



CITY OF WESTMINSTER

MINUTES

**CHILDREN, SPORTS AND LEISURE
POLICY & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
14 MARCH 2016
MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS**

Minutes of a meeting of the **Children, Sports and Leisure Policy & Scrutiny Committee** held on Monday 14 March 2016 at 7pm at Westminster City Hall, 64 Victoria Street, London SW1E 6QP.

Members Present: Councillors Andrew Smith (Chairman), Iain Bott, Peter Cuthbertson, Nick Evans, Adnan Mohammed, Robert Rigby and Tim Roca.

Co-opted Members: Annie Ee and Louise McCullough

Also present: Councillor Paul Church (Deputy Cabinet Member for Children and Young People).

Apologies for Absence: Councillor Danny Chalkley, Councillor David Harvey, Councillor Rita Begum, Aki Turan, Brenda Morrison, Eugene Moriarty and Darren Guttridge.

1. MEMBERSHIP

- 1.1 It was noted that there were no changes to the membership.
- 1.2 The Chairman welcomed Councillor Paul Church (Deputy Cabinet Member for Children and Young People) to the meeting.
- 1.3 The Chairman advised that Councillor David Harvey (Cabinet Member for Sports, and Leisure) would not be attending the meeting. Any questions that Members had regarding his portfolio would be placed on the Committee's Action Tracker.
- 1.4 The Chairman welcomed Filsan Ali, Director of Somalia Development Network and Mohammed Hussein, Male Project Worker, from the Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) project who would take part in the item on Female Genital Mutilation.

2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

2.1 No further declarations of interests in respect of items to be discussed were made, other than those noted in the circulated schedule as set out below in paragraph 2.2.

2.2 Table of Member's interests tabled at the Committee Meeting was as follows:

Councillor/Member of the Children, Sports and Leisure P&S Committee	Organisation	Nature of Interest
Iain Bott	Paddington Academy One Westminster	Governor Non-Voting Member of the Board
Annie Ee	Hampden Gurney Primary School	Parent Governor
Louise McCullough,	St Vincent de Paul Primary School St Matthews CE Primary School Renaissance Foundation, E2 Renaissance Foundation, EC4	Governor Governor Trustee Mentor for Young People
Adnan Mohammed	St Marys School	Governor
Robert Rigby	Our Lady's Secondary School, Hackney Local Authority Governor Appointment Panel	Governor Member
Tim Roca	King's College London	Employer

3. MINUTES

- 3.1 **RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting held on 1 February 2016 be approved for signature by the Chairman as a true and correct record of the proceedings.

4. ACTION AND RECOMMENDATION TRACKERS AND COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

4.1 ACTION AND RECOMMENDATION TRACKERS

4.1.1 RESOLVED:

1. That the Action and Recommendation Trackers be noted.

4.2 COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

- 4.2.1 **RESOLVED:** The Committee agreed to add the following items to their work programme: Access to Art education in Westminster, the future and technological change of the library service, the Westminster Foundation, Youth Offending Policy and the role of Social Workers.

5. QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION: CABINET MEMBER FOR SPORTS AND LEISURE

- 5.1 The Committee received a written update from the Cabinet Member which covered current and forthcoming issues in his Portfolio.

6. QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION: CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

- 6.1 The Committee received an update from the Deputy Cabinet Member who responded to questions relating to:

- the successful Ofsted inspection of Children's Services.
- the importance of encouraging people to volunteer to become mentors.
- the benefits of the Education Excellence Programme and the additional funding given to all Westminster secondary schools to support GCSEs.
- the Multi-Agency Sexual Exploitation (MASE) Panel and their focus on changing young people's attitudes and disrupting perpetrator's activities.
- the sports and leisure facilities available for disabled children.
- the take up of free school meals by eligible families.
- the benefits of one to one mentoring offered to young people leaving custody and those at risk of custody.

6.2 The Committee thanked Councillors Robert Rigby and Paul Church for their hard work and support in hosting a very successful reception at the House of Commons for the Westminster school governors and for the hard work Councillor Robert Rigby puts into chairing the Local Governor's Panel.

6.3 The Chairman thanked both officers and Councillors for all their hard work in achieving a very successful Ofsted inspection of Children's Services.

6.4 **ACTIONS:**

1. That information be sent on numbers eligible for free school meals within Westminster along with a comparison with similar London Boroughs.
2. That information be sent on how Westminster supports disabled children and the services currently provided by the Council with details of any planned restructuring.
3. That the intervention(s) with four Westminster children referred to Children's Services in relation to Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and the subsequent outcomes be circulated to the Committee.
4. The possibility of providing table formatted data for the past three/five years to the Committee where applicable.

7. FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION

7.1 The Committee received a report outlining the actions that were currently being taken to prevent Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) in Westminster. The Committee noted that as many as 770 school age girls in Westminster could be at risk of FGM with some 250 at a high risk.

7.2 The Committee heard from Debbie Raymond, Head of Safeguarding and Quality, how FGM was a form of child abuse that was complex, sudden, traumatic and hidden and that preventative approaches were the only way to effectively protect girls from harm. The Committee noted the steps taken to prevent FGM including an innovative based project based at St Mary's Hospital and an extensive programme of community engagement work. The Committee also noted the new mandatory reporting in relation of FGM.

7.3 The Committee welcomed Filsan Ali, Director of the Midaye Somalia Development Network, who discussed with the Committee the design and delivery of the FGM community based project. The Committee heard that it was very important that the community drove the project in order for it to have an impact on families' cultural beliefs. The Committee noted that FGM was a very sensitive issue and that it was easier for the community centre to encourage people to open up about FGM than traditional statutory services.

