

Children, Young People and Family Support Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee

Thursday 19 November 2020 at 5.00 pm

To be held as an online video conference

The Press and Public are Welcome to Attend

Membership

Councillors Mick Rooney (Chair), Mike Levery (Deputy Chair), Mike Chaplin, Julie Grocutt, Francyne Johnson, Alan Law, Anne Murphy, Joe Otten, Kevin Oxley, Colin Ross, Jim Steinke, Alison Teal, Garry Weatherall, Sophie Wilson and Cliff Woodcraft

Education Non-Council Members

Alison Warner, Sam Evans, Peter Naldrett, Vacancy and Vacancy

Healthwatch Sheffield

Alice Riddell (Observer)

Substitute Members

In accordance with the Constitution, Substitute Members may be provided for the above Committee Members as and when required.

PUBLIC ACCESS TO THE MEETING

The Children, Young People and Family Support Scrutiny Committee exercises an overview and scrutiny function in respect of the planning, policy development and monitoring of service performance and other general issues relating to learning and attainment and the care of children and young people within the Children's Services area of Council activity. It also scrutinises as appropriate the various local Health Services functions, with particular reference to those relating to the care of children.

A copy of the agenda and reports is available on the Council's website at www.sheffield.gov.uk. You can also see the reports to be discussed at the meeting if you call at the First Point Reception, Town Hall, Pinstone Street entrance. The Reception is open between 9.00 am and 5.00 pm, Monday to Thursday and between 9.00 am and 4.45 pm. You may not be allowed to see some reports because they contain confidential information. These items are usually marked * on the agenda.

Members of the public have the right to ask questions or submit petitions to Scrutiny Committee meetings and recording is allowed under the direction of the Chair. Please see the website or contact Democratic Services for further information regarding public questions and petitions and details of the Council's protocol on audio/visual recording and photography at council meetings.

Scrutiny Committee meetings are normally open to the public but sometimes the Committee may have to discuss an item in private. If this happens, you will be asked to leave. Any private items are normally left until last. If you would like to attend the meeting please report to the First Point Reception desk where you will be directed to the meeting room.

If you require any further information about this Scrutiny Committee, please contact Alice Nicholson, Policy and Improvement Officer on 0114 27 35065 or [email alice.nicholson@sheffield.gov.uk](mailto:alice.nicholson@sheffield.gov.uk)

FACILITIES

There are public toilets available, with wheelchair access, on the ground floor of the Town Hall. Induction loop facilities are available in meeting rooms.

Access for people with mobility difficulties can be obtained through the ramp on the side to the main Town Hall entrance.

**CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILY SUPPORT SCRUTINY AND POLICY
DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE AGENDA
19 NOVEMBER 2020**

Order of Business

- 1. Welcome and Housekeeping Arrangements**
- 2. Apologies for Absence**
- 3. Exclusion of Public and Press**
To identify items where resolutions may be moved to exclude the press and public
- 4. Declarations of Interest** (Pages 5 - 8)
Members to declare any interests they have in the business to be considered at the meeting
- 5. Minutes of Previous Meeting** (Pages 9 - 20)
To approve the minutes of the meetings of Committee held on 15th October, 2020
- 6. Public Questions and Petitions**
To receive any questions or petitions from members of the public
- 7. Sheffield Youth Cabinet - Impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic on Young People in Sheffield** (Pages 21 - 24)
Members of the Youth Cabinet to present key areas and issues
- 8. Draft Work Programme 2020/21** (Pages 25 - 30)
Report of the Policy and Improvement Officer
- 9. Date of Next Meeting**
The next meeting of the Committee will be held on Thursday, 21st January, 2021, at 10.00 am

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ADVICE TO MEMBERS ON DECLARING INTERESTS AT MEETINGS

If you are present at a meeting of the Council, of its executive or any committee of the executive, or of any committee, sub-committee, joint committee, or joint sub-committee of the authority, and you have a **Disclosable Pecuniary Interest** (DPI) relating to any business that will be considered at the meeting, you must not:

- participate in any discussion of the business at the meeting, or if you become aware of your Disclosable Pecuniary Interest during the meeting, participate further in any discussion of the business, or
- participate in any vote or further vote taken on the matter at the meeting.

These prohibitions apply to any form of participation, including speaking as a member of the public.

You **must**:

- leave the room (in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct)
- make a verbal declaration of the existence and nature of any DPI at any meeting at which you are present at which an item of business which affects or relates to the subject matter of that interest is under consideration, at or before the consideration of the item of business or as soon as the interest becomes apparent.
- declare it to the meeting and notify the Council's Monitoring Officer within 28 days, if the DPI is not already registered.

If you have any of the following pecuniary interests, they are your **disclosable pecuniary interests** under the new national rules. You have a pecuniary interest if you, or your spouse or civil partner, have a pecuniary interest.

- Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain, which you, or your spouse or civil partner undertakes.
- Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from your council or authority) made or provided within the relevant period* in respect of any expenses incurred by you in carrying out duties as a member, or towards your election expenses. This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.

*The relevant period is the 12 months ending on the day when you tell the Monitoring Officer about your disclosable pecuniary interests.

- Any contract which is made between you, or your spouse or your civil partner (or a body in which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, has a beneficial interest) and your council or authority –
 - under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed; and
 - which has not been fully discharged.

