



AGENDA FOR THE CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Members of the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee are summoned to a meeting, which will be held in Committee Room 4, Town Hall, Upper Street, N1 2UD on, **2 February 2016 at 7.30 pm.**

John Lynch
Head of Democratic Services

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Despatched : 25 January 2016

Membership

Councillors:

Councillor Kaya Comer-Schwartz (Chair)
Councillor Nick Ward (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Alice Donovan
Councillor Rakhia Ismail
Councillor Michelline Safi Ngongo
Councillor Angela Picknell
Councillor Diarmaid Ward
Councillor Nick Wayne

Substitute Members

Substitutes:

Councillor James Court
Councillor Alex Diner
Councillor Jenny Kay
Councillor Alice Perry
Councillor Dave Poyser

Co-opted Member:

James Stephenson, Secondary Parent Governor
Erol Baduna, Primary Parent Governor
Mary Clement, Roman Catholic Diocese
Vacancy, Church of England Diocese

Quorum: is 4 Councillors

A. Formal Matters

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1. Apologies for Absence
2. Declarations of Interest

If you have a **Disclosable Pecuniary Interest*** in an item of business:

- if it is not yet on the council's register, you **must** declare both the existence and details of it at the start of the meeting or when it becomes apparent;
- you may **choose** to declare a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest that is already in the register in the interests of openness and transparency.

In both the above cases, you **must** leave the room without participating in discussion of the item.

If you have a **personal** interest in an item of business **and** you intend to speak or vote on the item you **must** declare both the existence and details of it at the start of the meeting or when it becomes apparent but you **may** participate in the discussion and vote on the item.

***(a) Employment, etc** - Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain.

(b) Sponsorship - Any payment or other financial benefit in respect of your expenses in carrying out duties as a member, or of your election; including from a trade union.

(c) Contracts - Any current contract for goods, services or works, between you or your partner (or a body in which one of you has a beneficial interest) and the council.

(d) Land - Any beneficial interest in land which is within the council's area.

(e) Licences- Any licence to occupy land in the council's area for a month or longer.

(f) Corporate tenancies - Any tenancy between the council and a body in which you or your partner have a beneficial interest.

(g) Securities - Any beneficial interest in securities of a body which has a place of business or land in the council's area, if the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body or of any one class of its issued share capital.

This applies to all members present at the meeting.

3. Declaration of Substitute Members
4. Minutes of the Previous Meeting
5. Chair's Report
6. Items for Call In (if any)
7. Public Questions

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B. Items for Decision/Discussion	Page
1. Alternative Provision: Witness Evidence	9 - 14
(a) Evidence from Schools and New River College	
(b) Briefing Notes <i>(to be circulated)</i>	
(c) Notes of Scrutiny Visit <i>(to be circulated)</i>	
2. Review of Work Programme	15 - 18

C. Urgent non-exempt items (if any)

Any non-exempt items which the Chair agrees should be considered urgently by reason of special circumstances. The reasons for urgency will be agreed by the Chair and recorded in the minutes.

D. Exclusion of press and public

To consider whether, in view of the nature of the remaining items on the agenda, it is likely to involve the disclosure of exempt or confidential information within the terms of the Access to Information Procedure Rules in the Constitution and, if so, whether to exclude the press and public during discussion thereof.

E. Exempt items for Call In (if any)

F. Confidential/exempt items

G. Urgent exempt items (if any)

Any exempt items which the Chair agrees should be considered urgently by reason of special circumstances. The reasons for urgency will be agreed by the Chair and recorded in the minutes.

The next meeting of the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee will be on 3 March 2016

Please note that committee agendas, reports and minutes are available from the council's website: www.democracy.islington.gov.uk

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Agenda Item A4

London Borough of Islington

Children's Services Scrutiny Committee - Monday, 11 January 2016

Minutes of the meeting of the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee held at Committee Room 4, Town Hall, Upper Street, N1 2UD on Monday, 11 January 2016 at 7.30 pm.

