

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE COMMITTEE: MINUTES

Date: Tuesday 29th July 2014

Time: 2.00 p.m. to 4.30 p.m.

Present: Councillors D Brown (Vice-Chairman), P Brown, S Bywater, P Clapp, D Divine, P Downes, D Harty, M Loynes, F Onasanya, M Rouse, M Smith (substituting for G Kenney), S van de Kerkhove, J Whitehead (Chairwoman), J Wisson and F Yeulett

Diocese of East Anglia Representative – Mr P Rossi

Apologies: Councillors G Kenney, M Leeke and L Nethsingha

15. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

16. MINUTES – 3rd JUNE 2014

The minutes of the meeting held on 3rd June 2014 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairwoman.

The Chairwoman reported that the Ofsted inspection of arrangements for the protection of children was complete and the report was currently being moderated. The final version would be published on 8th August 2014.

17. PETITIONS

No petitions had been received.

18. PROPOSED NEW SECONDARY SCHOOL AT HAMPTON GARDENS, PETERBOROUGH

The Committee considered a proposal to commission secondary school places for children from Yaxley and Farcet at a new secondary school at Hampton Gardens, Peterborough. The proposal was for a school with eight forms of entry (8FE), of which 4FE, 600 places, would be specifically for children from Yaxley and Farcet. This would be their catchment school.

Two local members spoke on this item:

- Councillor McGuire, the local member for Norman Cross, fully supported the recommendation, provided that the issue of safe routes to school could be satisfactorily resolved.
- Councillor Bywater, the local member for Sawtry and Ellington, expressed a number of reservations about the proposal, particularly relating to the possible adverse

impact on pupil numbers at Sawtry Community College and hence the College's long-term viability. He also questioned how places at the new school could be secured for Cambridgeshire pupils in the longer term; what steps would be taken to ensure that Cambridgeshire did not end up subsidising Peterborough pupils; and how safe and sustainable travel to the new school would be achieved.

The Committee noted the following points:

- The potential costs of establishing the school could be £27 million. The proposal had been for Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council to split these costs 50:50. This would be more cost-effective for Cambridgeshire than establishing a small, standalone school within the County, which could cost £20 million, plus there was currently no site available. However, members were advised that instead of a 50/50 split, Peterborough had recently sought an additional £5 million from Cambridgeshire, in recognition of the fact that Peterborough would be providing the site.
- The scheme would involve a one-off capital investment from Cambridgeshire, with no revenue consequences. Peterborough City would receive the funding for Cambridgeshire pupils attending the school and this would be paid at Peterborough levels.
- It was proposed to open the new school as a free school. Cambridgeshire members and officers would be on the panel selecting the sponsor.
- The planning application would be submitted by Peterborough and determined by their Planning Committee. Cambridgeshire would be fully involved in design and procurement.
- Cambridgeshire's 4FE would be secured through a legal agreement, so that places could not be allocated to Peterborough pupils if Peterborough numbers increased.

Members made the following comments:

- Expressed concern at the proposal from Peterborough that Cambridgeshire's contribution be increased.
- Asked officers to future-proof the heads of terms agreed with Peterborough to protect Cambridgeshire's position, should the new school become oversubscribed.
- Shared Councillor Bywater's concern about the long-term viability of Sawtry Community College. Officers advised that the College would be supported by the Department for Education and the Regional Schools Commissioner to address its current 'special measures' status. The College's catchment area was expected to continue to support 5FE, keeping the school viable in the longer term. In addition, whilst the new school would provide 600 places, modelling suggested that Yaxley and Farcet would generate 800 pupils, some of whom were expected to attend Sawtry, building on existing sibling links. There was no plan to revise Sawtry's catchment in light of the development at Alconbury Weald.

It was resolved to:

- 1) Approve the proposal to commission secondary school places for children from Farcet and Yaxley at the proposed new secondary school at Hampton Gardens, Peterborough and to make the school the catchment school for children from these communities, subject to a financial 50/50 split with Peterborough City Council and further subject to a maximum contribution from Cambridgeshire County Council of £15 million
- 2) Note the consultation responses and to request officers to pursue through the planning process provision of sufficient, safe and secure access routes between the villages of Yaxley and Farcet and the proposed new secondary school at Hampton Gardens
- 3) Ask officers to carry out a review of secondary school provision in Huntingdonshire, particularly considering how Sawtry Community College will be supported in light of neighbouring developments.

