

CHILDREN'S SELECT COMMITTEE

DRAFT MINUTES OF THE CHILDREN'S SELECT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 26 JANUARY 2016 AT KENNET ROOM - COUNTY HALL, TROWBRIDGE BA14 8JN.

Present:

Cllr Jon Hubbard (Chairman), Cllr Jacqui Lay (Vice Chairman), Cllr Pat Aves, Cllr Mary Champion, Cllr Mary Douglas, Cllr Sue Evans, Cllr Chris Hurst, Cllr Simon Jacobs, Cllr Bill Moss, Cllr Ricky Rogers, Cllr James Sheppard, Cllr Philip Whalley, Rev Alice Kemp, Dr M Thompson, Miss Tracy Cornelius, Mr J Hawkins, Miss Cathy Shahrokni, Cllr Jeff Osborn (Substitute) and James Wilkins.

Also Present:

Cllr Alan MacRae, Cllr Laura Mayes, Cllr Richard Gamble, Cllr Simon Killane and Cllr David Jenkins.

1 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Helen Osborn (who was substituted by Cllr Jeff Osborn), Mr Ken Brough, Mrs Lynne Swainston and Miss Sarah Busby.

2 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

Resolved:

To confirm and sign the minutes of the previous meeting held on 8 December 2015 as a correct record.

3 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest made at the meeting.

4 Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman made the following announcements:

- **James Wilkins** The Chairman introduced and welcomed James Wilkins on his first attendance at a meeting of this Committee. He explained that James would be representing Young People in Further Education and hoped that he would find the work of this Committee both interesting and rewarding.
- **Membership of the f40 Group** Members were reminded that at the previous meeting it had been agreed to circulate information on the role of the f40 Group.

A briefing note had now also been circulated confirming Wiltshire Council's membership to the f40 Group. The decision was made by the Wiltshire Schools Forum, which comprised of representatives of schools in Wiltshire for the purpose of determining the allocation of the Dedicated Schools Grant.

The f40 Group represented the education authorities in England which received the lowest cash allocations from government for primary and secondary pupils. The group campaigned to change the way the government allocated funding to local authorities and schools. As a part of this membership, Wiltshire was now entitled to have a representative on the f40's Executive Committee, which had yet to be decided.

- **Cabinet items**

On 9 February 2016 Cabinet would consider the following item:

School Admissions 2017/18 (Non-Key Decision)

To determine Wiltshire Council's admission arrangements for Voluntary Controlled & Community school's for 2017/18 intake. To determine Wiltshire Council's Co-ordinated Schemes for Admissions 2017/18.

On 15 March 2016 Cabinet would consider the following item:

Wiltshire Council CSE Action Plan Update (Non-Key Decision)

To inform Cabinet of progress made on implementing the Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) action plan.

5 **Public Participation**

There were no members of the public present or Councillors' questions.

6 **Pupil Performance in Public Tests and Examinations 2015**

The Committee received a report by Carolyn Godfrey, Corporate Director which provided an overview of pupil performance in tests and examinations in 2014/15

academic year. The report also gave an overview of recent school improvement work and set out the priorities for the next year.

Members noted with pleasure that there had been improvement in outcomes for pupils on a number of indicators at each key stage.

- The percentage of children achieving a good level of development at the end of the Foundation Stage (Reception Year) had increased by over 7%.
- Attainment at KS1 had either been maintained or improved for the percentage of pupils achieving level 2 and above.
- There had been a 2% rise in the proportion of pupils achieving level 4 and above in reading, writing and maths at KS2. Progress in core subjects had remained the same or slightly improved with the exception of maths which declined by 1%.
- There had been a much greater rise in the percentage of pupils gaining 5 or more good GCSEs including English and maths. This had risen by 2%, a greater rise than national and local comparators. The proportion of pupils making expected progress between the end of their primary schooling and the end of KS4 also had continued to improve with a particularly noteworthy 5.2% increase in pupils making expected progress in maths.

It was pointed out that there were a number of areas where there had not been improvements or where improvements were not rapid enough and these had become priority areas for action.