Present: **Councillors:** Comer-Schwartz (Chair), Ward (Vice-Chair),
Donovan, Ismail and Wayne

Co-opted Members: James Stephenson, Secondary Parent Governor
Erol Baduna, Primary Parent Governor
Mary Clement, Roman Catholic Diocese

Also Present: **Councillors:** Caluori

Councillor Kaya Comer-Schwartz in the Chair

88 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (ITEM NO. A1)**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Angela Picknell and Diarmaid Ward.

89 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (ITEM NO. A2)**

None.

90 **DECLARATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (ITEM NO. A3)**

None.

91 **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (ITEM NO. A4)**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 9 November 2015 be confirmed as a correct record and the Chair be authorised to sign them.

92 **CHAIR'S REPORT (ITEM NO. A5)**

The Chair reminded members of the forthcoming scrutiny visit to meet staff working in the Alternative Provision service.

It was agreed that Item B3 on the agenda, Impact of Special Educational Needs and Disability Changes on Children and Families, be deferred to a future meeting to enable the Committee to question the relevant officers.

93 **ITEMS FOR CALL IN (IF ANY) (ITEM NO. A6)**

None.

94 **PUBLIC QUESTIONS (ITEM NO. A7)**

None.

95 **ISLINGTON SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD ANNUAL REPORT 2014/15 (ITEM NO. B1)**

Alan Caton, Independent Chair of the Islington Safeguarding Children Board (ISCB), presented the report which summarised the Board's safeguarding work in 2014/15.

The following main points were noted in the discussion:

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- The ISCB had a statutory duty to coordinate the safeguarding work of local agencies and to ensure that local agencies were effective in their safeguarding work.
- It was advised that 2014/15 was a challenging year in which local agencies had to consider how to best safeguard children in light of increasing financial pressures. Despite this, it was reported that the timeliness of statutory assessments had improved, which was a priority for the year.
- The ISCB was pleased that independent assessments of Early Help services indicated that they were effective in helping to reduce demand for statutory services.
- The ISCB welcomed two new lay members in 2014/15 and they had made a positive contribution to the work of the Board. It was also noted that a number of agencies had increased their involvement and were chairing ISCB sub-groups.
- The Independent Chair outlined the priorities of the Board in improving the collective effectiveness of agencies. These were: (i) addressing the impact of neglect on children, including by helping them to become more resilient; (2) addressing the consequences / harm suffered as a result of domestic violence, parental mental health and substance abuse; and (iii) identification of children who are vulnerable to sexual exploitation and holding perpetrators to account.
- The Committee noted the safeguarding work undertaken with local schools, including the *Chelsea's Choice* production.
- It was noted that the ISCB had approached other strategic partnerships to ask what steps they would take to contribute to the priorities of the Board.
- The Committee was advised of several ISCB-led audits, including an audit of FGM which found weaknesses in information sharing. As a result a number of cases were reviewed and a follow-up audit found that improvements had been made.
- The ISCB had a responsibility to review child deaths. There were 18 such deaths in 2014/15, an increase on the average of 14 deaths per year. The reasons for these deaths ranged from young children having serious medical conditions, to older teenage victims of knife crime. The ISCB was concerned about gang violence in Islington.
- The Committee considered the future priorities of the Board. The ISCB was working to encourage universal services to engage with Early Help services and to support all agencies in taking ownership of safeguarding matters. The Board had a particular interest in private fostering arrangements and was working with health agencies and schools to identify children in such arrangements. The ISCB also wished to gain a greater understanding of serious youth violence; and would be working with children to shape local services.
- The Committee noted the work of ISCB to target child sexual exploitation. In particular, the Board was working with partners to achieve greater use of intelligence to better target offenders.
- The ISCB was concerned about the relatively small numbers of offenders being prosecuted for neglect offences.
- It was commented that the report was abstruse in places and it was not clear what audience the report was written for. It was explained that the report was written in accordance with statutory guidance and the executive summary was intended to be a more accessible summary. It was advised that the reports of other safeguarding boards were similar and the national association of safeguarding boards was reviewing the format of such reports. It was also noted that the government was reviewing the role of safeguarding boards and reporting arrangements could be altered as a result.
- The Committee queried the ISCB's relationship with the CPS, as it was noted in the report that better partnership arrangements were required. It was

advised that the CPS was not a statutory member of the Board, however the ISCB had asked for the CPS to attend local and London-wide meetings and to date there had been no engagement. It was explained that this was particularly important given an apparent contradiction between certain Police and CPS statistics. The Committee expressed concern at the lack of CPS engagement and noted that the Leader of the Council was raising this matter through the Local Government Association.

