AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence

2. Declaration of Members' Interests

   In accordance with the Council’s Constitution, Members are asked to declare any interest they may have in any matter which is to be considered at this meeting.

3. Minutes - To confirm as correct the minutes of the meeting held on 18 December 2012 and 22 January 2013 (Pages 1 - 12)

4. Corporate Parenting (Pages 13 - 24)

5. SEN Review: Update in the implementation of the recommendations (Pages 25 - 28)

6. Local Democracy Education in Barking and Dagenham

STUDENT VOICE SCRUTINY REVIEW

7. Early Outcomes Update
8. **Student Voice Presentation from Council Officers**

9. **Date of Next Meeting**
   
   Date: 20 March 2013  
   Time: 18.00  
   Venue: Committee Room 2, Town Hall, Barking.

10. **Any other public items which the Chair decides are urgent**

11. **To consider whether it would be appropriate to pass a resolution to exclude the public and press from the remainder of the meeting due to the nature of the business to be transacted.**

   **Private Business**
   
   The public and press have a legal right to attend Council meetings such as the Children’s Services Select Committee, except where business is confidential or certain other sensitive information is to be discussed. The list below shows why items are in the private part of the agenda, with reference to the relevant legislation (the relevant paragraph of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended). **There are no such items at the time of preparing this agenda.**

12. **Any other confidential or exempt items which the Chair decides are urgent**
CHILDREN’S SERVICES SELECT COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 18 December 2012
(6.00 - 7.45 pm)

Present: Councillor G Letchford (Chair), Councillor L Butt, Councillor R Douglas, Councillor A S Jamu, Councillor E Kangethe, Councillor A Salam and Councillor J R White;

Also Present: ; Meena Kishinani, Maureen Lowes and Tony Sargeant

Apologies: Councillor T Perry, Councillor P Burgon, Councillor B Poulton, Reverend Roger Gayler, Mrs Ghadeer Al-Salem Youssef, Mr Ishmael Ncube, Paul Cox, Helen Jenner and Sally Allen-Clark

24. Declaration of Members' Interests

None.

25. Minutes - To confirm as correct the minutes of the meeting held on 6 November 2012.

The minutes of the meeting held on 6 November 2012 were AGREED as an accurate record.

26. Feedback from Site Visit Held on 24 October 2012 at Dagenham Park CoE School

It was noted that Councillors Letchford, Douglas, Poulton, Burgon and the Scrutiny Officer undertook a site visit to Dagenham Park Church of England School on 24 October 2012 in relation to the Children’s Services Select Committee’s (CSSC, “the Committee”) review of school lunches.

The site visit was undertaken as the Catering Service was launching its new “Recipe for Success – Secondary Brands Concept”. The Secondary Brands Concept is the service’s response to consultation with children and young people which demonstrated that there was a desire for more choice and a “retail experience” from their canteen. At Dagenham Park school this has seen the service transformed to closely resemble the food courts seen in shopping centres. Multiple windows serving different cuisines, meal deals, and recognisable national brands on offer. The councillors present learned that this had all been achieved on a minimal budget and with strict adherence to prescribed nutritional standards.

It was reported during the site visit that these measures have been successful and have seen a 7% jump in users since its introduction, this is equal to a further 94 pupils per day using the service. Meal deals are priced at a competitive rate (£2.20) which is roughly on par or cheaper than the popular sandwich deals offered by retailers such as Tesco, Sainsbury’s, and Boots, and similarly priced to the lunchtime deals offered by local independent take-away shops.

Councillor Letchford was very impressed by the scheme and felt that the Catering
Service had met the pupils’ request to create a retail “food hall” experience with multiple choice, serving healthy food, and be competitively priced. Members were in agreement that the variety of food on offer was impressive; with Italian, pan-Asian, and American available alongside the traditional canteen offer. The members backed the initiative to roll-out the service to all the borough’s secondary schools as soon as possible.

The Divisional Director Strategic Commissioning and Safeguarding (DDSCS) was keen to stress that the costs of this initiative have been met by the Catering Services’s suppliers. The central Catering Service is working with Head Teachers with a view to expand this pioneering service to other schools.

