

**ADULT SOCIAL CARE, CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE MEETING  
MINUTES - 11 DECEMBER 2018**

**Present:** Councillor David Absolom (Chair);  
Councillors Grashoff, Hoskin, Jones, Khan, McEwan, McKenna,  
Pearce, Robinson, Terry, Vickers and White

**Apologies:** Councillors O'Connell and R Singh

**18. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 4 October 2018 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

**19. MINUTES OF OTHER BODIES**

The Minutes of the following meeting were submitted:

- Health and Wellbeing Board - 13 July 2018

**20. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND COUNCILLORS**

Questions on the following matters were submitted by Councillors:

Questioner	Subject	Reply
Councillor White	Cuts to Children's Centres	Councillor Terry

(The full text of the questions and replies was made available on the Reading Borough Council website).

**21. EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS AND QUALITY 2017-2018**

The Director of Children, Education and Early Help Services submitted a report providing the Committee with an overview of education performance in Reading during the academic year 2017-18.

The report covered the overall performance of the Borough's schools in the 2018 national assessments and examinations, performance in Ofsted inspections over the year and performance against other local authority targets, including exclusions. Wherever possible the report also provided an overview of the performance of pupils, recognising that some were educated out of the Borough and not all schools in the Borough educated only pupils who lived in the Borough itself. The report also outlined the authority's interventions to support improvements.

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The general direction of standards and student performance indicated that outcomes at the end of Key Stage 2 were not as strong as they needed to be and, although progress had been made, the progress was not fast enough to keep up with the progress that was being made nationally. This was particularly the case in writing and also with respect to progress made by disadvantaged pupils. Although progress data overall was positive, through the secondary years and indeed with some exceptional outcomes by the end of Key Stage 5, more needed to be done with respect to disadvantaged pupils and those who were at risk of not being in education, employment or training by the age of 18.

The report stated that there were several additional factors that were relevant and affected the overall outcome comparisons with national averages which needed to be recognised. Whilst almost all the Borough's pupils attended the Borough's primary schools, with only a small proportion leaving the Borough or attending independent schools for their primary education, the overall average performance of primary academies at the end of Key Stage 2 was lower than the overall average for maintained primary schools. As the local authority had no finance or powers to intervene in academies, tackling this lower performance was a challenge. Within secondary schools, performance and progress data was positive but, to some extent, this was skewed by the selective schools that currently drew the majority of their enrolment from out of the Borough. It was also skewed by the higher proportion of secondary aged pupils who left the Borough for their secondary education. Data on the success of pupils who were educated out of Borough was not accessible and therefore whilst the performance data at secondary school age provided an accurate view of the performance of schools, it did not provide an accurate summary of all the Borough's resident pupils. A significant number of schools had been inspected by Ofsted during 2017/18 and overall, the outcomes of the inspections had been positive and this had reflected well on the School Improvement Strategy which had been carefully structured to intervene early where there were concerns. However, the Ofsted outcomes would show that most primary schools in the Borough were now rated as good or outstanding. This judgement did not lay comfortably with standards and progress through primary as seen by performance data and also the high percentage of exclusions that had been seen across the Borough. The education performance data had informed the Education Strategy Plan to help bring about improvement in quality and outcomes for young people.

Reducing exclusions, particularly for pupils with SEND was a key priority and a major new initiative was focused on behaviour management in schools and would be launched in early December 2018. This was a therapeutic and trauma informed approach to managing behaviour and in better understanding the needs of individuals and initiating personalised approaches to manage the situation rather than exclude. Additional funding was also being released around action plans for individual pupils with significantly challenging behaviour to help manage the behaviour alongside learning.

**Resolved -**

- (1) That the outcomes and performance be noted;**
- (2) That the plans, set out in paragraph 5.9 of the report, and actions being implemented to address areas of weakness be noted.**

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**22. FAIR WORKLOAD CHARTER**

The report providing a summary of discussion and the resulting agreed Reading Pledge for a Fair Workload Agreement for school based staff was deferred to the next meeting.

**23. ANNUAL COMPLAINTS REPORT 2017-2018 FOR CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE**

The Director of Children, Education and Early Help Services submitted a report providing the Committee with an overview of complaints activity and performance for Children's Social Care for the period from the 1 April 2017 to the 31 March 2018.

The report stated that during the period the service had received 136 statutory complaints, which was an increase of four (3.03%) compared to 2016/17. Of the 136 complaints that had been received:

- 34 had been resolved through Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) by the Social Care Teams;
- 98 had been progressed to a formal investigation;
- 4 had been withdrawn.

