

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

SELECT COMMITTEE - EXTENDED SERVICES

MINUTES of a meeting of the Select Committee - Extended Services held in the Swale 3, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Wednesday, 16 June 2010.

PRESENT: Mr R B Burgess (Chairman), Mrs A D Allen, Mr A R Chell, Mrs J P Law, Mr K H Pugh, Mr K Smith and Mr M J Vye

IN ATTENDANCE: Miss T Grayell (Democratic Services Officer) and Mr G Romagnuolo (Policy Overview Research Officer)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

24. Interview with Zanya Davis, Artistic Director, PALS Theatre Ltd, Gravesend
(Item 1)

Please introduce yourself and outline the responsibilities that your post involves.

I am the Artistic Director of the PALS Theatre in Gravesend. My main responsibilities are to create and develop creative workshops for schools, nurseries and youth clubs – any education establishment, in fact - to design workshops and undertake various admin work.

What is PALS Theatre? Please outline the services that PALS Theatre offers, and how these services are delivered.

PAL stands for 'Positive Attitude to Life'. It was established in 2007 to encourage young people to think positively. We deliver breakfast, lunch and after-school activities, and deliver a Positive Life course and emotional literacy training in schools. We run PALS Youth Arts Club with Marling Cross Library in Gravesend, which allows young people to work towards a national qualification level 1 or 2, which is equivalent to an A Level. We also run the PALS Academy, which offers LAMDA qualifications, and we enter competitions. PALS always encourages young people to develop their own concepts and ideas, so everything that PALS does is original as it has been developed by the young people involved.

What type of working relationship exists between PALS Theatre and Kent County Council? How would you like to see this relationship develop into the future? In which ways – if any – can collaboration and partnership working between all organisations involved in providing Extended Services in the County be improved?

We have worked in partnership with KCC and the Extended Services team and this has provided a very helpful link to schools and kept us up to date with latest policy. Emma Jenkins is our contact and she has been very keen to help. In terms of collaboration for the future, the main issue is the lack of funding to allow us to develop more access to schools. Extended Services providers still need more access to frontline services at schools. I am writing letters to all schools to invite them to work with us as an established KCC partner.

I am interested in your use of drama and theatre to engage emotional literacy and address behaviour. Have you had any contact with local Academies?

I have worked with Leigh Tech in Dartford, as they asked PALS to develop a course for them. They have been receptive to our innovative work, but in many other cases it has proved difficult to make contact with the right people.

In your experience, what are the main benefits resulting from the provision of Extended Services? When marketing your services, do you include case studies to show the benefit of what you do?

I can give you snapshots of the sort of feedback that Head Teachers have said our work encourages children to do well beyond the classroom; that our services have brought a child out of her shell and given her vital confidence; that children from vulnerable groups have particularly benefitted; and that they hope our work will continue so that future children can enjoy the same benefits.

What are the main challenges for your company – if any - when providing Extended Services, and how can these challenges be resolved?

Many schools say they do not have the funds to allow the engagement with us that they would like to have. I would like to have more understanding of the KCC budget structure so I can set prices that I know are realistic for schools to afford. I also need to establish more contacts, so I can see which schools are receptive and want it, so are worth marketing to.

In which ways, if any, might the reduction of Government funding for Extended Services in future years, and the possible shrinking of the Extended Services Team, affect the provision of Extended Services?

Our marketing would need to be more targeted, so we don't waste money marketing to schools which are not receptive, but instead make good value contacts with those which are and which can bring in business.

In your view, which Extended Services activities have the greatest impact and benefit for the community, and which programmes are most likely to be sustainable in the future? We are trying to identify the value of Extended Services. How can the benefits be evidenced and quantified?

Some schools quote a percentage of change, eg a percentage drop in absenteeism or fewer incidents of bad behaviour. Anything which encourages confidence and helps pupils to be productive for the future will be a benefit, and will reap dividends beyond the end of the school day, but I agree that it is difficult to quantify this. The London Borough of Islington has tried similar theatre projects and has seen successes from them. Kent schools have the same problems as Islington schools, so if one can benefit, so can the other. With a limited Extended Service, we need to be more targeted and limit our work to those schools who want to work with us.

