

Children's Select Committee

MINUTES OF THE CHILDREN'S SELECT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 18 JULY 2024 AT COUNCIL CHAMBER - COUNTY HALL, BYTHESEA ROAD, TROWBRIDGE, BA14 8JN.

Present:

Cllr Jon Hubbard, Cllr Jacqui Lay, Cllr Carole King, Cllr Jo Trigg, Cllr Mary Champion, Cllr Bridget Wayman, Cllr Caroline Corbin, Cllr Helen Belcher OBE, Cllr Kathryn MacDermid, Dr Mike Thompson, John Hawkins

Also Present:

Cllr Laura Mayes, Cllr Iain Blair-Pilling

61 **Apologies**

Apologies were received from:

Cllr Kelvin Nash
Cllr Mike Sankey

62 **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

Cllr Helen Belcher OBE raised that her apologies had not been listed in the previous minutes.

Resolved

To include Cllr Helen Belcher OBE's apologies and approve the minutes of the previous meeting, held on 6 June 2024, as a true and correct record.

63 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

64 **Chairman's Announcements**

There were no Chair Announcements.

65 **Public Participation**

There was no public participation.

66 **Youth Justice Services Inspection Outcome**

The committee received a report which summarises the findings, recommendation and planned actions arising from an inspection from HM Inspectorate of Probation in February 2024.

Kat McJannet introduced and summarised the report which is attached to the agenda.

The following points of clarification were offered from councillor questions:

- The action plan was created soon after the inspection and actions include external training, peer reviewing, and an audit framework being put in place.
- Court disposals, as opposed to an out-of-court disposal, were described as where a crime committed is of a serious enough nature that the court becomes involved and could remain on the young person's record. Court disposals require intervention whereas out-of-court disposals are voluntary.
- It is uncommon for young people who enter the youth justice system to receive a custodial sentence.

Resolved

To note the report

To receive a briefing on the work of the Youth Justice Team

67 NHS Dentistry Access and Oral Health Improvement for Children and Young People

The committee had received a pre-meeting briefing on this item before the meeting and therefore officer provided a short overview of the current provision of NHS dentistry and plans for oral health improvement for children and young people.

The following points of clarification were offered from councillor questions:

- NHS Dentistry workforce figures could be provided in a future meeting.
- NHS England commissioned the toothbrushing scheme and provided guidelines across the country for two years. There are plans to potentially continue the programme afterwards.
- Councillors raised concern at capacity numbers not being readily available. Figures regarding the number of dental practices that are taking new patients would need to be investigated as to whether the data exists to separate places for adults and children, but capacity data would be sought and provided at a future meeting.

- Paragraph 10 – The annual funding for health promotion (£67,000) is secured base funding.
- Paragraph 23 – The £300K underspend will be utilised in the near future.

The importance of providing dental services for children looked after was emphasised by councillors.

Resolved

To note the report.

To receive further information on availability of NHS dentistry in Wiltshire to forward to members after the meeting.

To receive an update on progress to improve NHS dentistry access and oral health improvements to include the service for looked after children in Jan 2025.

To consider whether further scrutiny would add value in building the evidence base to secure further funding in 25/26.

68 Wiltshire Young Carers Annual Update

The committee received an annual update on the Young Carers Service and how the aims of the carers strategy are being delivered.

Netty Lee briefly introduced and summarised the report, strategy and service specifications which were included in the agenda supplement.

The following points of clarification were offered from councillor questions:

- Providing data on educational attainment outcomes would be taken away and considered, as Councillors were keen to understand how being a young carer affects prospects for higher education.
- A timescale for assessment and performance indication to be carried out had been applied.
- A briefing for the Chair and Vice-Chair was urgently requested on the KPIs within an area of the report which showed significant service failures in order to receive clarification.

Resolved

To note the update

To receive a Chair's briefing on the commissioned side of the service to include performance data.

