

# **Children's Services Scrutiny Committee**

**30 April 2019**

## **Executive Member Update and Questions**

The Committee is invited to question the Executive Member for Children, Young People and Families on her work and the work of the Committee. An update from the Executive Member is set out below. The procedure for Executive Member questions is appended to this item.

**Questions for the Executive Member may be submitted in advance by emailing [democracy@islington.gov.uk](mailto:democracy@islington.gov.uk) by Wednesday 24 April 2019**

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### **Secondary School Places offers**

At beginning of March the placements for the autumn 2019 Secondary Schools were sent around to parents and carers. Overall the picture was positive. The number of applications we had for secondary school places was up 3% on last year and despite this increase, 2% more residents got their first choice of place (or one of their top three choices) and our residents were more likely to get their choice compared with residents in London, on average.

### **Islington Education Awards**

It was an unmitigated joy to attend Islington's first Education awards. The Islington Education awards was an opportunity to recognise the dedicated teachers and staff of our local schools. They make an enormous contribution to making Islington the best place for children to learn and grow.

The enthusiasm our staff have for teaching is amazing to see, they are the backbone of education in the borough and it was wonderful to be able to come together and recognise their hard work. Our ambition is to give all children the best start in life, our talented school teams play major role in achieving this, that's why it's so great that we are now going to celebrate them annually.

### **Looked After Children Achievements Awards**

I was so honoured to be asked to attend and help present awards to our looked after children. It was a really lovely event which allowed families, carers and council staff to celebrate the amazing progress our looked after children are making. Children aged 5-17 proudly accepted awards in the Emirates Stadium.

It was a great opportunity for me to meet representative from Children's Active Involvement Service; I was blown away by how proactive they are and how much work they do in partnership with council.

At the awards there was also a presentation by a group of our older male looked after children who had gone to Gambia to teach children skills that they had, including health and fitness and dance. It was clear that this project had a profound experience on these young men. It was brilliant that the council could support them to do something that is usually only reserved for middle class children on gap years.

## **Meeting with the new Borough Commander**

Cllr Watts, Hull and I recently had a chance to sit down with the new Borough Commander Chief Supt Raj Kohli. It was very welcome to hear that his top priority coming into the role is tackling youth crime. He seemed to take a positive approach to not criminalising young people. He has experience of working with Music and Change in Camden an organisation who have a good reputation in working with young people engaged with high risk activity to support their mental health needs and divert them from criminality. We also discussed the use of section 60s in the borough, which he believes should be used to disrupt and prevent young people from engage in criminality. As well as a systematic approach to dealing with the complex issues relating to the drugs economy in Finsbury Park.

## **11 by 11 and Music Education and Islington**

It has been very exciting to launch of 11 by 11 and Music Education and Islington. The launch of 11 by 11 was a great success due to the council's collaboration with Islington Community of Schools and cultural organisations like All Change, Paul Lyall and Park Theatre. Jeremy Corbyn, the Mayor, the left lieutenant and Cllrs sat with the leaders of dozens of cultural institutions and Islington head teachers; to be treated to performance by Islington pupils including samba, Shakespeare and poetry.

Similarly, Music Education Islington was recently launched which aims to ensure every child can discover and develop their musical skills under the guidance of some of the best music teachers in the world. The new partnership with lead delivery organisation Guildhall School of Music & Drama, the internationally renowned conservatoire in the City of London. This is the first such partnership of its kind and the first time a conservatoire has led the delivery of music education for a local authority, as part of a wider partnership involving several other outstanding music education providers.

## **Procedure for Executive Member Questions at Children's Services Scrutiny Committee**

- (a) Elected members and members of the public may ask the Executive Member for Children, Schools and Families questions on any matter in relation to the executive portfolio or the work of the committee.
- (b) The intention of the session is to complement and enhance the work of the committee. The Executive Member may submit written information in advance of the meeting to advise of his recent work and other topical and timely matters of relevance. The session is not intended to replace or replicate the questions sessions held at each ordinary meeting of the Council.
- (c) Questions should be submitted in writing to the committee clerk no later than three clear working days in advance of the meeting. Such questions will be notified to the Executive Member which may facilitate a more detailed answer at the meeting. Details of how questions should be submitted will be detailed on the agenda for the meeting.
- (d) Questioners should provide their name to enable this to be recorded in the minutes of the meeting. The minutes of the meeting will include a summary of the question and the response.
- (e) The Chair may permit questions to be asked at the meeting without notice.
- (f) The time set aside for questions shall be no longer than 15 minutes.
- (g) No individual may ask more than two questions at each meeting.
- (h) Where there is more than one question on any particular subject or closely related subjects, the Executive Member may give a joint reply to the questions.
- (i) The committee clerk shall have power to edit or amend written questions to make them concise but without affecting the substance, following consultation with the questioner.
- (j) An answer may take the form of:
  - A direct oral answer;
  - Where the desired information is in a publication of the Council or other published work, a reference to that publication; or
  - Where the reply cannot conveniently be given orally, a written answer circulated later to the questioner within 5 working days provided the questioner has given contact details.
- (k) Priority shall normally be given to questions notified in advance.
- (l) The Chair may permit supplementary questions to be asked. Supplementary questions must arise directly out of the original question or the reply.
- (m) A question may be rejected by the committee clerk, or the Chair at the meeting, if it:
  - does not relate to the executive portfolio or the work of the committee;
  - is defamatory, frivolous or offensive;
  - is substantially the same as a question asked to the Executive Member at any meeting within the last six months;
  - requests the disclosure of information which is confidential or exempt; or
  - names, or clearly identifies, a member of staff or any other individual.