In your opinion, how can Kent County Council, together with schools and other providers of Extended Services, ensure the sustainability of Extended Services into the future?

They would need to be able to demonstrate the benefits of Extended Services to prove that it gives value for money. We could collate evidence and a database.

Can you suggest any innovative and creative ways for KCC to deliver Extended Services in the County?

As a provider, I feel the KCC could reduce the layers of management which are involved in delivering Extended Services. I would seek to work directly with schools as far as possible, and management could have a regulatory role.

Would you place the onus on a school to contact you, so you can market yourselves directly and discuss their requirements?

Yes, I would like us to become an approved, vetted provider so we can contact schools and liaise with them directly.

The Select Committee has been looking into the possibility of the management of Extended Services, bookings and access to schools being taken on by a social enterprise company, which would manage the work for several schools. Have you considered your company buying in more services so that you can offer this sort of package to the schools you work with? The co-ordinator of services could be based in one school and serve several other to make it cost effective.

This sounds good, and it would be good to group schools and use their premises in this way. I like the idea of an outside provider taking over the school premises at 4pm and running them from then on, to provide activities and services. This is what I had imagined 'the school that never sleeps' would look like.

What about people being able to access a school? How important is access, and where would you get funding to improve it?

As we are a limited company, we get our income from fees from clients. We are changing to be a Community Interest Company (CIC), so we can access Government funding and can offer workshops to schools at a reduced rate. Money is a key issue for a school when deciding to try out the sort of services that we offer.

How would you convince a school to use your company and justify the cost?

Once I manage to make a contact at a school that is interested, I find that they do want what we offer, so convincing them is not a problem. Getting through to make the initial contact is a challenge. Some schools have to delay signing up as they need to access match funding, and some charge the parents for the activity.

What are your costs and charges?

For after-school clubs, we charge £30 per hour for a group of 20 to 30 children, which makes £1.50 to £2 per head. However, some schools have trouble covering this cost, and have to charge each child who is taking part.

We have heard from other interviewees that some parents do not value an activity if it is provided free, and are more likely to make a commitment to it if they are paying something for it.

Yes, I can understand that.

If you are charging a school so much per pupil, and there are not enough pupils taking part, how do you make up the shortfall? Do you accept a lower rate for that hour's activity?

Yes, sometimes I do have to do this.

Being a Community Interest Company is a good idea, as it gives you good options for how you spend available money. A CIC can apply for funding on

behalf of clients it is working with, so I would fully support your intention to do this.

What age groups do you work with?

From nursery age to 18.

Do you come across any other barriers to your work, other than those you have already told us about?

No, most people are receptive to what we do, once I can make contact and explain our aims. All our employees are CRB-checked and vetted, and schools are happy for me to have the keys to lock up their premises after the clubs.

The Select Committee has been looking for case studies which will demonstrate the benefits of Extended Services. You talked about it raising their self-esteem, but can you also link it to attainment?

It definitely also helps with a child's literacy, and I can send the Select Committee some data on this.

As you are based in Gravesend, have you approached Gravesham Borough Council to do any work with them?

I have approached them but they were not very receptive.

I recommend that you persevere and ask to talk to the Leader, Mike Snelling, who is also a Member of the Kent County Council.

It would be good if we could get to work with Gravesham.

As grants are reduced, is there scope to extend the commerciality of your company? This will take time, but how long might this be? When could the service that you give become self-supporting?

I will have a clearer idea of this when I have completed the process for becoming a CIC. It is hard to predict, as each year that we have run so far has been different as our company has established and grown. CIC status will help us to move forward.

We know how Extended Services relates to a school's core business. Do you have any activities which are part of formal courses, or which lead to qualifications?

We offer the Arts Award, a recognised national qualification, which supports young people as artists. There are 3 levels, which are the equivalent of GCSEs and A Levels, and we offer LAMDA qualifications and the Duke of Edinburgh awards.

Why would you say that your business should be supported by public money?

Because the community and young people are at the heart of what we do. We offer positive and productive activities for young people, and we link young people and the community in a positive way. This link will be the future model for so much service delivery in the UK.

From Gravesend, how far across the county are you able to reach with your work?

We currently work in Dartford, Gravesend and Medway.

It would be good if you could work with Canterbury City Council as well. Perhaps Select Committee Members could help you with new contacts in your existing and new areas. We will chat outside the meeting.

27. Interview with Sally Staples, Head of Kent Arts Development Unit, KCC
(Item 2)

Please introduce yourself and describe the roles and responsibilities that your current post involves, and an outline of the structure and remit of the Arts Development Unit.

I am the Head of the Kent Arts Development Unit. Our direct engagement with Extended Services is minimal, but there is a direct overlap between what we deliver and the provision of Extended Services. KCC has always had some form of ADU, but the current Unit now has quite a different format. I have been here for two and a half years, and when I arrived I reviewed the structure and made dramatic changes.

One of the challenges we had to address was how to provide best value for money. The KCC used to provide arts services directly, mainly by staff running galleries, but this is a very expensive way of delivering arts activity in the county. There were 26 officers in the team, and there are now 11. These are arranged in two groups of specialist officers; arts and regeneration officers, who are split geographically to serve the county, and arts form officers. We still provided some direct services, eg the visual arts officer runs the John Downton exhibition that you see at Sessions House, but the team's main role now is to provide a strategic service across the county, to strengthen arts provision.

The danger with arts is that we often take it for granted that there will be specialists to provide arts activity. People working in the arts need to be a blend of two things; experts in their field (ie great artists) and good at communicating that skill to others. The job isn't as easy as many people think. We need to find people who are both creative and good at communicating, for instance, with disaffected young people. I see the role of the team as to generate opportunities, 'feed the engine room', to supply people to deliver arts services and encourage the emerging young artists for tomorrow.

Could your team become involved in Extended Services in school in any way?

Yes, the John Downton Award is already marketed to all schools in Kent, and this year we will pay particular attention to schools in areas where there was low take up last year. We aim to get a new range of young artists taking part each year. We also run the Kent Youth Theatre Festival, which is in its second year. Many youth theatres are independently run but about one-third are attached to schools or an after-school activity.

In your view, what are the benefits resulting from the Unit's involvement in Extended Services? How would you measure success?

We have a performance management framework to judge our delivery against our annual operating plan and there are two ways of measuring success which are most relevant to Extended Services; leverage of money and levels of participation.

The KADU's budget is £1.1million per year (plus another £1million specifically for the Turner Contemporary), of which a considerable proportion is for grants for projects.

Last year we levered in £6million for the county. We have a strong relationship with the Arts Council, which is built on mutual trust and respect, and my team are experts at applying for grants. For instance, my team was instrumental in writing the successful £3million Seachange bid for Dreamland last year.

Levels of participation measure how many people take part in an activity, and how many organisations we advise. We give business advice, as creative people are not always business-minded people. By helping them to become more business-minded, we help to make them more sustainable. This part of our work is a meeting of good art and good governance, and it is often one of the most challenging parts of what we do.

We have a Youth Arts Officer, who comes under the direct management of the Kent Arts Development Unit but is shared with the Youth Service, and who runs the Youth Theatre Festival. Youth Theatre has traditionally been seen as a middle-class activity, but the YAO builds in elements to the project to access hard to reach young people.

How do you reach young people in deprived areas, and how could they benefit from what you do?

We work with organisations which specialise in such work, for example Rhythmix, which is associated with Kent Music. These people are experts at relating to disaffected young people. For example, we were interviewing musicians, and we found a young chap whose mother had died when he was young. His father and his older brother were alcoholics but he had made a conscious choice to teach himself to play the guitar and avoid following their example. He now teaches young people. Knowing the sort of the situation they are coming from, he can relate to them, and they look up to him because of his musical skills.

We use systematic measurement to see the benefit of what we do. For example we have been piloting a SEEDA funded GIS-based planning tool which enables you to map levels of arts participation alongside employment, educational attainment, levels of obesity, etc.

