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**SOUTHAMPTON CITY COUNCIL**  
**CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SCRUTINY PANEL**  
**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 26 SEPTEMBER 2024**

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**Present:** Councillors Barnes-Andrews (Chair), Webb (Vice-Chair), Chapman, Allen, G Lambert, Beaurain and Y Frampton  
Appointed Members:

**Apologies:** Appointed Members: Rob Sanders and Catherine Hobbs

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

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 28 August 2024 be approved and signed as a correct record.

16. **THE YOUTH JUSTICE SERVICE**

The Panel considered the report of the Executive Director - Children and Learning providing an update on the performance of the Youth Justice Service in Southampton.

Councillor Winning - Cabinet Member for Children and Learning, Rob Henderson - Executive Director for Children's Services and Learning, Tim Nelson - Head of Young People's Services and Anna Harbridge - Youth Service Manager were in attendance and, with the consent of the Chair, addressed the meeting.

The Panel discussed a number of points including:

- The improving picture regarding youth offending outcomes in Southampton and the effectiveness of the Youth Justice Service.
- The reduction in the number of children and young people from Southampton in custody compared to 2023.
- The positive impact of the alternative to custody packages and its impact on court decisions regarding offenders being remanded to custody.
- The reduction in caseloads for Youth Justice Service case holders following the appointment of additional case managers.
- The increasing effectiveness of the Safe City Partnership's response to serious incidents in the city.
- That, despite the cohort of the Youth Justice Serving having the worst attainment outcomes and attendance outcomes of young people in Southampton, the Panel noted some encouraging and welcome actions and approaches being delivered to support improved education outcomes for young offenders in the city.
- The data lag that exists for Youth Justice performance indicators.

**RESOLVED** That, reflecting current poor outcomes and the actions being undertaken to improve performance, the Panel is provided with the updated education outcomes for young people in Southampton involved with the Youth Justice System once the national comparator data is available.

17. **SOUTHAMPTON SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN PARTNERSHIP (SSCP) ANNUAL REPORT**

The Panel considered the report of the Southampton Safeguarding Children Partnership (SSCP) outlining the activity of the Safeguarding Children Partnership during 2023 - 2024 in response to the strategic priorities 2023 – 2026.

Scott Mackechnie, Independent Scrutineer of the Southampton Safeguarding Children Partnership, Councillor Winning - Cabinet Member for Children and Learning, and Rob Henderson - Executive Director for Children's Services and Learning were in attendance and, with the consent of the Chair, addressed the meeting.

The Panel explored a number of issues including:

- Performance against the 5 strategic priorities of the Safeguarding Partnership, particularly:
  - Confidence that the Youth Justice Service and partners are working effectively to reduce levels of serious youth violence in Southampton.
  - What the increase in cases of neglect tells us about the effectiveness of the work of the Partnership's approach to neglect.
  - The profile of the issue of education participation amongst partners and if there is now a greater recognition by partners of the impact that school attendance has on a range of outcomes across the city.
  - Partners enthusiasm about the Family Safeguarding Model.
- The merger of the Adult and Children Safeguarding Boards, the advantages and risks of this decision, and whether the Independent Scrutineer was aware of other local authorities that have combined their safeguarding boards.

**RESOLVED** that following the creation of the Southampton Children and Adults Safeguarding Partnership (SCASP), the Panel invite the Independent Scrutineer to a meeting of the Panel in 2025/26 to consider the effectiveness of the new safeguarding partnership arrangements.

#### 18. **CHILDREN AND LEARNING - PERFORMANCE AND TRANSFORMATION**

The Panel considered the report of the Scrutiny Manager recommending that the Panel consider and challenge the performance of Children's Services and Learning in Southampton.

Laura Trevett - Strategic Performance Manager, Councillor Winning - Cabinet Member for Children and Learning, and Rob Henderson - Executive Director for Children's Services and Learning were in attendance and, with the consent of the Chair, addressed the meeting.

The Panel discussed a number of points including:

- The potential reasons for the increase in re-referrals during August.
- The reasons for the majority of visiting and supervision targets being missed in August and for much of 2024/25.
- The number of foster carers, the drive to recruit new foster carers, and the role Newton (Europe) are playing in facilitating an increase in the number of SCC foster carers with an expectation that the number will rise from January 2025.

**RESOLVED** That, reflecting the reported increase in the rate of re-referrals in August 2024, the audit that is currently being conducted on re-referrals is circulated to the Panel upon completion.

19. **MONITORING SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Panel received and noted the report of the Scrutiny Manager recommending that the Panel consider the responses to recommendations from previous meetings.