

## **CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE COMMITTEE: MINUTES**

**Date:** 9 October 2018

**Time:** 2.00pm – 4.50pm

**Venue:** Kreis Viersen Room, Shire Hall, Cambridge

**Present:** Councillors S Bywater (Chairman), S Hoy (Vice Chairwoman), D Ambrose Smith, A Bradnam, P Downes (to 4.40pm), L Every, A Hay, S Taylor, J Whitehead and J Wisson

Co-opted Member: A Read

**Apologies:** F Vettese (co-opted member)

### **CONSTITUTIONAL MATTERS**

#### **149. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman stated that he had agreed to a request by officers to defer Item 6: The Proposed Expansion of Bellbird Primary School, Sawston to the meeting on 13 November 2013. This was to allow officers time to consider further comments received recently from another primary school in the town.

#### **150. NOTIFICATION OF A CHANGE IN COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP**

The Chairman welcomed Councillor David Ambrose Smith to the Committee and thanked his predecessor, Councillor David Wells, for his contribution to the Committee's work during his tenure.

#### **151. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Apologies for absence were noted as recorded above. There were no declarations of interest.

#### **152. MINUTES OF THE MEETING ON 11 SEPTEMBER 2018**

The minutes of the meeting on 11 September 2018 were approved as an accurate record and signed by the Chairman.

#### **153. ACTION LOG**

The Action Log was reviewed and the following verbal updates noted:

- i. Minute 101: To reflect on how elements of the detailed supporting data might be included in future reports, perhaps via a separate document or web link  
This would be reflected in the report being brought to Committee in January 2019.
- ii. Minute 102: To explore running a pilot project with a group of GP surgeries and to provide information on the extended Early Years entitlement to town and parish councils to enable them to signpost residents  
This would be covered in the report coming to Committee in January 2019.

- iii. Minute 130: To provide an information report on how children at risk were identified by front line services, possibly through the Local Safeguarding Children Board

The Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (DASV) Delivery Board would be considering a scoping report at its November 2018 meeting, to undertake a review of current and future specialist provision to support children and families impacted by domestic abuse. This would include an analysis of how children were identified by front line services, and would be done in collaboration with the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB). The outcome from the review, which would be completed during 2019, would be fed back to the Children and Young People Committee.

A Member asked for clarification of whether the Children and Young People Committee would be receiving the information report which had been requested in addition to being advised of the outcome of the review.

(**Action:** Democratic Services Officer)

- iv. Minute 142: Future Special Educational Needs (SEND) and Outcome Focused Review reports to cover the possibility of seeking Transformation Funding to fund work on SEND transport

Noted. Work on SEND Sufficiency was continuing and a report on this would be brought to the Committee in January 2019.

- v. Minute 144: To circulate a copy of the document setting out the Local Authority's statutory responsibilities in relation to schools

A copy would be circulated to all Committee members by email.

(**Action:** Service Director for Education)

## 154. PETITIONS

No petitions were received.

## KEY DECISION

## 155. EXEMPTION AND DELEGATION TO AWARD FOR LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN AND INDEPENDENT SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (KD2018/073)

The Head of Children's Social Care Commissioning stated that approval was being sought to begin commissioning activity in relation to Residential Children's Homes, Independent Fostering Agencies, Independent Non Maintained Special Schools and Out of School Tuition. Officers were recommending that the Committee delegate authority to the Executive Director for People and Communities to commission these services through a Dynamic Purchasing System. This provided a quick and efficient tool to enable providers to join and leave a commissioning framework and allowed services to be commissioned as 'lots' within a single procurement, so generating efficiencies and reductions in cost. In total the annual budget across the four areas listed was in excess of £30m.

In response to questions from Members, the Head of Children's Social Care Commissioning stated that:

- Spot purchasing included a competitive process to identify providers where needs could not be met from within an existing commissioning framework. It was subject to quality assurance checks;
- 'Dynamic' in this context was a technical term used in contract regulations;
- The use of mixed lots was a process also currently being used in West Sussex.