19. NORTH ELY – DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTIONS TOWARDS THE CAPITAL COST OF PROVIDING NEW PRIMARY SCHOOLS

The Committee considered a report on the provision of primary schools on two sites being developed for housing in north Ely, one by Endurance Estates and one by the Church Commissioners. Members were advised that negotiations with both developers on Section 106 agreements for the sites had identified financial viability issues, currently resulting in funding shortfalls for the two new schools, £941,206 for the Isle of Ely Primary School on the Endurance Estates' site and £5,320,000 for the new primary school to be established on the Church Commissioners' site.

Members considered the differing circumstances of the two sites. The Endurance Estates' site would be developed first and the new school on this site would meet demographic pressure in the existing adjoining community as well as the needs of the new development. For this reason, the school would be opening in temporary accommodation in September 2014 before moving to its final location in September 2015. The Church Commissioners' site would be developed in two phases, 800 houses initially and a possible second phase of 1,000 further houses. It was anticipated that the primary school on this site would be needed by 2021.

Members also considered:

- The need for new housing in Ely and the risk to the overall development if Section 106 requirements were too high
- The Council's difficult financial position, with a £29 million shortfall in basic need allocation from Government over the next two years
- Options for managing the shortfall, including the phased development of the primary schools. However, members noted that this option could result in greater costs overall and could disrupt teaching and learning when later construction works took place

- What steps were being taken to ensure that forecasts of the number of school places required were as accurate as possible. Officers explained the methodology used, which had recently been revised to take account of experience from other developments in the County. Members supported a suggestion that the higher end of the range of numbers should be anticipated, not the mid-point.

In view of the differing requirements of the two sites, members suggested that negotiations with Endurance Estates to address the shortfall on their site could provide a positive model for subsequent negotiations with the Church Commissioners on theirs.

The Committee also noted that the challenge of planning for and funding new school places was replicated across the County. The Chairwoman reported that she would be discussing with members and officers how responsibility for these issues would be shared by the Children and Young People and Economy and Environment Committees.

It was resolved to:

- 1) Send the following comments to the Environment and Economy (E&E) Committee on the level of education contributions to be sought as a basis for concluding the Section 106 agreement with the developers of the two sites:
 - The E&E Committee is reminded that the Council has a statutory duty to provide school places, meaning that these should be a priority in Section 106 negotiations
 - The E&E Committee is asked to make every effort to increase the Section 106 contributions for the two primary schools
 - The E&E Committee is asked to provide feedback to the Children and Young People Committee in due course
- 2) Note the terms of an option agreement and cost recovery agreement negotiated with Endurance Estates to allow for the transfer of the Isle of Ely Primary School site. (The agreements are within the scope of officers' delegated authority as the cost of land acquisition and site infrastructure are included in the overall cost of the capital project approved as part of the 2013/14 Annual Business Plan)
- 3) Agree that the financial implications of recommendations 1) and 2) above, which are set out in paragraph 4.1 of the report, should be reflected in the annual review of the Council's Children and Young People's (CYP) 5-year capital programme which will form part of the Council's Annual Business Plan.

20. ACCELERATING ACHIEVEMENT OF VULNERABLE GROUPS STRATEGY AND NARROWING THE GAPS

The Service Director: Learning presented a report describing the steps being taken to accelerate the achievement of children in vulnerable groups. The Council's strategy on this issue, refreshed in April 2014, had been circulated with the agenda, together with

two member-led review reports and a detailed analysis of the performance of the 1,659 pupils who had failed to reach the Key Stage 2 benchmark in 2013.

Responding to the report, members discussed the following issues:

- Noted that in 2012, Cambridgeshire had ranked 147th out of 151 local authorities for the performance of children in receipt of Free School Meals (FSM). The 1,659 analysis had identified a particular issue relating to children who both had Special Educational Needs (SEN) and received FSM. The reasons for these differences were unclear. In relation to FSM, it was possible that some eligible pupils were not claiming FSM who, if included, would raise attainment levels. It was also possible that Cambridgeshire's threshold for SEN designation was higher than other local authorities'. Schools would be asked specifically to target and support children who both had SEN and received FSM.

It was also noted that more boys than girls were in receipt of FSM, had SEN, or were in both categories. Concern was expressed that teachers might have lower expectations of boys than of girls; it was suggested that it be highlighted to schools that boys were an at risk group.