It was noted that the Council’s Catering Service currently does not run the catering contract at Barking Abbey school.

The information gleaned from the site visit will help inform the Committee’s scrutiny review, which it hopes to complete before the end of the 2012/13 municipal year.

27. **In-depth Review of School Lunches - Terms of Reference**

The Scrutiny Officer (SO) introduced the report.

The report contained the proposed Terms of Reference for the In-depth Review of School Lunches which is being undertaken by the Committee. It outlined the aim of the review, the terms of reference, indicators of success, and important notes to consider.

The Committee AGREED the Terms of Reference.

28. **Catering Services Report & Presentation**

The Group Manager Policy Performance and Programmes, Children’s Services (GMPPPP) and the Catering Services Manager (CSM) introduced the report.

The GMPPPP thanked the Committee for the kind comments expressed under agenda item 4.

The officers save an overview of the Catering Service. Of note:
- It is an annually renewable service. Schools choose whether to procure the service from the Council or an alternative service provider.
- 54 of the 56 schools in the borough buy into the Council’s Catering Service. Currently Barking Abbey and St Margaret’s School do not procure the service.
- The service employs 326 people, the majority of whom are from the local area.
- Over 2,850,000 meals are served per annum, all managed by 12 people at the Town Hall.
- The Service receives zero subsidy from the General Fund. It receives a £100,000 subsidy from the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG), but this is due to end in April 2013 when the service will be entirely self-funded. Officers have worked hard to ensure the April 2013 deadline will be met. When compared to other comparable services elsewhere, the London Borough of
Barking and Dagenham’s (LBBD, “the Council”) service is in a very strong position.

- When a student receives Free School Meals (FSM), the service receives 87% of the funding received from Her Majesty’s Government (HMG). This equates to roughly £3,300,000 a year in extra revenue. A FSM campaign last year saw 2,998 new FSM claimants. This bought an additional £1,800,000 in pupil premium, and £1,200,000 in grant money into the borough.
- All sales are cashless, with the payments being processed through the Youth Access Card / Access and Connect. Parents top-up their child’s card online and can monitor their purchases. This has added benefits of saving money from cash handling, more accurate transactions, and reduced potential for bullying as students carry less/no money into schools. 17,000 people pay via the internet, telephone, or via machines in one stop shops. Free School meals are credited automatically and there is no way to differentiate a FSM pupil to a paying pupil, again reducing the potential for bullying.
- Primary School provision is for a two-course hot meal, secondary schools receive the same but with the addition of a café service.
- The Service works closely with the Asset Team to ensure refurbishments and new builds are of the best quality and are fit for purpose.
- A plethora of data can be gleaned from the cashless catering system and be used to ensure accurate stock control, for example.
- The service ensures it always has a dialogue with students, school staff, cooks, suppliers, and other local authorities to listed to feedback and generate new ideas.
- All nutritional standards requirements are adhered to.
- The Catering Service has recognised that its “traditional offer” (the typical school canteen) as a concept was becoming dated and tired. The Catering Service approached every Student Council how they would like to see the service look now and in the future. This, alongside visits to the food court at Lakeside, as resulted in the Secondary Brands Launch at Dagenham Park Church of England School on 24 October 2012, which several Committee members attended.
- There are a variety of healthy eating and nutritional standards guidelines, and the Service has been successful in achieving a Food For Life Bronze award. Officers are hopeful of being awarded the Silver award in the near future.
- Seven schools have committed to a “whole school approach”.
- Benchmarking is very difficult to undertake due to the high number of variables. However, some local authorities subsidise their catering services between 15 pence and 99 pence per meal. 70% of local authorities charge £2.00 or more per meal.
- School kitchens must adhere to the same hygiene standards as commercial kitchens. 95% of school kitchens have a four star or five star rating.
- The service will soon move from pooled, to school-by-school budgeting. Proposals to offer the service to other boroughs commercially are being investigated.

Members were extremely impressed with the evidence presented to them by the officers and noted that the service is in a very positive position with a promising future. It was noted that, when the £100,000 DSG subsidy ends in April 2013, there will be no price increase on meals. Rather the difference will be met through
a new management fee to be charged to schools.

