

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CHILDREN AND EDUCATION SCRUTINY  
COMMITTEE HELD AT THE BOURGES/VIERSEN ROOM - TOWN HALL  
ON 5 JANUARY 2017**

Present: Councillors Aitken (Chairman), Peach, Ayres, Bisby, Shearman, Amjad, Iqbal and Fower

Officers in

Attendance: Wendi Ogle Welbourn, Corporate Director People and Communities  
Terry Reynolds, Service Director Education  
Gary Perkins, Assistant Director, Education  
Nicola Curley, Assistant Director for Children's Social Care  
Pat Carrington, Principal, City College, Peterborough  
Karen S. Dunleavy, Democratic Services Officer

**1. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Liz Youngman, Al Kingsley and Councillor Rush. Councillor Ayres attended as a substitute for Councillor Rush.

**2. Declarations of Interest and Whipping Declarations**

Councillor Over declared a personal interest in item 5 as he knew Susie Lucas and Margaret Palmer who had been put forward by the Parish Liaison Group to be considered as non-voting co-opted members to the Committee and therefore would not vote on the agenda item.

**3. Minutes of Meeting Held on 14 November 2016**

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 November 2016 were approved as a true and accurate record.

**4. Call In of any Cabinet, Cabinet Member or Key Officer Decisions**

There were no requests for call-in to consider.

**5. Terms of Reference for Children and Education Scrutiny Committee and Work Programme**

The Democratic Services Officer introduced the report which provided the Committee with the terms of reference and work programme for the new Children and Education Scrutiny Committee and a recommendation proposing the appointments of two rural Parish Councillors as non-voting co-opted members to the Committee.

The Democratic Services Officer responded to comments and questions raised by Members and a discussion took place around the following points:

- If a second co-opted member is not appointed then the proposed second member could act as a substitute.
- Remuneration for co-opted members had already been agreed by Council and with a start date of 01 April 2017.

- Four vacancies for non-voting co-opted members existed and councillors suggested that these posts should be advertised and promoted within the Muslim Community and the other faith communities in the city. Representatives from the Racial Equality Council should also be encouraged to apply.
- Parent governor vacancies were advertised through Governor Services so that part of the process was already underway.
- Members also suggested that a representative from a Teacher's Union be considered as a possible co-opted member.
- Members suggested that consideration should be given to the meetings being broadcast on line in order to reach those unable to attend.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- The Committee recommended that Democratic Services Officers should invite candidates for the vacant positions of non-voting co-opted members from either the Muslim community, Racial Equality Council, SACRE and the Teachers Union.

## **ACTIONS AGREED**

The Committee noted the Terms of Reference and Work Programme.

The Committee also agreed to appoint:

1. Susie Lucas as one of the four non-voting co-opted member positions for Children and Education Scrutiny Committee; and
2. Margaret Palmer as a substitute for the non-voting co-opted member Susie Lucas.

The Committee agreed that a briefing note would be provided by the adult learning services to outline the opportunities for adult learning and skills.

It was agreed that agenda item 7 Service Director Report: Children & Safeguarding would be discussed next.

7.13pm at this point Susie Lucas joined the meeting.

## **6. Service Director Report: Children & Safeguarding**

The Assistant Director for Children's Social Care introduced the report, which provided Members with an overview of the key activities within the portfolio of the Service Director for Children and Safeguarding and a summary of key performance information in respect of Children's Social Care up to the end October 2016.

Discussion took place regarding the following:

- Members raised concerns over the block against the funding for innovation funding from the Department for Education (DFE) to establish the model of Family Safeguarding in Peterborough, which would help the Council to secure consistently good outcomes for vulnerable children and their families.
- The last Ofsted report was produced in May 2015 and was followed by the Ofsted Improvement Plan which contained 19 improvements that required attention. The Liquid Logic database issue continued to require improvement. The focus of the Ofsted plan was to resolve practical issues such as reducing Social Worker caseloads. The local average for Social Worker caseloads was at least 19.
- New members of staff would undertake an induction process and were made aware of the expectations required of them.
- Social workers need to be provided with the right tools for the job such as Chrome books to improve efficiency.