- Following a query on publication timescales, it was advised that the report covered the period 1 April to 31 March. Data for the end of the year became available in early summer and the annual report was required to be published by September.
- It was advised that encouraging preventative actions and early intervention was a priority of the ISCB. The Board considered work with schools and young people to be crucial.
- Following a question on how the Board was addressing mental health, radicalisation and FGM, it was clarified that the ISCB was a strategic board and did not work on an operational level, however the Board was working to ensure that partner agencies had effective policies and procedures to deal with all aspects of safeguarding. Cathy Blair, Director of Targeted and Specialist Children's Services, advised that schools and children's centres occasionally raised concerns about FGM with the local authority and in such instances officers approached families about the issue.
- It was advised that, of the 18 child deaths in 2014/15, two were as a result of knife crime. Three deaths had 'modifiable factors' and were therefore considered preventable. The Board was not aware of the numbers of young people apprehended by the Police for carrying knives, however could investigate such statistics in future. It was confirmed that children apprehended for such crimes were referred to social services.
- It was commented that some of the ISCB's priorities seemed nebulous and members queried how the Board was specifically working to tackle neglect. In response it was advised that the Board was challenging partners on their identification and prevention procedures. For neglect this included assessing if agencies gave sufficient consideration to neglect when making interventions on related factors, such as domestic abuse and substance abuse.
- The Committee queried why multi-agency safeguarding training was not consistently delivered in all settings. In response, it was advised that a great deal of single-agency training had been delivered, however there were difficulties in arranging multi-agency training. Multi-agency training was preferential as it promoted joint-working and gave staff an opportunity to consider safeguarding from a different perspective. For example, it was noted that front line police officers did not regularly interact with health workers and those working in children's services. The ISCB would continue to evaluate the effectiveness of training and emphasise its importance.
- It was queried if the 41% increase in high risk abuse cases being referred to MARAC was positive or negative. In response, it was advised that abuse was generally under-reported so an increase in referrals was considered positive.
- Following a query, it was advised that Moorfields NHS Trust featured significantly in the report as they had substantial engagement with the ISCB.
- The Committee noted the impact of the neglect toolkit, which had helped with the identification and awareness of neglect issues in universal services.
- In response to a query about where unaccompanied asylum seeking children presented themselves to the council, it was advised that some approached the council through a solicitor, whereas others were identified through council services or local community groups.
- The Committee queried the reasons for the increase in homeless young people. In response, it was advised that some families with disruptive or

offending 16 and 17 year olds were making their children homeless, and since the Southwark Judgement in 2009, children's services were required to provide accommodation and care services to these young people. It was clarified that previously the authority would have provided housing, but these young people would not be considered 'looked after children' and therefore would not be entitled to access to certain services and benefits.

- It was noted that emotional abuse and neglect had a higher prevalence than child sexual exploitation, however sexual exploitation was more prominently featured as a concern in the media. It was queried how this shaped the priorities of the Board. In response, it was advised that different types of abuse were identified through different channels and the Board had to maintain a focus on all areas. For example, neglect and emotional abuse was often associated with domestic violence and substance abuse and instances could be identified by agencies working with families on those issues, however sexual exploitation tended to be identified by social workers developing child protection plans.
- Following a query, it was advised that the increase in the number of child protection plans had brought Islington in line with its statistical neighbours.
- A discussion was had on how complaints against staff working with children were processed. It was advised that there was initial concern about health partners not making referrals for consideration by the LADO, however it was found that a parallel process was in place and agencies were found to be compliant.
- Following a question by a member of the public, it was queried why the report did not focus on radicalisation and extremism. In response, it was noted that this had been a priority more recently and guidance was being prepared for parents and carers.
- Following a question by a member of the public, it was advised that the ISCB included BME members. The report did not include BME data as, although partners recorded demographic information, due to the few numbers of referrals the data was not statistically significant.
- A member of the public queried how deaf children and those with other communication difficulties were effectively safeguarded, how these children could communicate their concerns to agencies, and if local services with safeguarding responsibilities had sufficient access to BSL interpreters. In response it was advised that the council did have a service for children with disabilities. It was requested that further information be circulated to the Committee.