It was resolved to:

- a) Give approval to Commission, and delegate authority to the Executive Director for People and Communities to award the above Dynamic Purchasing System; (**Action:** Executive Director for People and Communities/ Democratic Services Officer)
- b) give approval to seek to spot purchase Independent Fostering Agency placements using the existing specification and individual placement agreement for a period of up to six months, to 30.6.2019;
- c) give approval to seek an exemption to spot purchase Independent Non Maintained Special Schools using the National Association for Special Schools Contract and Schedule 2 Agreement for individual placement agreements for a further six months, to 30.6.2019.

## DECISIONS

### 156. THE BELLBIRD PRIMARY SCHOOL, SAWSTON: PROPOSED EXPANSION

This item was deferred to the meeting on 13 November 2018. Minute 149 above refers.

### 157. FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE REPORT – AUGUST 2018

The Strategic Finance Business Partner stated that as of the end of August 2018 there was a forecast pressure of £5.4m on those budgets within the Children and Young People Committee's remit. The main changes since the previous month were an increase in the pressure on the Children in Care budget to £1.4m and the High Needs Top-Up Funding budget of £1.5m. In response to these pressures the Service Director for Childrens' Services and Safeguarding had gained agreement from other Eastern Region Local Authorities to reduce the expectation that Authorities would accommodate Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) at a rate 0.07% of their total population of children and young people to 0.06%. As Cambridgeshire was already at 0.07% this would help reduce future numbers by assigning new arrivals to other Local Authorities within the region who were still below the threshold. Considerable work was also taking place in relation to High Needs pressures including a detailed discussion by the Cambridgeshire Schools Forum on 5 October 2018 and its establishment of a Working Group to examine the issue in more detail. There were no significant changes to report in relation to the five Children and Young People Performance Indicators currently graded as red. Due to the continued high level of demand for Childrens' Services the Committee was recommended to consider requesting that the General Purposes Committee (GPC) consider allocating up to £3.413m from the smoothing fund reserve to help address pressures on this budget in 2018-19.

The Chairman expressed his thanks to the Service Director for Childrens' Services and Safeguarding for his hard work in successfully re-negotiating the percentage of UASC accommodated within each of the Local Authorities in the Eastern Region to create a more equitable balance. He also expressed the hope that all members of the

Committee would feel able to join him in endorsing the recommendation to seek GPC's agreement to allocating monies from the smoothing fund reserve to address the significant pressures on the Children's Services budget in the current financial year.

Arising from the report:

- A Member asked about the implications of wider Children's Services pressures on the Staying Put budget. Officers stated that this needed to be considered in the wider context of the Placement Planning budget, but that it was acknowledged that Staying Put (Looked After Children remaining with their foster carers beyond the age of 16) was often a positive option;
- A Member asked whether the discussion about making a request to GPC in relation to the smoothing fund reserve should be deferred until the Committee discussed the Business Planning reports later in the agenda. Officers stated that the recommendation was to seek additional funds for the current financial year and so was distinct from the consideration of future budget funding;
- A Member asked the total size of the smoothing fund reserve. Officers undertook to check the exact figure and report back;  
(**Action:** Strategic Finance Manager)
- Officers stated that they were not aware of any other bids having been made so far to GPC in relation to the smoothing fund reserve.

It was resolved unanimously to:

- a) review and comment on the report;
- b) request that the General Purposes Committee allocate up to £3.413m from the smoothing fund reserve towards pressures in children's services budgets in 2018-19.

## **158. SERVICE COMMITTEE REVIEW OF THE DRAFT CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2019-20**

The Head of 0-19 Place Planning and Organisation stated that the report before the Committee represented an annual review of the People and Communities Directorate Capital Programme. Sections one to four contained standard information which was provided to all Policy and Service Committees whilst the information from section five onward related specifically to the business of the Children and Young People Committee. The Capital Programme had undergone a fundamental review and this had included identifying a number of projects for possible removal from the programme. Members' attention was drawn to a request to give an agreement in principle to including a new project in the programme at a later date to address longstanding issues at Abbey College in Ramsey, subject to a feasibility study. Officers also recommended a revision to Recommendation (b): to comment on the draft proposals for P&C's 2019-20 Capital Programme and endorse their development, to recognise that the Committee had requested a further report on the proposed amalgamation of Eastfield Infant and Nurse School and Westfield Junior School. The revised Recommendation would read: to comment on the draft proposals for P&C's 2019-20 Capital Programme and endorse their development, *with the exception of the Eastfield and Westfield capital scheme as this is the subject of a separate options appraisal which will be considered by the Committee at its meeting in November 2018.*

