

Children's Services Scrutiny Committee

22 November 2018

Update from the Executive Member for Children, Young People and Families

- We heard this week that we will have a JTAI (joint targeted area inspection) looking at sexual abuse within the family. These new thematic inspections are multi agency covering the local authority, police, health partners, probation and fire and rescue. Local safeguarding arrangements will also be in the frame. Off-site data gathering begins this week and on the week of the 3rd December we will have 15 inspectors on site. Following our recent SIF inspection, in which our Children's Services received a rating of Good overall with Outstanding leadership and management, and a subsequent focussed visit on adolescent risk we feel that our services are in a good place but of course this is an inspection of the wider partnership, not just Islington Council. The outcome will be a narrative judgment rather than a one-word judgment scale. Scrutiny may wish to plan some time in to discuss the report at a future meeting.
- I'm delighted to say that our Integrated Gangs team won the coveted partnership working award at the Children and Young People Now awards. This is richly deserved recognition of a ground-breaking new service which has facilitated really positive outcomes for young people involved in gangs by bringing together the Police, Council, Health and Voluntary Sector under one roof. The team are working with an incredibly difficult context with highly complex vulnerable young people and we still face huge challenges in decisively reducing violence and gang involvement, but young people in Islington are safer because of our gangs team and it's great to see that recognised on a national stage.
- Jermain Jackman, Chair of the Islington Fair Futures Commission came to the October Executive Meeting as we published our official response to the Fair Futures Committee recommendations. The report is short and very clear – it's well worth a read. It sets out how we will respond to each of the recommendations of the commission, how each recommendation will fit in with our Corporate Plan and which named Executive Member(s) will take responsibility for overseeing the implementation of the responses within their portfolio areas. We have also announced our intention to reconfigure the previous Children's Trust Partnership Board (suspended for the period of the commission) as a new, smaller and more focussed implementation Board. The Commission has been so successful that Hackney are now setting up their own Commission, and there is talk in the ether of a London Fair Futures Commission. Watch this space.

- I held the first Children's Ward Partnership meeting at King Henry's Walk Adventure playground in Mildmay, with around 40 children aged 6-12. The purpose was to provide some balance to the more adult focused Ward Partnership meetings. As we rarely hear from younger children outside the school setting, it was a great opportunity to hear their concerns and priorities. Although the focus was primarily on issues specific to the local area, there were broader insights for the wider Borough. I've tweeted a thread on some of the insights and the full notes will be available on the Mildmay section of the Council website, but I was particularly struck by concerns about road safety and fears of gang members in public spaces. We have some real actionable items to take to the Ward Improvement Plan. This worked well as a pilot and I'd be happy to help facilitate a similar process in other Wards.
- We will be bringing forward a new School cuts campaign early next year, which is being developed with colleagues from the NEU. Following the motion passed at Full Council I have written to the Government setting out our view. The next stage is to engage parents, teachers, children and the wider community in campaign activity to replicate the success of the School Cuts campaign run at the last General Election by the NUT.