The Committee thanked Alan Caton for his attendance.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the Islington Safeguarding Board Annual Report and recommendations of the Board be noted;
- 2) That concerns about the engagement of the CPS in local safeguarding activity be noted; and
- 3) That further information on the safeguarding of children with disabilities be circulated to the Committee.

96

ALTERNATIVE PROVISION: WITNESS EVIDENCE (ITEM NO. B2)

The Committee received witness evidence from Sarah Bealey of the Elizabeth Garrett Anderson School on pupil outcomes and accountability and the policies and practices of schools.

The following main points were noted in the discussion:

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- The view of the Elizabeth Garrett Anderson School was that the quality and range of alternative provision had improved in recent years. There were a greater number of options available, although it was noted that some of those were further outside of the borough.
- The Elizabeth Garrett Anderson School was acutely aware of their accountability for pupils on alternative provision and had an active role in monitoring pupil progress and the quality of providers.
- The school was keen to work with providers to improve the quality of their teaching. It was explained that some providers provided quality vocational courses however found teaching a core English and Maths curriculum to be challenging. Providers had been invited into the school to observe lessons. The school considered such partnership working to be very important.
- The school considered alternative provision to be good value. Although alternative provision was only used as a last resort, the school appreciated that for a minority of pupils who struggled with mainstream education it was essential.
- The average pupil referred to alternative provision from the school was white British and had a multitude of issues. The smaller, more nurturing environment available in alternative provision was praised. It was commented that schools did not have the resources or capacity to provide this environment and without alternative provision there would likely be an increase in exclusions.
- Whilst it was recognised that not all pupils achieved positive outcomes, it was commented that alternative provision was central to improving the outcomes for some pupils. An example of a former Elizabeth Garrett Anderson pupil progressing from alternative provision to university was given.
- The experience of the Elizabeth Garrett Anderson School was that alternative provision was most effective for pupils at risk of exclusion, those who were disengaged from education, who were not attending school regularly, or were from dysfunctional families. It was commented that these pupils often benefitted from engagement with Early Help services.
- A worry was expressed that a number of pupils entering alternative provision had been mid-phase admissions to schools. It was commented that moving schools during GCSE studies was often difficult for pupils and additional support was needed to make such transfers work.
- The school considered the academic quality of providers to be very important. Although pupils on alternative provision often required additional educational support, some pupils had strong academic abilities and the potential to attend university. It was important to challenge pupils to ensure that they were able to re-engage with education later in life.
- It was queried if pupils admitted to schools mid-phase or through the Fair Access Protocol were placed on alternative provision as a method of easing the burden on schools to integrate potentially difficult pupils. In response, it was advised that this was not the case at the Elizabeth Garrett Anderson School. The council's alternative provision service challenged schools on referrals and schools were required to evidence what they had done to keep pupils in mainstream education. Given the difficulties often faced by pupils on alternative provision, referrals to IFIT or Families First were usually made before a referral to alternative provision.
- Officers advised that some Year 11 pupils admitted to schools mid-phase in the past had been referred to alternative provision. It was suggested that pupils who had been working to a different GCSE syllabus previously were not likely to pass their GCSEs if admitted late in the academic year.
- It was commented that the Secure in Education Board had strong safeguarding mechanisms and an independent chair. Schools receiving pupils though the Board were expected to do everything possible to keep the pupil in

mainstream education and an automatic referral to alternative provision would not be acceptable in most cases.