7.4 The Committee also welcomed Mohammed Hussein, Male Project Worker, who discussed with the Committee working with young men, fathers and Imams on FGM. The Committee heard that FGM was mainly controlled by men in the community but that they were not involved or engaged in the whole FGM process and rarely understood the psychological and health problems it caused to women. The Committee noted that educating the whole community around the health and legal implications of FGM was essential in preventing it.

7.5 Some of the key issues that emerged from the Committee's discussion were:

- the importance of having a male project worker which could directly engage with males in the community to discuss the impact of FGM on girls.
- the importance of the summer campaign which aimed to raise awareness in communities and throughout professional networks about the risk to girls over the summer months.
- the importance of holding FGM discussions during community events/forums, in schools and mosques.
- the need for sustainable funding for this important ground-breaking project.
- the factors considered when identifying girls at risk, the different types of FGM performed and the misconception that FGM was a religious practice.
- the importance of the community understanding both how harmful FGM was to women and the legal implications of continuing to carry out this practice.
- the need for all social workers and practitioners to receive appropriate training.

7.6 The Chairman thanked everyone who had given up their time to attend the meeting and contribute to the discussion.

7.7 **RESOLVED:** The Committee made the following comments which would be forwarded to the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People for consideration:

1. The Committee welcomed the report and supported the efforts of the Council to work with community organisations to tackle FGM.
2. The Committee highlighted the importance of engaging with men as well as women on addressing some of the beliefs around FGM and supported the proactive engagement with religious leaders to highlight the health problems and dangers of FGM for women.
3. The Committee supported the need for sustainable funding for the project and supported efforts to identify funding from various sources.
4. The Committee emphasised the importance that all social workers and practitioners were trained in countering FGM and the issues involved.

8. CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

- 8.1 The Committee received a report outlining how Westminster Children's Services tackle Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE). The Committee noted that this was a priority area for the Council and the Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB) and that it was one of the most challenging areas of safeguarding children and required a strong multi agency approach.
- 8.2 The Committee heard from Melissa Caslake, Director of Family Services, that child sexual exploitation (CSE) could take on many forms; typically in Westminster it involved peer on peer abuse usually linked with gangs, crime drinking alcohol and substance abuse. The Committee further heard about the different levels of interventions available when a referral of CSE was received. The Committee noted that Westminster participated in the Police Operation Makesafe. It involved hotels, hostels, pubs and taxi firms to alert them to CSE risks.
- 8.3 Some of the key issues that emerged from the Committee's discussion were:
- the welcomed news that the police had committed additional resources to CSE so that all cases were now fully investigated.
 - the different interventions available to help victims recognise abusive relationships.
 - the careful monitoring of all Looked After Children (LAC) placed in and outside of Westminster by maintaining strong multi agency links with professionals working with LAC children to detect actual or potential CSE.
 - the joined up working that the Council and the Police had undertaken to reduce gangs' ability to sexual exploit vulnerable young people sexually.
 - child runaways and missing children.
 - the role of the CSE Tri-Borough Officer and the importance of prevention in schools and youth clubs.
 - the responsibility of both officers and Members to manage a healthy political system with the correct balances and checks in place.
 - the CSE training that Operation Makesafe had carried out with officers in other departments e.g., Licensing and Community Safety.
 - the importance of all public facing WCC employees receiving CSE training.
- 8.4 **RESOLVED:** The Committee made the following comments which would be forwarded to the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People for consideration:
1. The Committee welcomed the report and the multi-agency approach to tackling Child Sexual Exploitation.

2. The Committee highlighted the importance of protecting Westminster's Looked After Children (LAC) whether they were placed in or out of borough and the importance of sharing information and joint working with other local authorities.
3. The Committee welcomed raising Child Sexual Exploitation awareness in Westminster Schools.

9. SCHOOL ORGANISATION AND INVESTMENT STRATEGY 2016

- 9.1 The Committee received a report outlining pupil place planning in Westminster and the draft School Organisation and Investment Strategy 2016 which provided details on projected pupil numbers and plans for providing new school places.
- 9.2 The Committee welcomed Ian Heggs, Tri-Borough Director of Schools Quality and Standards and Alan Wharton, Tri-Borough Head of Asset Strategy (Children's Services) who discussed working with existing academy sponsors, budget constraints arising from the absence of further Basic Need grant allocations, rising tender prices in the construction industry and the desirability of seeking financial contributions from developers as new homes increase the demand for school places.
- 9.3 The Committee noted that the Strategy anticipated the increasing need for additional secondary school pupil places and the flexible approach to providing these places by working with the DfE to open new free schools in areas of greatest need, e.g. ARK Atwood and Marylebone Boys School. The previous focus on additional primary places had been successfully implemented.
- 9.4 The Committee discussed the creative ways and principles that would guide Westminster in providing more pupil places, work with academy sponsors to assist in delivering additional places, the work carried out by the Admissions Team on encouraging parents to make realistic preference choices on their school admission form and that many secondary school pupils preferred to attend local secondary schools.
- 9.5 The Committee welcomed the report and the proposed additional secondary school places in Westminster schools. The Committee also commented the range of different schools and school places available in Westminster.
- 9.6 **ACTION:** That the information contained in Appendix 7 be checked and if necessary an updated copy be circulated to the Committee.

10. EXEMPT REPORT UNDER LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

10.1 **RESOLVED:** That under Section 100 (A) (4) and schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business because it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information on the grounds shown below:

<u>Item No</u>	<u>Grounds</u>	<u>Para of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act</u>
10.	Information relating to an individual	1

11. UPDATE ON SAFEGUARDING ISSUES (verbal update – see agenda item 10)

11.1 The Committee received an update in relation to two serious case reviews.

12. TERMINATION OF MEETING

12 .1 The meeting ended at 9.13pm.

CHAIRMAN _____

DATE _____