

SCRUTINY FOR POLICIES, CHILDREN AND FAMILIES COMMITTEE

Minutes of a Meeting of the Scrutiny for Policies, Children and Families Committee held in the Luttrell Room - County Hall, Taunton, on Monday 25 July 2022 at 1.00 pm

Present: Cllr L Redman (Chair), Cllr O Patrick (Vice-Chair), Cllr J Baker, Cllr S Hart, Cllr B Height, Cllr J Hunt, Cllr J Kenton, Cllr M Lovell, Cllr S Osborne (present as substitute), Cllr E Potts-Jones, Cllr J Snell, Cllr R Woods (present as substitute) R Hobbs (attended virtually), E Tipper and The Revd T Osmond – co-opted members

Other Members present: Cllr T Munt, Cllr A Bradford, Cllr F Nicholson, Cllr H Shearer and Cllr L Trimnell

Other members present virtually: Cllr A Dingwall, Cllr M Stanton, Cllr M Kravis, Cllr L Leyshon and Cllr D Johnson

Apologies for absence: Cllr S Aujla (substituted by Cllr R Woods), Cllr S Carswell and Cllr A Hadley (substituted by Cllr S Osborne)

1 **Declarations of Interest** - Agenda Item 2

There were no additional declarations of interest made at the meeting.

2 **Minutes from the previous meeting held on 20 June 2022** - Agenda Item 3

The minutes of the meeting held on Monday 20 June 2022 were approved and signed as a correct record.

3 **Public Question Time** - Agenda Item 4

There were no questions asked, statements made or petitions presented.

4 **Scrutiny for Policies, Children and Families Committee Work Programme** - Agenda Item 5

The Committee considered and noted the Committee's current work programme and the Executive Forward Plan of planned key decisions in coming months, including Executive meetings.

It was agreed: -

- That the Council's Assistant Director Inclusion was asked to provide a 'briefing on a page' on the current situation regarding school exclusions
- That the Committee's recent Task and Finish Group report on School Exclusions be circulated
- That job titles as well as names, be included on the work plan

- Members were invited to email the Chair and Vice Chair if they have any further items they would like the Committee to focus on
- That the work plan be noted.

5 **Education and Inclusion Services Redesign** - Agenda Item 6

The Committee received a PowerPoint presentation from the Council's Assistant Director, Inclusion Dr Rob Hart, who presented the proposals for the Education and Inclusion Services redesign.

Dr Hart covered the following in the presentation – context / aims of the service redesign and the need for systemic change; outlined the current structure and issues and challenges; detailed proposals within an area-based structure, with clearer accountability structure; what kind of service will become; strengthening preventative capacity; outlined the consultation process and proposed timeline with implementation from beginning of 2023.

The Committee had a broad discussion on the proposals, covering – how will know the changes lead to the outcomes wanted (what will 'success' look like); where the proposals sit in terms of national guidance and best practice; where and how early years 'fit' in the proposals; details on the Support Services for Education (SSE), management and commercial development.

The Committee requested that the final proposals be presented to the Committee, after the consultation and engagement had concluded, and prior to approval being made on the redesign by the Executive.

6 **Update on budgetary pressures in Children's Services** - Agenda Item 7

The Chair advised that unfortunately the Council's Deputy Director Children's Services was unable to attend the meeting. It was noted that the Ofsted Inspection of Children's Services is currently taking place.

As a background to the item, the link to the revenue budget monitoring report had been shared with the Committee. This report had been considered at the Executive meeting on 11 July 2022 and concerns the 2022/23 revenue budget monitoring report – month 2 – end May 2022, and in particular the information relating to Children's Services.

It was noted that the Place Scrutiny Committee considers the budget monitoring reports. However, the Chair had wanted the report to come to this Committee so members could discuss the Children's Services specific sections of the paper as this highlights the issues which are important to the Committee. The Chair said that he would be happy to receive any questions from Committee members and coordinate responses.

The item was DEFERRED to a future meeting.

7 **Items for Information - Standing Item** - Agenda Item 8

The Committee noted the following item for information: -

- (a) [Somerset Children and Young People's Plan 2022 – 2024](#) approved at the Full Council meeting held on 20 July 2022

8 **Any other urgent items of business** - Agenda Item 9

There were no other items of business.

(The meeting ended at 3.00 pm)

CHAIR