- Officers advised that the alternative provision team maintained a good working relationship with the two academy schools in the borough, although one did limit the providers they would use.
- The Committee noted concerns about 'school hopping' pupils. It was explained that some pupils moved schools and between local authority areas to avoid exclusion and family intervention. Sometimes these pupils had come from challenging backgrounds but this was not immediately apparent to schools and local agencies. It was suggested that better outcomes could be achieved if schools were more honest with each other when transferring pupils.
- The Committee queried how alternative provision could be considered good value when outcomes were often poor. In response, it was advised that alternative provision was used as a last resort when a school had tried everything to re-engage the pupil in education. Often the relationship between the school and pupil had broken down. Whilst it was recognised that outcomes were often poor, alternative provision gave these pupils a chance to succeed that they would not have otherwise.
- It was suggested that the successes of schools and alternative provision providers should be assessed differently. Although pupils in alternative provision were not as likely to achieve strong academic outcomes, re-integration into the education system could be considered a success for some pupils, regardless of their academic performance. Given the personal difficulties that alternative provision pupils often faced, significant improvements in attendance were often considered a success.
- Following a question about the proportion of BME pupils on alternative provision, it was advised that the vast majority from the Elizabeth Garrett Anderson School were from white British backgrounds. It was advised that the school was working with pupils to raise aspirations and instil positive work ethics. The school had organised mother and daughter university visits and held literacy and numeracy classes for parents.
- The Committee queried if the school had experienced any problems with providers in the past. It was commented that some providers did not have high enough aspirations for their pupils; however, schools were able to raise such concerns with the council. There were instances of the council ceasing to place pupils with providers that did not meet expected standards.
- It was queried if providers had access to counsellors to help pupils with behavioural and emotional needs. In response, it was advised that this varied depending on the provider; however the council and schools sought to place pupils with providers that were appropriate for their needs. Pupils in need of such support would be placed at a provider with a nurturing environment; it was commented that one such Elizabeth Garrett Anderson pupil had been placed at Hackney City Farm and achieved good outcomes. However, some pupils preferred college-style education and were placed with providers that could provide this setting.
- The Committee queried what the Elizabeth Garrett Anderson School would do to support pupils currently sent to alternative provision if it had greater capacity and resources. In response, it was advised that the school would teach these pupils in smaller classes and regularly take them out of school for educational activities.
- A member of the public commented on the council's intention to reduce the number of pupils placed in alternative provision and queried the possible impact of schools having to retain pupils that would otherwise be referred to alternative provision. In response, it was stated that Elizabeth Garrett Anderson School referred few pupils to alternative provision so there would only be a limited impact.

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- In response to a question from a member of the public, it was advised that providers became responsible for pupil premium funding, however they had to justify any spend before monies were transferred. It was reported that some providers had spent the funding on activities for their pupils, whereas others had spent the funding on technology such as laptops.
- Following a query from a member of the public, it was advised that alternative provision pupils had a wide range of vulnerabilities and providers were required to follow the national curriculum for core subjects.
- The Committee queried why the Elizabeth Garrett Anderson School had a low number of referrals in comparison to other schools. In response, it was advised that the school had a “never give up” attitude and cared deeply for all of its pupils. The school sought to be as creative and flexible as possible when dealing with difficult pupils and, where possible, would tailor the curriculum to their interests and needs to keep them engaged. Examples were given of pupils doing a different activity one afternoon a week, or coming in late on certain mornings and finishing later in the day. Some pupils were permitted to drop a school subject and focus on social skills instead. The school sought to foster a culture where every pupil felt valued and cared for; it was suggested that this made pupils want to attend school and developed pupils’ belief that they could succeed.

The Committee thanked Sarah Bealey for her attendance.

97 **IMPACT OF SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITY (SEND) CHANGES ON CHILDREN AND FAMILIES (ITEM NO. B3)**

RESOLVED:

That consideration of the item be deferred to the May 2016 meeting.

