasons for the loss of Social Workers in the last two years as requested at the last meeting of the Committee.

During the 24 month period between November 2007 and November 2009, 28 Social Workers had left the employment of the Children and Young People’s Services Department, 14 Social Workers had left during 2008 and to date 14 Social Workers had left during 2009.

The reasons for this had been analysed, primarily using exit interviews and in addition drawing on the knowledge of managers and personnel staff. In a small number of cases reasons were not known and/or not given. Where onward destinations were known they were given. In some cases a reason for leaving was given but it was not known if the member of staff had subsequently moved on to a post in another authority.

Information was also provided in relation to the new pay scales for Social Workers and information regarding agency staff which was requested at the last meeting of the Committee.

Members raised a question with regard to the number of Social Workers that had recently been appointed.

* Resolved that:

  (1) the report be noted; and

  (2) information be circulated to the Committee on the number of Social Workers that had recently been appointed.

(b) Corporate Performance Management Report Quarter 2, 2009/2010
Corporate Complaints: July – September 2009

A report was submitted which updated Members on the Corporate Performance Management Report Quarter 2, 2009/2010 Corporate Complaints: July – September 2009 as requested at the last meeting of the Committee. During the relevant months referred to there had been seven corporate complaints for Children and Young People’s Services of which five were dealt with in the ten days. The other two required detailed investigation in both cases and covered complex issues. One involved the Local Government Ombudsman and the other was a complex issue involving a voluntary/private early years provider.

* Resolved that the report be noted.
(c) Common Assessment Framework

A report was submitted which informed Members of a questionnaire regarding CAF Activity Template April 2007 to date that had been drawn up following the last meeting of the Committee when Members had raised concerns regarding the implementation stage of CAF and it was agreed that the Chairman should meet with the Senior Assistant Director, Children and Families to look at ways in which the matter could be progressed through Children’s Services.

* Resolved that:

(1) the report be noted; and

(2) an update on the responses received to the questionnaire be submitted to the next meeting of the Committee.

(d) Scrutiny Review of Activities for Young People – Minutes from the Visit to Nottingham City Council

A report was submitted which provided Members with the Minutes from the visit to Nottingham City Council held on 5 January 2010, as requested at the last meeting of the Committee.

The Chairman reported that a visit had been arranged to attend De La Salle School on 11 March 2010 to assist with the review. It was agreed that the Chairman would attend this visit.

* Resolved that:

(1) the report be noted; and

(2) the Chairman attend the visit to De La Salle School on 11 March 2010 to assist with the review.

Councillor Hargreaves left the meeting during discussion on the following item.

54 OFSTED INSPECTION REPORTS

A report was submitted which informed Members that four schools had been inspected. The individual reports for the schools were submitted. The schools were judged against a four point scale with Grade One being outstanding and Grade Four being adequate.

The schools inspected were as follows:

- Chapel End Primary School - Adequate
- Eaves Primary School - Satisfactory
- Haydock English Martyrs Catholic Primary School - Good
- Sherdley Primary School - Adequate
* Resolved that the report be noted.