

**CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE COMMITTEE: MINUTES**

**Date:** Tuesday, 24<sup>th</sup> May 2016

**Time:** 2.00pm – 4.40pm

**Present:** Councillors P Ashcroft (substituting for Councillor Divine), D Brown (Vice-Chairman), P Brown, S Bywater, P Downes, S Frost, D Harty, Z Moghadas, L Nethsingha (substituting for Councillor Leeke), S Taylor, J Whitehead (Chairwoman), J Wisson, F Yeulett (substituting for Councillor Loynes)

**Apologies:** Councillors Divine (Councillor Ashcroft substituting), Loynes (Councillor Yeulett substituting and Leeke (Councillor Nethsingha)

**172. NOTIFICATION OF CHAIRMAN/WOMAN AND VICE-CHAIRMAN/WOMAN**

It was resolved to note that the Council had appointed Councillor Whitehead as the Chairwoman and Councillor D Brown as the Vice-Chairman for the municipal year 2016-17.

**173. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

**174. CO-OPTION OF DIOCESAN REPRESENTATIVES**

It was resolved to co-opt the following representatives:

- Mrs Polly Stanton, Church of England diocesan representative
- Mr Paul Rossi, Roman Catholic diocesan representative.

**175. MINUTES 8<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2016 AND ACTION LOG**

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 8<sup>th</sup> March 2016 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairwoman.

The Action Log was noted, and verbal updates given on a number of items that were being progressed:

Work on Private schools – this piece of work would be completed by end of June;  
Appointment of an Alternative Sponsor for the New Secondary and Special Schools in Littleport – it was noted that Greenwood Dale Foundation had decided not to be the sponsor. Active Learning Trust would be sponsor for the Littleport schools.

**176. PETITIONS**

No petitions had been received.

**177. NATIONAL FREE SCHOOL PROCESS**

The Committee received a report on new Advice from the Department for Education (DfE) regarding the Free School Presumption as part of the process for the establishment of

new schools, which included proposals for processes to be used to identify new school sponsors, and whether to run a competition to identify new school sponsors.

Members noted the background and implications of the new Advice. Whilst similar to existing processes, there were a number of issues which required the Committee's steer. A number of these were largely administrative, i.e. the involvement of a DfE representative on joint officer/assessment panels, adopting model specification template, application form and criteria, and to continue to hold public presentations.

The issues around whether or not to run a competition were more complex: there were clearly scenarios where there could be a good sponsor, known to the authority, where it may be desirable to recommend the sponsor without running a competition.

Members considered each of the recommendations in turn. There was broad agreement for the involvement of the DfE representative, although their exact role was queried, i.e. whether they were assessing the presenters or the assessment panel. It was also pointed out that at the recent Darwin Green competition, a DfE representative had been included in the assessment panel, but the RSC had later overturned the panel's decision.

Members were happy to adopt the model specification template, application form and criteria.

There was some debate on the proposal to hold a public presentation by potential school sponsors where the new school was established in an existing community. It was pointed out that even with new communities, there was often an element of an existing community, or at least adjacent communities that would be affected by the proposal, and the divisions between old and new communities were not always straightforward. The style, format and quality of the public meeting was also an issue – whilst it was reasonable for communities to receive information on what was happening, and have an opportunity to express their concerns, a Member suggested that on some occasions there had been no apparent value added by holding public meetings. The general consensus was that public engagement through presentations should be encouraged, but the style and format of those meetings may need to change. Officers noted these points and agreed to take action on these views in regard to the interest from existing residents in schools in new communities, and the format of public presentations in future. **Action required.**

Members debated at length whether a competition needed to be run, and the following points were raised:

- a Member commented that situations where free schools were set up without competition or demand should be avoided, as this merely took pupils away from other schools, reducing the viability of those schools, without necessarily adding value;
- reservations were also expressed that not running competitions could result in Academy chains that were skilled in the competitive/planning processes dominating, rather than those who may be more focused on education. However, another Member expressed reservations about forcing a competition where there was no need for it;
- it was confirmed that Members and officers would still evaluate Free School proposals, and the Children & Young People Committee could make these decisions on a case by case basis. It was suggested that this could result in potentially a two stage process i.e. if the Committee was unhappy about the bid, a competition would need to be run, which would make the whole process longer;

