

AT A MEETING of the CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SELECT COMMITTEE of the COUNTY COUNCIL held at The Castle, Winchester on Wednesday, 12 June 2013.

PRESENT

Chairman:
p Councillor Ray Bolton

Vice-Chairman:
p Councillor John West

Councillors:

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| p John Bennison | p Warwick Lovegrove |
| p Ann Briggs | p Martin Lyon |
| p Rita Burgess | p Andy Moore |
| p Christopher Carter | p Jackie Porter |
| a Roz Chadd | p Patricia Stallard |
| p Criss Connor | p Bruce Tennent |
| p Marge Harvey | p Malcolm Wade |
| p Roger Huxstep | a Patricia West |
| a Jonathan Glen | p Christopher Wood |

Co-opted Members:

p Tony Blackshaw – Church of England Schools Representative
Roman Catholic Schools Representative – position vacant
Parent Governor (Primary School) – position vacant
Parent Governor (Secondary School) – position vacant
Parent Governor (Special School) – position vacant

At the invitation of the Chairman:

p Councillor Peter Edgar – Executive Member for Education
p Councillor Keith Mans – Executive Lead Member for Children’s Services

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillors Roz Chadd, Jonathan Glen, and Pat West.

2. **DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

Members were mindful that where they believed they had a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in any matter considered at the meeting they must declare that interest at the time of the relevant debate and, having regard to the circumstances

Items to be actioned on the Committee’s work programme:

described in Part 3 Paragraph 1.5 of the County Council's Members' Code of Conduct, leave the meeting while the matter was discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with Paragraph 1.6 of the Code. Furthermore Members were mindful that where they believed they had a Non-Pecuniary interest in a matter being considered at the meeting they considered whether such interest should be declared, and having regard to Part 5, Paragraph 2 of the Code, considered whether it was appropriate to leave the meeting whilst the matter was discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with the Code.

3. **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Committee, held on 23 January 2013, were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman explained that the Parent Governor co-opted members of the Committee were currently in the process of being appointed and it was anticipated that they should be in position by the next meeting of the Select Committee.

As this was the first meeting of the new administration, the Chairman invited each Member to introduce themselves and comment on the schools within their divisions.

5. **DEPUTATIONS**

No deputations were received.

6. **INTRODUCTION TO SCRUTINY**

The Committee received a presentation (Item 6 in the Minutes Book) from the Director of Policy and Governance.

Members heard:

- The role of scrutiny at the Council, its background, role, and purpose.
- That a key element of the Committee's work would be to review and make recommendations to assist in the development of future policies and strategies.
- The Committee was responsible for holding the Executive and Council to account, as a critical friend, regarding the "pre-scrutiny" of decisions yet to be made and the "call-in" of decisions made but not yet implemented.
- The presentation advised Members how they could set the work programme for future meetings, via requests to the Chairman.
- Members' attention was drawn to the handout provided

which set out a flowchart to assess work programme suggestions. Amongst other things, this stressed that suggestions should be within the remit of the Committee's terms of reference, evidence based, of county-wide community concern, and be likely to lead to a productive outcome.

RESOLVED:

That the officers be thanked for the presentation and that its content be considered when assessing the Committee's future work programme.

7. **INTRODUCTION TO CHILDREN'S SERVICES**

The Executive Lead Member for Children's Services, Councillor Mans, and the Executive Member for Education, Councillor Edgar, welcomed Members to this, the first Select Committee of the new administration. In summary, they underlined the important work of the Committee, as a knowledgeable and critical friend, in ensuring Hampshire's children do as well as possible in an environment of changing national legislation and policies.

They also summarised the remit of their portfolios and welcomed enquiries from Members at any time.

The Committee received a presentation from the Director of Children's Services (Item 7 in the Minute Book).

Members heard:

- The Director's statutory role arising from the 2004 Children Act, and how this had been re-affirmed by the new Government to provide clear accountability. He added that the Lord Laming Report had set out a number of recommendations to better protect vulnerable children. This had included local authorities assuming a responsibility for the performance of services provided to children from other partner organisations, such as health services.
- That Children's Services was sub-divided into three main areas of work;
 - Children and Families,
 - Education and Inclusion, and
 - Access, Performance and Resources.
- That the Council retained a responsibility for needs of children in both independent schools and academy schools.
- The presentation referred to the Council's imminent take-over of the Isle of Wight's Children Services functions. The County would assume these functions on an agreed agency basis, but Isle of Wight Council would retain political responsibility for the services. Therefore, this Committee's role was limited to ensuring that this new role for the County did not

deflect services and priorities to the detriment of Hampshire's children.