- Any beneficial interest in land which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, have and which is within the area of your council or authority.
- Any licence (alone or jointly with others) which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, holds to occupy land in the area of your council or authority for a month or longer.
- Any tenancy where (to your knowledge) –
 - the landlord is your council or authority; and
 - the tenant is a body in which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, has a beneficial interest.
- Any beneficial interest which you, or your spouse or your civil partner has in securities of a body where -
 - (a) that body (to your knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of your council or authority; and
 - (b) either -
 - the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body; or
 - if the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which you, or your spouse or your civil partner, has a beneficial interest exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.

If you attend a meeting at which any item of business is to be considered and you are aware that you have a **personal interest** in the matter which does not amount to a DPI, you must make verbal declaration of the existence and nature of that interest at or before the consideration of the item of business or as soon as the interest becomes apparent. You should leave the room if your continued presence is incompatible with the 7 Principles of Public Life (selflessness; integrity; objectivity; accountability; openness; honesty; and leadership).

You have a personal interest where –

- a decision in relation to that business might reasonably be regarded as affecting the well-being or financial standing (including interests in land and easements over land) of you or a member of your family or a person or an organisation with whom you have a close association to a greater extent than it would affect the majority of the Council Tax payers, ratepayers or inhabitants of the ward or electoral area for which you have been elected or otherwise of the Authority's administrative area, or
- it relates to or is likely to affect any of the interests that are defined as DPIs but are in respect of a member of your family (other than a partner) or a person with whom you have a close association.

Guidance on declarations of interest, incorporating regulations published by the Government in relation to Disclosable Pecuniary Interests, has been circulated to you previously.

You should identify any potential interest you may have relating to business to be considered at the meeting. This will help you and anyone that you ask for advice to fully consider all the circumstances before deciding what action you should take.

In certain circumstances the Council may grant a **dispensation** to permit a Member to take part in the business of the Authority even if the member has a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest relating to that business.

To obtain a dispensation, you must write to the Monitoring Officer at least 48 hours before the meeting in question, explaining why a dispensation is sought and desirable, and specifying the period of time for which it is sought. The Monitoring Officer may consult with the Independent Person or the Council's Audit and Standards Committee in relation to a request for dispensation.

Further advice can be obtained from Gillian Duckworth, Director of Legal and Governance on 0114 2734018 or email gillian.duckworth@sheffield.gov.uk.

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SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL

Children, Young People and Family Support Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee

Meeting held 15 October 2020

(NOTE: This meeting was held as a remote meeting in accordance with the provisions of The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020.)

PRESENT: Councillors Mick Rooney (Chair), Mike Levery (Deputy Chair), Mike Chaplin, Julie Grocutt, Francyne Johnson, Alan Law, Kevin Oxley, Colin Ross, Jim Steinke, Sophie Wilson, Cliff Woodcraft, Peter Price (Substitute Member), Kaltum Rivers (Substitute Member) and Andrew Sangar (Substitute Member)

Non-Council Members in attendance:-

Alison Warner, (School Governor Representative - Non-Council Non-Voting Member)
Sam Evans, (Diocese Representative - Non-Council Voting Member)
Alice Riddell, (Healthwatch Sheffield, Observer)

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1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

- 1.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Joe Otten, Alison Teal and Garry Weatherall, with Councillors Andrew Sangar, Kaltum Rivers and Peter Price, respectively, attending as substitutes; and from Peter Naldrett (Parent Governor Representative - Non-Council Voting Member).

2. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

- 2.1 No items were identified where resolutions may be moved to exclude the public and press.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- 3.1 In relation to Agenda Item 7 (Return to School in Covid-19 – Update on Schools Fully Opening)), Sam Evans declared a personal interest as the Chief Executive of Philadelphia Network Ltd and also a Trustee, and which ran the S6 Foodbank, and was also involved separately in the Holiday Hunger Programme.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

- 4.1 The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 21st May 2020, were approved as a correct record, subject to the amendment of (a) Item 3 – Declarations of Interest, by the substitution, in paragraph 3.1, after the words “Forge

Youth” of the words “and is now a Director of Forge Youth's parent Charity, and indicated that he would not take part in any vote.” and (b) Item 5 – Call-In of the Cabinet Decision On Investing In Young People, by the replacement, in paragraph 5.5, after the words “on behalf of the Council since 2002, on a” of the number 50 with the number 15 so as to read “on behalf of the Council since 2002, on a on a 15 year contract”.

4.2 The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 26th June, 2020, were approved as a correct record.

4.3 Arising from the minutes of the meeting held on 21st May, 2020:-

4.3.1 The Cabinet Member for Education and Skills (Councillor Abtisam Mohamed) confirmed that she would check to make sure a detailed written response had been sent in relation to the public questions asked by Jane Peters, concerning home education. The Chair requested that the response was also provided to the Committee.

4.4 Arising from the minutes of the meeting held on 26th June, 2020:-

4.4.1 The Chair stated that in relation to paragraph 4.2 of the minutes, and concerning voice and influence of young people, he was determined that piece of work would be progressed. The Policy and Improvement Officer (Alice Nicholson) reported that she had made contact with the appropriate people in relation to youth voice and the Youth Council, and it was possible that this would be the subject of an item at the next meeting of the Committee.

4.4.2 The Chair reported that the work concerning the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) was also an issue for potential inclusion on the Committee's Work Programme, which would be considered later at this meeting.

4.4.3 In relation to written responses from the Executive Director, People Services, to questions asked by Helen Thompson, on behalf of the Sheffield Futures Board of Trustees, the Policy and Improvement Officer reported that she was following up this matter.

5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS

5.1 There were no questions or petitions received from members of the public.

6. RETURN TO SCHOOL IN COVID-19 - UPDATE ON SCHOOLS FULLY OPENING

6.1 The Committee received a report of the Executive Director, People Services concerning schools opening fully in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic. The report provided an update on the return to schools from September, 2020, and the support provided during the pandemic to date, including in relation to public health, school transport and health, safety and wellbeing.

- 6.2 In attendance for this item were Councillor Abtisam Mohamed (Cabinet Member for Education and Skills), Andrew Jones (Interim Director of Education and Skills (Sheffield City Council)), Stephen Betts (Chief Executive, Learn Sheffield). School Leaders in attendance were Cathy Rowland (Dobcroft Infant School), Sacha Schofield (Bents Green Special School), Chris French (Mercia Learning Trust) and Joanne Bradshaw (Sheffield South East Trust).
- 6.3 Andrew Jones introduced the report, stating that the pandemic had been an extremely challenging situation for providers, and he praised schools, education providers and childcare providers for how they had responded throughout. Schools and providers had remained open during the pandemic, and this was important in relation to the quality of education provision and to enable parents to go to work. From 15th June, 2020, Sheffield schools had opened more widely to other groups of children.
- 6.4 The Council and its partners in Learn Sheffield had provided a strong lead and support and had worked with schools and providers, including in relation to the public health team, which had provided ongoing support to schools both in relation to cases of Covid-19, and to ensure that guidance was easy to follow. Schools could report instances of Covid-19 to either Public Health England (PHE), the Department for Education (DfE) or to the local public health team. There were recent issues which had arisen with regard to whether headteachers could reasonably be expected to make decisions with regard to significant public health matters and which were being taken up with the DfE.
- 6.5 Some schools had experienced instances of Covid-19, with the majority of those being from community and home settings rather than transmission in schools. Support had been provided relating to provision of school food and schools supporting each other if there were kitchen staff shortages.
- 6.6 There was continuing focus on children with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), who were entitled to attend school during the lockdown to ensure that support and provision for them was as continuous as possible. School transport resumed in September. Attendance during the lockdown was between 20 to 25 percent of children still going to school and since September, it was approximately 87 percent in primary schools and 85 percent in secondary schools. Risk assessments for schools were in place and included mitigations which it was intended, together with campaigns, would help to ease parents' anxiety about children's safety and wellbeing, and would also affect attendance.
- 6.7 There had been a significant increase in the number of children who were electively home educated since September. Normally, there would be approximately 20 new children registered for home education. However, in September, there had been approximately 200, with most of the parents citing anxiety and concerns about Coronavirus as the reason for wanting to educate children at home.
- 6.8 There had been instances of children having to go home or because of the occurrence of Covid-19 in a school and in such cases, work was provided for children by schools.

- 6.9 Some 1800 laptops had been provided by the DfE to vulnerable children in the City, and a further laptop scheme had also been introduced. Schools had started to receive allocations from the Government catch up funding for a national tutoring service and individual support for children, and Learn Sheffield was working with schools in relation to maximising use of that funding.
- 6.10 Stephen Betts informed the Committee that the Covid-19 Recovery Festival comprised 20 events during September, and had been accessed by one thousand people. That would lead into a Covid-19 Recovery Plan, which included use of the catch up funding mentioned above.
- 6.11 There was a recent initiative by the WANdisco founder and Chief Executive, and supported by Learn Sheffield and the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills, for businesses to donate laptops for distribution to schools.
- 6.12 The invited school leaders - Sacha Schofield, Joanne Bradshaw, Cathy Rowland and Chris French then provided the Committee with an insight into the experience of schools during the period of the pandemic so far and this was summarised as follows:-
- 6.13 The support to schools provided by Learn Sheffield, the Council's Public Health Team and that of the Director of Education and Skills was acknowledged. Particular mention was made of the public health team's guidance in relation to the specific medical, social and emotional needs of students in the special sector and helping students with particular medical needs to go back to school. Students were happy to be back at school, and there was further work to be done to help support students with significant medical issues to get back to school.
- 6.14 These had been unprecedented and challenging times for education. Schools had remained open after 23rd March, 2020, and played a valuable role during the national lockdown. In Sheffield, there had been a city-wide strategy and collaborative effort in the education sector, regardless of status of school, and the valuable public health team advice to school leaders was gratefully acknowledged in interpreting Government guidance. Particular mention was made of the invaluable support provided by Bethan Plant and Greg Fell in the Public Health Team and to the roles of Andrew Jones and Stephen Betts and their colleagues in providing information and updates, as well as being there as a point of contact. Whilst children had returned to school, there was still anxiety and work to be done in relation to the health and wellbeing of pupils, parents and staff.
- 6.15 Food distribution and making sure that children and families were fed had been a key issue, and this had been supported by the Council. Mention was made of the Easter Hamper Scheme, which brought people together to deliver hampers to children and families and work with the voluntary food distribution sector to deliver food parcels to families. The national free school meals vouchers also served a purpose, although it was sometimes difficult to manage that scheme.
- 6.16 There had been significant progress in relation to learning at home and online learning could be provided. However, in addition to online learning, it had been necessary to deliver equipment including desks, chairs, pencils, paper and reading

books to families, to enable children to learn.