Outcomes in phonics and for maths at KS2 continued to be a priority. Despite improvements in the proportion of pupils achieving expected levels in phonics decoding, this remained lower than the national comparison. This was particularly the case for pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM).

There had been very marked improvements in the outcomes for disadvantaged learners at KS2 and KS4 with rates of improvements outstripping those of national and local comparators. However, this vulnerable group of pupils continued to be a high priority as outcomes in Wiltshire still needed to improve to match national figures and those of non-FSM pupils in the county. It was noted that in some instances there appeared to be a lack of information passing from primary to secondary schools, particularly regarding the pastoral needs of some pupils, which compounded the problems.

It was recognised that there was generally a lack of understanding about phonics. The goal of phonics was to enable beginning readers to decode new written words by sounding them out, or in phonics terms, blending the sound-spelling patterns. Since it focused on the spoken and written units within words,

phonics was a sublexical approach and, as a result, was often contrasted with whole language, a word-level-up philosophy for teaching reading.

After further discussion,

Resolved:

- (1) To note the contents of the report.**
- (2) To request a pre-information briefing on the delivery of phonics decoding within Wiltshire Council schools at the next Children's Select Committee meeting.**
- (3) To congratulate the work of Wiltshire Schools in placing Key Stage 4 within the top performance quartile and to thank all schools for ongoing work and the work of young people in their continuing achievement.**
- (4) To bring back the vocational Key Stage 5 results for consideration at the next meeting on 22 March 2016.**

7 Anti-Bullying Update

The Committee received an update report by Julia Cramp, Associate Director, Commissioning, Performance & School Effectiveness on events held in Wiltshire during Anti-Bullying Week 2015.

It was noted that the Council had supported the National Anti-Bullying Week which had taken place between 16 and 20 November 2015. The theme had been *Make a Noise about Bullying*, and had a strong focus on communicating key messages via social media using the hash tag #anti-bullyingweek. Local activities to support the national campaign complemented a wide range of other initiatives which take place throughout the year to help and tackle bullying.

Local data discussed during the week confirmed that the majority of young people in Wiltshire had not experienced bullying and considered that their schools dealt well with bullying. In recent reports, Ofsted consistently provided positive feedback on the way Wiltshire schools approached bullying on the relatively rare occasions when it took place, but the Local Authority would continue to work with schools to promote good practice in relation to dealing with bullying.

During anti-bullying week the Council actively promoted the national campaign and encouraged all Wiltshire schools to mark the week and download the free campaign materials. Although it had not been possible to confirm how many Wiltshire schools took part or downloaded resources, it was likely that a large number of schools got involved, as schools often mentioned anti-bullying week

as part of their Healthy Schools audits. Many schools had added information about activities to their school website and some engaged the local press.

During discussion, reference was made to the Pupil Health and Wellbeing Survey and Members considered that it would be useful to establish which schools were engaged in this survey within their community areas.

Resolved:

- (1) To note the contents of the update.**
- (2) To provide Members with information on which schools were and were not engaged with the Pupil Health and Wellbeing Survey in their area.**

8 Adoptions West

The Chairman reminded Members that at its meeting held on 8 December 2015, this Committee received a briefing note on the Council's plan to commission out the adoption service to Adoptions West. The Committee requested that a further verbal update be received at the January meeting of this Committee, noting the potential or more detailed scrutiny input when appropriate.

The Committee received a confidential update from Carolyn Godfrey, Corporate Director.

Resolved:

- (1) To note the verbal update.**
- (2) To request a further verbal update when more information is available.**

9 Interim report of the Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Task Group

The Chairman reminded Members that, at its meeting on 13 October 2014, the Committee established a Child Sexual Exploitation Task Group. The terms of reference focused on scrutinising and monitoring the implementation of Wiltshire Council's Sexual Exploitation Action Plan.

It was expected that the final report of the Task Group would be received by the Committee in March or May 2016. However, as the Committee had agreed to the establishment of the Task Group over a year ago, the Task Group was keen to update the Committee on its work to date and to seek endorsement of its planned work.