RESOLVED:

That the officers be thanked for the presentation and that its content be considered when assessing the Committee's future work programme.

8. **OVERVIEW OF RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN EDUCATION PROVISION AND THE CHANGING ROLE OF THE COUNTY COUNCIL**

The Committee received a presentation from the Director of Children's Services (Item 8 in the Minute Book).

Members noted:

- The number of children in the Hampshire state school system and the varying diversities of these schools.
- That whilst Hampshire's Primary School children were performing above the national average, by the age of 16 years old, their exam results had slipped back to the national average. In response to questions, it was hoped that this downward change would be limited to this year's results only and could have been due, in part, to the transition process of some schools to academies.
- The increasing gap between the educational performance of children on free school meals and their peers, between the ages of 11 and 16 years old. This issue had been subject to an investigation and it was agreed that this would be reported to a future meeting of this Committee.

Report to be presented to future meeting

RESOLVED:

That the officers be thanked for the presentation and that its content be considered when assessing the Committee's future work programme.

9. **KEY ISSUES IN RELATION TO CHILDREN AND FAMILIES**

The Committee received a presentation from the Director of Children's Services (Item 9 in the Minute Book).

The Committee noted:

- The Council's responsibility in safeguarding children and the filtering the department undertook to process 66,000 contacts per year (via hantsdirect and the Police) to placing approximately 400 children in care.
- The process ensured that where the Council investigated children whose care was of potential concern, they were supplied with as much information as possible from other partner agencies, such as the Police and housing associations.

- That the higher percentage of disabled children in residential care reflected the difficulty of placing disabled children with foster families.

In response to a question regarding Sure Start Centres, the Director explained that whilst no centre sites had been closed, and there was an ambition for the centres to remain universally available, there was an opportunity to re-focus their attention on the children that needed the centres the most.

In response to a question regarding the standardisation of service provision, it was anticipated that this would further improve through the increased co-location of agencies.

RESOLVED:

That the officers be thanked for the presentation and that its content be considered when assessing the Committee's future work programme.

10. **KEY ISSUES IN RELATION TO SCHOOL ACCESS**

The Committee received a presentation from the Director of Children's Services (Item 9 in the Minute Book).

Members noted:

- The Council's role in forecasting the number of school places required and the effect of migration. Across the County, there was currently a high demand for primary school places and a falling demand for secondary school places. Within that, there were a number of areas of exceptional demand, such as Andover, Basingstoke, Gosport and Winchester. Other areas, such as Bordon, with a high percentage of children from military families, were affected by issues such as troop re-deployment, often with little prior notice to the local education authority. However, the Committee noted that there was no anticipated shortfall in places for September 2013.
- The £272m capital programme to 2015 and how the department worked closely with District Planning Authorities to determine developer's contributions for education.

In response to questions, the Committee noted that between £15-20m was currently provided to maintain existing schools. This budget was allocated on a needs basis, following regular condition surveys.

The presentation also highlighted the role of the Schools Forum in distributing schools' budgets and the proposed change to the department's IT system, which was anticipated to be completed by 2015.

During debate, a Member raised concern regarding the

process of re-commissioning services and whether this gave service providers sufficient time to plan for the future. It was noted that the Committee could scrutinise the affect of the Council's grants to voluntary organisations.

RESOLVED:

That the officers be thanked for the presentation and that its content be considered when assessing the Committee's future work programme.

11. **IDENTIFICATION OF AREAS FOR SCRUTINY AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE WORK PROGRAMME**

The Committee considered its forthcoming work programme (Item 11 in the minute book).

In light of the above presentations, the Committee agreed to submit their suggestions for future scrutiny topics to the Chairman and Director of Policy and Governance in advance of the next meeting.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee's suggestions for future scrutiny topics be submitted to the Chairman and Director of Policy and Governance in advance of the next meeting.

The Work Programme be updated

Chairman, 3 October 2013