- A live business reporting system for safeguarding objectives was currently in place and progress could be viewed on a daily basis, displaying results faster than previously. The indicator for health assessments and very difficult to achieve and further development was required to try obtain more accurate results.
- It had been confirmed that the performance charts contained within the report were not completely accurate and in some cases it had been unclear whether some children had or had attended a dentist appointment.
- There had been a dip in annual health assessments especially amongst the 16-18 age group who did not want to attend appointments.
- Partners organisations that had been involved in safeguarding referral included schools, school nurses, health visitors, mental health services, police, and Cafcass.
- Cases for child protection where the child was considered at serious risk referral were initiated without family consultation however lesser risks such as neglect required family consultation before referral and in order to initiate sources of support for the family.
- Partner colleagues attempted to deal with cases where appropriate and contacted the social care team if they required guidance or had a concern regards to a safeguarding issue.
- Members raised concerns with regards to the dental checks that had not always been recorded.

### **ACTION AGREED**

The Committee noted:

- The content of the report; and
- The delay in decision making by the Department for Education (DfE) in response of the bid for Innovation Funding.

The Committee also agreed that the Assistant Director of Children Social Care would enquire with the Adolescent and Children's Trust (TACT) over whether they used a performance management system that could be utilised by the Authority.

## **7. Implications of Education Bill & Proposals for Restructure of Education Services**

The Committee received a report on the implications of the March 2016 White Paper "Educational Excellence Everywhere" and proposals for the future structure and functions of the Education Services division of the People and Communities Directorate.

The Service Director Education and Assistant Director Education responded to comments and questions raised by Members. A summary of responses included:

- There was a national "Strategic School Improvement Fund" of £140M to help to build school-led improvements and it had been hoped to secure as much of the funding for Peterborough as possible. There were four national priorities for spending the sum, such as to ensure less patchy coverage of multi academy trusts and teaching alliances, more high quality training routes for teachers in challenging areas, making sure curriculum ideas such as mastery were in all class rooms and faster intervention in failing schools. Whilst the additional funding may be available, it must be viewed in the context of a cut of £600M in education support and the application for funding process was not yet fully understood.
- Future co-operation between Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council would cover a range of functions in education including school place planning and the admissions process as well as other areas where the councils were able to support each other. Cambridge appeared to have a range of trading policies with schools which generated income which Peterborough may have had access to.

Cambridge had no statutory responsibilities for school improvements at secondary level for schools that were academies and the Secretary of State was taking over the responsibility for failing schools. Members expressed concern over past management arrangements.

- Standing Advisory of Religious Education (SACRE) remained a statutory duty, to prepare a syllabus, monitor religious education at schools and report to the DfE. However, there had been no clear directive over where the budget for the function would be managed.
- The Education Services Grant, which had funded the majority of school improvement work in local authorities, would be abolished from April 2017, with no transitional arrangements in place for the remainder of the 16-17 school year. This amount had been currently £2.2M for Peterborough. Whilst notice had been given over the level of funding to be removed, information of the statutory responsibilities to be removed had not yet been received. In 2017-18 there would be a £50M transitional grant nationally for local authorities to continue their statutory responsibilities to grant maintained schools. Councils could also apply to the Schools Forum for the transfer of funds back to the Council and the arrangement were currently being drafted.
- The Council would continue to be involved in school improvement for non academy schools, however would not provide services directly and would liaise with Ofsted as appropriate in a commissioning role.
- The working party for the school improvement plan would still be required. There were schools nationally that had performed better than some Peterborough schools, however, Peterborough had a unique set of issues. Schools in other regions would be identified which were performing better and it had been hoped that Peterborough would be able to liaise with them to identify improvement measures. Meetings had taken place with the Chief HMI Inspector following his report on Peterborough under-performing to explore any improvements that could be undertaken.
- The essential principle to school improvement was that schools should drive their own plans and not be micro-managed. There had been in the past a system of command and control for school improvement by the LA and schools had struggled when support had been withdrawn. It had been more desirable to improve the teaching in classrooms, which should be of paramount focus for Head Teachers. The approach in Peterborough schools should concentrate on school collaboration and improvement.
- The Leader commented that repeated debate of failure in local schools on the radio was demoralising for the schools.
- Ofsted results were poor and although there had been no evidence of improvement in the report, it was felt that some schools that were operating successfully, which were not reflected in the recent Ofsted results. Ofsted had been challenged on the issue and the LA were awaiting the outcome of the investigation.
- Maths and writing results had improved, however reading results at aged 11 were disappointing as many children tested had not spoken English as a first language and the reading test was set at aged 15.

## **ACTION AGREED**

The committee noted the report and agreed that the Service Director Education would provide members with a briefing note to outline any progress made on the allocation of the £140m Strategic School Improvement Fund.

## **8. Apprenticeships, Skills & Impact on Reduction in NEET Figures**

The Committee received a report which provided an update on City College Peterborough (CCP) since the last report to the Scrutiny Committee in January 2016 and included the role of CCP in delivering improved educational and other outcomes for the city and to report on Apprenticeships, Skills & Impact on Reduction in Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) figures.

The Assistant Director, Skills and Employment responded to comments and questions raised by Members. In summary responses included:

Children in care (CiC) could miss out on apprenticeships. For those who had the lowest skill set who had not reached the required education level there were study schools programmes similar to those that were on offer at the former John Mansfield school. Traineeships encompassed additional work experience for young people and were just below apprenticeship level which could lead to an apprenticeship.

- Young people should stay in education or work placed education until the age of 18 and had a right to stay in education, however, there had been no single organisation that policed attendance or sanctioned young people for non-attendance. If a young person was pregnant at age 16 they would be included in the NEET figures whereas they would not if pregnant in the workplace.
- There were large differences between Cambridge city and Cambridgeshire in employment skill sets and it had been noticeable that Peterborough had more low paid, low skilled jobs and as a consequence low local aspirations. It had been noted that skills should be improved to improve work progression and work had been currently undertaken on a business plan to submit for funding to the Department of Work and Pensions as part of the devolution plans in order to explore how the issue could be effectively addressed.
- Large companies had visited local schools to inspire pupils to aim higher, however, the results were not measureable. Pupils were also encouraged to engage in a programme working with health sector to encourage apprenticeships and foundation degrees. If the initiative was successful it may be rolled out further in other industries.
- There were changes due to apprenticeship scheme the funding which would involve the allocation to a business which would commission their own provider. A part of an organisation with a wages bill in excess of £3M paid a levy which could be spent on apprenticeships and the management of these would be undertaken by the businesses. There had also been scope for the development of an apprentice trailblazer, which would involve a group of 10 companies from the same sector designing apprenticeships suited to their specific needs. The LA would lead on developing a national apprenticeship on personal centered commissioning.
- It was requested that Vivacity, Serco, Amey, Skanska and Peterborough City Council would develop their apprenticeship schemes.
- The apprenticeship grant was an employer apprenticeship grant which gave employers with less than 50 employees that had not appointed an apprentice within a 12 month period, a grant provision of £1500.00 in support. Further assistance would be available under the devolution deal in smaller business and 223 young people aged 16-18 and 119 18-21 year olds had so far taken advantage of the scheme using the funding available up to the end of December 2016. The initiative provided employers with up to £2000.00 to support the employment of an apprentice separate to the education which was free. Confirmation was awaited with regards to additional funding post 2016.
- There would be no additional funding for Adult Learning as a national decision and the funding that was available must be spent on Maths and English. There had been a consultation with the learners who attended Brook Street and the College Association as how to effectively manage the additional adult funding issue as there had also been the social aspect to consider as courses were often attended for social reasons. Numbers of adult enrolment had not reduced as a result of removing the funding.
- There is a criteria to support concessions which had been funded through work with business.
- 16 – 25 year olds with SEND benefited from specialist educational provision within Peterborough City Council, Peterborough Regional College and Brook Street. Local studies had also been conducted to identify which schools pupils were attending and if there were any gaps in local delivery. The development of social enterprises and

day centre opportunities were also being explored.

- Contact for adult courses had been made through PCC departments, Adult Social Care, forums and word of mouth.
- The areas of focus for adult education provision for the Community Service Initiative cannot be clearly defined within Wards as the provision took place where it was needed and supported by the local community. The can do area had referred to Central Ward.

The Committee congratulated the Assistant Director, Skills and Employment on her achievements.

#### **ACTION AGREED**

The Committee noted the report and agreed that the Assistant Director Skills and Employment would:

- Provide a briefing note to outline the number of people with learning difficulties that had been supported through the City Centre Hub, including the type of activities undertaken; and
- Provide a list of community groups and key partners that had been involved in the Community Serve initiative.

#### **9. Forward Plan of Executive Decisions**

This was a regular report to the Children and Education Scrutiny Committee outlining the content of the Forward Plan of Executive Decisions.

#### **ACTION REQUIRED**

- Members requested a briefing note on schools budgets - KEY/9JAN17/04.
- Members requested a briefing note on the Day Opportunities for the place on the framework - KEY/26DEC16/04

CHAIRMAN  
7.00 – 9.20pm