The Chairman stated that he had accepted two requests to speak on this item in relation to the proposal to remove planned works at Spring Common Academy from the

capital programme. He invited Councillor Tom Sanderson to address the Committee in his capacity as the local Member for Huntingdon West.

Councillor Sanderson stated that he had visited Spring Common Academy on a number of occasions and had been impressed by the difference being made to the lives of children and young people with severe and profound physical and learning difficulties and life-limiting conditions. However, classrooms and communal spaces needed to be adapted to meet students' needs and safeguarding requirements. Around 200 children and young people were currently on roll from across the county and they were entitled to suitable and safe facilities under the Special Educational Needs (SEN) Code of Practice. New specialist mobile classrooms had now been installed on site, but the school needed to be able to plan ahead and would be willing to co-operate with phased building work.

The Chairman thanked Councillor Sanderson for his comments and invited Dr Kim Taylor OBE, headteacher at Spring Common Academy, to address the Committee.

Dr Taylor stated that the current building had been designed to cater predominantly for children with moderate learning difficulties, but that 60% of current pupils were non-ambulatory and significant numbers had complex and profound needs requiring the use and storage of specialist living aids and medical equipment. The upper school had no sinks in classrooms or cubicle toilets and there was little space for the delivery of therapy. Some children were unable to move outside to reach other accommodation due to the implications for their health. The Academy Trust had assisted as far as possible, but she was concerned that a future Ofsted inspection might judge that the current building was not fit for purpose.

In discussion of the report:

- Officers stated that the Spring Common School capital project had a projected cost of £5.9m;
- A Member commented that they had previously been a Governor of Spring Common School for a number of years. The pupil intake had changed significantly over time and the severity of pupils' disabilities was now much greater. Their sense was that the existing buildings had been built for pupils with less complex needs than the current intake and they would be concerned if the Council was unable to find a way to help. They questioned whether there might be an intermediate solution which either cost less than the projected £5.9m or was spread over a number of years;
- A Member commented that their understanding was that when a school converted to academy status the Local Authority handed over the land and buildings and that they then became the responsibility of the Academy Trust and the Department for Education (DfE). They felt the discussion was symptomatic of wider confusion regarding the division of responsibilities between the Local Authority and Academy Trusts in relation to school buildings whereby academies were no longer accountable to the Local Authority, but would still look to the Local Authority to contribute to some costs. Officers clarified that the Local Authority had a different order of responsibility in relation to pupils at special schools as it was the Local Authority who commissioned their places.

Officers stated that the core issue at Spring Common related to the suitability of the buildings rather than their condition. The Trust had maintained the building well and invested in it, and because of that it could not draw down condition

funding from the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA). In view of this the officers had been working with the academy to ameliorate the situation by providing two specialist temporary classrooms on site. These had been specially adapted to meet the needs of the pupils who would be using them and had been built to a specification which had been agreed by Dr Taylor. Planning permission for these temporary classrooms had been granted for five years, but subject to further planning consents they might last up to 30 years. The works which had been planned would bring the existing building up to the standards set out in the latest government Building Bulletin guidelines. Officers acknowledged that this was a difficult and emotive decision, but it was illustrative of the financial challenges which the Local Authority now faced. If Members wished, they could revisit the recommendation to explore deferring the planned works for a year or two or phasing the work in order to focus on key aspects.

