

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

CHILDREN, FAMILIES & EDUCATION - RESOURCES AND INFRASTRUCTURE POLICY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES of a meeting of the Children, Families & Education - Resources and Infrastructure Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee held at Council Chamber, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Tuesday, 20th July, 2010.

PRESENT: Mr C J Capon (Chairman), Mr T Gates (Vice-Chairman), Mr D L Brazier, Mrs A D Allen (Substitute for Mrs J A Rook), Mr K H Pugh, Mr K Smith, Mr B J Sweetland, Mr M J Vye, Mr R Tolputt and Mr M J Whiting

CHURCH REPRESENTATIVES: The Reverend Canon J L Smith

TEACHER ADVISERS: Mr T Desmoyers-Davies and Mr J Walder

ALSO PRESENT: Mrs S V Hohler, Mr G Cooke and Mr L Christie

IN ATTENDANCE: Ms R Turner (Managing Director Children, Families and Education), Mr K Abbott (Director Resources and Planning Group), Ms C McKenzie (Greener Kent Manager), Mr G Ward (Director, Capital and Infrastructure Group) and Mrs C A Singh (Democratic Services Officer)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

31. Declarations of Interests by Members in items on the Agenda for this meeting (Item A2)

Mr Whiting declared an interest on Item B4 as his employer was a sponsor of the Spires Academy, Sturry, Canterbury. Mr Christie also made a declaration on Item B4 as his daughter was a teacher at one of the schools being discussed.

32. Minutes of the meeting held on 15 April 2010 (Item A3)

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 15 April 2010 are correctly recorded and that they be signed by the Chairman.

33. Deputy Cabinet Member and Service Directors' - Verbal Update (Item B1)

(Verbal Report by Mr G Cooke, Deputy Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Education, Mr K Abbott, Director of Resources and Planning and Mr G Ward, Director of Capital Programme and Infrastructure)

(Mr L Christie, Leader of the Labour Group was present for this Item and was given permission to speak by the Chairman)

(1) The Chairman asked Mr Cooke to give his verbal update. Mr Cooke spoke on the pace of the changes coming from Central government that affected the services of the CFE Directorate. He advised Members of meetings that had taken place with headteachers and Members of the County Council keeping them informed of the changes, in particular those affecting mainstream schools, special schools and academies and the halting of the Building Schools for the Future programme (BSF).

(2) Mr Cooke advised Members that although there were more financial savings that had to be made, the front line services would be protected, although this may be more difficult to achieve in the future. He advised that on 26 July there would be an announcement by the Secretary of State and preparations needed to be in hand of where the capital programme would be targeted.

(3) Mr Cooke was pleased to announce two Kent School Honours and congratulated Ms Helen Tait, Headteacher at Sandgate Primary School and Folkestone Academy who received a CBE for services to education in Kent and Mr Michael Stevens, Chair of Governors, Oakwood Park School, Maidstone, who received an MBE for voluntary services to education. The Chairman asked for a letter to be sent to each of them passing on the Committee's congratulations.

(4) Members were given the opportunity to ask questions and make comments, which included the following:

(5) In response to a question by Mr Pugh, Mr Ward advised that consultants had been appointed through the procurement process, for their experience on elements of strategic finance and for technical advice when the first BSF contract was being drawn up. Mr Ward said that he would, if required to, submit a report giving more detail to a future meeting.

(6) In reply to a question by Mr Brazier, Mr Ward advised that large amounts of money had been spent on the BSF programme, which included transport surveys etc but felt this would not be wasted. He was positive about education capital investment, following the announcement by Ht Hon Michael Gove, Secretary of State for Education that the education capital was reducing by 50%. He considered that whilst a significant reduction, 50% of what was being spent was a significant amount at £10-£12m for secondary schools. This was, however, clearly dependent upon the priorities set by Government.

