



Minutes of the meeting of the CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE COMMITTEE held on WEDNESDAY 12 FEBRUARY 2020 at 7.00 PM

Present: Councillor Carr (Chair)
Councillors D Hopkins, V Hopkins, Lancaster (substitute for Councillor Baines), Montague, M Bradburn, Brown, Marlow, Townsend and Wales

Officers: S Gonsalves (Director of Policy, Insight & Communications), M Heath (Director of Children's Services), J Beake (Corporate Equality & Diversity Officer), E McCabe-Smith (Liberal Democrats, Political Assistant) and R Tidman (Overview and Scrutiny Officer)

Apologies: Councillors Akter, Baines, K Bradburn, Miles and I Oduko (Parent Governor Representative), R Mascarenhas (Youth Participation Worker), L Amner (Milton Keynes Youth Cabinet), R Johnston (Milton Keynes Youth Cabinet), T Poyner (Milton Keynes Youth Cabinet)

Also Present: Councillor Nolan (Cabinet member for Children and Families), H Markham QC (Chair, MK Child Poverty Commission), A O'Malley (Commissioner) and one member of the public.

CYP20 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

Councillors Brown and V Hopkins and S Rahman advised the Committee that they were employees of schools within Milton Keynes, but they did not have any interest in the items on the agenda that would preclude them taking part in any discussions or votes the Committee might have.

Councillors D Hopkins and Marlow advised the Committee that they were governors of schools within Milton Keynes, but they did not have any interest in the items on the agenda that would preclude them taking part in any discussions or votes the Committee might have.

CYP21 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED -

There were no questions from members of the public

CHILD POVERTY COMMISSION

Witnesses: S Gonsalves (Director of Policy, Insight & Communications),
J Beake (Corporate Equality & Diversity Officer),
H Markham QC (Chair, MK Child Poverty Commission),
and Anita O'Malley (Commissioner)

The Committee received the report from the Milton Keynes Child Poverty Commission which set out a summary of the evidence the Commission had received to date and the process that it was taking towards developing its report and recommendations to Cabinet.

In response to questions the Committee noted that:

- (a) some families were facing impossible choices and in recent times these impossible choices had not got any easier;
- (b) half the children in Milton Keynes living in poverty had at least one parent in employment and this was due to the impact of rising living costs and low wages;
- (c) in certain parts of the borough, families were reliant on the support they received from schools, for example breakfast and activity clubs with free lunches;
- (d) schools also offered a central hub with pastoral staff that already had relationships with families and ability to hold drop in sessions;
- (e) those living in poverty generally had poor physical and mental health, had underachieved at school, felt unsafe, experienced stigma and bullying and could feel trapped in a cycle of family poverty;
- (f) there was positive activities being delivered, but it was a case of what practical things the Council and its partners could deliver to make things better for people without duplicating effort;
- (g) information could be brought together at one stop shops through parish council's, in community centres or children's centres;
- (h) sometimes a lack of information sharing, for example between those providing temporary accommodation and the housing services could lead to issues with tenants, for example if they had mental health issues but the landlord was not aware;

- (i) some parents with disabled children were struggling financially or with relationship breakdowns;
- (j) it was helpful to look at this issue under the 'Do, Influence, Promote' framework; and
- (k) some families were trapped in a cycle of deprivation and it was necessary to work out how to create space for them to make decisions about how they could help themselves. For example at lunches hosted in the school holidays and also make sure advice was available for parents on issues such as debt and domestic abuse.

RESOLVED –

1. That the witnesses be thanked for their reports and their contribution to the Committee's scrutiny of this item.
2. That members of the Committee forward any suggested actions that could be incorporated into the Child Poverty Action Plan to the Corporate Equality and Diversity Officer.

CYP23

2019/20 WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee received and noted the proposed Work Programme for 2019/20.

Members of the Committee suggested a number of items for inclusion in the draft 2020/21 Work Programme.

RESOLVED

1. That the 2019/20 Work Programme be received and noted.
2. That the Planning Group finalise the draft 2020/21 Work Programme and it be circulated to the Committee.

THE CHAIR CLOSED THE MEETING AT 8:25 PM