- The Service Director for Education stated that the budget planning report included the assumption that that Spring Common project would be removed from the capital programme. If it was not the planned saving would have to be met from elsewhere. The findings of a recent sufficiency study had not yet been shared fully with schools, but it would be important to take into account the new special schools which would be opening at Northstowe and Alconbury;
- A Member commented that there appeared to be some uncertainty about whether the existing building was compliant with current Building Bulletin guidelines. The Head of 0-19 Place Planning and Organisation confirmed that the existing building met the standards in place at the time it was built, but that it would be deficient in some areas against the new Building Bulletin guidelines. Officers did not judge the school was at a point where it would risk being closed due to its condition;
- The Group Accountant stated that the £5.9m cost of the Spring Common works would all be funded through borrowing. Over the lifetime of the asset the actual cost would be around £10.5m, including interest charges;
- A Member commented that councillors had a responsibility for the wellbeing of Cambridgeshire's children. The Council had decided that these children should attend a special school and they found it intolerable that their basic hygiene requirements were not being met. They called on the Committee to direct officers to find a way to start the works programme at Spring Common;
- A Member asked whether some of the budget for temporary accommodation could be re-directed to part fund the works. Officers stated that this would have a knock-on effect on other planned projects;
- Members asked whether it would be possible to visit Spring Common School to see the situation first hand. Dr Taylor confirmed that she would welcome this and would facilitate any such visits;
- A Member asked whether there would be value in approaching the DfE to seek a funding contribution for the planned works at Spring Common. The Service Director for Education stated that the DfE did not provide any funding of this type for existing schools;
- A Member sought clarification of what was meant by the 'St Neots Eastern Expansion'. Officers stated that this referred to the expansion of Wintringham Park and Loves Farm which meant that the creation of an additional single form of entry primary school in the area was no longer needed.

Summing up, the Chairman stated that the Committee faced a number of extremely difficult decisions in relation to the capital programme. In order to obtain further detail to inform the Committee's decision on the Spring Common project the Chairman proposed an additional resolution, seconded by Councillor Every, that the Committee

*defer the decision on Spring Common Special School until sufficiency work had been carried out*

On being put to the vote it was resolved unanimously to:

- a) note the overview and context provided for the 2019-20 Capital Programme for People & Communities (P&C);
- b) comment on the draft proposals for P&C's 2019-20 Capital Programme and endorse their development, with the exception of the Eastfield and Westfield capital scheme as this is the subject of a separate options appraisal which will be considered by the Committee at its meeting in November 2018;
- c) agree that, following the Programme's adoption by full Council, where it proves necessary for new schemes to be added to the Capital Programme for the reasons identified in sections 5.10 and 5.11, these are detailed in the Finance Performance Report for approval initially by the Children and Young People (CYP) Committee and then the General Purposes Committee;
- d) defer the decision on Spring Common Special School until sufficiency work had been carried out.

#### **159. SERVICE COMMITTEE REVIEW OF DRAFT REVENUE BUSINESS PLANNING PROPOSALS FOR 2019/20 to 2023/24**

The Chairman noted that the Draft Revenue Business Planning Proposals report contained a confidential appendix and asked whether any members of the Committee wished to discuss that appendix. No Members expressed the wish to do so.

Officers gave a short presentation to provide additional context to the proposals contained in the draft revenue business planning proposals for 2019/20 to 2023/24. This described the significant and continuing pressures being faced across a range of services within the Children and Young People's remit and the savings which were still being delivered.

The Service Director for Children's Services and Safeguarding stated that the number of Looked After Children in Cambridgeshire remained higher than would be expected with the increase in associated costs. Officers were broadly satisfied that the right children were being taken into care, but work continued to move these children through the care system more quickly. Work was also being undertaken to look at alternatives to bringing older children into care where the impact was limited. It cost around £850 to place a child through an Independent Foster Care Agency compared with around £300-350 per week to place a child with an in-house foster care. The national shortage of placements meant that more young people went into residential placements at a cost of around £3,500 per week. In total an estimated pressure of £2.7m was forecast against the Children's Services budget by the end of the financial year. Officers judged that the number of children and young people in the County's care would only reduce when current restructuring of the Service was complete. It was forecast that Cambridgeshire would be back in line with its statistical neighbours in terms of the number of children in care by 2020/21. A programme in Hertfordshire which had led to a reduction in the number of children in care was currently being trialled in Peterborough. If successful this might be introduced in Cambridgeshire, but it would require upfront investment.