98 **EXECUTIVE MEMBER QUESTIONS (ITEM NO. B4)**

Councillor Joe Caluori, Executive Member for Children and Families, provided an update to the Committee on his recent work. The Committee questioned the Executive Member on the following topics:

- Councillor Wayne queried if the recent inspection of the youth offending service represented a fair evaluation of the service and what the council would be doing to make the required improvements identified by the inspector. In response, it was advised that the conclusions of the report were fair and the council would be working to improve its relationship with the police as a result. In particular, the council and police needed to be more direct with each other about local issues. The co-location of the police and youth offending service would contribute to this, as would greater information sharing. It was hoped that a better relationship with the police would lead to more comprehensive intelligence on youth offenders.
- Councillor Wayne asked a supplementary question on the council’s relationship with the new Borough Commander. Councillor Caluori advised that the Borough Commander had been in post for around six months and was willing to work with the council on youth offending. Councillor Caluori also emphasised the importance of working with schools, as they had regular contact with pupils and parents and were a good source of information.
- The Chair commented on the great work of Cathy Blair, the Director of Targeted and Specialist Children’s Services, who was to retire at the end of February. In response to a query about the recruitment of a new director, it was advised that further information would be circulated outside of the meeting. The Committee resolved that their thanks to Cathy Blair be noted.

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- The Chair asked for further information on the council's selection by the government as a 'Practice Leader' for child protection social work. Councillor Caluori advised that the council was considered to be a pioneering authority and had been granted £2million to make further social work innovations. This was intended to set a path for other authorities to follow. Officers would be presenting their work to other local authorities.
- A member of the public asked about the impact of individual elector registration on young people. It was queried how many 16 to 19 year olds had dropped off the electoral register and what the council was doing to encourage registration. Councillor Caluori advised that he did not have information to hand however a response could be provided outside of the meeting.
- A member of the public asked about school class sizes and if there was a school places crisis in Islington. In response, it was advised that one new school was due to open in future, the City of London Primary Academy, however there were no current plans to open other new schools and any population increase was expected to be counteracted by expanding existing good and outstanding schools. Councillor Caluori further explained that Islington did not have a school places crisis; however there was some uneven distribution of schools in the borough, with some schools over capacity and others with over-supply. As a result the council had changed its geographic planning areas so developers would need to give greater consideration to local school provision when planning new developments. Councillor Caluori appreciated that the GLA predicted a future shortfall in school places in Islington, however it was explained that these figures were partially based on the number of new properties and it was known that up to 40% of new properties in the south of the borough were vacant. In addition, it was thought that the changing wealth profile of residents living in new developments may mean that future borough residents have a lesser demand for state education.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee's thanks to Cathy Blair for her contribution to the council's children's services be noted.

99

REVIEW OF WORK PROGRAMME (ITEM NO. B5)

The Committee requested further information to assist the Alternative Provision review. In particular, information was requested on school referring numbers, demographic information, pupils admitted mid-term or under the Fair Access Protocol, outcomes and performance data, "life chances" and destinations for those on alternative provision, what schools do before referring pupils to alternative provision, a list of providers and courses, and attendance statistics.

Officers advised that a plan for providing this information would be reported to the next meeting.

MEETING CLOSED AT 9.30 pm

Chair

Children’s Service Scrutiny – Witness Evidence Plan

Scrutiny topic: Alternative Provision

Our role as a scrutiny committee:

- To assess whether the range and quality of provision provides sufficient opportunities for attainment and clear pathways for progression;
- To consider whether accountability – for example by schools and the Council - for those in alternative provision is good enough;
- To review how to keep children in school and the use of Alternative Provision or exclusion as the last resort;
- To consider ways in which identification and early intervention support to pupils and their families, which improves attainment, resilience, empathy, self-awareness, attendance and other related outcomes, could be improved – early identification in education and early support;
- To make recommendations for innovation opportunities.

Focus

Provision quality and range	<p>SID Objective 2. To identify how we can ensure that provision is of the highest quality.</p> <p>SID Objective 5. To evaluate the quality, standards and value for money of alternative provision providers, and the range of provision.</p>
Pupil outcomes and accountability	<p>SID Objective 3. To make recommendations to further improve the outcomes, attendance, and accountability for those in alternative provision.</p> <p>SID Objective 4. To identify how schools and academies are ensuring the best possible outcomes for the most vulnerable children, including their emotional well-being, and make recommendations about how best practice can be in place in all schools and Academies.</p>
Prevention and early intervention	<p>SID Objective 1. To identify how we can reduce the numbers of children on alternative provision</p> <p>SID Objective 6. To identify how early intervention and ‘Think Family’ approaches can be mainstreamed once the pump priming funding is no longer available.</p>