- 6.17 There had been good support from the Council. There was a lot of information from the DfE each day, and this did not always help deal with the practical matters. As a leader in school, it was a big responsibility to also consider public health matters and risk assessments in schools relating to Covid-19 and the support of the Public Health Team's expertise was invaluable. Attention was on day to day management of issues relating to the pandemic in schools, in addition to other leadership responsibilities. People all contributed to deliver things which may not be within their usual role and within the bubble structure in schools established to help keep people safe. The work of the unions was also acknowledged in relation to representing members and in looking at the right balance of the various considerations relating to schools for children and families and staff.
- 6.18 Issues such as catch up and recovery had to be set in context of managing the present circumstances and the consideration given to physical premises and staffing resources which may have to adapt each day to account for changes. Staffing was also affected by Covid-19 testing, the results of which might take four to five days, and self-isolation.
- 6.19 Families also had their own issues to contend with, in trying to support young people at home and also managing their own jobs and circumstances, so it was acknowledged to be potentially very difficult for families, regardless of the learning resources that schools might provide.
- 6.20 It was reaffirmed that the education sector was working together, regardless of a school's maintained or academy status and feeling part of a collective, rather than alone had been important for school leaders.
- 6.21 There had been a lot of effort put into safety and logistical planning and children had returned to schools strongly on the whole and parents were confident in the overwhelming majority of cases. Nonetheless, there were emerging challenges and a varied picture in schools, including an increase in absences due to contact tracing and cases of Covid-19 in communities affecting schools, and which impacted upon pupil and staff absence, school leadership and support and other staffing areas, including dinner teams.
- 6.22 In the Mercia Trust, staff absence had been significant although schools had continued to run. There was pressure, particularly on senior staff as regards school organisation relating to Covid-19 and in ensuring they were present in school. Positively, the statistics relating to wellbeing and behaviour were good, and this was indicative of the high profile of staff and children wishing to get back to school. There were children in relation to which there had been concerns prior to the pandemic, and that remained to be the case. It was, however, relatively early to make a judgement, and the evidence suggested that issues relating to wellbeing may occur later in time.
- 6.23 There were challenges in managing pupil absence when pupils were absent through contact tracing and in setting work for pupils to do at home, which was appropriate. The offer for remote education was a combination of virtual and hard

- copy resources and was challenging in relation to expectations for remote learning. There was some anxiety, especially for older students, such as those seeking university places or an apprenticeship.
- 6.24 It would be demanding to sustain the present levels effort throughout the year. There were also unknown factors which would affect schools, for example, significant expenditure on outdoor covered areas to supplement dining rooms.
- 6.25 Whilst things had been challenging, schools were open and did feel reasonably settled. However, disruptions could be profound and it was likely that there would be more disruption and absences over time. There was a reliance on schools being even more resilient and developing a robust remote learning offer. There was not yet clarity concerning end of year outcomes, both for primary and secondary schools, including for Key Stages 4 and 5. A number of things that had been put in place in schools and driven by safety expectations were likely to remain after the pandemic, and which had positive effects on student behaviour, supervision or general wellbeing.
- 6.26 Members of the Committee raised questions, and the following responses were provided:-
- 6.27 There were legal requirements for remote learning and considerations with regards to age appropriate facilities and activities for learning. Parents also needed to be able to manage to support such remote learning in the context of other family and job-related circumstances. Attendance and home education were areas of focus for the Council. Some parents were understandably anxious, and that was the background to some issues with attendance. The Council would seek to understand what lay behind those anxieties and to work with families and provide reassurance, rather than pursuing a punitive approach and issuing fines to people in relation to non-attendance in the current term. Attendance officers had been allocated to help provide such support to families.
- 6.28 Whilst the Council and the Government had run back to school campaigns during the summer, there were concerns that the media reporting was that parents would be fined if children did not return to school, and this may have contributed to an increase in elective home education, as parents were worried that they would be fined if children were absent. Checks and balances were being put in place through Multi Agency Support Teams (MAST) as a priority, which provided safe and well checks for children that were home educated. In relation to the provision and plans, families had to support children educated at home, there was one teacher assigned to that role in Sheffield. This was not adequate in the present circumstances of increased numbers of children educated at home and therefore, teachers had been allocated from the SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) and Lifelong Learning teams, together with additional business support to process applications. There was a protocol in Sheffield that children could return to school within 12 weeks of parents choosing for them to be home educated. There was also a concern as regards home educated children in relation to the timing of the school census of numbers of children on roll. The census outcomes affected funding for schools and the Council, and there would potentially be reduced resources available to support the children in school, if a parent chose to return their child to

- school following a period of home education. It might also be difficult for children to return to oversubscribed schools at a later date. These concerns were being taken up with the Government in order that such problems might be alleviated.
- 6.29 With regard to mental health in school settings and whether there was adequate and timely support and what would improve it, there were issues of long waiting times for access to assessments for children at Ryegate Children's Centre.
- 6.30 Questions were asked as to whether parents were aware of the available foodbanks and how they might be encouraged to access them, and also with regard staff absence and remote learning and what planning and preparation was taking place.
- 6.31 There were often initial announcements made by the Government, with full guidance to follow, and this was sometimes too late to allow for proper planning. There were issues in making sense of the guidance, although there was support locally and collectively, and it was an additional issue for school leaders. There was not, in the generic guidance, an appreciation of children with particular needs, including medical needs and the public health team had supported schools with interpreting the guidance. It had been difficult to manage transport for children who were unable to wear a mask or to socially distance. It was also challenging to reassure staff with health needs that the measures in place were to help protect them. There was sometimes inconsistency between different sets of guidance, such as for schools and care settings.
- 6.32 Regarding end of year outcomes and planning in relation to exams and assessment and what discussions were being held with the government in that regard, there were regular conversations with the DfE. The situation with regard to exams was less than satisfactory. Secondary schools had been affected differently during the pandemic, with some having experienced no cases of Covid-19 to date and others having been affected by repeated incidences affecting pupils. There had also been the apparent decision to permit headteachers to make decisions about which pupils should be sent home in the context of Covid-19. These factors led to a variation in provision both in Sheffield, regionally and nationally. The case was being put to the DfE that that was not clarity about how exams and standardised assessments could be equitable, given that variation. A further report could be provided to the Committee on that matter.
- 6.33 In relation to whether there was consensus as to what form exams and assessment might take in 2021, there was a degree of unanimity on the issue in the City, and it was noted that Scotland had provided a clearer steer for schools. Equity was the key issue, and it was likely that different forms of assessment would be employed. However, there was a concern that a timely decision had not been made by the Government. Sheffield schools had been working with a national campaign entitled 'Worth Less', which had campaigned in relation to school funding, and had broadened its remit to include other issues.
- 6.34 With regard to school transport and the maintenance of bubbles formed in schools, it was considered that students attending a special school, for example, might come from different geographical areas and whilst they may be in one bubble in school, that would change when they travelled to and from school. Whilst the matter had