The Service Director for Education stated that pressures on the Education budget were driven by increased demand and a rapidly growing pupil intake. This placed pressure

both on services and on the number of school places required. Planning for the irregular changes in pupil numbers was hugely challenging and central Government funding was not meeting the growing basic need for school places in Cambridgeshire. The Cambridgeshire Schools Forum was kept fully briefed on the pressures which existed and remained strongly supportive. Pay increases and the associated increases in pension contributions needed to be managed from within existing resources and huge pressures existed on the High Needs Block, although Cambridgeshire still remained better placed on this than many shire counties. Home to school transport was also an area of significant pressure, particularly in relation to pupils with special educational needs and disabilities. Officers were working closely with colleagues in Peterborough and remained committed to delivering better outcomes and better quality services, but tough decisions were unavoidable.

Arising from the report:

- The Vice Chairwoman asked whether more detail was available in relation to the proposals contained in Section 5 of the report. Officers stated that the proposals and figures remained draft at this stage and that updated figures and proposals and the associated Impact Assessments would be presented again to the Committee in November and then in December in their final form for the Committee to endorse. The Chairman asked that Members should feedback to officers outside of the meeting if there were any specific proposals where they would like to see more detail;
- Paragraph 4.3: A Member asked what 'changing the way we organise our services to support people' and 'better managing the contracts we have with suppliers and external providers' meant in practice. The Executive Director for People and Communities stated new staff had been employed to increase the skill level of contract managers;
- Paragraphs 5.2, 5.3 and 5.6: A Member commented that there appeared to be reductions proposed in preventative Youth Offending and Early Years services. They expressed the view that reductions should not be made in preventative services. Officers undertook to provide more detail on this point and to check whether the budget line referred to at Paragraph 5.3 was no longer used;  
(**Action:** Strategic Finance Business Partner)
- Paragraph 5.9: A Member commented that small primary schools were the most likely to be affected by the proposal to reduce internal funding to school facing traded services (ICT and PE) as they would be unlikely to have the capacity to buy these services in from elsewhere;
- Paragraph 5.11: A Member asked whether the proposed changes to contracts would affect new or existing staff. Officers stated that it would initially be voluntary and that it needed to be tested to establish the level of take-up;
- Paragraph 5.12: The Vice Chairwoman asked for more information on the 'other interventions' mentioned in the report's next iteration.  
(**Action:** Strategic Finance Business Partner)

## **160. PROPOSAL TO CLOSE THE RESIDENTIAL CHILDREN'S HOME AT VICTORIA ROAD, WISBECH**

The Service Director for Children's Services and Safeguarding stated that the Victoria Road residential children's home had offered accommodation for five children and young people and provided a base for a range of outreach services. The outreach services had been relocated and were not affected by the proposal to close the residential element of the building. The accommodation had been empty since June

2018 and the two young people resident at the time had been relocated to alternative accommodation. At the point of closure there had been a longstanding difficulty in recruiting the necessary staff. The existing staff had been redeployed to fill vacant posts elsewhere within the Council. The closure was in line with the current practice of having smaller or more specialist residential settings and would generate net savings of around £300k per year. Work was continuing to establish whether the building could be used for an alternative purpose by the People and Communities Directorate or whether it should be offered up for possible disposal.

Arising from the report:

- A Member asked about the alternative accommodation provided to the two young people who had been moved out of Victoria Road. Officers stated that one had completed a planned move into semi-independent accommodation and the other had moved to another residential home;
- A Member asked about the impact of the closure of the Hawthorns Residential Children's Home. Officers stated that the Hawthorns had faced similar difficulties in maintaining an appropriate staffing complement and that the closure had gone smoothly. The Executive Director for People and Communities stated that there was only a small number of children and young people for whom a family setting was not appropriate. These young people had very specific challenges and needs and in these cases it was preferable to look across the whole of the independent sector to identify the specialist provision which they needed. This could be a costly option, but in this small number of cases the cost was justified;
- The Vice Chairwoman expressed concern that a private sector company might purchase the building and run an independent residential setting which might not necessarily provide homes to Cambridgeshire children. Officers stated that no decision had yet been reached on whether the site would be re-purposed within the People and Communities Directorate. If it was not it would be for the Commercial and Investment Committee to consider whether it should be retained or disposed of and members of the Children and Young People Committee could make representations at that time.