Councillor Downes circulated a briefing note he had prepared showing local authorities' performance of FSM pupils at GCSE, FSM take-up and funding levels, which suggested that there was a strong correlation between funding and performance.

Members noted that from September 2014, the introduction of universal infant free school meals meant that it would be more difficult to identify pupils who attracted the pupil premium. However, the Council had been working hard with schools to publicise this issue and to encourage eligible parents to register. It appeared at this stage that registrations could even be higher than in 2013.

Members noted that use of the pupil premium was closely scrutinised. Schools were required to publish details on their websites and were held to account through the local authority's annual monitoring visits and Ofsted inspections.

- Suggested in relation to the lower performance of summer-born children that some children might be starting school too early, possibly for economic or social reasons. Schools should be able to consider the particular circumstances of individual children.
- Noted that the next report on the agenda identified a number of primary schools with surplus revenue balances and expressed concern that these monies should be spent to help accelerate achievement. Officers noted that schools might be holding balances for specific reasons. However, they agreed that each school should be challenged on an individual basis.

It was resolved to:

- 1) Note the contents of the report

- 2) Endorse the recommendations of the two earlier member-led reviews and to ask officers to review schools' surplus revenue balances to identify any additional resources that could be used to support the Accelerating the Achievement of Vulnerable Groups Strategy.

21. FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE REPORT – OUTTURN 2013/14

The Committee received the final outturn report for Children, Families and Adults for 2013/14. Members noted that the significant overspends for Children and Young People were £1.8 million in Children's Social Care and £1.7 million in Strategy and Commissioning, both relating to demand-led services.

It was resolved to:

Note the report.

22. FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE REPORT – MAY 2014

The Committee received a report setting out financial and performance information for Children, Families and Adults as at the end of May 2014. Members were advised of early pressures relating to Children's Social Care and the placement budget for looked after children, both of which officers would seek to manage in-year. In Children's Social Care, the pressures related in part to the number and cost of legal proceedings. Options being considered included bringing a lawyer in-house, rather than purchasing services from LGSS.

It was resolved to:

Note the report.

23. REVIEW OF EMERGING BUSINESS PLANNING PROPOSALS FOR 2015/16 AND BEYOND

Members received an overview of the emerging Business Planning proposals for the Children, Families and Adults (CFA) service within the remit of the Children and Young People Committee.

The Chairwoman suggested that all Committee members should have the opportunity to shape policies and proposals such as those contained in the emerging Business Plan, before they were published as formal Committee papers. The Service Director: Strategy and Commissioning noted that officers were proposing a number of member workshops on areas associated with the Business Plan. Members expressed a range of views on these suggestions, some expressing concern about time commitments and others drawing attention to the role of the topic champions and groups covered in the next item.

Members commented on two specific aspects of the paper:

- Noted that the Council currently recovered a contribution from the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) for corporate overheads. However, following a review of the legislation, it appeared that this practice would need to be discontinued.
- Expressed concern at proposals to remove further funding from services supporting early years and early education provision. The Head of Strategy and Partnership explained that this would not be a new saving but a continuation of the review of early help and preventative services already underway.

It was resolved to

- 1) Note the overview and context provided for the 2015/16 Business Plan for the CFA Service
- 2) Comment as above on the approach to savings within the remit of the Children and Young People's Committee for the CFA Service set out in the 2014/15 Business Plan
- 3) Ask officers to work with members of the Children and Young People Committee to develop more detailed proposals for presenting to the Children and Young People Committee on 16th September 2014 (capital) and 21st October 2014 (revenue), including at a single informal Business Planning workshop, date to be confirmed.

24. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE COMMITTEE AGENDA PLAN, TOPIC CHAMPIONS AND APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES

Members received the agenda plan for the Children and Young People Committee. Following discussion at the previous meeting on 3rd June 2014, the Committee received an update on progress in establishing topic champions and groups. Members were also invited to agree appointments to two outside bodies identified since the previous meeting.

It was resolved to:

- 1) Note the agenda plan and agree that the Committee should meet on a monthly basis from September 2014
- 2) Agree the appointment of topic champions and groups as set out in paragraph 2.2 of the Committee report, subject to Councillor Clapp joining group 2 on children's social care and Councillor Bywater joining group 5 on early help
- 3) Agree appointments to the new University Technical College in Cambridge and the Joint Consultative Committee (JCC) – Teachers as set out in section 3 of the Committee report, no named substitutes to be appointed for JCC – Teachers.

Chairwoman: