

## CHILDREN'S SELECT COMMITTEE

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**DRAFT MINUTES OF THE CHILDREN'S SELECT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 28 JANUARY 2014 AT KENNET ROOM - COUNTY HALL, TROWBRIDGE BA14 8JN.**

**Present:**

Cllr Mary Champion, Cllr Sue Evans, Cllr Jon Hubbard (Chairman), Cllr Chris Hurst, Cllr Simon Jacobs, Cllr Jacqui Lay (Vice Chairman), Cllr Bill Moss, Cllr Helen Osborn, Cllr Sheila Parker, Cllr Ricky Rogers and Cllr Philip Whalley

**Also Present:**

Mr Ken Brough, Cllr Richard Gamble, Mr John Hawkins, Kaylum House, Rev Alice Kemp, Cllr Laura Mayes and Dr Mike Thompson

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**1 Apologies**

Apologies for the meeting were received from Cllr Mary Douglas.

**2 Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the previous meeting held 3 December 2013 were presented to the Committee and subject to an amendment to minute item 112, it was;

**Resolved:**

**To approve the Minutes of the meeting held 3 December 2013 as a true and accurate record.**

**3 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest to note at the meeting.

**4 Chairman's Announcements**

The Chairman made the following announcements:

**Parent Governor Representatives**

On 3 December the Committee asked the Cabinet Member for Children's Services to co-sign a letter with the Chairman requesting that central government amends the Parent Governor Representatives Regulations 2001. The regulations only allowed parent governors from maintained schools to be appointed as parent governor representatives on overview and scrutiny

committees. This had caused difficulty appointing a secondary parent governor rep to the Children's Select Committee, as most secondary schools are now operating as academies or free schools. Since the December meeting, the Chairman and the Cabinet Member both signed the letter and it was confirmed that it had now been sent to the Secretary of State for Education.

#### Church of England diocesan representative

The Chairman confirmed that Officers had made contact with the Bristol Church of England diocese and it was confirmed that Lynne Swainston had been appointed as the new Church of England diocesan representative to this Committee, and would take her seat at the next Committee in March.

### **5 Public Participation**

No questions had been received from members of the public.

### **6 Further Education in Salisbury Task Group - 18 month review of progress**

The Chairman introduced the item and reminded members that the item had been included on the agenda for previous Committee in December 2013. The Committee deferred the item to allow additional time to consider the draft report and its recommendations.

Dr Mike Thomson, Chairman of the Task Group, outlined the findings of the follow up from the Task Group's final report. It was noted that some comments provided by the Wessex Partnership were received too late for members to consider them as part of the report. The following comments were therefore made to the Committee:

- Grammar schools have a large scale and highly successful collaboration in place, providing a very broad Level 3 curriculum, catering for approximately 700 students. The curriculum offer and student performance, results in a considerable net influx of post 16 students to the Salisbury Area from other parts of Wiltshire and from other counties too.

- Cross partner working exists across Grammar Schools which already provide Careers and HE Fairs to which all local post-16 providers are invited to attend for both KS4 and KS5 students, including an Oxbridge Evening, periodic lectures and workshop events. Wiltshire College also provides HE Fairs to promote HE options.

- Avon Valley College and The Stonehenge School had agreed a vision for a collaborative sixth form in the Salisbury Plain area for the young people of Amesbury and Durrington and the neighbouring communities. The two schools agreed that a proposed collaborative Sixth Form Centre would enable more Avon Valley College students to stay on and would also encourage students from The Stonehenge School to access their local provision. The schools noted

that the population of the local area would increase significantly in the coming years due to local developments.

- Due to the planned significant military influx, greater pressure will be placed on local providers to deliver post-16 provision. The aforementioned joint venture between AVC and Stonehenge will be difficult to achieve without major capital investment. Schools (and in particular 11-16 schools) find it difficult to maintain accurate, up-to-date data regarding post-16 students and would benefit from a formalised mechanism for returning data to us that ensure its detail and accuracy.

- Wiltshire College reported that every year they contract an external company to survey new students regarding the route they followed to the College. Many of the students report poor experiences of Independent Advice and Guidance (IAG), with the Apprenticeship route being particularly neglected in the guidance students have received. The College suggested that, in this light, the take-up of Apprenticeships in the south of the county as compared with the national average deserves investigation.

The Committee discussed the comments that had been made by Schools, focussing in particular on the number of students that commute to out of county providers for post 16 provisions. The Committee discussed how providers could innovate and work together to ensure the breadth and range of provisions available across the region. The Committee discussed information sharing exercises with independent schools to identify best practice arrangements. The Committee then discussed the payment of travel expenses to those students who travel out of/ into county. It was confirmed that a 16-19 bursary, was available to support young people who travel to receive their provision.