(7) In response to a question by Mr Christie, Mrs Hohler advised that stopping the BSF in wave 4 in Thanet and Gravesham meant that only half of the proposed schools had been rebuilt. The Cabinet had and continued to put out press releases on its disappointment for those 2 areas. The Cabinet had also written to the Secretary of State for Education to persuade him to reinstate the building of those remaining schools in wave 4.

(8) In response to a question by Mr Pugh about the Isle of Sheppey Academy, Mr Ward advised that the local authority was responsible for the delivery of the new build part of BSF. The Academy was in wave 4 the designs were agreed and the contractual obligations were going through. The Isle of Sheppey Academy was in the same position as the other remaining schools in wave 4. KCC had committed £6m along with the government funding.

(9) RESOLVED that:-

- (a) a report giving more detail on the consultants that had been appointed for elements of strategic finance advice and for technical advice when the first BSF contact was being drawn up to be submitted to a future meeting; and
- (b) the responses to Members questions and the verbal updates be noted.

34. Restructure of the CFE Directorate

(Item B2)

(Report by Mr K Abbott, Director of Resources and Planning, Ms R Turner, Managing Director, Children, Families & Education Directorate and Mrs S Hohler, Cabinet Member for Children, Families & Education)

(Mr L Christie, Leader of the Labour Group was present for this Item and was given permission to speak by the Chairman)

(1) Members considered a report that gave an overview of the CFE restructure, consultation feedback, details of the recruitment process, service planning and model of delivery, savings made and planning for pressures ahead.

(2) Mrs Turner introduced the report advising that the restructuring of the Children Families and Education Directorate and the review of the Local Children Services Partnerships had helped to reduce the Directorate's budget by 10%. After completing phases 1 and 2 the review was now in phase 3 which would be completed by the end of July.

(3) Members were given the opportunity to make comments and ask questions which included the following:

(4) In response to questions that referred to page 37 regarding the Select Committee on Extended Services and page 45 on Early Years by Mr Vye, Mrs Turner explained that she wanted to assure Members that Extended Schools was still a focus that learning continued before school, after school and during the school holiday periods with a connection to family life too. There was a need to build a sustainable model with schools themselves generating that work to be kept going even in light of what may happen with the grants. The School Improvement Officers would have this in their sights. She mentioned that support would also be given by the Family Liaison Officers and the Preventative Services Managers who would have this within their role. Raising standards and settings within Early Years this was still a priority.

(5) In reply to a question by Mr Smith, Mrs Hohler advised that there was agreement to reform the Members Monitoring Group on Attainment, which would allow a small cross party group of Members the opportunity to meet in private to discuss the outcomes of the OFSTED inspection reports in depth.

(6) In reply to a question by Mr Desmoyers-Davies, Mrs Turner considered that with any process where staff were experiencing change there could be a dip in moral,

which needed to be picked back up again to move things forward with following the restructure. In managing that change there was a need to work in partnership with the Trade Unions. There was now an organisational model that was fit for purpose and more sustainable than previously with a streamlined commissioning centre and twelve local districts. She concluded that the Directorate would be judged by the results of its services for children and young people in Kent. Ms Turner noted Mr Desmoyers–Davies view that the process for his trade union members had been unsatisfactory.

(7) In response to questions by Mrs Allen, Mrs Turner advised that there would be twelve Preventative Services Managers, one per district, and their role would be the bridge between universal services that were provided for all young children and young people including; health, early years, schools, colleges and at the extreme end; safeguarding, special education, extreme disability and child protection. They would also be managing Children Centres within their locality, Family Liaison Officers and Parent Support Advisors and a range of preventative services identifying early indicators of need. The vision was that this role would help the Social Workers and Family Support Assistants get off the back foot, which was where they were at present with the increased demand for their services. The twelve appointments had now been made and their names would be circulated to Members.

(8) With regards to the review of the Kent Children's Trust, Ms Turner explained that the majority of the review was complete. There was now a Strategic Board and a Commissioning Group of Chief Officers, which sat below the Strategic Board as the Executive. The establishment of twelve Local Children's Trust Boards, that would look at the needs of children and families and linked them with the schools and other services within their districts was still being carried out and would be established from September onwards.

