



## **ACHIEVING FOR CHILDREN BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING SUMMARY 23 OCTOBER 2014**

The Achieving for Children (AfC) Board of Directors met on 23 October 2014 in the Salon, York House, Twickenham and considered the following substantive items:

### **Finance Report for Q2 2014-15**

Paul Bettles, the Director of Finance, presented the Financial Report for Q2 2014-15 and the Board discussed the outstanding budget issues that remain. Paul will work with the two Councils to ensure these issues are resolved.

Paul also provided the Board with an overview of current overspends and underspends across service areas, which together suggest a projected overspend of over £1m. The Board discussed the reasons for these, and implications of them for this and future years. The demand-led budgets – such as social care and some of the SEN budgets – were discussed in more detail and SLT will continue to monitor those closely and consider both short-term and longer-term responses.

Paul will bring the 2016-17 budget plans to the next meeting on 18 December to be discussed so the Board will be in a position to make a decision on future budget planning.

### **Performance Report for Q2 2014-15**

Ian Dodds, Director of Standards and Improvement, presented the Performance Report for Q2 2014-15 and highlighted that well over 80% of indicators in both boroughs are green rated. Discussion focused upon those areas where performance requires improvement, around target setting processes and benchmarking with other similar areas, and about ensuring that the Councils are supported in commissioning effectively at a time of significant budget pressure.

### **Chief Executive Officer Report for Q2 2014-15**

Nick Whitfield, Chief Executive, introduced the CEO Report for Q2 2014-15. Nick updated the Board on recent school Ofsted inspection results, and on the support being provided to schools who might not receive a “good” judgement. The Board discussed the strengths of those schools who receive a “good” judgement, and the opportunity to support more schools where we have track records of success and capacity.

Nick updated the Board about LA inspections, and the uncertainty regarding when and how the two boroughs will be inspected. The Board agreed actions to ensure that AfC and Board members are well prepared for the inspections.

Nick also set out the position for 2015-16 on growth and savings for AfC, which will require savings overall across AfC. SLT are currently developing proposals for how to achieve this, and the Board provided input into those discussions as well as wanting to establish medium-term planning to prevent ‘salami slicing’ each year.

### **Staff Engagement**

Rob Henderson, Deputy Chief Executive, outlined the outcomes from the staff engagement survey and shared ideas from that and mechanisms such as the Bureaucracy Busting workshops about how AfC staff engagement could be improved. Rob fed back that many of the solutions offered by staff related to ICT in order to improve flexible working, and that suggestions had been made around changing working hours to better suit clients and service users.

The Board reiterated its support for staff involvement, and thanked everyone for contributing to the workshops and survey. It was discussed how to ensure that short-term 'easy wins' are completed and that staff understand which suggestions will either take longer to implement or cannot be implemented, and why this is. The Board also discussed how to improve the visibility of the Board and SLT across the organisation as a whole given our occupation of so many sites across the boroughs.