been considered by Transport Services, because of the logistics and cost, the bubbles established within school could not necessarily be replicated for school transport. However, schools had worked with Transport Services in relation to providing visual support, transport staff wore masks and school start and finish times were staggered. This was an issue for special schools and in mainstream schools. In secondary schools, and on public transport, students wore masks. However, some students were exempt, and that was being partially addressed in special schools by encouraging students that were able to tolerate wearing a mask, to do so. For mainstream schools, children could sit in zones on transport. The ability of headteachers to directly influence what happened once students were on transport, and to enforce pupil bubbles or social distancing, was probably relatively limited. It had not been possible to provide sufficient transport capacity to maintain pupil bubbles on transport, for larger secondary schools for example.

- 6.35 As regards broadband access and laptops, the DfE laptop scheme used an algorithm to determine laptop allocation to schools and also the likely broadband connectivity in homes. Some laptops included a wifi dongle to enable connectivity remotely at home and others did not. Some Trusts had, from their own resources, provided laptops and devices for pupils. Out of 1800 laptops allocated, approximately 1700 were based on whether a child had an allocated social worker and 50 were for year 11 students (based on eligibility for free school meals). From September, eligibility for Year 3 and above was based upon eligibility for free school meals and schools asking parents about the level of technology kit they had available.
- 6.36 It had been found that access to devices, rather than wifi, was a barrier to remote learning, and some schools had purchased devices and others had been obtained through the DfE scheme for students to use in school and at home. There had been some issues concerning the wifi codes provided by the DfE which might not work in some areas of the City, and schools had purchased dongles and cards to enable access in such circumstances. A blended mix of physical and virtual learning resources was required and consideration also had to be given to the capacity of parents and families to support learning.
- 6.37 In response to questions concerning the role of OfSTED and the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) in inspecting schools and the additional related pressure on schools, the Committee was informed that the Council did provide challenge to the DfE in a number of areas. It was not thought that the use of OfSTED inspections would be a useful intervention, and there were other means of gathering information from schools concerning the response to the Covid-19 pandemic without using OfSTED inspections. The issue of HSE visits was also raised, and it had been pointed out that the HSE was a relevant statutory body.
- 6.38 OfSTED activity to examine the effectiveness of Covid-19 related school operations was continuing in some schools in the City that were within the OfSTED window and this did create additional demands. It was important that the focus was on keeping schools open, quality of teaching and pupil attendance and maintaining day to day school for children.
- 6.39 It had been possible for schools to provide hot meals, and where it was not

possible, that had been due to operational issues. The Council's partner, Taylor Shaw had provided meals to schools, even if it had not been contracted to do so, such as in an Academy Trust, where senior leaders had undertaken basic food hygiene training to enable them to serve food. Cold meals were sometimes provided due to operational issues.

- 6.40 The ambition was to widen the provision of hot meals, although it was the case that kitchen staff might also be affected by outbreaks of Covid-19 and may have to self-isolate. Such staff were also vulnerable because of the proximity to others in which they worked. There were also logistical matters to consider to maintain the integrity of pupil bubbles, and which meant that dinner times had become longer and this affected the ability to serve hot meals in some schools. In other schools, pupils ate in classrooms. Taylor Shaw had worked with schools to facilitate the provision of hot meals, which might be served in classrooms using biodegradable containers. There was also additional cleaning to be done after meals were eaten.
- 6.41 With regard to the three possible ways of schools reporting cases of Covid-19 and in response, it was stated that the situation was not ideal and parents themselves could also report cases by using the NHS Coronavirus 119 telephone number and advice to parents may be inconsistent with the advice that a school was given. A particular concern related to the potential for headteachers being put in the position of having to make their own decisions in relation to reported cases of Covid-19, and representations were being made to the DfE in that regard.
- 6.42 Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) continued to be processed and legislation earlier in the pandemic for more flexible timescales had now ceased. In September, more applications were completed than new ones received. In respect of Ryegate Children's Centre, concerns outlined at this meeting as regards commissioning of mental health services would be looked at further with commissioners, and an update would be provided for this Committee.
- 6.43 Educational Psychologists were able to make on site visits, where that was appropriate. There were also concerns about access to speech and language therapists not making visits to schools, and that issue was being picked up with the relevant commissioners.
- 6.44 As regards elective home education, many parents made a positive choice about elective home educating their child and did so for a number of reasons. At this time, there was a large number of parents citing concerns about Covid-19 as being part of the reasons for home education. Balanced advice was provided to parents and the 12-week time period in which they might return their child to school was also made clear, and it was important to make sure parents were well informed in relation to home education.
- 6.45 In relation to continuation of learning and assessment and examinations, and in being able to look at students' work during the year, there had been some gaps in students' education and it had become apparent that the mental health of students had been affected by missing several months' work and attempting to catch up, and also because of periods of self-isolation for some students. Primary schools would most likely wish for teacher assessment to be recognised as a valid method of

measuring progress for the remainder of the year, instead of Key Stage 2 SATS. For Year 1 children, phonic tests had been delayed until December, and might not be considered a priority at this time. There had been an effect on children in relation to their reading, which was an example of how pupils would need to catch up in other areas of learning. For secondary schools, alternative plans would be required in relation to how exams might be carried out and which were equitable and also, if that was not possible, clarity as regards assessment and collecting evidence, particularly for Year 11 and Year 13 students.