During the same period six complaints had progressed to a Stage 2 investigation, and two had progressed to a Stage 3 investigation. The Customer Relations Team had continued to raise awareness of the complaints process and in accordance with recommendations from Ofsted had worked with operational teams to encourage children and young people to submit complaints where they were dissatisfied with the service they had received.

A copy of the Children's Social Care Complaints 2017/18 - Summary Report was attached to the report at Appendix A and provided an analysis of the data. The report explained how complaints were managed and how the learning was used to improve services.

**Resolved -**

- (1) That the contents of the report and intended actions to further improve the management of representations and complaints in 2018/19 for Children's Social Care be noted;
- (2) That the continuing work to raise awareness of the complaints process and encourage its use by children and young people be noted.

**24. ANNUAL COMPLAINTS AND COMPLIMENTS REPORT 2017-2018 FOR ADULT SOCIAL CARE**

The Director of Adult Social Care and Health Services submitted a report providing the Committee with an overview of complaints and compliments activity and performance for Adult Social Care for the period from 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018. A summary of the

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Adult Social Care Complaints and Compliments 2017/18 was attached to the report at Appendix A.

The report stated that during the period the service had received seven Corporate complaints and 77 Statutory complaints.

The report explained that the Council operated a one stage complaints procedure in respect of statutory complaints about Adult Social Care that had been made by 'qualifying individuals', as specified in the legislation. 'Qualifying individuals' were defined in national guidance as the Service User or their appointed representative which could be a family member, friend or Advocate. The timescale for responding to complaints was between 15 working days and three months, depending on the seriousness and complexity of the complaint. The guidance provided a risk matrix to assist the Customer Relations Manager, who was the designated Complaints Manager for the Council, to assess the complaint. The Council's Corporate Complaints Procedure gave an opportunity for those who were not 'qualifying individuals' under the social services legislation, to still be able to complain about Adult Social Care.

**Resolved - That the report be noted.**

**25. ETHICAL CARE CHARTER UPDATE NOVEMBER 2018**

The Director of Adult Social Care and Health Services submitted a report providing the Committee with an update on the National Ethical Care Charter in Reading.

The report stated that work continued to support domiciliary care providers in the Borough to work towards the National Ethical Care Charter standards as part of a phased approach, and towards stage three regarding the National Living Wage, previously known as the 'National Minimum Wage'. Monitoring that had been carried out by the Council's Commissioners, including market information that had come from a range of sources, had indicated that there were no new concerns to report. Six out of seven Homecare providers had implemented the National Ethical Care Charter Standards and one provider had progressed with an action plan which the Council had continued to monitor. However, the provider had now indicated that they were making good progress and once a formal review had been completed it was expected that they would be deemed to be compliant. The Council was confident that the providers on the Homecare Framework in the Borough would be 100% compliant by January 2019 and aligned with the National Ethical Charter, including paying the Foundation Living Wage of £9 per hour. Spot purchase care providers in the Borough paid the National Living Wage which was the legal minimum requirement within the National Ethical Care Charter, representing 50% of the market. The new tender that would commence in March 2019 would draw all Homecare Supported Living providers under one dynamic framework that would see all staff being paid the Living Wage Foundation rate, in complying with the Council's Pay Policy decision. The Cost of Care Review for Homecare had been carried out in 2017/18 and had resulted in the new fees being set. Through this process the impact on cost to the Council had been low.

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The report stated that being a Living Wage Foundation employer was not a National Ethical Charter legal requirement explicitly and only three Councils with social services functions had signed the Living Wage Foundation across the south east. 50% of providers on the Council's Framework had adopted the Living Wage Foundation in the Borough and 50% of care providers on spot purchasing arrangements paid the National Living Wage.

The current Homecare and Supportive Living Framework would end in May 2019. However, through corporate procedure board waiver rules the contract had been extended by six months, in line with the intended procurement process of 14 months. Therefore work was currently on-going to recommission and market shape support at home, it would be driven towards self-directed support, working with other Councils and the Berkshire West Clinical Commissioning Group.

The Council continued to work with the care market regarding the monitoring of core standards, including the National Ethical Care Charter and engaged with Skills for Care in terms of reporting care workforce performance through the National Minimum Data Set. The Commissioning Team had carried out and planned a number of market engagement events with care and support partners to engage the new way of working which was focused on self-directed care.

**Resolved -**

- (1) That the continued progress made by local care providers towards full compliance with the National Ethical Care Charter be noted;**
- (2) That the National Ethical Care Charter promotes best practice in contracting employment terms for carers and in paying the National Living Wage (prior known as the National Minimum Wage) be noted.**

(The meeting commenced at 6.30 pm and closed at 7.17 pm).

(The meeting closed at 7.17 pm)