Members were mindful of the increasing child population and the changing demographics the borough is experiencing and asked if the catering service was ready for this. Officers reassured the Committee that they work closely with the Asset Team on new builds and providing extra provision in existing schools. The service is able to offer tailored menus which take account of requirements including vegetarianism, halal, kosher, gluten free, lactose free, and nut free. The service also went on to note that they do not deep fry foods and meat is good quality and British, for example. It was noted that Academy schools do not/will not have to adhere to the same nutritional standards as their traditional counterparts.

Regarding the use of biometrics, officers felt the technology offered some key advantages. For example card replacements have proved costly with different policies applied by different schools. There can sometimes be unavoidable delays to replacing cards too. Officers were keen to stress that the database does not store an image of a person’s fingerprint; rather it remembers key points in the fingerprint pattern. It is impossible to “backwards engineer” someone’s fingerprint from this stored data.

The DDSCS rounded off the discussion by noting that the service has improved significantly since 2006. For example, the number of sick days taken by staff has dropped from an average of 22 down to 8. However, officers in the Council are aware that there is still room for improvement and that, as the service moves to a business-like model, these improvements will be realised. It was noted that Investors in People inspectors deliberately speak to catering staff and on their last inspection were impressed that the catering staff were aware of priorities and applicable guidelines etc. Officers look forward to working with the Committee to deliver the review.

The Committee thanked officers for all their work so far.

The Committee noted the report and directed the SO to ensure the evidence packs are published for public inspection.

29. Feedback from Site Visit Held on 7 December 2012 at All Saints Catholic School

It was noted that Councillor Letchford and the Scrutiny Officer undertook a site visit to All Saints Catholic School on 7 December 2012. During the site visit Councillor Letchford and the SO observed the Student Council Summit, organised and run by the Sixth-Form students themselves.

It was noted that this was the first such workshop of its kind and that it was hoped it would become an annual event. The following schools took part:

- All Saints Catholic School
- Barking Abbey School
- Dagenham Park Church of England School
- Eastbrook Comprehensive School
- Eastbury Comprehensive School
- Robert Clack School
- Sydney Russell Comprehensive School
- Warren Comprehensive School
The event guest speakers (The Corporate Director of Children’s Services and Mr Sim Simpkins from Student Voice UK) and four workshops:

1. The Role of Student Council
2. Effective Decision Making Process
3. Talk vs Discussion
4. Effective Meeting and Planning Strategies.

Councillor Letchford congratulated Mr Paul Cox and is All Saints Student Council colleagues for organising and hosting such a successful summit and proposed that they should be held more frequently.

A member of the Barking and Dagenham Youth Forum highlighted the importance of the Forum and urged the Committee to ask officers to organise joint meetings between primary and secondary age groups. It was noted that the borough has a 5-12 Children’s Forum. The Engagement Team will be asked to explore the idea of inviting Primary representatives to the Youth Forum.

30. **In-depth review of Student Voice - Terms of Reference**

The Scrutiny Officer (SO) introduced the report.

The report contained the proposed Terms of Reference for the In-depth Review of Student Voice which is being undertaken by the Committee. It outlined the aim of the review, the terms of reference, and indicators of success.

The Committee **AGREED** the Terms of Reference.

31. **Date of Next Meeting**

Noted.

32. **Any other public items which the Chair decides are urgent**

The Chair would like Local Democracy Education for Young People to be added to the February agenda.

The meeting closed at 19.45.
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CHILDREN'S SERVICES SELECT COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 22 January 2013
(6.40 - 8.19 pm)

Present: Councillor G Letchford (Chair), Councillor T Perry (Deputy Chair), Councillor P Burgon, Councillor A S Jamu, Councillor E Kangethe, Councillor B Poulton and Councillor A Salam; Mr Ishmael Ncube and Paul Cox

Also Present: Councillor E Carpenter, Councillor J R White, Councillor R Gill, Councillor J Ogungbose, Councillor L A Reason and Councillor D Twomey; Christine Pryor, Kevin Donovan, Helen Jenner, Erik Stein and Fiona Taylor

Apologies: Councillor L Butt, Councillor R Douglas, Reverend Roger Gayler and Mrs Ghadeer Al-Salem Youssef

33. Declaration of Members' Interests

None.