Key questions

- How can pupils be ‘turned around’ before they become disengaged with their education? How can pupils and their parents/carers get the right help to support their needs?
- How do schools and academies retain full responsibility for learners they exclude or place in alternative provision – including the quality of their education and the outcomes they achieve?
- Is there a sufficient range of good or outstanding alternative provision which enables pupils to achieve good educational attainment on par with their peers regardless of circumstances or settings?
- What are the innovation opportunities that could secure better outcomes for this group of young people?

Work programme for alternative provision scrutiny

1. Additional documentation

- Outcomes in individual schools with contextual data such as attendance and exclusions
- Performance report for current AP providers and value for money
- School referring numbers and demographic information
- Other briefing notes as requested by the committee

2. Witness suggestions:

Who	Organisation/remit	Area of focus
Context		
Gabby Grodentz	Islington Council - Head of Alternative Provision	How alternative provision is set up in Islington
Pupil outcomes and accountability		
Sarah Bealey	Schools - Elizabeth Garrett Anderson	Policies and practices of schools; strategies for full ownership of pupils in AP; identifying and enabling pupils to overcome specific personal, social and academic needs; improving engagement with education; enabling good academic attainment; reintegration into mainstream education; partnership working.
Julie Chambers	Schools – Highbury Fields	
Tom Mannion	St Aloysius' College	
Provision quality and range		
John d'Abbro OBE	AP service: New Rush Hall (LB Redbridge)	To provide a comparison with an AP service from another London borough.
Anna Cain	AP provider: The Boxing Academy	Outline of the provision provided to Islington (and other boroughs where relevant); how closely does provision match young people's needs; identifying and enabling pupils to overcome specific personal, social and academic needs; improving motivation, self-confidence, attendance and engagement with education; enable good academic attainment with appropriate accreditation and qualifications; and progression following the placement e.g. further education, employment, training or reintegration into mainstream education
Rebekah Westgate	AP provider: BSix	
Prevention and early intervention		
Nigel Smith	New River College	The role and practices of the New River College PRU.
Anthony Doudle	Islington Council – Head of School Improvement (Primary)	Early identification and intervention opportunities; primary to secondary transition.
Gabby Grodentz Kim Lawson	Islington Council – targeted and specialist early intervention support to pupils and their families: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New wraparound service for alternative provision • IFIT 	How schools, young people and parents are supported; what works; early success indicators

3. Work plan

9 November 2015: Witnesses – Provision quality and range		
Who	Organisation/remit	Area of focus
Gabby Grodentz	Islington Council – Head of Alternative Provision	Quality and range of provision in Islington
Anna Cain	The Boxing Academy	
Rebekah Westgate	BSix	

11 January 2016: Witnesses – Pupil outcomes and accountability		
Who	Organisation/remit	Area of focus
Sarah Bealey	Elizabeth Garrett Anderson School	Pupil outcomes and accountability / policies and practices of schools

2 February 2016: Witnesses – Prevention and early intervention / Pupil outcomes and accountability – *Extra evidence meeting*		
Who	Organisation/remit	Area of focus
Julie Chambers	Highbury Fields	Pupil outcomes and accountability / policies and practices of schools
Tom Mannion	St Aloysius' College	
Nigel Smith	New River College	Prevention and early intervention / The role and practices of the New River College PRU.