The Committee discussed curriculum planning arrangements and it was noted that a recent OFSTED inspection had found this area to be lacking across the county, with regard to the necessary independent advice that young people require.

**Resolved:**

- 1. To refer the following recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Children's Services:**
  - a. Wiltshire Council to produce a statement detailing its specific responsibilities as a school sponsor, as opposed its general educational responsibilities as a local authority.**
  - b. The local authority work with Avon Valley College and The Stonehenge School to develop joint local post-16 provision.**
  - c. Because the disparity in funding received by Wiltshire and Hampshire for post-16 education remains, the Cabinet Member for**

**Children's Services and Chairman of the Children's Select Committee to write a joint letter to the Secretary of State for Education and the Secretary of State for Skills and Lifelong Learning to draw attention to, and request a review of this situation.**

- 2. That the Children's Select Committee explore the role of the local authority in helping providers to coordinate their post-16 marketing, Independent Advice and Guidance (IAG), and curriculum planning and delivery.**
- 3. To receive an Officer report at the first meeting of the Children's Select Committee in 2015, to update against the original objectives of the Task Group and recommendations 1 a-c (above).**

## **7 Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)**

Terence Herbert (Associate Director - Children's Social Care, Integrated Youth and Preventative Services, 0-25 SEN/Disability Service) was in attendance to discuss the MASH. The MASH had arisen as a result of serious case reviews and recommendations from the Munro Review in 2010. The role of the MASH is to co-ordinate a multi agency approach to safeguarding events, allowing the team to consult a far greater number of agencies in a far shorter time period. The result of this has seen a change in the way that safeguarding incidents are coordinated and handled. The MASH acts as a central point of contact for social care, police and health, and has revolutionised how the agencies interact and share information. The MASH plans to incorporate selected other agencies including educational services, to develop the information sharing arrangements that are currently in place. Terence Herbert commented on the effectiveness of the co-location and spoke of the benefits this has with regard to information sharing between agencies.

The Committee questioned the legal and governance practices within MASH, with particular a focus on information sharing arrangements. It was confirmed that as a Tier 3 (county wide) agency, the MASH operates in line with information sharing protocols governing the sharing of sensitive information. It was clarified that previous arguments surrounding data protection had incorrectly prevented this practice, and that this had now been overcome.

The Committee discussed the funding arrangements, with particular focus on the contributions from the Community Health Centre. It was confirmed that the contributions from the CHC were representative of the level of resources that are provided at the MASH by the CHC. The Committee also focussed on the sustainability of the MASH, with its long term future scrutinised. It was confirmed that whilst the MASH was operating within budget, like many funded other agencies, it may not be entirely resistant to cost saving measures in future. Terence Herbert discussed the potential hidden savings that the MASH may provide, but reaffirmed that the primary focus of the MASH was not that of

a cost saving exercise, but to provide a critical front line service to 'at risk' individuals.

The Committee voiced concern at the level of engagement from the health service and the representation of the youth service also. It was confirmed that the problems with the health service were previously cultural and procedural difficulties, but that the new arrangements within the MASH were providing an innovative approach to information sharing between the health service and other agencies. It was stated that the MASH were also expecting an enhanced presence for early intervention within the MASH from April 2014. At the end of the discussion it was;

**Resolved:**

**To make the following recommendation to cabinet:**

- 1. To congratulate those involved in the implementation of a Wiltshire Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) on the positive progress so far, reflecting the priority given to safeguarding across the Council, the Police, the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and the Children's Community Health provider (Great Western NHS Hospital Trust).**

**8 Pupil Performance In Public Tests And Examinations 2013**

David Clarke, Interim Head of School Effectiveness and Cllr Richard Gamble, Portfolio Holder for Schools, Skills and Youth were in attendance to discuss the Pupil Performance in Public Tests and Examinations 2013 report, which provided an overview of pupil performance at the end of each key stage and compared Wiltshire's attainment with national, south west and statistical neighbours for all phases. Cllr Gamble outlined the report with particular focus on the headline performance as follows:

**KS2 & 3 Performance**

- On headline indicators both academies and voluntary aided schools have the highest levels of attainment and high levels of progress, however foundation schools do least well with lower attainment and progress measures.

**KS4 Performance**

- 5+A\*-C (inc English and Maths) results rose by over 1%. This was above all local and national comparator figures, however, there was a slight national decline on this indicator from 2012.

- Expected progress measures between KS2 and 4 improved by around 3%, putting Wiltshire in line with comparators in English and above in Maths.

**KS5 Performance (age 18)**

- Although point score performance was not as high as in the past, outcomes are in the top quartile showing that performance remains at a high level.