34. Call-in on Budget Strategy 2013/15 re Integrated Youth Services

The Children’s Services Select Committee (CSSC, “the Committee”) convened to consider a call-in by Councillors Carpenter and Ogungbose of the Cabinet’s decision at its meeting on 19 December 2012 to make savings within Integrated Youth Services (code CHS/SAV/20) and the lack of a full Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) relating to these savings.

The call-in meeting was held accordance with Part B, Article 5A of the Council Constitution.

Councillor Carpenter and Ogungbose introduced the call-in and referred to the main reasons behind it, which included that:

- The savings under CHS/SAV/20 which relate to the Youth Service did not have an associated EIA in Appendix D when the saving was agreed by Cabinet in December. Councillor Carpenter noted that the £140,000 in 2013/14 and £460,000 in 2014/15 saving is the second largest frontline service cut in the report. Further to the lack of EIA, the paperwork at Appendix B did not detail on the anticipated redundancies and, further reducing the ability to fully assess the equalities impact.
- Councillor Ogungbose built on this element of the call-in rationale by informing the Committee how an EIA should be developed as per the process outlined to Members at the Extraordinary Assembly meeting held on 14 January 2013, and raised concerns about the EIA review process that had been outlined against this particular saving. He reiterated to the Committee that the EIA is a vital document and it’s omission from the Cabinet paperwork brought the legitimacy of the decision taken into question.
- Councillor Carpenter stated she was extremely proud of the Youth Service, and was pleased it was located in Becontree Ward. However, she asked...
the Committee to be mindful that the service covers the whole borough and therefore, cuts to it, would have a wide impact.

- Councillor Carpenter expressed dismay that the cuts (totalling £600,000) amount to circa 42% of the entire budget and, as such, felt that the borough’s young people were being disproportionately affected by the budget cuts the Council is required to undertake due to reduced funding from Her Majesty’s Government.
- The Committee was asked to bear in mind that the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham (LBBD, “the Borough”) has the highest proportion of 0-19 year olds in the country at 31%, and this is likely to increase further with the anticipated demographic changes.
- It was noted that building trusting relationships between the Youth Workers and the service users is hard and takes a long time. The call-in argued that this saving would have a detrimental impact on these relationship and harm years of work to build trusting relationships with (often vulnerable) young people.
- This cut would have a big impact on young people with complex needs.
- Reducing the number of sessions offered by Youth Service would drive more young people to congregate on the borough’s streets, where they could either be more likely to engage in anti-social behaviour or become victims of crime themselves.
- The Committee was urged to petition Cabinet to focus on budget reductions in other areas before cutting here. It was suggested that
  - the Youth Bus was too costly and too big for many of the borough’s streets (and will soon be driven by a Youth Worker diverting resources away from where they’re needed).
  - The Access and Connect card was good, but too costly in the current climate at £361,000.
  - There is still scope to save money from central “back office” bureaucracy (e.g. business units).
- It was argued that the Vibe is the only dedicated youth centre in the borough. It was noted that its deficit (cost over income) is very small and, within a year, it could be made profitable saving it from cuts.
- Councillor Carpenter said she had seen for herself the health and wellbeing benefits that Youth Services work brings about

In support of the Cabinet’s decision to proceed with saving “CHS/SAV/20 – Children’s Services, Targeted Support, Youth Services”, the Cabinet Member for Finance, Cabinet Member for Children’s Services and the Corporate Director for Children’s Services (assisted by Divisional Director Targeted Support and Group Manager Extended Schools and Engagement) made the following points:

- The Committee was informed of the extremely difficult decisions Cabinet need to me make to ensure the Council has a balanced budget, and these decisions will have to involve reducing services, such as proposed in CHS/SAV/20.
- The Council will be receiving considerably less money from Her Majesty’s Government (HMG) over the next few years, totalling circa. £90,000,000 between 2010-15 – roughly 40% of the overall budget. This has left the Council with no alternative but to prioritise the money they do have discretionary control over. He asked the Committee to note that a sizable proportion of the Council’s spending is statutory, meaning cuts had to be made to non-statutory spending. For example, the Council will have to
make very difficult decisions about its library service in the near future, as the Council can no longer finance the current service provision.