- 6.46 As regards free school meals during school holidays, the Council had requested the Government to extend free school meals into the holidays. However, for the upcoming half term holiday, and at this point, it was not the case that free school meals would be provided.
- 6.47 In relation whether pupils would be able to catch up, in the first half term, schools were assessing children young to ascertain their attainment and whether there had been any effect on their progress. There would be associated programmes of study and schools would be allocated funding from the catch-up programme and sharing of best practice was enabled through Learn Sheffield. There was also work with other organisations, including the Education Endowment Fund, to ensure that support was targeted appropriately. There was a mixed picture as to whether students had fallen behind with learning, and that might depend upon a range of factors, such as learning from home during the summer term and resources to which they had access.
- 6.48 As regards city-wide data regarding absences and attendance and whether contingency plans had been developed should schools have to close, attendance data was produced via an online portal introduced by the DfE on which schools completed a daily return, which was not mandatory. A local collection system had been in place prior to May, which it was considered was more accurate than the DfE portal. The DfE portal relied upon the manual input of data. The Council data team checked the DfE data to identify anomalies and errors. It had been suggested by the Council to the DfE that the management information systems used by schools could be utilised for data collection purposes.
- 6.49 With respect to operating models, monitoring the most effective ways of moving students around schools and good practice in secondary schools operating larger bubbles, some case studies were being developed with secondary schools so that best practice might be shared.
- 6.50 Members of the Committee also made comments in respect of:-
- encouraging parents to wear face coverings wherever possible;
 - an appreciation of the difficult challenges facing schools and the work that schools did working together effectively, as demonstrated during the period of the pandemic; and
 - it was positive that schools were looking at best practice as regards running

larger schools

6.51 RESOLVED: That the Committee:-

- (a) thanks the School Leaders - Cathy Rowland (Dobcroft Infant School), Sacha Schofield (Bents Green Special School), Chris French (Mercia Learning Trust), Joanne Bradshaw (Sheffield South East Trust) and Andrew Jones (Interim Director of Education and Skills (Sheffield City Council)), Stephen Betts (Chief Executive, Learn Sheffield) for attending the meeting and for their contributions;
- (b) further, thanks everyone working in schools in the City for the collaborative and co-operative way in which they have come together during the Covid-19 pandemic to ensure schools are open, regardless of the type of school or sector in which they educate and support children and young people in Sheffield;
- (c) requests the Executive Director, People Services, to examine the following matters which were of particular concern to this Committee and to report to this Committee accordingly:-
 - (i) clarity in relation to the examinations and assessment for pupils and students in primary and secondary schools, most notably for those at Key Stages 4 and 5;
 - (ii) with regard to Ryegate Children's Centre:-
 - to provide an understanding of the current situation with regard to the Centre, given the concerns expressed to the Committee about substantial waiting lists and the potential effect on access to healthcare services to children and young people with physical and mental health needs, whilst noting that this matter is also included on the Committee's Work Programme;
 - that all Members of the Council be informed of the situation as regards the Centre accordingly;
 - (iii) that access for children and young people to speech and language services, and matters affecting special schools at this time, be further examined, and that all Members of the Council be informed about what was happening as appropriate;
 - (iv) the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on elective home schooling and related issues affecting schools, including those relating to school places and resources, which might be further affected by increased numbers of children educated at home;
 - (v) provision of free school meals in school holiday periods and access by families to services provided by food banks in the City;

- (vi) the accuracy of data collected by the DfE relating to attendance and absence in schools and the prospect of using local collection of absence rates;
 - (vii) to examine plans relating to schools to deal with potential increased staff absences due to Covid-19;
 - (viii) further information be provided to this Committee as regards access to digital learning and resources and digital exclusion of children in the context of Covid-19; and
 - (ix) concerns about the speed of assessment of 'catch up' for pupils and the delivery of the school curriculum;
- (d) on its behalf, requests the Chair and Deputy Chair to write to the Sheffield Members of Parliament on a number of issues of concern, namely OfSTED and the need for visits to schools at this point, free school meals during holidays and exams in 2021; and
- (e) requests the Policy and Improvement Officer to provide the information considered at this meeting, and concerning the return to school in the pandemic and schools and the webcast of this meeting of the Committee to all Members of the Council, for information.

7. DRAFT WORK PROGRAMME 2020/21

- 7.1 The Policy and Improvement Officer (Alice Nicholson) presented the Committee draft Work Programme for 2020/21 and updated Members on forthcoming items for consideration by the Committee, which would include Home Schooling, the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS), the impact of Covid-19 restrictions on children and young people, educational disadvantage and catch-up plans, and updates on Multi Agency Support Teams (MAST) and youth services in-house.

8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

- 8.1 It was noted that the next meeting of the Committee would be held on Thursday, 19th November 2020, at 10.00 am.



Report to Children, Young People & Family Support Scrutiny & Policy Development Committee Thursday 19th November 2020

Report of: Policy and Improvement Officer

Subject: Sheffield Youth Cabinet – Impact of Covid-19 Pandemic on Young People in Sheffield

Author of Report: Alice Nicholson, Policy and Improvement Officer
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0114 273 5065

This item is members of Sheffield Youth Cabinet presenting key areas and issues of concern for them as the Covid-19 pandemic impacts on their lives. There is a brief report *Sheffield Youth Cabinet – Scrutiny Preparation Paper* that outlines the key areas they feel are of most importance, and areas for recommendations.

In early 2020 this Committee made recommendations to Cabinet on *Voice and Involvement of Young People in Scrutiny*, included recommendations are share Scrutiny Work Programme on a regular basis with Youth Cabinet so that they can engage in issues of interest; and Youth Cabinet be invited to scrutiny meetings on a regular basis. Covid-19 has disrupted usual scrutiny meeting and work programming arrangements, this item today is an opportunity to establish the good practice the Committee recommended last year.

Type of item: The report author should tick the appropriate box

Reviewing of existing policy	
Informing the development of new policy	
Performance / budget monitoring report	
Cabinet request for scrutiny	
Full Council request for scrutiny	
Call-in of Cabinet decision	
Other	X

The Scrutiny Committee is being asked to:

- Consider the information presented by Youth Cabinet on the impact of Covid-19 pandemic, including their recommendations.
- Determine if there is an area of interest for this Committee to delve into through the Committee's work programme activity.

Background Papers: Voice and Involvement of Young People in Scrutiny – see [Cabinet 18 March 2020](#)

Category of Report: OPEN

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Sheffield Youth Cabinet - Scrutiny Preparation Paper

Background

The impact of Covid-19 on children and young people has continued to be a concern of the Youth Cabinet throughout. Over April to June Sheffield Youth Cabinet inputted the views of young people from Sheffield into a Yorkshire and Humber Youth Voice views on education report that was fed into MP's, key government departments and other relevant areas.

In preparation for the scheduled meeting with the Scrutiny Committee on the 19th November a discussion was held with the Youth Cabinet around their experiences throughout the last 9 months, the impact that Covid-19 has had on them and other young people and the support they feel young people need moving forward. This brief report outlines the key areas they feel are of most importance and areas for recommendations.

The key areas they feel are important are:

- 1) Mental Health – the support needs and requirements of young people as well as recognising the difference community-based provision such as youth work and sporting clubs make and widening the access
- 2) Careers – This area includes, careers guidance, education around different industries and education and work opportunities, the impact of covid-19 on work experience and volunteering opportunities in different industries which may be impacting on future course choices,
- 3) Exams – the impact of missed education on college/ university choices and how previously attainable options such as medicine young people are not seeing as not an option due to missed education and the impact this may have on final grades and thoughts on exams 2021 and whether they could be assessed in a different way
- 4) Education – The impact of covid-19 has meant that some schools are not able to do practical work at the moment and there are concerns about the young people who learn in a practical way and whether this could cause them to disengage or what impact this might have on young people picking their GCSE options this year. There are also concerns from some who aren't bubbled in academic sets that this may have an impact on education. A further concern was raised around school uniform policies, cost and the impact of covid 19 safety measures.

Areas for recommendations from the young people:

- 1) Schools across the city need to be more consistent in their approach to communications
- 2) All round careers guidance education around different industries and progression routes
- 3) More access to youth provision, sports and other opportunities to greater support young people.
- 4) Consider how young people can gain work experience, especially in the current climate to help them make choices in key years such as Y9, Y11 and Y13.
- 5) Consider impact on exams and how else we can moderate young people

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Report to Children, Young People and Family Support Scrutiny & Policy Development Committee Thursday 19th November 2020

Report of: Policy and Improvement Officer

Subject: Draft Work Programme 2020/21: Children, Young People and Family Support Scrutiny & Policy Development Committee

Author of Report: Alice Nicholson, Policy and Improvement Officer
alice.nicholson@sheffield.gov.uk

The usual pattern of meetings has been disrupted by Covid-19, meetings are being held virtually, and this Committee met May, June, October, and now November 2020. There are two more meetings scheduled in January and February 2021.

A current work programme for 2020/21 is attached at Appendix 1 for the Committee's consideration and discussion. Scrutiny work programmes are live documents, so are subject to change, there may be occasion when other appropriate items are swapped into the schedule. This work programme includes possible items to be scheduled as put forward by the Committee, and the Committee is asked to prioritise and agree the remaining items to be scheduled in line with sections of this report that refer to role of scrutiny. Section 2.0 is a guide to assist with determining the work programme.

Type of item: The report author should tick the appropriate box

Reviewing of existing policy	
Informing the development of new policy	
Statutory consultation	
Performance / budget monitoring report	
Cabinet request for scrutiny	
Full Council request for scrutiny	
Call-in of Cabinet decision	
Briefing paper for the Scrutiny Committee	
Other	X

The Scrutiny Committee is being asked to:

- Consider and discuss the committee's work programme for 2020/21
- Prioritise and agree remaining items to be scheduled

Background Papers: [Sheffield Council Constitution](#)

Category of Report: OPEN

Draft Work Programme 2020/21: Children, Young People and Family Support Scrutiny Committee - Thursday 19th November 2020

1.0 What is the role of Scrutiny?

1.1 Scrutiny Committees exist to hold decision makers to account, investigate issues of local concern, and make recommendations for improvement. The Centre for Governance and Scrutiny (formerly the Centre for Public Scrutiny) has identified that effective scrutiny:

- Provides 'Critical Friend' challenge to executive policy makers and decision makers
- Enables the voice and concern of the public and its communities
- Is carried out by independent minded governors who lead and own the scrutiny process
- Drives improvement in public services and finds efficiencies and new ways of delivering services

1.2 The Centre for Governance and Scrutiny has updated its activity with several blogs and handy advice for scrutiny in Covid-19, and the Covid Act. These can be found on their web pages - <https://www.cfgs.org.uk/> .