(9) In response to a question by Mr Christie, Mrs Hohler said that she categorically did not feel that the timing of the restructure had influenced schools to apply for academy status. She had received emails from headteachers who said that they were going to apply for academy status because of the financial incentive but still wanted to work with the County Council. Mrs Hohler felt confident that KCC would retain a good working relationship with all schools.

(10) In a follow up question, Mr Christie felt that the schools were offered more money; the CFE restructure was to save money as there was £6.2m less input into education, he suggested that Mrs Hohler's response did not negate the fact that the restructure, which he said was financially driven had an impact on the schools decision. Ms Turner said that the restructure would yield nearly £9m in savings, which was necessary but it was delivering a much more focused level of service. Schools were use to a level of support from the local authority and schools would be getting a more focused level of support than they had before with the new structure model.

(11) In reply to questions by the Reverend Canon Smith, Mr Cooke felt that the new structure of the CFE Directorate was fit for purpose. He advised that there was going to be a huge opportunity to look at the way services were delivered to the public in an efficient and cost effective way whilst maintaining the level of service. Ms Turner confirmed that the Children's Trust Board meetings would still have the

regular attendance of all partner agencies and would seek to engage, General Practitioners.

(12) In reply to a question by Mr Sweetland, Ms Turner explained that the District and Borough Councils still had a significant role particularly in housing and leisure services. In terms of delivery, CFE was looking at its commissioning role in the future where the district and borough councils may play a role. Mr Cooke added that it was a matter of forging partnerships with both tiers of local authorities.

(13) Mr Vye paid tribute to the staff in Advisory Services Kent and thanked them for all their hard work and wished them well for the future.

(14) In response to follow up questions by Mr Vye, Mr Abbott advised that £8.367m was the savings made through the CFE restructure, which exceeded the savings in the budget referred to on page 25 of the report. This was due to identified savings for 2011 and because there were saving identified at the end of the process of the restructure. The full savings would be known later because of protected salaries for colleagues that may have posts that in the future may be lower paid than their current role.

(15) Ms Turner agreed to forward a hard copy of the Ofsted inspections which were published by district and reminded Mr Vye that the Members Monitoring Group would be set up to enable Members to interrogate the information in private.

(16) RESOLVED that:

(a) the responses to Members questions and comments be noted as detailed in paragraphs (4)-(15); and

(b) the support of this POSC be given to the CFE Directorates new arrangements as they commence and bed down from the 1 September 2010 onwards and the report be noted.

35. CFE Financial Outturn and Unit Operating Plan Outturn for 2009/10

(Item B3)

(Report by Mrs S Hohler – Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Education and Mrs R Turner – Managing Director, Children, Families and Education)

(Mr K Abbott, Director of Resources and Planning and Mr G Ward, Director of Capital Programme and Infrastructure were present for this item)

(1) The Committed debated a report that summarised the 2009/10 financial outturn, together with annual operating plan outturn information, for each of the Service Units within the Children, Families and Education Directorate together with the financial and key activity and performance outcome.

(2) Chairman asked Mr Abbott then Mr Ward to introduce the report. Mr Abbott highlighted the key points which included the following:

(3) The CFE Directorates overall outturn position was a net underspend of £2.238m as set out in appendix 1 of the report.

(4) Mr Ward then spoke on the capital programme advising that there was an underspend of £1.4m, highlighting that the County Council met in February when it had improved its budget and reflected the variations from the position of the budget in January.

(5) Members of the Committee were given the opportunity to make comments and ask questions which included the following:

(6) Mr Smith reminded Members that the CFE Budget Informal Member Group (IMG) had been set up with 2 Members from each of the 3 CFE POSCs. The inaugural meeting of the CFE Budget IMG would be held on 30 July 2010 at 10.00 am. This meeting would cover the rudiments of the CFE budget. Additional meetings would be set up to discuss the budget to report back to this Committee and the Joint POSC.