- The Council still has to find a further £7,000,000 of savings.
- The Cabinet Members stated unequivocally that none of the Cabinet entered public services wanting to make the cuts that were being proposed and he thanked officers for their studious efforts in assisting Cabinet to compile the budget options.
- The Council does remain committed to the Borough’s youth, as evidenced by the decision to replace Abbey Road Leisure Centre with the new £13,000,000 Axe Street Leisure Centre.
- The Cabinet members agreed with the sentiments expressed by Councillors Carpenter and Ogungbose that the service is wonderful and achieves a great deal but, unfortunately, the reality is they can no long afford it. They disagreed that the Youth Bus is expendable, stating it can reach many different areas and, consequently, many different people. They also felt that the access and connect card has a great deal of added value and the majority of the cost is now directly incurred by the schools themselves (except for £40,000).
- While having a dedicated building for Youth Services would be nice, it cannot be afforded in the current climate. So to retain the use of the building it can be shared (during the day) with special needs services.
- As regards growing income to make it cost neutral, Cabinet Members are cautious of relying on projections as, if they fail to materialise, it will leave the Council in a vulnerable financial situation.
- The Corporate Director of Children’s Services (CDCS) reassured the Committee that an EIA was completed for all of the proposed savings and each EIA was discussed and agreed at a Children's Service’s Departmental Management Team (DMT) meeting. Following this they were submitted to the Equalities and Diversity Board for approval. The correct process was followed for all the savings, including CHS/SAV/20. Furthermore, the full EIAs were never presented to the Select Committees for their deliberation, summaries were used and the summary for CHS/SAV/20 was presented to the CSSC in November. Omitting the EIA detail from the Cabinet paperwork was an unfortunate administrative error, for which officers apologised, but it does not bring the validity of the ultimate decision into question.
- Public Health have been consulted on the risks that could result of implementing CHS/SAV/20, and the CDCS recommended the CSSC to monitor the situation independently also.
- It was noted that the majority of the saving is scheduled for 2014/15. This gives officers a window of time to try and procure other sources of money to try and mitigate any negative effects. For example, officers are currently working to secure new funding for the Summer Sorted programme.
- Volunteer programmes are good and the key to their continuing success is adequate support and mentoring.
- Through maximising the use of the Council’s buildings, the impact of cuts can be reduced. The Vibe will continue to be a youth centre, but will also run additional services where this is currently capacity in its timetable. There are no plans to cease youth activities at the centre.
- It was noted that 72% of the cut is to be achieved through reducing management posts, in an effort to protect the frontline services (and the relationships with service users) as much as possible. £159,000 of the total cut is cutting already vacant posts.
While the “back office” budget may still seem high, it is from these areas that the Council’s safeguarding work is directly funded. This cannot be cut.

At this stage of the meeting both the call-in side and the Cabinet side were invited to ask each other questions:

- Councillor Carpenter emphasised that the Youth Service brings benefits to all 17 wards, rather than just Becontree. It is also a key part of the preventative work, which proves cheaper to the public purse than reactionary work (especially in preventing Not in Employment, Education, or Training (NEET) and drug and alcohol dependency work).
- Regarding the access and connect cards; the Cabinet rejected the idea of pursuing using fingerprint technology (which could be cheaper than a card based system) as many residents would have civil liberties concerns.
- Councillor R Gill informed Councillor Carpenter that the Youth Service was not being singled out for more stringent cuts than other services and that, unfortunately, many other services are seeing cuts just as deep as the Council tries to ensure a balanced budget. For example, the ranger service in the parks and libraries will see a similar (if not greater) level of budget reduction.
- Lots of provision will remain. For example, there are a multitude of after school clubs in the borough.

At this stage of the meeting the members of the CSSC were invited to ask questions:

- Members enquired whether the Council was in a firmer financial position since the announcement of the Local Government settlement in December. Officers responded that this grant is specifically to support schools funding. Financial analysis and the detailed requirements of the Educational Support Grant are still to be announced.
- The Committee learned that, under the Troubled Families agenda, two targeted youth workers have been funded, but the budget for the work is very small.
- CSSC was concerned that young people had not been adequately consulted on the budget proposals. Officers outlined that the Barking and Dagenham Youth Forum (BAD YF) was made aware once the budget papers had been published and that several members attended the public select committee meetings in November 2012 to provide their feedback. Unfortunately, organising a question and answer session between Cabinet and the Youth Forum has been challenging due to timetable clashes. However, officers are hoping to arrange a session at All Saints School in the near future. Some Youth Forum members also attended the public Leader’s Question Time events. The Cabinet Member for Finance highlighted that announcements were made on Facebook and Twitter, showing the Council’s desire to engage in a dialogue with the public on this issue.
- The BAD YF representative, Mr Paul Cox, remained concerned at the perceived lack of consultation, citing anecdotal evidence that many young people were still simply not aware of how changes in Council budgets will affect them. He affirmed that, because of this, the council needed to explore different routes to engage. For example, most young people will not consult a council website. Officers accepted this and AGREED to consult with the
Youth Forum on who to engage young people further in budget discussions. Officers highlighted that CSSC is undertaking a borough-wide review of School Councils, and how young people are engaged on such issues could be included in that piece of work.

- Regarding marketing, the CSSC was pleased to note that the Summer Sorted programme saw a 14% rise in participants, despite no increase in the marketing budget. Searching for events has been improved and officers are using better communication techniques to reach more young people.
- Regarding comparisons, the Committee learned that this borough – generally speaking – spends more on targeted support (on average) and less on generic support (on average) than other comparable London boroughs. LBBD has a strong and well developed volunteer programme.
- Members asked that, if the Youth Service provision was cut, would there be an effect on statutory services. Officers outlined that there are to be zero reductions to statutory services and that there is £1,000,000 in the budget to ensure the Council can meet its statutory obligations. Officers emphasised that, even after the £600,000 reduction, the Council would still be providing Youth Services in every council ward.
- Mr Cox reiterated the concern that well developed relationships are threatened by this service reduction. Many service users are vulnerable, and jeopardising the relationships these people have with their youth workers could do serious and irreversible harm. Officers agreed with this concern, noting that due to the work that has been undertaken there has been a 60% reduction in first time entrants to the Youth Offending Service. Also, the number of new users is currently increasing and this could be threatened too. However, by focusing on reducing management posts, it is hoped that the impact has been minimised.

At this stage of the meeting other Councillors were invited to submit questions or comments:

- Councillor Twomey asked officers if the remaining service would be able to cope with the anticipated population boom this borough is due to have. Officers said it does create a pressure, the biggest concerns currently being the provision for the 0-7 age range. However, officers are designing their services to be adaptable and are planning for the future.
- Concerns were raised regarding the affordability of sports facilities in the borough, especially those operated by private firms. Officers acknowledged that this is a shared concern, but informed Members that “vulnerable groups” receive free access to many sports services.
- Regarding the anticipated impact of this cut, Councillor Twomey was informed that officers are hoping to retain the majority of the Youth Service’s work and the cuts only result in a small reduction in the number of attendances per week, rather than widespread disengagement of young people. There is a risk some young people will feel less supported.
- Officers were commended for developing a strong volunteer programme, but cautioned that volunteers, to be successful, require a lot of professional support, training, and mentoring. Officers were confident this is, and will continue to be, well managed. Officers are also bidding for some Lottery funding to further protect this important work.

At this stage of the meeting those in the public gallery were invited to participate:
A member of the public (who is also a Youth Worker in the borough) said the distinction between “Youth Workers” and “Social Workers” is becoming increasingly blurred, for example he works in the borough’s Multi-Agency Locality Teams (MALT) and undertakes Common Assessment Framework (CAF) tasks. It is becoming difficult to strike a balance between targeted and universal work. As such, cuts to this area will have a serious knock on effect.

- There is already a lot of young people not engaged in youth activities who are potentially causing harm through loitering and anti-social behaviour. This cut could exasperate that situation.
- While the BAD YF is an excellent Forum, it should not be the borough’s only form of young people engagement, as its felt the Forum is not representative of the borough’s young people as a whole. Officers noted that other groups are also regularly engaged, e.g. Skittlz, Disabled Youth Parliament, and Young Voices.

Closing the debate:

- Councillor Carpenter thanked all those who participated for a strong and impassioned debate and urged the CSSC to refer the decision back to Cabinet for further consideration.
- Councillor White said he and his Cabinet colleagues agreed with the arguments Councillor Carpenter had put forward, but that they have a duty to provide a balanced budget and cannot protect non-statutory services any longer. He urged the CSSC to dismiss the call-in.
- Councillor Reason thanked Councillors and officers for their hard work in managing this difficult process.
- Councillor Letchford thanked all those in attendance.

The CSSC dismissed the call-in.

35. Date of Next Meeting

Noted.

The meeting closed at 20.19.
Background...

- Corporate Parenting Group met regularly but...
- ‘Town Hall’ focussed
- Young people did not wholly shape the agenda
- Lack of direct scrutiny and performance challenge
- Few partners around the table
- Lack of direction and clarity of purpose
April 2012…

• Undertook a ½ day workshop to review the MCPG
• Reviewed the national & local context for LAC
• Reminded ourselves of the legislative requirements
• Focused upon the corporate parenting role & in particular the responsibilities of officers and elected members
• Considered who is providing corporate parenting currently and who this should involve in future.
• Discussed…’our children’, improving outcomes & life chances, value for money, council wide responsibility, LAC voices shaping their services.
April 2012 cont., Strategy & Action Plan

• Reviewed the plan April 2011 – 14 & refreshed

• Action plan revised, measurables & responsibilities included.

• Emphasis on evidence within the action plan

• Provided evidence of key achievements for 2011/12
April 2012 cont., the MCPG

- Revised ToR
- Revised membership including elected member chair, health rep, CMT rep & children in care council members (Skittlz)
- Reviewed pragmatics, frequency, standing agenda items etc etc
- Re-emphasised the role of the group re: challenge and accountability
April 2012 cont., Governance

• Confirmed governance and accountability arrangements as follows:-
• Corporate Parenting arrangements are not well embedded and the Lead Member is not part of the Corporate parenting Board.

• The lack of effective strategic planning means that the response to the needs of children looked after population is not sufficiently coordinated.

• Corporate Parenting arrangements are not well embedded and the Lead Member is not part of the Corporate parenting Board.

SLAC Inspection June 2012
SLAC Inspection June 2012

• Area for improvement:-
• “Corporate Parenting arrangements and strategic planning are strengthened to ensure that they properly reflect the council’s responsibilities to children looked after.”
Post SLAC action and activity

- Lead member and DCS now attend Corporate Parenting Board & Children’s Trust
- Corporate Parenting Board members are held to account for performance through CiC outcomes group, corp. parent board & trust.
- Annual report drafted to be shared with cabinet February 2013
- Lead member meets with Divisional Director on a monthly basis re: CiC.
- Regularly shared SLAC action plan progress to group
Post SLAC action & activity cont.

- Agenda is increasing ‘shaped’ by young people.
- Board continues to be chaired by Cllr Letchford – clear member commitment to CiC
- Focus upon leisure options for CiC within and beyond B&D
- Consulted with young people re: exam support
- Young People requested the reintroduction of the ‘homework club’.
- Board meeting entirely focussed upon NEET performance
- Revision of the CiC pledge with Skittlz.
- Health performance now standing agenda item
Future action

• Review board membership and ToR

• Review and refresh:
  a) Children’s Services Corporate Parenting Strategy and
  b) progress against current action plan
## Title: SEN Review: Update in the implementation of the recommendations

### Report of the Corporate Director of Children's Services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Open Report</th>
<th>For Information</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wards Affected:</strong> None</td>
<td><strong>Key Decision:</strong> No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Report Author:** Helen Jenner, Corporate Director of Children’s Services | **Contact Details:** Tel: 020 8227 5800  
  E-mail: helen.jenner@lbbd.gov.uk |
| **Accountable Divisional Director:** N/A |
| **Accountable Director:** Helen Jenner |

### Summary:

In 2011/12 the Children’s Services Select Committee (CSSC) undertook a review of the Special Educational Needs (SEN) provision in Barking and Dagenham. Several recommendations were made and, in accordance with good practice, the responsible department has been asked to update the Committee on the progress of implementing those recommendations.

To read the SEN report, please use the following internet link:


### Recommendation(s)

The CSSC is recommended to agree:

(i)  Note the contents of the report and comment on progress made.

### Reason(s)

It is good practice for the Committee to be updated on the progress of implementing recommendations from prior scrutiny review reports.
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Many of the Select Committee recommendations were, appropriately, influenced by the SEN Green Paper. National progress has been delayed as the revised guidance has not yet been issued.

Pathfinder Boroughs were set up and have been extended, when these report the next stages of the guidance will be issued, this has currently been postponed. This will shape exactly how some areas of the plan are to be addressed.

The opening of the Heathway Centre has had a significant impact on the quality of advice parents of disabled children are easily able to access.

### Progress to date

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommendation</th>
<th>Progress to date</th>
<th>Future Action/Issues</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recommendation 1</td>
<td>Implementation of Robust Assessment Process with clear timescales</td>
<td>National Government have not yet published process for new multi-agency assessment process. This has now been postponed until Summer 2013</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Statements issued within timescales - both indicators are green compared with national figures - 100% for single agency (SEN Dept) 83.6% for multi-agency (e.g. health input)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Recommendation 2</td>
<td>Clear details of provision available on website</td>
<td>Cross agency provision mapping programme will develop an integrated offer. Proposed National requirement September 2013 (may be postponed to April 2014 – we are awaiting guidance on any national requirements).</td>
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<td>Disabled Go Barking and Dagenham up to date and online</td>
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<td>Heathway Centre Programme now online</td>
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<td>SEN advice pages online with FAQ section and contact details</td>
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<tr>
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<td><a href="http://www.lbbd.gov.uk/ChildrenAndYoungPeople/ChildrenwithSEN/Pages/Home.aspx">http://www.lbbd.gov.uk/ChildrenAndYoungPeople/ChildrenwithSEN/Pages/Home.aspx</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommendation 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parents aware of all affordable options early in assessment process</td>
<td>This has always been policy. SEN team have been asked to make sure this is clarified early in the process</td>
<td>Additional guidance needed for parents explaining availability. Section to be added to FAQ on out of Borough provisions and availability of places.</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Introduction of Personalised Budgets supported by framework of advice</td>
<td>Personalised budgets now used extensively for transport. All parents who request are given support for personalised option. Heathway Centre provides advice and support about personalised budgets as an option.</td>
<td>New national regulations still awaited. Once received briefing sessions will be run, working with Just Say Parents Forum.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Multi-staged appeals process</td>
<td>Where parents are unhappy with recommendations Jonathon Butler and Anne Jones work to find resolution. If this is not possible, before Tribunal Stage, the Divisional Director, or DCS will meet with parents to try to find a resolution. 3 cases went to Tribunal Hearing this year. One was lost, one was won and the third has not yet concluded.</td>
<td>Need to work with health colleagues, to ensure they are linked to appeal process. The one case lost was because local health services were not able to guarantee to meet the child’s health needs.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Recommendation 6</th>
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<tr>
<td>Linked School Improvement Plans for SEN</td>
<td>Re-structure of inclusion team has enabled better linking and cross referencing between schools. Annual Reviews of individual ARP provision with Director now in place. (Completed October 2012)</td>
<td>Provision and quality review currently being undertaken (links with mapping in Rec 2) Year 2 ARP provision Annual Reviews will take place July-October 2013.</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommendation 7</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transition Plans</td>
<td>New transition strategy agreed by Cabinet. Transition Steering Group in place and reviewing impact.</td>
<td>Revised national guidance awaited on implications of proposed extension of transition to age 25.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Recommendation 8</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Progress Report to be presented to Children’s Trust and Select Committee</td>
<td>This report will be presented to February 2013 Select Committee and then circulated to Children’s Trust members.</td>
<td>A further Update will be taken to Children’s Trust as soon as national guidance is clarified.</td>
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