



# Minutes

Name of meeting	<b>POLICY AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES, EDUCATION AND SKILLS</b>
Date and time	<b>THURSDAY, 23 MAY 2019 COMMENCING AT 5:00 PM</b>
Venue	<b>COUNCIL CHAMBER, COUNTY HALL, NEWPORT, ISLE OF WIGHT</b>
Present	Cllrs Vanessa Churchman (Chairman), Debbie Andre, George Cameron, John Howe, Gary Peace.
Officers Present	Jennifer Beresford, Simon Dear, Kathy Marriott
Other Members Present	Cllr Paul Brading
Apologies	Angela Murphy, CCG

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1. [Minutes](#)

RESOLVED:

THAT the Minutes of the meeting held on 7 March 2019 be confirmed.

2. [Declarations of Interest](#)

Cllr Debbie Andre declared an interest as a member of the Adoption Panel.

Cllr John Howe declared an interest as a member of the Fostering Panel.

3. **Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCG) Update on Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)**

Members were advised that the CCG had extended their apologies for the meeting.

4. **Reports of the Director of Children's Services:**

(a) [Quarterly Performance Data](#)

Members received a presentation ([attached to and forming part of these minutes](#)) which provided the committee with the priorities from the Isle of Wight Children and Young Peoples plan and progress against the long term measures associated with the Corporate Plan and the areas for improvement from the 2018 Ofsted inspection.

Clarification was provided that £0.5 million funding had been allocated for the transformation of children's social care was in addition to the services revenue and capital budget. The monies would be used, in part, to recruit two mental health workers to the work within the service and a volunteer co-ordinator to organise work with the voluntary sector.

Questions were raised in relation to case loads and morale. Members were reassured while case loads were higher than would be preferred the additional support from the personal assistants for social workers ensured they were manageable.

Discussion took place regarding the recruitment of social workers and the use agency staff. The use of agency staff had significantly reduced and there were only five agency workers on the staff at the time of the meeting and this number was now consistently low. In addition, agency workers were recommending the Island to colleagues and only one of the trainee social workers who had qualified through council initiatives had chosen to leave the local authority indicating that the service was now perceived as a good place to work.

Reassurance was provided that Child Protection levels continued due to historical issues, such as new cases from threshold reviews and lack of earlier interventions, prior to the improvement journey rather than current practises. Depravation also impacted in these figures as did the nature of the communities on the Island which were smaller. Overall, trend data showed a positive direction of travel. It was requested future reports would include a profile of the age of children open to child protection plans.

Questions were raised in relation to support for schools. The early help team worked closely with all partners including schools. There were around 500 Early Help cases, the majority of which were held by schools. The Island's approach to Early Help had also been recognised nationally. The committee were reminded that safeguarding training was available for all members and information regarding training would be provided.

#### RESOLVED:

THAT the performance data be noted.

(b) [Childrens Services Quality Assurance Framework](#)

The committee considered the presentation ([attached to and forming part of these minutes](#)) which provided an outline of the Children's Social Care Quality Assurance Framework including:

- How quality was assessed (what is known about the quality and impact of the work undertaken, how this was known and what areas of practice needed improvement.
- A case study to illustrate this (i.e. how a case file audit is undertaken and how many/what percentages were undertaken)
- How this provides assurance the right processes are in place

- The improvements needed to the process

In relation to client feedback as a source of quality assurance, members questioned how this worked as they expected families to see the services involvement negatively. Officers advised work was undertaken with families to encourage them to engage positively with the service, empower them and make their experience beneficial.

5. **Council's forward plan and the committee's work plan**

The chairman outlined the following items for consideration for inclusion on the committee's work plan:

- Child Poverty
- Careers Guidance
- Higher Education
- Children's Health (including gender identity)
- Out of School Activities
- Adult and Family Education
- Exclusions and Behaviour

Members agreed an informal meeting to further discuss these items would be beneficial as would informal briefings to better understand the proposed areas for consideration.

**RESOLVED**

THAT the council's forward plan be noted.

6. **Members' Question Time**

Cllr George Cameron raised a question in relation to West Wight Place Planning Consultation. During the resulting discussion, members noted the Cabinet member may be minded to refer the final decision to Cabinet.

CHAIRMAN