(7) The Chairman advised that the Teacher, Church and Parent Governor Representatives on the Committees were welcome to attend the IMG.

(8) Mr Vye referred to a drift of expenditure on the Advisory Service, which had been demand lead in the past and how this would be met in the future, Mr Abbott advised that he would report the detail to Mr Vye outside the meeting and added that in primary schools there was a pressure brought to bear in terms of the previous governments timetable on the National Challenge and the local authorities need to respond to it, which may not necessarily exist in the future in the same way. There were pressures which were addressed in building the budget but had been tied up in where the budget had been directed in reducing the resource through the restructuring.

(9) In response to a question by Mr Desmoyers-Davies, Mr Ward explained that the 'poor monitoring information' referred to on page 73 paragraph 4.3.4 was a reflection of judgement on the information provided by the school, it was reflecting information given by the school on where they were on a project in terms of the outturn and their information proved incorrect.

(10) In a follow up question, Mr Desmoyers-Davies asked what scrutiny had been undertaken on the accuracy of the information provided by schools. Mr Ward advised that the schools had a budget for projects as they were commissioning the work, the local authority did not have the monitoring regime that provided the resources to check the information. This was an individual low level scheme that was being managed by a school.

(11) RESOLVED that:

(a) the revenue and capital financial outturn for 2009/10 and changes to the capital programme be noted;

(b) the performance outturn for 2009/10 be noted; and

- (c) a Budget Informal Member Group (2, 2, 2) (from each of the 3 CFE POSCs) be set up to meet and discuss the 2011/12 budget on a regular basis over the next 6 months in order to get a fuller understanding of the implications of potential budget reductions and report back to the this POSC in November 2010 and January 2011.

36. New Academies and Free Schools Proposals and the broader emerging Government agenda for Schools Reform

(Item B4)

(Report by- Mr K Abbott, Director, Resources and Planning, Mr G Ward, Director, Capital and Infrastructure, Ms R Turner, Managing Director, Children, Families & Education Directorate and Mrs S Hohler, Cabinet Member for Children, Families & Education)

(Mr L Christie, Leader of the Labour Group was present for this Item and was given permission to speak by the Chairman)

(1) The Committee discussed a report that gave an update on the coalition Government's new academies and free schools proposals together with information on the emerging broader Government agenda for Schools Reform and summarised the proposals in the Academies Bill and highlighted the key implications and concerns for local authorities and schools. It also provided a preliminary outline of key elements expected to feature in the coalition Government's second Education Bill expected around mid-October.

(2) The Chairman asked Mr Abbott to introduce the report. Mr Abbott advised that 16 Kent schools had formally voted to convert to academy status and on Friday, 16 July the Secretary of State agreed in principle to five of those schools converting to academy status from 1 September 2010, which were; the Hayesbrook School, Tonbridge, Fulston Manor School, Sittingbourne, Dartford Grammar School for Boys and Canterbury High School with its federated Primary School. Other schools may be agreed this week.

Mr Abbott felt that the decision on those five schools one week before the end of term, with no legislation in place at this stage, meant that it would not be possible for the processes of Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) (TUPE), land, property and financial transfer issues to be completed by 1 September in line with the Department for Education (DFE) expectation. Mr Abbott advised that he had already written to the 16 schools that wished to convert to academy status to initiate work in terms of the transition planning with them. The schools all recognised the issue of the timing and were happy to work with the local authority in planning what would happen and when. The position would vary school by school depending on the school's status and the property and land issues that arose. He explained that concerns had been raised with the Local Government Association (LGA) and the Association of Directors of Children's Services Ltd (ADCS) for many weeks but to date little had been received by way of answers from the DFE.

