

**MINUTES OF THE CHILDREN AND EDUCATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
MEETING
HELD AT 7PM ON TUESDAY 13 JANUARY 2020
BOURGES/VIERSEN ROOMS, TOWN HALL, PETERBOROUGH**

- Committee Members Present:** Councillors J Goodwin (Chairman), G Casey, N Day, A Dowson, C Harper, T Haynes, Skibsted, S Lane, L Robinson, B Rush, and Over.
- Co-opted Members A Kingsley, F Vettese, Claire Watchorn, Peter French and Parish Councillors Junaid Bhatti, and Susie Lucas.
- Also Present:** Councillor Ayres, Cabinet Member for Children's Services and Education, Skills and University.
Julie Taylor, Chief Executive Officer, Head Teachers
- Officers Present:** Wendi Ogle-Welbourn, Executive Director, People and Communities
Jonathan Lewis, Service Director, Education
Dee Glover, Head Teacher for Virtual Schools
Joanne Procter, Head of Service- Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Safeguarding Boards

34. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Peter Cantley, Peter French was in attendance as substitute.

Apologies were received from Cllr Louise Coles, Cllr Warren was in attendance as substitute.

35. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND WHIPPING DECLARATIONS

1. Councillor Over declared a non-pecuniary interest in that he was the Director of the Soak Education Trust in age.
2. Alistair Kingsley declared a non-pecuniary interest in that he was a member of the Hampton Academy Trust.
3. Flavio Vettese - informed the Committee that the report at item 4 Report of the Service Director for Education included some of the Roman Catholic Diocese schools, however as the report was for information he remained in the room for the discussions.

There were no whipping declarations made.

36. CALL IN OF ANY CABINET, CABINET MEMBER OR KEY OFFICER DECISIONS

There were no requests for call-in to consider.

37. REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR FOR EDUCATION

The Service Director, Education introduced the report accompanied by the Cabinet Member for Children's Services and Education Skills and University, which provided the Committee with an overview of two of the key areas of statutory responsibility for the Service Director for Education under the Education Act 1996. The overview provided to Members covered:

- an update on standards of attainment and rates of progress made by children in Peterborough Infant, Junior, Primary and Secondary schools in the 2019 Early Years and National Curriculum assessments.
- An outline of the action the Local Authority and Academy Trusts / Schools would take to improve standards.
- An outline of the duty placed upon the Local Authority for school and setting place planning across the 0-19 age range.
- An overview of funding for Peterborough schools from the 2020/21 budget settlement and an update on the Peterborough Pupil Referral Service.
- The latest Education action plan.

Julie Taylor, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) for Head Teachers addressed the Committee and key points highlighted included:

- It was important to tackle the education challenges for the city whilst providing the best education possible for children in Peterborough.
- The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) group was undertaking ongoing challenges to improve education in the city.
- There would be another round of Ofsted inspections were due and it was important that schools demonstrated that they were working well together.
- The CEO group was established 18 months ago and the remit was to challenge education provision and talk to schools about their data, this was shared locally and nationally between the CEO groups.
- The CEO group's schools funding would be used to put measures in place for schools that were experiencing issues.
- Peterborough Partnership of Secondary Schools and Primary schools group along with the CEO group had developed a plan to tackle the education challenges in Peterborough. There were four headings and areas of focus within the plan which included curriculum, leadership, recruitment retention and disadvantaged and vulnerable children. The priorities contained within the plan would be tackled over a three year period.

The Children and Education Scrutiny Committee debated the report and in summary, key points raised and responses to questions included:

- The Service Director Education advised that:
 - The improvement offer outlined on page eight paragraph 4.19 of the report was programmed to support in a range of areas of the curriculum where improvements were needed and had not been just for phonic learning. The LA held responsibility for the education outcome of Peterborough school children and the initiative was set up to make sure both maintained, and academy schools had all the tools they needed to tackle all areas of educational difficulties.
 - The funding table outlined at 4.45 of the report demonstrated that Bolton was at the top of closing the gap in education standards, however, they were able to offer a free school meal to every child. The funding percentage increase for Peterborough was incredibly disappointing and it was felt that there were areas such as increased pastoral support and reduced classes sizes that could help improve outcomes for

the City. Despite the low funding increase, the Authority was adequately funded, and the aim was to work hard to tackle all education provision issues in Peterborough schools.

