
SOUTHAMPTON CITY COUNCIL
HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 7 DECEMBER 2017

Present: Councillors Bogle (Chair), White (Vice-Chair), P Baillie, Houghton, Mintoff and Savage

Apologies: Councillors Noon

18. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (INCLUDING MATTERS ARISING)**

RESOLVED: that the minutes for the Panel meeting on 26 October 2017 be approved and signed as a correct record.

19. **UPDATE ON CHILD HEALTH IN SOUTHAMPTON**

The Panel considered the report of the Director of Public Health outlining progress against the Children and Young People's Strategy to date.

Donna Chapman (Associate Director of the Integrated Commissioning Unit), Jason Horsley (Director of Public Health), Hilary Brooks (Service Director – Children and Families), Felicity Ridgeway (Service Lead - Policy, Partnerships and Strategic Planning) and Councillor Shields (Cabinet Member for Health and Community Safety) were in attendance and, with the consent of the Chair, addressed the meeting.

The Panel explored issues relating to child health in Southampton and discussed a number of matters including:

- How high levels of employment have not led to social mobility. Areas with higher levels of deprivation in Southampton in general perform less well against the indicators used to measure child health;
- The success of early years provision and outcomes in Southampton. However, the Panel noted that attainment and health outcomes drop off as children get older. The Panel noted the levels of childhood obesity in Southampton and that rates of obesity increased as children progress through the school system;
- The need to get children “school ready” and focus on early identification and intervention. Good education leads to better health outcomes. It was noted that the emphasis on education within London’s boroughs could potentially explain how boroughs like Hackney, with a high level of deprivation, produced better outcomes against the indicators than Southampton. However, it was also noted that another potential explanation, for the areas such as Hackney, performing better than might be expected, could be the changing demographics in the area;
- Examples of good practice within some schools in the City relating to reducing obesity were discussed. The Panel were keen to promote good practice and encourage it to be embedded across all schools to ensure that outcomes at all schools reflect the best performing schools;

- Budget pressures, particularly Public Health reductions, increased risks and can lead to targeted services being delivered at the expense of universal services;
- The Panel considered the potential of targeted projects like the 'Pause Project' that works with those who have experienced, or are at risk of, repeat removals of children from their care and aims to break this cycle, and spending on projects that have a wider reaching for example: campaigns that targeting risky behaviours; the promotion of daily activity for children; and tackling smoking and pregnancy rates;
- The merits and strength of evidence relating to the siting of fast food restaurants near to schools. The Panel discussed how the Council's Planning Policies may need to be strengthened so that all school ages were included when considering applications for fast food restaurants located near to schools;
- The Mental health of Southampton's children. The Panel discussed: the accuracy of the data available; how schools were responding to recent tragic episodes; identifying those at risk and how schools should best support them. The Panel discussed the University of Southampton's 'Lifelab' project and encouraged wider use of this resource;
- How tackling road safety and providing the correct signage encouraged children and their parents to walk to school; and
- The need for child health to be a focus across all of the City Council's policies and areas of influence.

RESOLVED that the Panel:

- (i) noted the progress against the Children and Young People's strategy to date;
- (ii) encouraged officers across the Authority to consider children's health when formulating Council policy;
- (iii) requested that Officers continue support and encourage schools within the City to share and incorporate best practice to improve child health outcomes;
- (iv) expressed its support for the development of projects like the Lifelab and the Pause Project; and
- (v) encouraged officers to review policies relating to the siting of fast food restaurants near schools and stressed how important it was to continue to consider the implications of pedestrian safety and noted that safe and effective walking routes to schools.