(3) In response to a question by Mr Tolputt, Mr Abbott explained that there was a need to distinguish between the new academies and the free schools. The new academies in terms of the land transfer would receive a 125 year lease and in terms of the site they would get what they were entitled to in line with statute and current regulations. For free schools it was different, there was a process that was set out on page 102, paragraph (3), where free schools were located would be determined by the group establishing the free school, which was different to academies, and for existing maintained schools converting.

(4) Mr Christie made a declaration of interest as his daughter was a teacher at one of the schools mentioned by Mr Abbott in paragraph (2) above, which was noted by the Committee.

(5) In response to our questions by Mr Christie, Mr Abbott advised that he was not aware of the position of nursery schools inspected as outstanding but agreed to find out and advise Members outside the meeting.

(6) Mr Abbott explained that there was now an expectation that it would be good practise for the schools to consult parents and communities regarding their plans to convert to academy status but as things stood at present there was no formal requirement for that to happen.

(7) Mr Abbott referred the Committee to appendix A, page 118, advising that this was grouped on the basis of those schools that achieved 'outstanding' in their Ofsted inspection were given the option to be fast tracked to convert to academy status if they wished to pursue this. He agreed to circulate the analysis on this to Members.

(8) Mr Abbott went on to advise on the financial impact of the schools converting to the new academies status, explaining that it did depend on what the government did beyond this year. Referring to page 118 he explained that as a school moved to new academy status it would take its formative budget, a neutral impact on the local Authority (LA) and the school. For central services, from the DFE's published ready reckoner, the 15 schools (*now 16*) would receive £4.249m paid by the DFE. The amount removed from the LA budget would be £736k. That £736k would go to those schools, along with a lot of costs. There would be some impact on the LA but this would be minor as a lot of the costs would go to those schools. The issue would come if all those schools were to convert in a full year; the DFE would currently have to find £3½m top up to reflect other central services, which currently the DFE was not removing the funding from local authorities for. (*If all schools were to go then this would reveal large figures as reflected in the table on page 118*). From the DFE's Customer Impact Assessment it was aware of the sustainability issues in the future of this top up if there was the sort of take up that the government was hoping to achieve with the new policy. The DFE had said in its published document that it would be speaking with departments, communities and local government on how to fund that in the future. With the LA's experience of Grant Maintained schools and funding this was similar to the model of 15 years ago. There was concern that the government may have to come back to LAs to remove all of the £4.2m not just the £736k for those 15 schools. If the Government continued as things stood there would be less impact, if they looked for full recovery for new academies central services there would be a big issue for local authorities if a significant number of schools moved to new academy status. It was hoped that there would be

confirmation on this in the Autumn alongside the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) announcement.

(9) In reply to a question by Mr Walder, Mr Abbott explained that the LA was not the current employer for a number of these schools. This would be an issue for the governing body of those schools as the first 5 schools that had been approved by the Secretary of State for academy status were all foundation schools. One of the reasons for writing to all 16 schools that had voted for converting to academy status was to make clear the point that the arrangements and the governments expectation that consultation with TUPE etc was done over the Summer break was not possible. Mr Abbott felt that November would be a far more realistic time to begin the consultation, in terms of the legal processes that schools would need to go through.

(10) In reply to a comment by Mr Smith, Mr Cooke suggested that it was about how the local authority's role developed with the schools what ever type of school they were. Mr Abbott added that the 8.7% referred to the dedicated Schools Grant, KCC was in the bottom quartile, there were other South East LAs that were 17%, nationally some were in the 20%, which was all a reflection of where authorities had saved money in the past on budgets saving delegated funding to schools, some authorities still managed on a central basis, there was a reason for the variance because of decisions made over many years by both Members and the Schools Funding Forums. The 8.7% did not cover what was the top up of £3½m, which related to the base budget, the council tax and the government general grant.

(11) In reply to a question by Mr Whiting, Mr Abbott advised that the LA had no formal role in the Secretary of States decision the Diocese Boards and Education Boards did. The process for the LA was through a weekly conference call with the DFE when it sought information they should know regarding the schools that wished to convert to academy status. The LA provided a matrix of information about loans; current budget positions etc but had no role in the decision.

(12) Mr Ward added that regarding the leasing/loaning of land the current advice was still being looked at. Regarding the current academies the land would revert back to the local authority even if it were a foundation school and it would be leased/licensed back for 125 years. He advised that in one case the LA leased back less land that was handed back that was in part to deliver a receipt that the authority wished to contribute to building an academy. He felt that the expectation was that the LA would have to lease back the land the school had to date with the 16 schools. Mr Cooke added that whilst the authority was not part of the consultation process it was campaigning in specific areas but as far as the schools were concerned the position of the authority to date had been to remain strictly neutral, what ever the school wished to do the LA was respecting their autonomy to make that considered decisions.

(13) Mr Abbott advised that to date there had been no proposals received for a free school in Kent. He understood that the earliest that a free school could be established was September 2011.

(14) In response to questions by Mr Christie, Mr Ward advised that the Harnessing Technology Grant made free Broad Band available to Primary and Secondary schools up to a prescribed band width. The CFE Directorate was working on the

basis that the Harnessing Technology Grant would end this financial year, so had been working with schools to ensure that the Broad Band continued to exist. The reduction outlined in the report on page 102 paragraph 3.2 of £1.35m or 25% of what had been lost as a result of the decision of free schools. Since the initial announcement of saving there had been additional savings made on the Harnessing Technology Grant, which had totalled £2.7m or 50%. This was not an issue for the current financial year for schools as the grant ran until August 2011. This meant that there would be an increase in cost for the schools Broad Band facility from 1 April 2011.

(15) In response to a question on petitions, Mr Adams advised that there was already existing legislation that places a duty on the local authority to consider parental representations, which meant that it was currently possible for members of the public or groups of the public, to ask the local authority to bring about some form of structural change in the locality. The legislation was silent on what constituted parental representation as to whether it was an individual or a group of one thousand parents. Mr Adams considered that these issues may simply go to the Department for Children Schools and Families (DCSF) or DEF officials and the Secretary of State as oppose to the legislation that the local authority worked within which would require public consultation.

(16) In reply to questions by Mr Tolputt, Mr Abbott advised that free schools and the new academies would not be able to get their insurance cover from the local authority, the government had recognise that and as part of the settlement package there was an additional top up grant of £60-£100 k for the academies.

(17) The Reverend Canon Smith announced that he was retiring. The Reverend Canon Smith was originally appointed to the former Education Committee in 1999. This was his last meeting with the County Council.

(18) RESOLVED that:

- (a) the Members wished to formally thank the Reverend Canon Smith for all his work on the Education Committees over the years and wished him a long and happy retirement;
- (b) Mr Abbott agreed to circulate the analysis regarding information on appendix A, page 118 and find out the position of nursery schools inspected as 'outstanding' and report back to Members outside the meeting; and
- (c) the report be noted.

37. Special Educational Needs Transport-Informal Member Group *(Item B5)*

(Report by Mr G Ward, Director, Capital Programme & Infrastructure)

(1) The Committee considered a report on the progress on work undertaken by the SEN Transport Informal Member Group (IMG), which included interviewing Mr Harlock, Head of Commercial Services and Mr Myers, Parent Governor of a SEN

school and considering papers prepared on Manchester City Council's concept of 'Independence Training' and the devolution of transport budgets to schools.

(2) RESOLVED that:

- (a) agreement be given to the concept of 'independence training' and how it could be applied to benefit some of the pupils within our special schools, it is suggested that an independence scheme could be developed and piloted in Kent, with tailoring to meet the requirements of locality and pupil need;
- (b) the devolution of transport budgets to schools be investigated as a viable means of both reducing the future costs of SEN student home-to-school transport and improving the quality of the service to the young people;
- (c) the reduction of statements and the subsequent transport requirements be investigated: and
- (e) the SEN Transport IMG Members be thanked for the work they had undertaken, which had now concluded.