The Committee also considered a late paper which outlined performance for the vulnerable group in KS4. The key details of the paper were as described as follows:

- A 3% fall in the number of students eligible for free schools meals who achieved 5+ A\*-C at GCSE, compared with a 1.7% rise nationally.
- A 5.7% rise in the number of SEN students with a statement achieving 5+ A\*-C at GCSE.
- A rise in performance of pupils with mixed race ethnicity and a 12.4% rise in the performance of students with black ethnicities. There was also a 4.6% fall in the performance of Asian students.

The Committee noted that the performance for Children in Care was not reported due to the small number of students, but that attention should still be given to the most deprived pupils as evidenced in the performance of the pupils eligible for free schools meals. The Committee discussed the current approaches that are in place to support children who receive free school meals.

The Committee drew reference to the number of students who travel out of county for post 16 provision and stated that the data was therefore representative of Wiltshire Schools, and not necessarily Wiltshire children.

Questions were asked regarding statemented children and a disparity between KS3&4 performance. The Committee also discussed the number of maintained schools across the county and questioned if the data could be comparable with privately funded schools. It was clarified that many private schools take different qualifications, and do not participate in SAT's, and so as a result, comparable data cannot be drawn.

Carolyn Godfrey also stated that the £13m provided to schools through the Pupil Premium to support disadvantaged students should be accountable, and questioned how this was being used to raise performance in these areas.

At the end of the discussion, the Committee commended the performance of Wiltshire Schools and pupils, and praised the achievements in light of the national funding challenges. It was;

### **Resolved:**

- 1. To note the Pupil Performance in Public Tests and Examinations 2013. To request that future Pupil Performance reports include the numbers and percentages of students to provide more context, and contain a breakdown of performance for small schools.**

## **9 Task Group update**

The Committee thanked Lin Hitchman, Head of Children in Care, who would soon be leaving the Council, for her commitment to improving the lives of

children in care, and transforming the standard and delivery of care across the entire county.

The Select Committee received an update on the activity of the following Task Groups since the last meeting together with the Committee's Forward Work Programme for the following:-

- Safeguarding Children and Young Peoples Task Group; As read.

- Further Education in the Salisbury Area Task Group; The Task Group's 18-month review of progress with its recommendations took place on 14 November and is as reported (above). It was proposed that the Task Group be recommended for closure.

- Further Education Task Group; Following the outcome of the Peer Review, Scrutiny had attracted some criticism for its process driven approach, and it was recommended that a more outcome focussed approach be taken. The Further Education Task Group met on 21 January 2014 to discuss the outcomes that could be focussed on in future, and this was to include work that focussed on developing partnerships between schools and colleges.

- Schools and the Local Authority Task Group; Cllr Phillip Whalley provided an update to the Committee from the Task Groups first meeting held on 23 January 2014. The Task Group explored the relationship between schools/academies and the Local Authority, including how the LA provides its statutory responsibility and questioning it being fit for purpose. At the next meeting the TG will identify precise objectives, and develop a plan for surveying schools.

- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Task Group; Rev. Alice Kemp provided an update to the Committee, detailing as follows; At its meeting on 23 January 2014 the Task Group had focussed on how young people with SEND prepare for adulthood. The Task Group had received a comprehensive presentation on 'my plan', which is a Wiltshire Council single assessment project, devised to enable professionals and families to work together with a young person in a way that avoids excessive paperwork and assessment, in order to prepare them for independence and adulthood. The Task Group agreed that its next meeting would be a more detailed look at the current Wiltshire landscape in terms of opportunities and challenges for young people with SEND in the following areas: education and training, employment, housing, and community involvement.

**Resolved:**

- 1. To note the updates on Task Group activity.**
- 2. To amend the name of the 'Further Education Task Group' to read 'Education for 16-19s Task Group' and amend its Terms of Reference**

to read “To review the quality, range and equity of access to educational opportunities for 16-19s in Wiltshire”.

3. **Following Cabinet’s decision on 21 January to undertake a review of Positive Leisure Time Activities for Young People, to establish a task group to respond to the consultation, with authority for making the necessary arrangements to be delegated to the Chairman and Vice-Chairman.**

## 10 **Forward Work Programme**

The Committee received a copy of the Forward Work Programme, and the Senior Scrutiny Officer outlined the new items that had been added including:

- Business Plan Scorecard Update to be discussed at the March meeting following its consideration at Cabinet.
- The Apprenticeship Programme in Wiltshire to be discussed at the March meeting.

### **Resolved:**

**To note the contents of the Forward Work Programme.**

## 11 **Coalition Changes - Update from Department for Education**

The Committee received and noted a report by Carolyn Godfrey, Corporate Director, on developments relating to children’s services arising from the Coalition Government.

## 12 **Urgent Items**

There were no urgent items.

## 13 **Date of Next Meeting**

The date of the next meeting was noted as being 23 March 2014 at 10:30am to be held in the Council Chamber - County Hall, Trowbridge BA14 8JN.

(Duration of meeting: 10.30 am - 1.00 pm)

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