Cllr Jacqui Lay, Chairman of the Task Group, explained that it had started its work some 10 months previously looking at a huge amount of information and had a number of comprehensive briefings and gathered information from a number of sources. These sources included looking at the case studies at Rotherham and Oxford and also at the resources available through the Local Government Association (LGA). The resource pack for councils from the LGA - Tackling Child Sexual Exploitation - was noted as having been very useful and the Task Group felt that other task groups should consider using these resource packs for future work, particularly for the scoping work.

Cllr Lay went on to report that one of the initial tasks was to understand how the Council's Action Plan had been developed and its relationship with the Wiltshire Safeguarding Children Board (WSCB) Action Plan and how the two plans tied in together. The WSCB plan was in essence an overarching plan which its other partners would use to create their own plans. Other partners in question included the police and the health authority.

A number of other Local Authority action plans had been examined for comparison. The Action Plan was described as very much an evolving living document, evolving all the time, and being updated. As such it was intended that the Task Group would look at it again at its next meeting.

Cllr Lay stressed that raising awareness was very much a key action and this had included training for councillors and also presentations to Area Boards. Some feedback had been received from some Area Boards that had received the presentations and this would be looked into further at future meetings. It was noted that not all councillors had attended the training sessions and it was noted that there was online training available. Cllr Laura Mayes, Cabinet Member for Children's Services, kindly offered to highlight the importance of this training to Members at Full Council.

Resolved:

To note the interim report and the proposed future work for the Task Group.

10 Safeguarding Children and Young People Task Group Update

The Committee received an interim report from the Safeguarding Children and Young People Task Group which presented the work it proposed to undertake before the Task Group was disbanded.

During discussion, Cllr Mary Douglas, drew attention to the Committee's meeting on 21 July 2015, when, on considering the Executive Response to the final report of the Children's Centres Task Group, the Committee had agreed to look, in the New Year, at how the additional funding expected for Early Help transferred from the Health service would be used. Members also requested information on the recruitment and retention of staff.

Resolved:

- (1) To note the work undertaken by the Task Group so far.**
- (2) To explore setting up an Early Help Task Group.**
- (3) To receive regular updates at the Children's Select Committee on recruitment and retention of staff.**
- (4) To endorse the future work for the Safeguarding Children and Young People Task Group as presented in the interim report.**
- (5) To endorse the recommendations of the Task Group regarding Multi-Agency Forums as contained within the interim report and refer them to the Cabinet Member for Children's Services for response at the next Children's Select Committee meeting.**

11 DfE Changes - Update from Department for Education - November 2015 to January 2016

The Committee received an update from Carolyn Godfrey, Corporate Director, on developments relating to children's services arising from the Department for Education from November 2015 to January 2016 as follows;-

- Autumn Statement and Spending Review
- Wraparound and holiday childcare – open consultation
- Funding for school admission appeals: Outcome of the consultation
- Behaviour and discipline in schools
- Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions
- Dealing with issues relating to parental responsibility
- School complaints procedures
- Governance handbook
- School teachers' pay and conditions
- Academies update
- Reforming children's social care, A vision for change
- Special Guardianship Review

Resolved:

- (1) To note the update provided.**
- (2) To request that a copy of the Local Authority's response to the Government's consultation on wraparound and holiday childcare and how schools should respond to requests from parents for the use of school facilities be sent to the Chairman for information.**

12 **Task Group Update**

The Committee received an update on the activity of the following Task Groups:

- Obesity and Child Poverty Task Group (joint with Health Select Committee)
- Positive Leisure Time Activities for Young People Task Group (reconvened)
- School Improvement Strategy Task Group
- Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) Task Group

Resolved:

To note the update on task group activity provided.

13 **Forward Work Programme**

The Committee received a document showing the relevant items from the Overview & Scrutiny Forward Work Programme.

Resolved:

(1) To note the Forward Work Programme for this Committee.

(2) To request the Chairman and Vice-Chairman to discuss the possibility of including fostering as part of the Committee's Forward Work Programme at their next meeting with the executive.

14 **Date of Next Meeting**

To note that the next scheduled meeting of this Committee would be held on Tuesday 22 March 2016, at County Hall, Trowbridge, starting at 10.30am.

15 **Urgent Items**

There were no items of urgent business.

(Duration of meeting: 10.30 am - 12.55 pm)

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