(Following the meeting Mr Horne, Chairman of the SEN Transport IMG advised the Democratic Services Officer that he had attended the Bower Grove School, Maidstone, to speak with the Headteacher, Mr Phipps and to observe the children accessing and leaving the school by various modes of transport. He wished the Members to know that the children accessing the transport were severely handicapped and the transport was used effectively. Mr Phipps had advised him that he would be considering self management of the transport provision for Bower Grove school primarily because of the problems with the transition arrangements with new contractors)

38. Admissions

(Item B6)

(Report by- Mr G Ward, Director, Capital Programme & Infrastructure)

(1) The Chairman asked Mr Ward to introduce the report. Mr Ward highlighted that there had been a major change with casual school admissions. Currently up until this September primarily the local authority (LA) were responsible for admissions from reception year onwards but if a parent moved into an area they would approach the local school, for what ever age their child was, if the school had a place the school would let your child into the school, which was a simple local process. From 1 September the process would change, the parent would have to apply to the local authority that would look at the places available in the area and then contact the school to arrange the placement and then formally write to the parent. Mr Ward felt that the Admissions Team were prepared but were unaware of how much more addition work this would entail.

(2) With regard to page 124 paragraph 3(1) of the report, Mr Vye requested a fully researched, detailed report disaggregated by area to include; the published admission number of schools; grammar schools and others, the passes at the Kent Test, the number of passes at headteacher appeals, the number of independent appeals and the number of successful appeals and the final percentage of the

cohort going to grammar school for 2010, to be submitted to the next meeting of this POSC.

(3) In response to a question by Mr Pugh, Mr Ward advised that the LA coordinated the admissions process to all schools in Kent but each school had its own admission arrangements. With regard to academies and foundation schools they could set their own admission arrangements but the LA administered it all through the process. There were approximately 100 different admission authorities in Kent. In a follow up comment Mr Pugh expressed his frustrations in trying to assist a pupil entering a school on the Isle of Sheppey. Mr Ward read out the admissions criteria for the school and advised that the LA had to abide by the criteria. Mr Cooke concurred advising that there were regulations that needed to be followed and that any variations made to the admissions criteria had to be carried out through consultation.

(4) RESOLVED that:

(a) agreement be given to the request for a fully researched, detailed report disaggregated by area to include; the published admission number of schools; grammar schools and others, the passes at the Kent Test, the number of passes at headteacher appeals, the number of independent appeals and the number of successful appeals and the final percentage of the cohort going to grammar school for 2010, to be submitted to the next meeting of this POSC; and

(b) the responses to Members questions and the report be noted.

39. Sustainability and Climate Change Update

(Item B7)

(Report by- Ms R Turner, Managing Director Children Families and Education Directorate and Mrs C McKenzie, Sustainability and Climate Change, Environment, Highways and Waste Directorate)

(1) The Committee considered a report that summarised the progress made against the work carried out on Climate Change and the implementation of the Environment commitments and the ISO14001.

(2) The Chairman asked Mrs McKenzie to give a brief introduction. Mrs McKenzie highlighted some of the progress that the CFE Directorate had made and the future challenges that the directorate faced for the coming years that included; over the last year the Kent Environment Strategy had been reviewed and updated. The original Strategy governed what the directorate and the local authority did within Kent as a whole. A lot of the activity underneath the Strategy had a lot of good activity and projects but the outcomes did not change. She felt that it was important that what was carried out in the future with the policy within CFE directorate and within KCC as a whole was taken in context with the Kent Environment Strategy.

(3) All CFE buildings had been assessed to display an energy certificate which was an energy performance requirement, 350 schools, that were applicable for an energy certificate had been assessed with an average rating of 'D', which was

better than average. Half of the schools were better than that cohort of schools. In terms of demonstrative savings within CFE; business miles had been reduced by less than 1% with a saving of £49k and in the last 6 months CFE had participated in 'BT MeetMe' telephone calls but there was still a lot of potential in those areas. Schools waste contracts included more recycling offers and a food trial had been undertaken, extending to the Family Centres and the Children's Centres.