69 **Voice and Participation Service Annual report 2023-2024**

The committee received an annual report outlining the activities, achievements and challenges of the Voice and Participation Service over the past 12 months.

Joe Sutton introduced the report which was attached to the agenda.

The Committee gave its congratulations for the national recognition received and thanked the team for all their hard work.

Councillors commented that it would be beneficial to see how the involvement of young people impacts future action.

Resolved

To note the content of the report and congratulate the team on their work.

To request that the impact of the involvement of young people be included in future reports.

For the Chair and Vice-Chair to agree with officers how the work of the youth council will link to the select committee's Forward Work Programme.

70 **Children and Young People Health and Wellbeing Survey**

The committee received a brief verbal update with plans for the survey in the upcoming year.

As part of the verbal update, a PowerPoint slide was shared with the Committee that was attached to the minutes.

Resolved

To note the verbal update

To request officers consider including children living in Wiltshire but attending school out of county.

71 **Regular updates**

71a School Ofsted Judgements

The committee received an update including information regarding the most recent Ofsted Inspection reports.

The written report was noted.

71b DfE Changes - Update from Department for Education

The committee received an update on developments relating to children's services arising from the Department for Education.

The written report was noted.

72 **Working together to improve school attendance**

The DfE published new non-statutory guidance in May 2022 to help schools, trusts, governing bodies and local authorities maintain high levels of school attendance. The guidance applied from September 2022.

This regular update was an opportunity for the committee to be aware of the latest requirements, as set out in the guidance.

The written report was noted.

73 **Schools Forum**

The committee received a very brief update highlighting key items from the last meeting of Schools Forum, to enable the Children's Select Committee to be informed in a timely manner of the work undertaken by the Schools Forum through the year.

Full agendas and minutes for the Schools Forum can be accessed here [Schools Forum | Wiltshire Council](#)

The written update was noted.

73a Corporate Parenting Panel

The committee received a very brief update highlighting key items from the last meeting of the Corporate Parenting Panel, to enable the Children's Select Committee members, as Corporate Parents, to be informed in a timely manner of the work undertaken by the Corporate Parenting Panel through the year.

The written update was noted.

73b Safety Valve update

As agreed by the committee at its extraordinary meeting on 7 December 2023, the committee received a regular update from officers on the development of the Safety Valve project, as well as input from the overview and scrutiny representative.

The Committee raised concerns that the data potentially paints a more positive picture than is actually the case.

The written report was noted.

74 **Directors' update**

Kathryn Davis, Director for Education and Skills, mentioned that the opening of Melksham House had taken place with a community event which had been well attended.

75 **Cabinet Member and Portfolio Holders' update**

Cllr Laura Mayes, Deputy Leader of the Council, stated that she had attended the celebration of Wiltshire's first Mockingbird "Constellation", which brings foster carers together to share experiences and advice. Foster parents are also able to assist each other, and the foster children can make friends with each other.

Cllr Mayes also discussed attending a Five to Thrive training session in Devizes.

76 **Chair's update**

The Chair briefly updated the committee on his work with the LGA.

76a **Overview and Scrutiny Activities Updates**

The committee received updates from active Task Groups, Rapid Scrutiny exercises and the committee's board representatives. A report by the Senior Scrutiny Officers which provided an update on Task Group activity since the last meeting is attached.

The Chair notified the committee that the standing task group had met to review the annual Corporate Parenting Plan and a summary of their comments and recommendations including actions taken in response to the suggestions from the task group.

The written update was noted.

77 **Forward Work Programme**

The committee was asked to note the attached documents showing the relevant items from the overview and scrutiny forward work programme.

The Forward Work Programme was noted.

78 **Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be on 5 September 2024.

79 **Urgent Items**

There were no urgent items.

80 **Glossary**

(Duration of meeting: 10.30am – 13.30pm)

The Officer who has produced these minutes is Max Hirst of Democratic Services,
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