



County Hall
Cardiff
CF10 4UW
Tel: (029) 2087 2000

Neuadd y Sir
Caerdydd
CF10 4UW
Ffôn: (029) 2087 2000

CORRESPONDENCE FOLLOWING THE COMMITTEE MEETING

Committee CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date and Time of Meeting TUESDAY, 27 SEPTEMBER 2016, 4.30 PM

Please find below correspondence send by the Committee Chair following the meeting, together with any responses received.

For any further details, please contact scrutinyviewpoints@cardiff.gov.uk

Correspondence following the Committee Meeting *(Pages 1 - 8)*

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County Hall
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Date 7 October 2016

My Ref SS/CYP/MJH
Your Ref:

Councillor Sue Lent
Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Families, Children and Early Years
County Hall
Atlantic Wharf
CARDIFF
CF10 4UW

Dear Sue

The Committee noted your apology for being unable to attend the meeting and also wished to thank Tony Young for attending Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee on 27 September 2016 to present the **Quarter One performance report for Children's Services**. During the way forward section of the meeting the Members considered the information in the report, together with answers to their questions, and agreed to provide you with the following comments and concerns.

The Committee continued to be pleased with the overall direction of Children's Services performance, but noted that there was still slippage in some areas of performance. In particular the Members commented on the reduction in young carers accessing the care system, completion of Personal Education Plans and some Education performance data. The Committee considered that some of these issues fell more clearly under the Terms of Reference of the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee, and the Committee agreed to write to that Committee highlighting this Committee's concerns.

In respect of the Quarter One Performance report the Members highlighted two areas which they felt required further clarification. The Committee requested an additional analysis of 2015/16 and 2014/15 Looked After Children cases, by category of referral. The Members felt this would help to identify if any particular group were over represented in the overall numbers and to track any changes.

Members also expressed their surprise that when they questioned the already expected overspend of £2M, they were informed that this had been the result of an unexpected intake of an additional 39 Looked After Children. The Members requested that an investigation be undertaken, by Children's Services, into the circumstances of each of these children to understand if these children were known to any agencies prior to their referral to Children's Services, and report the findings to the Members of the Committee. This will help Children's Services direct resources where they are needed in the Early Help Strategy.

I hope that these comments, advice and requests for information will be of use and support in improving outcomes for children. The Committee looks forward to receiving a formal response within the next month.

To recap, this letter requests several actions, requests for information and recommendations, as follows and requires:

- An additional analysis of 2015/16 and 2014/15 Looked After Children cases, by category of referral. To help to identify if any particular group were over represented in the overall numbers and to track any changes; and
- Undertaken an investigation into the circumstances of each of the recent increase in Looked After Children cases, to understand whether early intervention could have been put in place to prevent the children becoming looked after.

Yours sincerely

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COUNTY COUNCILLOR RICHARD COOK
Chairperson – Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

CC: Tony Young, Director of Children's Services
Melanie Jackson - Personal Assistant to Deputy Leader
Kim Brown, Service Manager, Policy & Performance

Date 5 October 2016

My Ref SS/CYP/MJH
Your Ref:



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Councillor Sue Lent
Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Families, Children and Early Years
County Hall
Atlantic Wharf
CARDIFF

Dear Sue

The Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee agreed to write to you in your capacity as Chair of the Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee to inform you and the Committee of my Committee's concerns around a number of performance issues, which the Committee considered fell within the Terms of Reference of your Advisor Committee

The Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee on 27 September 2016 considered a report on **Quarter one performance for Children's Services**. Although the Committee continued to be pleased with the overall direction of Children's Services performance, it is noted that there was still slippage in some areas of performance. In particular the Members were concerned around the following:

- the reduction in young carers accessing the care systems from 83% in 2014-15 to 60% in 2015/16;
- that only 27.6% of Personal Education Plans were in place in 2015/16;
- Secondary school attendance for children looked after in Cardiff schools declined slightly to 91.8%, compared with 93.6% in 2014-15;
- Achievement of the Core Subject Indicator at Key Stage 2 (reaching Level 4 in Science, Mathematics and English or Welsh) was 54.5% compared with 65.2% in 2014-15; and
- Achievement of the Core Subject Indicator at Key Stage 3 (reaching Level 5 in Science, Mathematics and English or Welsh) was 34.4% from 37.0% in 2014-15.