- There were challenges around foundation stage education such as school readiness. This involved the schools understanding what academic level children were at when they entered school and one of the main issues had been literacy in the home. Generally, the LA's quality of Ofsted outcomes in Peterborough was strong however, there was a need for increased early year providers.
- Targets within the Education Action Plan were set and monitored by the school improvement team for all schools. As a result support and capacity leadership had increased following introduction of the new model.
- The Key Stage 2 paper had complex language and was felt by some schools to be particularly difficult. The LA had undertaken an analysis to demonstrate where the difficulties had been experienced and organised workshops for schools to tackle the issues going forward. The CEO of Head Teachers also advised that one of key areas of difficulty experienced was with students where English was not a first language (EAL). There were strategies in place to tackle the issues such as attending the LA run workshops.
- The pupil movement between schools (Churn) was at 40% within the city and the importance of children's education stability was communicated to parents regularly. In addition, there was a new national factor in the funding arrangements that recognised people moving between schools which provided targeted support for those children. The CEO of Head Teachers also advised that every school operated a very clear strategy to identify learning gaps for children moving between schools.
- The readiness programme involved work with early year providers in communicating what the expectations were. In addition, Members were informed about a recent campaign undertaken by the LA, which had featured an information display in Queensgate shopping centre for parents with pre-school children. In addition, the team had undertaken lengths to track pre-school Children with SEN requirements.
- Reading was the biggest gap that the LA needed to focus improvements on for Peterborough. This would involve calling leaders to account, use of Pupil premium, recruitment and retention of good quality teachers.
- The Authority would explore initiatives implemented at Coventry City Council to find solutions to close the gap for Peterborough.
- The Authority would imbed best practice in order to close the EAL gap. The CEO Head Teacher group provided an excellent opportunity to compare EAL provision across the city to find solutions and adopt best practice across schools in order to close the gap.
- Post 16 opportunities included further education offers such as University Technology College (UTC). There was a statutory obligation for the LA to write to all students in year nine in relation to all further education offers open to them.
- Funding for schools was a challenge as there were other services areas within the LA to compete with, such as Children Safeguarding and Highway maintenance. Although this was a barrier, the focus was to provide education across the city in a different way with the same money.
- The LA aimed to recruit the best teachers who would make a difference in the classroom and the current teacher recruitment aimed to attract good, great and amazing quality ones.
- The LAs School Organisation Plan had positively met the need of the City going forward with intake figures rising from 2000 to 3000, which was positive. Need had focused around housing development and there were some free school bids in the plans. In addition, Members were advised that a request was recently sent to secondary school head teachers to explore whether the school could take further pupils. The request was met with a positive response, which saved the LA £8m.

- Five schools that had not made good progress with phonics would continue to receive support through initiatives such as the English Hub New Wave.
- The LA had been working with Derby to implement the phonics champions to raise levels in schools where there were issues. In addition, Dogsthorpe Primary School had engaged with other schools across the city to share best practice and improve performance.
- Members thanked the CEO for Head Teachers for attending and contributing to the meeting.

AGREED ACTIONS

The Children and Education Scrutiny Committee considered and **RESOLVED** to note the report.

38. CAMBRIDGESHIRE & PETERBOROUGH SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD ANNUAL REPORT 2018-19

The Head of Service Safeguarding Board introduced the report which provided an overview of the annual report 2018-2019. In addition, Members were requested to provide feedback on the revised format.