- discussed the experience of the Darwin Green competition, where the Regional Schools Commissioner (RSC) overturned the panel's decision. It was noted that the Executive Director was seeking a meeting with the RSC to better understand the RSC's decision, with a view to minimising the risk of this happening again. A Member suggested that this was sufficiently fundamental to refer this matter to National Schools Commissioner, Sir David Carter, any possibly the Secretary of State, observing that the outcome of this decision would be of wider interest nationally. The detrimental impact on the Panel's chosen sponsor, Chesterton Community College, in terms of staff opportunities missed, were discussed;
- a Member suggested having a standing item on the agenda, to review cases where it was felt a competition was unnecessary. Members felt that generally, competition was desirable, but there could be circumstances where we don't want to run them;
- if a basic need for a new school was required, sites would usually be secured using Section 106 funding, and in most cases that asset would then be handed over to the school. A situation where the government was directly funding a free school was difficult to envisage;
- a Member suggested that the specifications for Free Schools should include an expectation to stimulate the cultural and social life of the community, especially given the move to utilising community assets as far as possible. Officers agreed that they would attempt to draw out in the objectives a commitment to contributing to the vibrant cultural health of the community.

An amendment was put forward to replace recommendations (b) and (c), and was unanimously supported:

(b) For the Committee to approve any proposals advanced by officers, CYP Spokes and Local Members, to not run a competition where the Regional School Commissioner proposes a Free School before the Authority has launched its sponsor selection competition.

It was resolved to endorse the proposals set out in sections 4 and 5 of the report, as amended, in response to the DfE's advice:

- (a) To continue to complete and evaluate new school proposals if a free school proposal comes forward after the Council's usual competitive process has been launched and before it has closed, with the following modifications:
  - The inclusion of a DfE representative on the joint officer/Member assessment panel, which is one of the options available to authorities as detailed in section 5 of the report
  - The adoption of the DfE's model specification template, application form and criteria as the basis for the future evaluation of proposals to provide consistency of response
  - To only hold a public presentation by the potential school sponsors where the new school is to be established in an existing community
- (b) For the Committee to approve any proposals advanced by officers, CYP Spokes and Local Members, to not run a competition where the Regional School Commissioner proposes a Free School before the Authority has launched its sponsor selection competition.

## 178. EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES IN CAMBRIDGESHIRE

The Committee received and considered a report on the issues raised by Ofsted about the quality of education and outcomes for disadvantaged pupils in Cambridgeshire.

Members were advised that Andrew Cook, the Regional Director of Ofsted, had published a letter expressing concerns regarding educational outcomes in Cambridgeshire, especially for disadvantaged groups. Copies of that letter and the response that had been sent were noted. The Local Authority shared these concerns and was aware of all of the issues raised. However, the “marked decline for primary schools” had been challenged, as 81.6% primary schools had been judged as good or outstanding, showing a steady improvement from 69% in August 2013. Whilst this was still below national figure, it was going in the right direction, and neither the LA or schools were complacent about the issues. Members noted two additional pieces of correspondence that had been tabled – a letter from the Regional Schools Commissioner, and Council’s letter to the Education Selection Committee. The issues relating to school recruitment were also noted.

The Chairwoman drew Members’ attention to the Educational Achievement Board, which had recently held its inaugural meeting. She suggested that the minutes of that Board should be copied to this Committee. **Action required.**

Arising from the report, Members noted:

- that more was known about vulnerable groups than a few years ago. The Authority was offering guidance on how to identify and support these children, what the best interventions were, and what the evidence base was on the best way to work with these children, and through monitoring, ensuring they were being taught by the best teachers;
- that the reference to Neale Wade was positive, as an example of good practice  
**Action: Keith Grimwade to email Councillor Yeulett the detail.**

*(Councillor Nethsingha left the meeting)*

- noted the issues around funding of Statements of Special Educational Needs (now Education, Health and Care Plans);
- noted that Schools were being encouraged to appoint Pupil Premium Champions, to ensure that funding was properly spent;
- asked about the refresh of the Accelerating Achievement strategy, and how quickly it would be completed and implemented. It was agreed that this would be considered at the September meeting, and also noted that ‘refresh’ may underestimate the work being undertaken, and the ambitious targets being put in place;
- commented that the decline from 78% good and outstanding secondary schools to 46% was alarming. Officers advised that the current position was now 53.3%, and rising. It was suggested that the rapid academisation of the secondary sector had led to an unhelpful isolation of secondary schools from support;
- noted how the Pupil Premium was made up, and the rules around how it had to be

spent;