It was resolved unanimously to:

- a) note the content of the report;
- b) accept the recommendation to close the residential children's home at Victoria Road, Wisbech;
- c) note that funds released through this decision will be used to contribute to the cost of placements for children in care;
- d) note that officers are seeking to ensure that as many members of staff affected by this decision are offered alternative employment opportunities as possible.

## **161. SCHOOL ADMISSIONS AND TRANSPORT OUTCOME FOCUSE REVIEW: PHASE 2 UPDATE**

The Chairman advised those present that he had exercised his discretion to accept the Schools Admissions and Transport Outcome Focused Review as a late report on the following grounds:

1. Reason for lateness: Officer illness.
2. Reason for Urgency: To enable the next stages to be developed.

The Transformation Adviser stated that in autumn 2017 Council services had been asked to conduct a series of outcome focused reviews (OFRs) which would include an in-depth evaluation of the activities which services delivered, why the service delivered those activities and how the activities were delivered. The OFR of the School Admissions and Education Transport Services was launched in November 2017. This recognised that the two services were closely linked and that the ability of the two teams to collaborate effectively had significant implications for parents' overall experience.

Arising from the report:

- A Member commented that Post 16 transport was of particular significance in rural areas and asked what research had been carried out into the impact of the recommendations on this user group. The Service Director for Education stated that the current Post 16 transport offer was slightly above statutory requirements. Whilst there were no proposals to extend that entitlement there was still a conversation to be had around making the best use of the funding available. This formed part of the wider picture of Post 16 education as a whole and the gaps which existed in rural communities in relation to Post 16 provision which needed to be explored;
- A Member commented that some Local Authority responsibility to coordinate the award of government funding which could be used to meet transport costs had been transferred to schools with sixth forms and Further Education colleges. Officers clarified that this was known as the Post-16 Bursary and each school or college set their own eligibility criteria. It was not proposed to remove the current Local Authority subsidy for those Post-16 students meeting the low income criteria;
- A Member asked whether schools had been consulted about the proposal that they take greater responsibility for organising Post 16 transport. Officers stated that schools were aware that this option was being considered and that a consultation would form part of the planned future work;
- A Member expressed the hope that the learning gained through the Total Transport project, including offering up spare seats to other users, would be utilised as part of the current review.

It was resolved:

- a) that the Local Authority establishes a Transport board to evaluate the Council's position on its future role in facilitating access to education within the area of Post-16 Education Transport, informed by additional engagement with schools and customers, and that the strategy will be reported to the Children and Young People Committee for final approval;
- b) to make website content more accessible and provide well-timed guidance to residents in order to reduce demand on customer services;
- c) resource needs to be dedicated to implement improvements to the systems that the services use in order to streamline processes for the customer, adapt to customer needs, and enable more efficient back-office processes for the team;
- d) to re-introduce an opt-in system for secondary transport in order to reduce additional unused capacity;
- e) Services working more closely together by co-locating the School Admissions and Education Transport team;
- f) development of more robust reflective practices.

## INFORMATION AND MONITORING ITEMS

### 162. FREE SCHOOL PROPOSALS

The Head of Place Planning 0-19 and Organisation gave the following updates to the information contained in the report:

#### Wave 12

- Paragraph 3.1 - Godmanchester Secondary Academy: A response had now been sent to the Department for Education (DfE);
- Paragraph 3.4 - St Bede's Inter-Church School: New information indicated that the Trust was now focusing on a possible secondary school in Soham. Existing schools in the area were expressing concerns and officers had reservations regarding basic need. The DfE was investigating the proposals and the Committee would be kept informed of any developments.

#### Wave 13

- Paragraph 4.1.4: The DfE was currently carrying out a sift of expressions of interest and not all of these would result in an application being submitted.
- Paragraph 4.3 – Special or Alternative Provision Free Schools: A decision on whether to pursue this would be subject to the outcome of the county-wide review of special school provision currently taking place.