(4) For CFE there would be a continued focus on energy and carbon reduction, which she felt was a big challenge for CFE because of the size of its estate. The carbon omissions did go up last year primarily because of the schools estate due to extended opening hours, older buildings 'school that never sleeps' and more ICTs. There had been progress in reducing business mileage but there was still a lot of potential to reduce business mileage and cost savings that could be delivered. There was also a need to improve on the activity around water and energy investment if significant savings were to be made. Mrs McKenzie advised that different funding streams were being looked at with an awareness of the uncertainty of budgets and the issue of the new academies and free schools policy being introduced at this time but reminded Members that KCC was still responsible for the academies and free schools etc carbon omissions which was a complicated situation as KCC would not have any control over those schools. Mrs McKenzie concluded by highlighting the need to look at climate change risk and the potential for green jobs.

(5) Members were given the opportunity to ask questions and make comments which included the following:

(6) In reply to questions by Mr Pugh, Mrs McKenzie advised that KCC was working with the district and borough councils through the Climate Change Programme via a network and the Climate Change Plan. She felt that retrofit was one of the trickiest issues for KCC. She confirmed that there were a myriad of grants for businesses and residents but the picture was very confused. She gave the example of the Warm Front Grant, a domestic retrofit grant, available to vulnerable residents, the take up in Kent was only 5% and that could be worth approximately £150m to Kent. She also confirmed that KCC was working directly with the business community to try to streamline getting access to grants and working with the rest of the public sector to see how retrofit could be carried out with a consistent approach. KCC was lobbying government to have a streamlined consistent approach to grants to improve the take up of grants by Kent residents and businesses to allow KCC to make small pots of money go further.

(7) In reply to a question by Mr Smith, Mrs McKenzie advised that she was aware that an area of Ms Sue Dunn's, Head of 14-24 Innovation Unit, work did cover Priority 7 [support and development of green jobs and businesses in Kent] within construction. Mrs McKenzie advised that her Team were looking at some of the spin offs such as training and apprenticeships. There was a lot of potential; both KCC and the district and borough councils were looking at taking on a number of educational placements.

(8) In response to questions by Mr Sweetland, Mrs McKenzie advised that LASER was the main energy contractor for Kent schools. She felt that in terms of business mileage reduction Mr Sweetland was correct that 3.5% was a start and that figure was rising but there was huge potential to increase that reduction, there was a need to challenge the way KCC did things and the amount of meetings that were

held. With regards to 'BT MeetMe' 10% of the accounts used, the overall savings for Kent were quite significant and with more use there would be huge savings, this was difficult to challenge but there was more buy in now because of the revenue savings that had been demonstrated mostly during the bad weather conditions in the Winter. She concluded on the issue of Management Challenge, advising that her Team had brought in the Environment Board business mileage that had also been difficult issue to tackle. Mr Ward added that CFE had set a target of 5% for business mileage but had a disappointing result in not reach that target. He explained that colleagues that did use 'BT MeetMe' during the bad weather had reverted back to type. He felt that with the restructure and reduced staffing levels, staff would need to work smarter using tools such as BT MeetMe.

(9) RESOLVED that:

- (a) the responses to questions and comments made by Members be noted; and
- (b) the overall progress made by KCC and the CFE Directorate on climate change and environmental issues be noted;

40. Select Committee Update

(Item C1)

(Report by Mr P Wickenden, Overview, Scrutiny and Localism Manager)

(1) The Members considered a report that highlighted the progress of the Select Committee on Extended Services and invited suggestions for the Select Committee Topic Review Programme.

(2) RESOLVED that:

- (a) the progress of the Select Committee on Extended Services be noted; and
- (b) Members agreed to forward their suggestions of any items for inclusion in the Select Committee topic review programme to the Democratic Services Officer and the report be noted.