- noted that visit were carried out on maintained primary schools judged to be good or outstanding once a term. For schools where there were concerns or judged to be “requiring improvement”, visits were much more frequent. Academies were visited annually, although the visiting protocol was currently being renegotiated, to make the process more rigorous and mutually beneficial, and to include the systematic identification of and sharing of effective practice;
- discussed how the Authority could support schools in teacher recruitment and retention, and how the Authority could influence the achievement of disadvantaged groups, even where it does not have direct responsibility;
- noted progress with the protocol to monitor the performance of Academies, currently being piloted with three secondary schools. The first school in the pilot had found the external challenge useful, and it had not added significantly to its workload. Officers were confident that they would have a model they would be able to roll out.

It was resolved:

to comment on the Local Authority’s response to the issues raised and suggest any further actions it would like officers to take.

## **179. TRANSFORMING CARE PLAN**

The Committee received a report regarding the programme of work known as *Transforming Care*, led by Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), to develop community based services for people of all ages with learning disabilities and/or autism, to reduce the need for in-patient beds.

Members were reminded that in 2012, the Department of Health (DoH) commissioned an investigation into the abuse of people with learning disabilities living at Winterbourne View, an inpatient assessment and treatment service for adults with learning disabilities near Bristol. Since that time there has been mixed progress across the country with *Transforming Care*, a programme promoting the transformation of services for people of all ages (children and adults), including the reduction of the number of inpatient beds.

Locally, a Transforming Care Board was set up, and targets established for inpatients of beds. There were currently 10 people under 18 years of age in inpatient beds, 4 in local provision, and 6 out of county. Inpatient beds for children provided very specialist services for those with severe or complex mental health disorders, which the most sophisticated community measures could not support. The emphasis for children was on early advice and support for families, with a focus on emotional health and wellbeing. However, it was acknowledged that the community offer needed to be enhanced.

During discussion:

- it was confirmed that “in-patient bed” referred to places/individual rooms, and was part of the jargon still used in NHS settings;
- it was noted that the intention was not to eliminate to inpatient beds altogether, as for a small number of complex cases they would always be required, but to provide effective community services for all other cases, and to avoid, where possible, placing

clients that required inpatient services out of county;

- noting that the Transforming Care Board had put in a significant bid (over £1.8M) for funding, a Member asked what the implications were if that bid was unsuccessful? Officers explained that the bid had been developed to enable the service to build up the necessary community resource. In discussions with NHS England, it was clear that they were unlikely to attract the full amount, and had been advised to resubmit the bid, split into two elements: project management support, and supporting the existing staff complement so that staffing hours could be extended, and could be more flexible. The outcome of bids would be known by August;
- discussed the extent of cross border working – the CCG footprint included surgeries around Royston, and a small part of Northamptonshire. Where collaborative work was necessary around certain clients who lived on the borders of the county, the necessary cross border work would be undertaken;
- a Member commented that what works for adults would not necessarily be appropriate for children, and suggested that more work was required on the Children's side. Officers acknowledged this point, but pointed out that there were benefits, especially in the transition to adulthood.

The Chairwoman urged Members to email her any additional points they would like to raise regarding the draft Transforming Care plan.

It was resolved:

1. note and comment on the draft Transforming Care plan;
2. delegate authority to the Executive Director: Children, Families and Adults, to approve the strategy after it has been presented to both the Children and Young People's and Adults Committees and following discussion with the Chairman of the Adults Committee and the Chairwoman of the Children and Young Person's Committee.

## **180. CHILDREN'S CENTRES OFFER 2017 ONWARDS**

The Committee considered a report on Children's Centre savings, as identified in the Business Plan for 2017-18, identifying the potential impact on wider Council services, and the proposed timescales going forward.

Members were reminded that Children's Centres had been established across Cambridgeshire over the last 10-12 years, and had been successful in improving the outcomes for the very youngest children. There was significant evidence to demonstrate that the earliest interventions provided the greatest impact: Children's Centres work together with partners, including Maternity and Health Visitor services, to provide a robust infrastructure enabling children to have the best and safest start in life. The Local Authority was required to make provision for Children's Centres, through the Childcare Act 2006. £2M savings had been identified for Children's Centres for 2017-18. Children's Centres had been reduced in previous budget savings.

The report proposed that more time was required to come forward with proposals, working with partners, in order to achieve the significant reductions identified, and explore possible alternative models and their policy and financial implications.

