

Note of last Children & Young People Board meeting

Title: Children & Young People Board
Date: Thursday 15 October 2015
Venue: Bayview Suite, Bournemouth International Centre, Exeter Road,
Bournemouth BH2 5BH

Attendance

An attendance list is attached as **Appendix A** to this note

Item	Decisions and actions	Action
1	Welcome and Declarations of Interest Cllr Roy Perry welcomed the board to his first meeting as Chair. He thanked Cllr David Simmonds for his work as the previous Chair and congratulated him on recently becoming a father. He also thanked the officers involved with the organisation of the 2015 NCAS Conference for their work. Declarations of Interest There were no declarations of interest.	
2	iMPower Research on the Ofsted Single Inspection Framework The Chair introduced the Chief Executive of iMPower, Amanda Kelly, to the board. Amanda was asked to present the main findings of iMPower's research on the effectiveness of the current Ofsted Single Inspection Framework. This research was published at the NCAS Conference. By way of context, the Chair noted that too few local authorities are achieving 'outstanding' ratings under the new Ofsted framework, and too many are being rated as 'requires improvement'. The key question for the board is whether the new framework is serving the interests of children. Amanda Kelly then presented the main findings of iMPower's research. The research focussed on three main issues: 1. Is inspection helping drive improvement? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The research shows that there has been a decline in local authorities' ratings since Ofsted introduced the Single Inspection Framework in 2012, but that this downward trend began before the introduction of the new framework.• This downward trend is exemplified by the fact that not a single authority has got an 'outstanding' rating since 2012, and the last authority to be rated outstanding has recently been rated	

inadequate.

2. Impact post-inspection
 - The research shows that those authorities that are rated 'inadequate' have the worst post-inspection performance and tend to suffer an accelerated decline away from the average. For instance, 25% of authorities that are rated 'inadequate' remain at this rating for a 5 year period
 - Amanda noted that this pattern of post-inspection impact on children's services does not mirror the pattern of post-inspection impact on schools, where 'inadequate' ratings tend to quickly improve and revert back to the average rating of all local authorities.
3. The cost of inspection
 - The research shows that the costs to local government of responding to failed inspections ranges between £3m and £10m, but this excludes the costs associated with preparing for and then servicing an inspection, which means that the total costs could be upwards of £30m.
 - The key question is whether this expenditure can be shown to improve the safety of children. As things stand, the sector has a poor record of tracking outcomes and even inspectors cannot tell definitively if things are getting better or worse.

In her summary, Amanda said that the sector needs to work collaboratively to develop a new way of dealing with local authorities who are rated 'inadequate', because at the moment they tend to remain 'inadequate' for years. The research highlighted the risk of the sector making policy to promote improvement on the back of a flawed system for assessing performance.

In the ensuing question and answer session, members raised the following points:

- The need to broaden the research to take into account the views of members as well as officers and to study similarities and differences between the two sets of views.
- The need to incorporate the wider lesson that negative sanctions do not tend to induce positive change in parenting into Ofsted's approach.
- The importance of future LGA discussions on whether we think Ofsted should go into a school as a champion of the school, as has been proposed, or whether they should take a more impartial and nonpartisan approach.
- The need for local authorities to innovate in the face of likely further funding cuts, and to think about how an inspection regime can be organised to spur such innovation, most likely by emphasising the value of prevention.
- The value of further research on the differences between school inspections and children's services inspections, particularly within regions, in terms of allowing the board to draw wider conclusions about possible improvements to the latter.
- How an 'inadequate' rating has a negative impact on staff morale, which has a negative impact on recruitment and how this can lead to a downward spiral that might account for some of the trouble authorities have recovering from an 'inadequate' rating.
- The problems that are raised by the new terminology in the Single

Inspection Framework, as it is hard to get constituents to recognise that a 'requires improvement' is equivalent to the old category of 'adequate' rather than being a 'fail'. The new terminology also implies that children are less safe than they used to be, when this is not clearly the case.