The Committee recommends that your Advisor Committee investigates the reasons for the decline in performance and identifies actions to improve performance over the next year.

Yours sincerely

COUNTY COUNCILLOR RICHARD COOK
Chairperson – Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

CC: Tony Young, Director of Children's Services
Melanie Jackson - Personal Assistant to Deputy Leader

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My Ref: Scrutiny/Correspondence/MJH

5 October 2016



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Councillor Sarah Merry
Cabinet Member - Education
County Hall
Atlantic Wharf
CARDIFF
CF10 4UW

Dear Sarah

On behalf of the Committee I would like to thank you for attending the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee on 27 September 2016, to introduce the **Cardiff 2020, Quarter One Corporate Performance Report and Provisional School Results reports**. The Committee welcomed your statement and answers to Members' questions. I would also like to thank Nick Batchelar, Suzanne Scarlett and Natalie Stork for the presentation of the reports, as well as the answers they gave to Members' questions. During the Way Forward section of the meeting the Members raised a number of comments and concerns for your consideration, which they asked me to write to you about.

Cardiff 2020

Members enjoyed the introductory DVD for the launch of the Cardiff 2020 – Aiming for Excellence, together with the slide show of the event and feedback. Members noted that the event had been accessed widely on the internet and requested a copy of the link so that they could access it again. The Members were also pleased to hear that a large number of organisations were involved and asked if a list of all the organisations could be sent to them.

Quarter One Corporate Performance Report and Provisional School Results

The Committee welcomed the continued improvement in the results for the 2015-16 academic year. Members also noted that outcomes at the end of Key Stage 4, particularly for eFSM pupils and in level 1 and level 2 thresholds, are still not yet high enough. The Committee also note that mention was made that a Head Teacher from the West of England had produced a report for the Education Directorate. The Committee requested a copy of this report to be made available for their information.

The Committee initially reflected on the high level of sickness in the Directorate and asked for an explanation of the actions being undertaken to ensure that the Directorate target is met by the end of March 2017, to be provided in the response to this letter.

The Committee reiterated, during the way forward, their concern that the performance at Foundation Phase of Boys remained around 8ppt lower than Girls. The Members wished to inquire, whether there was a similar pattern between Girls and Boys across the Looked After Children cohort and the FSM cohort.

The Committee also requested further information on the reasons for the Key Stage 2 (at Paragraph 8) performance of boys continued to be below that of Girls and what actions are now being considered to improve this disparity.

The Committee noted some dissatisfaction from Officers, with the information being provided by the Central South Consortium, particularly around moderation, categorisation, and the detailed analysis of pupil performance. The Committee recommended that appropriate actions be agreed with the Consortium, to addresses these areas of concern and further details be provided to Committee in the response to this letter.

I hope that these comments, advice and requests for information detailed above will be of use and support in improving outcomes for Cardiff's pupils. The Committee looks forward to receiving further reports and information in the near future, and as such the Members require a formal response to this letter within the next month.

To recap, this letter requests several actions, requests for information and recommendations, as follows and requires:

- The Members requested a list of organisations involved in the launch of the Cardiff 2020 event;
- A Copy of the report produced by the Head Teacher from the West of England;
- An explanation of the actions being undertaken to ensure that the Departmental Sickness target is met by the end of March 2017;
- Analysis of the performance of Boy against Girls, at Foundation Phase, to determine if there was a similar pattern between Girls and Boys across the Looked After Children cohort and the FSM cohort;
- Details of the actions being undertaken at Key Stage 2 to address performance of boys which continued to be below that of Girls; and
- Details of the actions being agreed to address the unsatisfactory information being provided by the Central South Consortium around moderation, categorisation, and the detailed analysis of pupil performance.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Cook', with a horizontal line underneath it.

COUNTY COUNCILLOR RICHARD COOK
Chair – Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

CC: Nick Batchelar, Director of Education and Lifelong Learning
Angela Kent Head of Achievement and Inclusion

Suzanne Scarlett, Head of Performance

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