The Children and Education Scrutiny Committee debated the report and in summary, key points raised and responses to questions included:

- Members were advised that:
 - Although all areas of safeguarding services had meant that there had been learning from the Audit opposed to each individual case. Where there had been an issue with an individual case, the QEG would highlight this immediately.
 - Where there had been issues highlighted for an individual case, the partner or multi agency service would be informed and the action assigned would be monitored by the Safeguarding Board. In addition, a further audit would take place in six months' time of the reported issue.
 - Where concerns had been raised with partner or multi agency safeguarding services, the issues would be resolved in a timely manner and none of them had failed to improve.
- Some Members commented that the report reformat had been revamped too far. The Head of Service Safeguarding Board advised that there had been some performance information that needed to be reintroduced to the annual report format.
- The Head of Service Safeguarding Board advised that the policies and procedures which had been implemented to manage County lines issues had had an impact, compared to few years ago, however, there was no overnight solution to the issues.
- Members commented that the safeguarding workshops recently operated had been of a good standard. The Head of Service Safeguarding Board advised that there had been a detailed breakdown of safeguarding workshops attended. In addition, Where non-attendance had been an issue, the Chair of the Safeguarding Board would challenge this with the agency. There had been improved attendance following a recent challenge with one agency.
- The Head of Service Safeguarding Board advised that:
 - All agencies such as the fire service had provided strong support during the Board's safeguarding awareness campaigns. In addition, future campaigns were likely to be social media driven.
 - Support was provided to parents through workshops that delivered information in relation to internet safety. The uptake was low as some parents struggled with technology, however the Safeguarding Board would continue to provide

support and advice through social media, workshops and faith groups in the hope that this would encourage better participation.

AGREED ACTIONS

The Children and Education Scrutiny Committee considered and **RESOLVED** to note the report.

39. ANNUAL REPORT OF PETERBOROUGH VIRTUAL SCHOOL FOR CHILDREN IN CARE 2017 – 2018

The Head of Virtual Schools introduced the report which provided the Committee with an overview of the annual report 2017 – 2018. Members were also informed that the children in care data was not available until April, which was why the data seemed so far in the past. Members were also advised of the initiatives to improve outcomes for the Virtual School delivery.

The Children and Education Scrutiny Committee debated the report and in summary, key points raised and responses to questions included:

- Members thanked the Head of Virtual Schools for her dedication and hard work.
- The Head of Virtual Schools advised that:
 - the four students provided with tuition online instead of face to face had lived out of the area and unfortunately, there were challenges which had made it difficult to offer them a school place in the City. Members were also advised that these pupils received a digital dialogue with the tutor online and their progress and attendance had been tracked daily. In addition, if the pupils had lived in Peterborough, there would be no issue in finding them a school place due to the good relationship the Virtual School service had with Head Teachers.
 - the education progress of looked after children had been monitored by staff in the LA through the Personal Education Plan system. Where a Child in care had been placed out of the city, the Virtual Head would visit the school to gain attainment levels from the teacher. In addition, the meeting with the child's dedicated teacher would provide information about the pupil's progress.
 - where qualification bench markers had been removed there would be a good matched qualification that the child could cope with. The LA had the responsibility to challenge education provision for children in care as Corporate Parents and this would be undertaken through the Personal Education Plan process.
 - The Educational Psychologist was not appointed on a permanent basis due to the funding arrangement which was provided through pupil premium.
 - School staff were provided with training events for designated teachers on a regular basis in order to support children in care and young people in education. In addition, training was provided through teacher appraisal sessions.

AGREED ACTIONS:

The Children and Education Scrutiny Committee considered and **RESOLVED** to note the report.

40. FORWARD PLAN OF EXECUTIVE DECISIONS

The Committee received the latest version of the Council's Forward Plan of Executive Decisions, containing key decisions which the Leader of the Council anticipated Cabinet or Cabinet Members would take over following four months. Members were invited to comment

on the Forward Plan and where appropriate identify any relevant areas for inclusion in the Committee's work programme.

AGREED ACTIONS:

The Children and Education Scrutiny Committee considered the report and **RESOLVED** to note the current Forward Plan of Executive Decisions which identified any relevant items for inclusion within their work programme and requests further information.

41. WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2019/2020

The Democratic Services Officer presented the report which considered the work programme for the municipal year 2019/20.

AGREED ACTIONS:

The Children and Education Scrutiny Committee **RESOLVED** to note the work programme for 2019 – 2020 and agreed that the Senior Democratic Services Officer would recirculate the questions document intended for the Regional Schools Commissioner attendance on 5 March 2020.

42. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Joint Meeting of the Budget – 12 February 2020

Children and Education Scrutiny Committee – 5 March 2020

CHAIRMAN

7.00pm to 20:32pm