- There is a concern that local authorities who get an 'inadequate' rating spend more time and resources servicing the many inspections that this triggers than tackling the root causes of the problems identified.

The Chair concluded that iMPower's research provides the board with valuable material to bring to Ofsted and Ministers in future discussions. He also said that he saw the potential for fruitful collaboration between the board and the new Chair of Ofsted, David Hoare.

Action

Members **noted** the research.

3 Membership and Terms of Reference for 2015/16

The Chair asked members to note the Board's new membership and agree its Terms of Reference for 2015/16.

Action

Members noted the Board's new membership and **agreed** its Terms of Reference for 2015/16.

4 Children and Young People Board Priorities for 2015/16

The Chair introduced a report setting out the Board's priorities for the year ahead, which were discussed by the Board at the meeting on 17 June and refined and agreed by the Board's Office holders on 14 September.

The Chair said that, although he agreed with the content of the report, he had some remaining reservations about the number of priorities. He asked for members input on whether 14 priorities are too many, and where there might be opportunities to streamline or revise the proposed priorities.

Members raised the following points:

- Perhaps careers advice should be decoupled from point 7 in the priorities, which focuses on devolution, and instead treated as a separate issue that goes beyond the devolution agenda
- Point 6, which looks at councils roles in relation to free schools, should be developed in a pragmatic way, accepting that new free schools will be part of the future education landscape.
- The board should ensure that point 8, which looks at joined-up approaches to education and childcare provision, leads to an emphasis on the educational prospects of children rather than the employment prospects of adults
- Regarding point 13, which looks at fostering and adoption outcomes, the board welcomed a wide approach that also

- focussed on children over the age of 11

 - The board were keen for young people's mental health to be have a clearer role among in the priorities
 - Members also asked whether there should be explicit mention of financial issues, such as the funding of schools and transparency of funding
 - The board also asked for the links between education and devolution to be made clearer, most likely in terms of a focus on the devolution of training for skills that will boost local economic development.

The Chair noted the main points of the discussion. He concluded that the core priorities of the board going forward will remain a focus on early years, Ofsted and further education. However, this should be complemented by a focus on the importance of local skills training for successful devolution. In addition, it was suggested that the board should continue to discuss whether to give careers advice a more prominent role in their future work, perhaps by commissioning research on different models of careers advice.

Action

Officers to follow members' steer on revisions to the Board's priorities and present an updated report for discussion at a future meeting

5 Note of the Previous Meeting

Members **agreed** the Minutes of the previous meeting on Wednesday 17 June 2015.

Following on from these minutes, the Chair asked for members to send any further examples of free schools that were in appropriate places or buildings to Ian Keating.

Appendix A -Attendance

Position/Role	Councillor	Authority
Chairman	Cllr Roy Perry	Hampshire County Council
Vice-Chairman	Cllr Richard Watts	Islington Council
Deputy-chairman	Cllr Helen Powell	Lincolnshire County Council
	Cllr Liz Green	Kingston upon Thames Royal Borough Council
Members	Cllr Laura Mayes	Wiltshire Council
	Cllr Paul McLain	Gloucestershire County Council
	Cllr Dick Madden	Essex County Council
	Cllr Ivan Ould	Leicestershire County Council
	Cllr Ian Parry	Staffordshire County Council
	Cllr Anntoinette Bramble	Hackney London Borough Council
	Cllr Anne Burns	Cumbria County Council
	Cllr David Mellen	Nottingham City Council

Cllr John Merry CBE
Cllr Megan Swift
Cllr Bill Turner

Cllr Paul Cullen
Cllr Christopher Coleman

Apologies

Cllr Liz Hackett Pain
Cllr Bob Cook
Cllr John Kent

Salford City Council
Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council
Barking and Dagenham London Borough
Council

Richmondshire District Council
Cheltenham Borough Council

Monmouthshire County Council
Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council
Thurrock Council

In Attendance

LGA Officers
Ian Keating
Ian Dean
Clive Harris
John Wilesmith
Sarah Pickup