

## SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minute of Meeting of the Scrutiny Committee held in the Committee Room, Fourth Floor, Council Building, 2 High Street, Perth on Wednesday 12 February 2014 at 2.00pm.

Present: Councillors A Stewart, B Vaughan, R Brock, D Cuthbert, D Doogan, A Munro and A Younger.

In Attendance: G Taylor, and P Frazer (both Chief Executive's Service); B Atkinson, P McAvoy, R Goldsmith, (all Education and Children's Services); J Walker (Housing and Community Care); and B Renton (The Environment Service).

Councillor A Stewart, Convener, Presiding.

### **73. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES/SUBSTITUTES**

Councillor Stewart welcomed all present to the meeting and no apologies were noted.

### **74. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no Declarations of Interest made in terms of the Councillors' Code of Conduct.

### **75. MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minute of meeting of the Scrutiny Committee of 27 November 2014 was submitted, approved as a correct record and authorised for signature.

### **76. STANDARDS AND QUALITY REPORT 2012/13**

There was submitted a report by the Executive Director (Education and Children's Services) (13/520) (1) reflecting on the activities of the Service over the past year; and (2) presenting an overview of the Service's key strengths and areas for improvement. An Addendum containing alternative graphic illustrations of the attainment results was submitted for the Scrutiny Committee's consideration. Councillor Vaughan welcomed the inclusion of the additional charts which provided more transparency in outlining the data.

It was noted that the terms of Report 13/520 had been considered by the Lifelong Learning Committee on 29 January 2014.

Councillor Cuthbert requested clarification on the status of two schools which had been identified in the Standards and Quality Report 2012/13 as being mothballed. B Atkinson responded that these two rural schools, with falling rolls had been mothballed pending the outcome of the work of the Commission on the Delivery of Rural Education, and the Scottish Government's response to the commissions recommendations. These recommendations would be incorporated into the new Children and Young People (Scotland) Bill and the Council would have

to consider whether educational services were needed in areas where schools had falling rolls.

In response to a further question from Councillor Cuthbert in respect of Child Protection Concern Reports, B Atkinson reported that attempts were being made to identify for future reports those cases where police had reported initial concerns but which did not require further investigation.

Councillor Stewart queried why there had been an increase in the percentage of children requiring additional support in mainstream schools. B Atkinson responded that this was due in part to increasing awareness, particularly of autistic spectrum disorders, and an increase in the number of children with complex enduring needs. The Council would continue to focus on inclusion in the best interests of all children; although this did present some challenges in relation to capacity and resources.

Councillor Vaughan praised the work of the Community Link Workers and their efforts to improve attendance rates; however, she expressed concern that the Attendance Sub-Committee procedure was not being fully utilised by schools. B Atkinson responded that all head teachers were aware of their new responsibilities under early intervention guidance, and training had been made available for individual teachers.

In response to a further question from Councillor Vaughan regarding: (i) the use of the word *most* in the Quality and Standards Report 2012/13; and (ii) target dates for learning and achievement; B Atkinson responded that the issue of balance would be considered in future reports.

**Resolved:**

The contents of the Standards and Quality Report 2012/13 be noted.

## **77. ATTAINMENT IN PERTH AND KINROSS SCHOOLS 2013**

There was submitted a report by the Executive Director (Education and Children's Services) (14/13) presenting a summary analysis of pupil attainment in session 2012/13, specifically in relation to key Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) attainment measures and to Curriculum for Excellence progress with learning and achievement.

It was noted that the terms of Report 14/13 had been considered by the Lifelong Learning Committee on 6 November 2013.

The Committee also heard a presentation by P McAvoy, Head of Education - Secondary and Inclusion, Education and Children's Services on Attainment in Perth and Kinross Secondary Schools.

In response to a question from Councillor Cuthbert, P McAvoy clarified that the data was based on the percentage of the original S4 roll that sat the relevant exams. Exam success was not due to a single factor; however, supportive families, a broad curriculum, teaching quality and leadership had all contributed to that success.

In response to a question from Councillor Younger; R Goldsmith reported that he could forward more information to her on the difference in performance between boys and girls at 3+ @ Level 6 or Better. P McAvoy commented that schools did actively consider how to address gender differences; however, traditional curriculum options continued to be selected, although this trend was changing over time.

Councillor Doogan questioned whether schools in areas of high deprivation should develop more interventions to help young men achieve their full potential. P McAvoy reported that efforts were being made to offer more achievement focused awards at a senior curriculum level which could provide esteem and achievement to individual students.

**Resolved:**

The contents of the Attainment in Perth and Kinross Schools 2013 report be noted.

## **78. FIRST JOINT INSPECTION OF OLDER PEOPLES SERVICES**

There was submitted a report by the Executive Director (Housing and Community Care) (14/17) describing the key findings of an inspection of the quality of Health and Social Care services for Older People in Perth and Kinross, carried out by the Care Inspectorate supported by Health Improvement Scotland.

It was noted that as the inspection had been on a pilot basis, the Inspection Report would not be published.

In response to a comment from Councillor Stewart regarding the numbers of delayed discharges, J Walker responded that the focus of the report had been on a particular area, involving a number of work streams, and the prevention of hospital admission had been the most challenging issue. The Care Pathway was being re-designed with the aim of reducing both admissions and delayed discharges. Staff were being encouraged to consider whether hospital admission was appropriate in every case and to look at alternative options such as independent care or reablement. Recruiting care staff in rural areas presented a challenge and the Service was in discussion with providers about working across the whole community. A mapping exercise was currently being undertaken to match the location of carers to clients to help address the capacity issue.

Councillor Vaughan queried why GP engagement appeared to be poor. J Walker responded that historically, under the Quality Outcomes Focus, GPs had been awarded points for working in the community; when services were under pressure it was sometimes easier to admit patients to hospital. Not all GPs were aware that there were alternatives to hospital admission. Under the new Integrated Resource Framework, GPs would be able to see overall consumption patterns, which would provide a benchmark for admissions and other data.

**Resolved:**

The content of Report 14/17 be noted.

**IT WAS AGREED THAT THE PUBLIC AND PRESS SHOULD BE EXCLUDED DURING CONSIDERATION OF THE FOLLOWING ITEMS IN ORDER TO AVOID THE DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION WHICH IS EXEMPT IN TERMS OF SCHEDULE 7A TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND) ACT 1973.**

**79. MINUTE OF MEETING OF SOCIAL WORK COMPLAINTS REVIEW COMMITTEE OF 27 NOVEMBER 2013 FOR APPROVAL**

There was submitted and noted the minute of meeting of the Social Work Complaints Review Committee of 27 November 2013.

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