Arising from the report and the verbal updates provided:

- A Member sought more information on the statement that Longsands Academy and Ernulf Academy in St Neots were both now part of the Astrea Academy Trust. Officers stated that following discussions with the Regional Schools Commissioner the Astrea Academy Trust had been invited to take those schools on;
- A Member commented that a letter had been circulated in relation to the possible new school in Soham suggesting that parents wanting a religious education for their children should make contact. The Co-opted Member representing the Diocese of Ely stated that the Diocese had some concerns regarding the Soham proposal. The Diocese had made contact with the potential sponsor, who was not connected to the Diocese of Ely Multi Academy Trust, and they did not appear to be aware of the issue of demographic need. The Service Director for Education stated that a press release had been issued stating that there was no basic need for an additional secondary school in Soham;
- Officers confirmed that the Wave 12 application relating to the Wing Primary (Anglian Learning Trust) was progressing, but that officers had no new information to report at this stage;
- Several Members re-stated their opposition to building new schools where there was no basic need.

It was resolved to:

- a) note the latest position regarding Wave 11 and Wave 12 free schools in Cambridgeshire;
- b) note the level of interest with regard to establishing new schools in Cambridgeshire via Wave 13 of the government's central free school programme.

## 163. CHILDRENS' SERVICES FEEDBACK ANNUAL REPORT 2017/18

The Service Director for Children's Services and Safeguarding stated that it was a statutory requirement that the Children and Young People Committee receive an annual report on Children's Services complaints. Some were dealt with through the corporate complaints procedure rather than through Children's Services, but in total numbers were very low. The Customer Service Manager stated that the report covered the period from April 2017 to March 2018. During that period the number of complaints made equated to around 3% of the cases open to Children's Social Care. There had been a slight drop in the number of compliments recorded in the period, but some teams collated these separately.

Arising from the report:

- A Member sought clarification of the distinction between statutory and corporate complaints. Officers stated that the statutory complaints process comprised three stages: Stage 1 complaints where a local resolution was sought; Stage 2 complaints which could not be resolved locally and were referred for independent investigation; and Stage 3 complaints which were reviewed by a panel of independent people who reviewed the Stage 1 and 2 complaints and reached a final decision. Any complaints falling outside of the guidelines for statutory complaints about Children's Social Care were dealt with under the Council's own corporate complaints procedure. Until 2017 only statutory complaints had been recorded, but now both statutory and corporate complaints regarding Children's Social Care were recorded to ensure a complete picture;
- Members asked that future reports should include the number of complaints received by electoral district in addition to being shown by Social Care District/Area teams;  
(**Action:** Customer Service Manager)
- Graph 7: The Chairman of the Corporate Parenting Sub-Committee asked for more information about the complaints which had been made by Looked After Children in the period covered (suitably anonymised);  
(**Action:** Customer Care Manager)
- A Member noted the number of enquiries from local Members of Parliament had increased and asked why this might be the case. The Executive Director for People and Communities stated that she saw local MPs regularly and encouraged them to raise issues so that they could be dealt with quickly. Sometimes several enquiries might be received in quick succession relating to a single complaint where a complainant chose to involve their local councillor or MP either before contacting the Council themselves or at the same time;
- A Member noted that the report did not include information about transport appeals. The Service Director for Education stated that an annual officer report was produced on this which could be circulated to Members for information.  
(**Action:** Service Director for Education)

It was resolved to:

- a) consider the content of the report and appendix;
- b) request a further report in 12 months.

## **164. AGENDA PLAN, APPOINTMENTS AND TRAINING PLAN**

The Chairman stated that the Constitution and Ethics Committee was conducting a review of appointments to outside bodies across all Committees and that its findings would be reported in due course. Members reviewed the agenda plan, Committee appointments and the Committee training plan.

It was resolved to:

- a) note the following change to the published agenda plan: Placement Sufficiency for Looked After Children: Six Month Update Report deferred to January 2018;
- b) appoint Councillor Samantha Hoy as the Children and Young People's representative on the Communities and Partnership Committee's Poverty Working Group.

Chairman  
(date)