

Children's Select Committee

MINUTES OF THE CHILDREN'S SELECT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 21 JANUARY 2020 AT KENNET COMMITTEE ROOM, COUNTY HALL, TROWBRIDGE.

Present:

Cllr Jon Hubbard (Chairman), Cllr Jacqui Lay (Vice-Chairman), Cllr Mary Champion, Cllr Andrew Davis, Cllr Christopher Devine, Cllr Nick Holder, Cllr Chris Hurst, Cllr Fred Westmoreland, Cllr Philip Whalley and Cllr Suzanne Wickham

Also Present:

Cllr Pauline Church, Cllr Peter Hutton, Cllr David Halik and Cllr Tony Jackson

1 **Apologies**

Apologies were received from Cllr Sue Evans.

2 **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

Resolved:

To approve and sign as a correct record the minutes of the previous meeting held on 12 November 2019.

3 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

4 **Chairman's Announcements**

The Chairman made the following announcements:

Cabinet – 19 November 2019

Proposals for special schools in the north of Wiltshire – where the new maintained special school in Rowdeford was approved, as well as the closure of St Nicholas, Rowdeford and Larkrise schools.

Accommodation and Support for Care Leavers – where approval was granted to commission a 25-bed block contract capacity for vulnerable young people. There was also some work ongoing to explore the opportunity to commission the contract(s) in partnership with Swindon Borough Council.

Cabinet – 7 January 2020

Wiltshire Council Adoption Service: 2019/20, 6-month report – which detailed two areas of focus for our adoption service:

- The need for timeliness of the assessment of adopters and their match with a child to be adopted; and
- The need for timeliness of the adoption of children with complex needs.

Cabinet – forward work programme

For information – school admission policies 2021/22 would be considered by Cabinet on 4 February

Of interest - **SEND inclusion strategy 2020-2023** (going to 24 March 2020). The Chairman had asked for a briefing on this to determine if this was an item to bring to the committee.

For information the School Capital Programme 2020-25 would also go to Cabinet on 24 March.

Session with Children's Services Officers

That Officers were working to organise an information session on all the service areas within Children's Services, this would be designed for members recently appointed to the Children's Select Committee but would be open to all the committee's members and substitutes.

Note: Cllr Devine was happy to be approached to sit on the Adoption Panel.

5 **Public Participation**

There was no public participation.

6 **Young Carers in Wiltshire**

Gary Binstead – Head of Commissioning, Wiltshire Council and Jen Salter – Head of Service, Childrens Support & Safeguarding, Wiltshire Council introduced the report that provided an update to Children's Select Committee on the current position regarding young people in Wiltshire who were providing unpaid care.

Points made by Committee members included:

- That the statistics in the report could be improved, but the report was good on policy though.
- That a capture matrix of carers would be welcomed.
- A lack of awareness outside of the council on what the council offers to young carers.

- The biggest challenge was to get families to ask for help and then be put through an assessment process.
- That it would be beneficial if Wiltshire Councillors were to promote this service.

Decision

- **That the Chairman and Vice-Chairman meet with relevant officers in 4 to 5 months to review the scope of a potential task group or rapid scrutiny to be brought back to committee at the June meeting.**
- **That a Councillor briefing note would be welcomed to give the service and the Young Carers Awareness Day more publicity.**

The Chairman thanked Gary Binstead and Jan Salter for the report and the representatives of Carers Support Wiltshire for attending the meeting.

7 Update from Wiltshire Youth Voice Representative

Gary Binstead – Head of Service – Commissioning, Wiltshire Council introduced the report.

Points made included:

- As this was the first issue of the new report format there were no outstanding responses due for the Children's Select Committee from Wiltshire Youth Voice.
- That Mental health issues for young people were now being addressed. Young people now felt that they were being listened to.
- Wiltshire Youth Voice / Wiltshire Youth Union representatives to sit on this committee – That it was difficult for the youth rep to attend the meetings due to the time of day etc.

Committee members felt that a meeting of the Committee outside of school hours would be beneficial.

That an event held during the Summer that built a sense of community would again be beneficial.

The Chairman thanked Gary Binstead for his update.

Resolved:

To explore setting an additional meeting of the Children's Select Committee, to be a joint meeting with Wiltshire Youth Union which would

be set at a time to enable attendance by members of the Wiltshire Youth Union.