3 March 2016: Witnesses – Pupil outcomes and accountability / Prevention and early intervention		
Who	Organisation/remit	Area of focus
John d'Abbro OBE	New Rush Hall Group (TBC)	To provide a comparison with the way another borough commissions and delivers alternative provision, the way they work with partners, tackling the issue of schools retaining the responsibility for excluded students including quality of education and outcomes achieved.
Anthony Doudle	Islington Council – Head of School Improvement (Primary)	Early identification and intervention opportunities; primary to secondary transition.
Gabby Grodentz and Kim Lawson	Islington Council – targeted and specialist early intervention support to pupils and families <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New wraparound service for alternative provision • IFIT 	How schools, young people and parents are supported; what works; early success indicators

4. Visits

Visits			
Who	Organisation/remit	Area of focus	When
Council officers	Council offices	To meet officers supporting the Alternative Provision service and to discuss their views.	18 January 2016
Young people – past and present including their parents/carers	At a neutral location	To find out about young people's experiences of alternative provision, whether the provision and support was what they needed. How could alternative provision be more effective?	February/March 2016

5. Report

- **12 April 2016:** Draft recommendations
- **9 May 2016:** Final Report

Children's Services Scrutiny Committee

2 February 2016

Alternative Provision Review

Witness Evidence: School Representatives

School representatives providing witness evidence have been asked the following questions in advance of the committee meeting. These questions are reproduced in the agenda for information and to assist discussion at the meeting.

1. What do you think of the quality of service and delivery being provided in Alternative Provision? What's working? What could be changed or improved? How?
2. Is the current Alternative Provision system value for money?
3. What is the profile of students that you think are best served by Alternative Provision? Do think this will change?
4. The Local Authority is considering how early intervention with vulnerable children and families might reduce the number of students being referred to Alternative Provision – do you think this might be an effective approach and do you have any thoughts on how this could be structured?
5. How do you think providers could support students to achieve better outcomes?
6. Do you have any further thoughts on the structure and organisation of support for students on AP and how this could be improved – particularly in securing better and further qualifications for young people that then ensure secure pathways for progression?
7. Details of what schools do before sending pupils to AP; what are you required to do? What do you typically do? Does this depend on circumstances?

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CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

WORK PROGRAMME 2015/16

15 SEPTEMBER 2015

1. Work Programme 2015/16
2. Alternative Provision: Scrutiny Initiation Document and Presentation
3. Update on the Youth Crime Strategy
(to cover the engagement of adolescents)

9 NOVEMBER 2015

1. Alternative Provision: Witness Evidence
2. Child Protection Annual Report
3. Executive Member Questions
4. Review of Work Programme

11 JANUARY 2016

1. Islington Safeguarding Children Board: Annual Report
2. Alternative Provision: Witness Evidence
3. Executive Member Questions
4. Review of Work Programme

2 FEBRUARY 2016 – *Additional Witness Evidence Meeting*

1. Alternative Provision: Witness Evidence
2. Review of Work Programme

3 MARCH 2016

1. Alternative Provision: Witness Evidence
2. Engagement with and the Consistency of Early Years Provision
3. Executive Member Questions
4. Review of Work Programme

12 APRIL 2016

1. Alternative Provision: Draft Recommendations
2. Education in Islington: Annual Report 2015
3. The Educational Attainment of BME Children
4. Update on Youth Crime
5. Executive Member Questions

9 MAY 2016

1. Alternative Provision: Final Report
2. Executive Member Annual Presentation
3. The Impact of SEN Changes on Children and Families
4. Scrutiny Topics 2016/17

Children's Services Scrutiny Committee

2 February 2016

Review of Work Programme: Briefing Notes Update

At the January 2016 meeting the Committee requested further information to assist with the Alternative Provision review.

The Committee has requested further information on school referring numbers, demographic information, pupils admitted mid-term or under the Fair Access Protocol, outcomes and performance data, "life chances" and destinations for those on alternative provision, what schools do before referring pupils to alternative provision, a list of providers and courses, and attendance statistics.

Officers have indicated that these topics will be covered through four briefing notes:

- Briefing Note 1: School referral numbers, reasons for referral, mid-term admissions, attendance and demographic information.
- Briefing Note 2: The role of schools (including what schools do before referring pupils to alternative provision)
- Briefing Note 3: Attainment and progression (including destinations post-AP and post-16).
- Briefing Note 4: Delivering Alternative Provision (including current providers, quality of providers, outcomes and performance data).

Each briefing note will be aligned to an objective of the review as set out in the SID. It is intended that briefing notes 1 and 2 will be available for the 2nd February meeting and briefing notes 3 and 4 will be available shortly afterwards.

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