Arising from the report, Members:

- commented that this was an issue for concern, especially given the Serious Case Reviews and the well known issues for children under 5. More joined up thinking was required, e.g. through Community Hubs, to establish a much more integrated approach. Additional funding may be required e.g. to co-locate facilities, but this could be an Invest to Save opportunity;
- stressed the value of this work, and expressed disappointment regarding the budget decisions that had been taken, and agreed that more time was needed to explore all possibilities so that the best solutions were identified;
- agreed that the next step was to work up a service offer which focused on the most critical support to families which could make the most difference preventatively, and articulate what community based approaches might form part of a future offer. Members stressed that it was important to involve Local Members in this work, as they could save officers time and effort, as they knew their communities best;
- observed that for Invest to Save type projects, the outcomes and results of Children's Centres were less quantifiable, less tangible and longer term than those for other areas of Council services;
- asked officers if it would be possible to arrange Member visits to Children's Centres, so that they could become more aware of the services that they provide **Action required**;
- commented that the services of Children's Centres were often poorly publicised, e.g. through school websites;
- noted the total registration of 75.4% of children aged under 5, and asked who made up the remaining 25% - i.e. whether they were families who genuinely did not need Children's Centre services, or if they were the more vulnerable families which did need their support. Officers confirmed that this information was not available, but needed to be established.

It was resolved to:

- a. Consider the challenges to service delivery set out in the report
- b. Note and comment on the content and the risks associated with the potential scale of service change
- c. Note the links to the Council's procurement of the Healthy Child Programme service (Health Visiting, School Nursing and Family Nurse Partnership), as well as the emerging Community Hubs agenda, and the opportunities for service alignment
- d. Agreed to receive a further paper setting out some models and options based on the issues raised in this paper for service delivery and associated costs. These would be linked to the developments in (c) above.

## 181. DRAFT CFA PROCUREMENT STRATEGY

The Committee received a report on the development of a CFA Procurement Strategy. The Strategy focused on new actions being taken within CFA to achieve further efficiency from the procurement function. The key aim of the Strategy was to enable CFA services to get the best value services possible for children and adults in Cambridgeshire, by:

- Improving procurement and contract management arrangements;
- Delivering efficiency and value for money from procurement;
- Supporting the commissioning function to deliver efficiency by considering different procurement options.

The key areas in CFA were Looked After Children, SEND educational placements and Adults with Learning Disabilities.

Arising from the report, Members:

- suggested that the introduction needed to basically state what the document covered, and what it did not cover. It was noted in tandem with the development of the Procurement Strategy, a lot of work was taking place to ensure that the information available on the County Council's website was accurate and useful;
- observed that there was not much reference to the *quality* of provision of services. Officers commented that this was implicit, but the document would be refreshed to highlight this assumption;
- noted that the reference to outcomes/payment by results did not specify who was evaluating those outcomes. It was agreed that this would be clarified in the final document;
- pointed out that lengthy contracts had caused issues in other areas of the Council's work. Officers commented that there was a balance to be struck, and LGSS's procurement expertise would be used to help provide that balance.

It was resolved:

- a) Review and comment on the draft strategy;
- b) Delegate authority to the Executive Director: Children, Families and Adults, in consultation with the Chairwoman or Vice-Chairman, to approve the CFA Procurement Strategy after it had been presented to the Adults Committee.

## **182. FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE REPORT – MARCH 2016**

The Committee considered the Finance and Performance report for Children, Families and Adults (CFA) outlining the financial and performance position as at the end of March 2016. It was stressed that the report presented was not the year end position. Members noted that the likely underspend for year end was approximately £1.6M.

The Committee was reminded that the Scheme of Financial Management permitted Service Management Teams to propose "carry forwards" from year-end underspends which could be held in reserve for specific earmarked purposes. These plans would need to be endorsed by the General Purposes Committee in July. The Committee was asked to review these proposals (set out in section 4.3 of the report) and endorse the list for consideration by General Purposes Committee for final approval. It was noted that reasons for the variances related to changes in activity levels since the 2015-16 Business Plan had been drawn up. Existing reserves within CFA were set out in Appendix 1 to the report, including a set of proposals for the use of reserves. Members indicated their support for both the 'carry forward' items and the proposals for the use of reserves.

