

Somerset Council – Summary of Outcomes - Scrutiny Committee - Children and Families on Wednesday, 10 January 2024

Agenda Item No	Topic	Outcome
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Part A – Items considered in public

Councillor Evie Potts-Jones (Vice Chair) - in the Chair

A1	Membership changes	<p>The Vice-Chair updated the Committee on recent membership changes:-</p> <p>(a) Cllr Pauline Ham and Cllr Marcus Kravis have been appointed as members on the Committee, replacing Cllr Caroline Ellis and Cllr Jenny Kenton.</p> <p>(b) Mrs Eileen Tipper, longstanding co-opted member on the Committee has taken the difficult decision to stand down from the role. The Vice Chair said that she is a remarkable person and is extremely grateful for the time given to the work of the committee over the years and will forward on the Committees’ thanks and best wishes to her.</p> <p>The Vice Chair read out the following statement from the Chair – <i>“Eileen has been an amazing, co-opted member of the committee, she has been there as long as I have, always ready to challenge or delve, her knowledge, background and willingness to question or challenge has been so valuable to me and the committee over the years. I thank her for her service and support to me. Her experience will be missed by the committee, I really do thank her”</i>.</p>
A2	Apologies for Absence	<p>Apologies were received from Cllr Leigh Redman (substituted by Cllr Brian Smedley), Cllr Andy Hadley (substituted by Cllr Gill Slocombe), Cllr Suria Aujla (substituted by Cllr Rosemary Woods) and Ruth Hobbs (co-opted member). Cllr John Hunt joined the</p>

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		meeting on line.
A3	Declarations of Interest	<p>The following declaration of interest was made at the meeting:-</p> <p>Cllr Pauline Ham – personal interests – (a) family member works for the Leaving Care Team; (b) family member who works for the NUT.</p>
A4	Minutes from the meeting held on Tuesday 12 December 2023	<p>Resolved that the minutes of the Scrutiny Committee - Childrens and Families held on Tuesday 12 December 2023 be confirmed as a correct record.</p> <p>Referring to Minute 7 (EHCP- progress update), the Vice Chair advised that Cllr Nicholson had sent in her questions – confirmed that the responses are being collated and will be shared with the committee and will be published.</p>
A6	Scrutiny Committee - Children and Families Work Programme	<p>The Committee received and noted the current work plan and outcome tracker and Executive Forward Plan.</p> <p>The Scrutiny Manager highlighted the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The item on children’s mental health / self-harm will be considered at the March meeting; • To note that the Annual Report of the Director of Public Health will be

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		<p>considered by the Adults & Health Scrutiny Cttee at their meeting on 8 February (an item for information).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The MTFP will be on the agenda for the Corporate & Resources Scrutiny Cttee meeting on 1 February and all scrutiny members will be invited to attend the meeting. Implications / issues for this committee can be brought to following meeting. • The next meeting of the Committee is on 13 March 2024, and will be held in the JMR at Deane House, Taunton.
A7	Sufficiency Strategy for children looked after and care leavers – 2023-28	<p>The Committee received a presentation on the Sufficiency Strategy for children looked after and care leavers (2023-28) - outlined the Sufficiency Strategy for Somerset, the vision, priorities, challenges and the programme to improve outcomes and sufficiency / actions to be taken.</p> <p>Agreed that will provide foster carers data to the Committee.</p> <p>The Vice Chair thanked officers for the presentation and the Committee noted the update.</p>
A8	2023/24 Children's Services - Budget Monitoring	<p>The Committee received a presentation on 2023/24 Children’s Services budget monitoring position - month 7, focussing on – external placements monitoring & forecasting, CLA key cost drivers and the 23/24 DSG budget monitoring (High Needs, home to school transport and SEND transport).</p>

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		Noted that the council is refreshing the DSG Deficit Management Plan (DMP) and will bring this to scrutiny in March so the committee can see what is being proposed.
A9	Update on short break provision (respite)	<p>The Committee received a presentation on short break provision, which is holiday activities, daycare, fostering, residential and outlined the statutory guidance, gaps / opportunities, vision and plans for the future.</p> <p>Agreed that the Action Plan is shared with Scrutiny and officers were invited to update the Committee at the meeting in May.</p>
A10	Education Place Planning	<p>The Committee received a presentation on education place planning, providing an overview of statutory duties, the Somerset context, projection modelling, education growth and challenges, local first approach, developer contributions, extended / expanded childcare offer and expansion of wrap around provision.</p> <p>The Vice Chair thanked the officer for the excellent presentation.</p>
A11	Items for Information - Standing Item	<p>The Committee noted the following items for information:-</p> <p>(a) Housing related support and accommodation for 16 – 25-year-olds - the new service will go live in April 2024</p> <p>(b)C&YP December Bulletin – circulated on 19 December 2023</p>

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