1.3 Scrutiny Committees can operate in a number of ways – through formal meetings with several agenda items, single item 'select committee' style meetings, task and finish groups, and informal visits and meetings to gather evidence to inform scrutiny work. Committees can hear from Council Officers, Cabinet Members, partner organisations, expert witnesses, members of the public. Scrutiny Committees are not decision making bodies, but can make recommendations to decision makers.

2.0 Determining the work programme

2.1 It is important the work programme reflects the principles of effective scrutiny, outlined above at 1.1, and so the Committee has a vital role in ensuring that the work programme is looking at issues that concern local people, and looking at issues where scrutiny can influence decision makers. The work programme remains a live document, and there will be an opportunity for the Committee to discuss it at every Committee meeting, this might include:

- Prioritising issues for inclusion on a meeting agenda
- Identifying new issues for scrutiny
- Determining the appropriate approach for an issue – e.g. select committee style single item agenda vs task and finish group
- Identifying appropriate witnesses and sources of evidence to inform scrutiny discussions
- Identifying key lines of enquiry and specific issues that should be addressed through scrutiny of any given issue.

- 2.2 Where an issue is not appropriate for inclusion on a meeting agenda, but there is significant interest from members, the Committee can choose to request a written briefing.
- 2.3 Members of the Committee can also raise any issues for the work programme via the Chair or Policy and Improvement Officer at any time.

3.0 Meeting Dates 2020/21

- 3.1 Meetings have been scheduled for Thursdays 10am-12pm on the following dates:
- 21st January 2021
 - 25th February 2021

4.0 Recommendations

- 4.1 The Scrutiny Committee is being asked to:
- Consider and discuss the committee's work programme for 2020/21
 - Prioritise and agree remaining items to be scheduled

Children, Young People & Family Support Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee

CURRENT WORK PROGRAMME 2020/21

Last updated: 10th November 2020

Please note: the work programme is a live document and so is subject to change.

Children, Young People & Family Support		Thursdays 10am-12pm	
Topic	Reasons for selecting topic	Lead Member/Officer/contact	Agenda Item/ Briefing Paper/Task Group
Thursday 21st May 2020 3:00pm			
Call-in of the Cabinet Decision on Investing in Young People	Scrutinise this decision and agree Committee's course of action	Jackie Drayton, Cabinet Member for Children and Families, Abtisam Mohammed, Cabinet Member for Education and Skills; John Macilwraith, Executive director, People, Sam Martin, Head of Commissioning	Agenda Item
Friday 26th June 2020 10:00am			
Request by the Scrutiny Committee for Further Information Following the Call-in of the Decision on Investing in Young People	Consider the further information supplied and as per the Scrutiny Procedure rules determine if it wishes to make recommendations to the Executive on the called-in decision "Investing in Young People"	Jackie Drayton, Cabinet Member for Children and Families; John Macilwraith, Executive director, People	Agenda Item

Thursday 15th October 2020
2:00pm

<i>Return to School in Covid-19 - Update on Schools Fully Opening</i>	<i>Consideration of update on schools returning September 2020, support for and issues faced</i>	<i>Cabinet Member for Education and Skills, Andrew Jones, Interim Director for Education, School Leaders across the city estate</i>	<i>Agenda Item</i>
<i>Draft Work Programme 2020/21</i>	<i>Consideration of draft work programme for remainder of this municipal year</i>	<i>Policy & Improvement Officer</i>	<i>Agenda Item</i>

Thursday 19th November 5:00pm

Impact of Covid-19 pandemic on Young People in Sheffield	Hear from Young People in Sheffield (Sheffield Youth Cabinet) the impact of the pandemic on their education, work, health, and pressing issue that scrutiny could investigate further - future restrictions, educational disadvantage, what do young people want to see happen to minimise impact	Members of Sheffield Youth Cabinet	Agenda Item
Draft Work Programme 2020/21	Consideration of draft work programme for remainder of this municipal year	Policy & Improvement Officer	Agenda Item

Thursday 21st January 2021
10:00am

Youth Services - Sheffield City Council	Update on Youth Services, structure and operational plan after bringing in house October 2020	Cabinet Members for Children and Families and for Education and Skills; John Macilwraith, Dawn Shaw	Agenda Item
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Safeguarding Children's Board Annual Report	Holding to account - consider Annual Report; and impact of new safeguarding policies and practices	Chair of Sheffield Children Safeguarding Partnership; Cabinet Member for Children and Families; others TBC	Agenda Item
Sheffield Sexual Exploitation Service Annual Report		TBC	Agenda Item
Thursday 25th February 2021 10:00am			
Possible items to be scheduled - Agenda Item/ Briefing Paper/Task Group			
Ryegate House & CAMHS	Ryegate House – impact of Covid-19 and accessibility to services; CAMHS - impact of Covid-19 pandemic	TBC	Agenda Item
Exams 2021, educational disadvantage and catch up plans	Should 2021 exams be cancelled, what are catch up plans, is there evidence of increased educational disadvantage in Sheffield due to Covid-19 /lockdown?	TBC	
Home Schooling	Impact of Covid-19, an alternative to school; and safeguarding of those home schooled	TBC	
MAST	Update on provision, a current position briefing on this service, and its support role in pandemic response	TBC	