The agenda for that meeting would include information on the committee's area of work and would be held around the same time as meetings with the Executive.

To receive further information on the reasons for the reprioritisation as part of the Make you Mark ballot at the next available meeting

8 School Ofsted Judgements

Andrew Howard – Lead for Intensive Support & Vulnerable Learners, Wiltshire Council introduced a report that provided information regarding the most recent Ofsted Inspection reports published from 5th November – 31st December 2019.

It provided an ongoing view of the effectiveness of schools as seen by Ofsted Inspections. The report was an update to that provided to Children's Select Committee on the 12th November 2019.

Points raised by Committee members included:

- Were there any schools that Wiltshire Council had any concerns about.
- Did any schools with concerns raised against them have Ofsted inspections coming up.
- Were staffing levels adequate.

Resolved:

- **To note the report.**
- **To note that officers have offered to consider amending the dashboard, following questions raised by the committee with regards to young carers.**

The Chairman thanked Andrew Howard for his report.

9 DfE Changes - Update from Department for Education

Lucy Townsend – Director Families & Children, Families & Children's Services, Wiltshire Council presented a report which outlined the 19 December Queen's Speech which set out the government's legislative agenda for the parliamentary session ahead.

Points relating to children's services:

- A commitment of an additional £1 billion for adults and children’s social care in every year of this Parliament alongside plans to reform adult social care.
- In line with previous announcements, schools would receive an extra £14 billion over three years.
- Other education-related announcements included increasing teachers’ starting pay to £30,000 by September 2022; an extension of the free schools programme; the lifting of the exemption for outstanding schools from Ofsted inspection; investment in primary school PE teaching and the FE estate alongside additional investment in T Levels, which were due to launch in September 2020
- A ‘National Skills Fund’ worth £3 billion over the course of this Parliament would be set up and 20 Institutes of Technology would be established across England, which would bring together FE colleges, universities and employers to focus in key sectors such as construction and engineering.
- An additional £1 billion of funding for schools and childcare providers to help create more high quality, affordable childcare, including before and after school and during the holidays.
- The rolling forward of knife crime prevention orders and a new duty on public bodies to put in place plans to prevent and reduce serious violence within their communities via the Serious Violence Bill.
- The Domestic Abuse Bill would return and continue its passage through Parliament.

Resolved:

- **To note the report.**
- **To have a briefing for members on the following:**
 - **additional information on the implication for Wiltshire School on the mandatory minimum per pupil funding levels**
 - **clarify if Wiltshire will still be behind in terms of funding**
 - **clarify as much as possible what schools will be expected to pay out of this funding, and**
 - **high needs block (outcome of consultation) and implications for Wiltshire.**

10 **Wiltshire School Improvement Programme**

Andrew Howard – Intensive Support & Vulnerable Learners Lead, Wiltshire Council and Nick Bolton - Personal Development Advisor, Wiltshire Council introduced a report which outlined the impact of the new school improvement framework, and regional working and intensive support.

The report also outlined the current provision of life-skills education across Wiltshire and how the local authority supported and promoted this.

Points made by the Committee members included:

- That an Area Improvement Board had not been set up yet.
- When were the Committee going to see the impact and outcomes of the programme.
- That it was hoped that the Summer 2020 exam results would see the beginning of a more positive outcome.

Resolved:

- **To receive an update (after summer 2020), including specific measurable evidence of impact on pupil outcomes of the new way of working, as part of the School Performance report, and where / if possible:**
 - **direct feedback from schools (on receiving the support);**
 - **a diagram showing the new way of working / system.**

The Chairman thanked Andrew Howard for his update.

11 **Task Group and Board Representative Updates**

- Traded Services – final report to committee in March.
- CAMHS Task group – nothing to report.
- Youth Transport Task Group – working on two outstanding areas of work – final report to committee in March.

12 **Forward Work Programme**

The Forward Work Plan was noted, the Chairman requested that the Sub-Committee members contact him if they felt any additions were required.

13 **Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting would be held on Tuesday 10 March at County Hall.

14 **Urgent Items**

There were no urgent items to consider.

(Duration of meeting: 10.30 am - 1.00 pm)

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