

CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Councillor Lee Bridgeman (Chair)

Councillors Stephen Cunnah; Robert Hopkins; Heather Joyce; Sian-Elin Melbourne; Bablin Molik; Mike Phillips; Mia Rees; Kanaya Singh

Co-optees: Patricia Arlotte (Roman Catholic representative); Carol Colbert (Church in Wales Rep); Karen Dell'Armi (Parent Governor Rep); Mia John (Cardiff Youth Council Rep); 1 x parent governor vacancy

Our Purpose

- We work to improve the Council's services and policies in the area of children and young people, which includes Schools; Children's Social Services; Youth Services and Justice; and relevant support services (Education and Schools support services etc.)
- We monitor the effectiveness of who the Council works with in this area, including how resources are spent;
- We ensure that key Council Policies in this area such as Cardiff 2030 Vision for Education & Learning; Century Schools Programme; Social Care Commissioning Strategy; and Corporate Parenting Strategy are developed and put in place; and
- We make recommendations to the Council's decision-makers to enhance performance and service delivery.

Our Achievements

- **Youth Justice Service** – the Committee continued to monitor progress in relation to the Youth Justice Service, following the inspection of the service in 2020. The Chair of this Committee sits on the Youth Justice Advocacy Panel so has an overview of the strategic direction of the YJS. In addition, during 2021 the Committee received bi-monthly reports on progress relating to staff and capacity; partnership learning and work; "All Our Futures" Strategy; progress of quality assurance work, including case audits; quarterly performance reports, including an overview of organisational health; case studies; and victim engagement feedback. The Committee also held an informal session with young people in the YJS to gauge their views on the Service. The Committee will continue to be an integral part of monitoring and reviewing improvements to the Service, and more importantly, improving outcomes for young people within the Service. The Service has been 'de-escalated' from Stage 3 to Stage 1 by the Youth Justice Board for England and Wales; and will be subject to a further inspection in March 2022.

Children's Services – during 2021, the Committee monitored demands and challenges faced by Children's Services as part of its recovery and renewal work, arising from the Covid-19 pandemic. The Committee held a number of open and transparent discussions with Members, officers and partners and acted as a "critical friend" and support for the Service in relation to demands on the service; pressures; complexities of the challenges faced by the Service; resource needs; shifting the balance of care; remodelling of services; and during 2022, Members of the Committee will work with the Service in the development and implementation of a 3-year Children's Services Strategy.

21st Century Schools Programme – the Committee continued to undertake a range of policy development and pre-decision scrutiny in relation to the 21st Century Schools Programme, including progress in relation to Band B Schools. They made a number of observations in relation to developments in Cathays High School; Pentyrch Primary School; Willows High School; ALN Provision; Admission Arrangements; and the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan (WESP). The Committee will continue to challenge the Service to ensure the future proofing for schools in Cardiff.

Quotes:

The children and young people's scrutiny committee provides strong and timely scrutiny on a number of relevant issues facing education in the local authority, including sensitive school organisation proposals and a range of school support services..... The scrutiny committee follow up areas of focus in their work programme and write to the cabinet member to express their observations with suitably challenging recommendations.

Estyn – inspection of Cardiff Education Services – November 2021

There is greater clarity about the purpose of the partnership..... These arrangements have ensured greater accountability and commitment to the work of the YJS. We were also pleased to see oversight from local councillors, such as the chair of the scrutiny committee and the children's committee lead member.

HMIP (in relation to the Youth Justice Service)