During discussion:

- it was noted that the reference to three Council owned properties to be adapted and refurbished for Looked After Children and staff were vacant school caretaker properties;
- a Member asked if any of the underspend could be put towards Children's Centres. Officers advised that the reserves were only intended to plug gaps, and not support recurrent or structural shortfalls;
- noted the considerable demand for CYP social care services, putting staff under pressure. The concern was that as staff were put under pressure, they became more risk averse. Managers were identifying how best to manage those pressures, and analysis work was taking place to identify the reasons for the increase in demand, but appeared to be from a whole range of issues;
- noted the position with Home to School Transport, and work being undertaken e.g. the Total Transport pilot in Ely, to further reduce costs;
- with regard to the Child Sexual Exploitation Service, asked what the timescale was for implementing this work, and how it would be monitored. Officers advised that this was to be carried out by a national provider who could mobilise the services (missing interviews and intensive support services) quite quickly. Members noted that 'missing' interviews were required, under the Council's responsibility for all children and young people, including Looked After Children;
- noted that the Westwood Primary School extension was progressing;
- noted the issues in Strategic Management – Learning, relating to vacancies. Most of the services were traded, so when an income-generating post became vacant, it was filled as quickly as possible. The vacancy savings target had not been reduced to reflect this new position, therefore a pressure emerged;
- a Member asked about the rules relating to school transport, when a child lived a certain distance from the bus route. It was agreed that clarification would be provided  
**Action required;**
- noted the reducing costs of Adoption Orders, etc, and that this issue was the subject of an ongoing debate with LGSS Law;
- noted that the correct figure for unaccompanied asylum seeking children was 61. It was noted that the new guidance on child refugees in Europe was based on population, and would result in Cambridgeshire being asked to look after 105 children and young people. It was clarified that this was a total figure, i.e. the 61 existing children would count towards this total. Funding would come from central government, but would not necessarily cover all costs. It was also noted that the Authority had responsibility for some young refugees over 18, under the Leaving Care legislation.

It was resolved to review and comment on the finance and performance report and:

- a) Note the finance and performance position as at the end of March 2016;

- b) Note the implications for 2016-17 budget setting;
- c) Endorse the proposed service reserves for 2016-17 (listed in Appendix 1 to the report) and refer them to the General Purposes Committee for their approval

## 171. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE COMMITTEE AGENDA PLAN, APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES

The Committee received a report which:-

- (a) Presented the agenda plan for the Children and Young People Committee, as set out in Appendix A;
- (b) Invited reports back from representatives on outside bodies.

Further to minute 177, it was agreed the regional Schools Commissioner be invited to a future meeting, and it was suggested that the September meeting may be appropriate.

**Action required.**

Members noted a number of changes to the Agenda Plan, including the following additions to the July agenda:

- Corporate Parenting Board (A Loades/T Collins);
- Meadowgate Free School Proposal (H Belchamber);
- Chatteris Free School (H Belchamber);

Wintringham Park item to be rescheduled **Action required – Clare Buckingham to email Committee reasons why this needed to be rescheduled**

Cambridgeshire Catering Services item to move from July to September meeting.

Histon & Impington Primary School Review Stage 2 consultation outcomes (H Belchamber) to be added to the November meeting.

Members noted that it may be necessary to use the provisional October and December dates for Business Planning.

In respect of the schedule of appointments, the following changes to the schedule were agreed:

- Appoint Councillor David Brown to the vacancy on Mosaic;
- Appoint Councillor Moghadas to the Corporate Parenting Partnership Board, in place of Councillor Onasanya.

A number of queries were raised:

- Clerk to clarify if Councillor Scutt sat on SACRE;
- Councillor Wisson indicated that she would like to remain on the Fostering Panel, but the workload could not fit in with hers – was it possible to explore a job share arrangement. **Action required – Adrian Loades to discuss with Tracy Collins.**
- Noted that the F40 Group met quarterly, and was also doing a lot of business by email. It was agreed that Councillor Downes would be added to the circulation list for this group **Action required;**
- Transitions Partnership Board – check whether that group is still happening.

In respect of attendances at Internal Advisory Groups and Outside Bodies, and other events, the Committee received updates from:

- Councillor Downes on his attendance at the 'Prevent' session. It was noted that this would be the subject of a future Members Seminar.
- Councillor Whitehead on her attendance at a meeting of the Children's Safeguarding Board.

It was resolved to:

1. Note the agenda plan, as set out in Appendix A.
2. Review representation on Internal Advisory Groups and Panels, and Partnership Liaison and Advisory Groups, as set out in the minutes;
3. Note the oral updates from representatives on outside bodies.

Chairwoman