The Select Committee is trying to identify creative ways in which Extended Services can be delivered, and how we can quantify its effects on attainment and other issues.

Who benefits from the Unit's provision of Extended Services? Are there any groups of Kent residents who, in your view, find it more difficult to access the activities the Unit offers? If so, why?

The messages I would ask the Select Committee to consider are:-

- if you want to engage young people, think first of ensuring that we are attracting, training and retaining talented creative people in Kent who will work effectively with young people;
- school premises are not a good place for activities in which you are trying to engage disaffected young people (or their parents), as they often have negative associations with school. Don't assume a school environment is right for everyone;
- the arts can provide a link or bridge from such disaffected people to their previous bad experiences of people in authority. Artists often provide a bridge between 'anti-establishment' and constructive life choices;

- transport to help access to activities is a major challenge. After-school activities are most easy to attend if a pupil's parents have transport and are willing to assist.

I am interested in what you say about youth theatre being seen as 'middle-class'. Are a lot of young people missing out on it because of this? Can you comment on the distribution of youth theatres across the county?

We know there is much youth theatre activity going on across Kent, but we encourage companies to make contact with us so we can see how best we can be involved and help maximise involvement. We continue to be proactive in discovering new youth theatres.

You say that you lever in funds for the KCC, to help pay for cultural activities. Could a school's Extended Services activity help them lever in funds for their school?

Most of my team's fundraising success has come from Lottery applications, and, as I have said, my team is very good at leveraging in funds. The question to ask with Extended Services leveraging in is 'where would the money be levered from?'

Please explain the importance of creative education to engage with young people and to contribute to the knowledge economy.

There has been extensive national research about this. Cultural education as part of the school day develops transferable skills, eg problem solving, negotiation, team work, which are very useful for enhancing employability.

The creative industries sector is one of the few sectors which has continued to grow, even in the recession. Sales of theatre tickets, for example, have continued to increase as people want to have affordable treats. Kent has a slice of the creative economy and is well placed to increase its share. The creative economy is predicted to increase up to 2013, and Kent can't afford to miss out on this opportunity. To succeed, Kent will have to foster a suitable workforce, hence the need to develop young people's creative skills. We need to help by signposting young people to cultural opportunities.

Why is your team, rather than the private and voluntary sector, involved in delivering the Youth Theatre Festival?

We are delivering a 2010 target and have been awarded an Inspire mark for our work (this is the mark awarded by the London Organising Committee for the Olympic Games for cultural activity that is part of the Cultural Olympiad). All activities are originated by the creative sector, and Youth Theatre leaders lead it. There is a two-day residential part of the Festival. The safeguarding issues are significant, so if, in the future, the festival is run by the voluntary sector, KCC, as the safeguarding authority, would still need to have some involvement. We do not compete with the creative sector - we support it.

You say that your team is not involved in the delivery of Extended Services, but are you involved in any way in these sorts of activities at a more local level? As a local Member, I am involved in a number of projects in Swale, such as 'Litter Angels', 'Polkadot', Sheppey 'Safe', 'Viva Divas' and 'Sheppey's Got Talent'. How aware are you of these local projects, and would you want your team to be involved in them?

I know that my North Kent Arts and Regeneration officer has done much work in Swale, so I'm sure she will know about the projects you have listed. I will check that she is aware of them. To answer the question 'would I wish to be involved?' I would need to be clear about what it was a project needed of us.

I think organisers would want guidance on how to make their original idea sustainable.

My team gives a lot of this sort of advice, so we would be happy to advise, once we are made aware of a local project. The team's involvement would be via the local arts officer for that area. I will pass on your contact details. This sort of links helps us to create a network of cultural expertise.

The Select Committee needs to identify ideas for the future delivery of Extended Services which are innovative and creative. Do you have any views on this?

I don't have a great knowledge of Extended Services, and it seems a very complex area to get into. I cannot offer any ideas as I don't feel that I understand the context of it.

How can we direct schools to work with you more, so they can take advantage of what you can offer and the resources that you have?

While we do have access to funding opportunities, we have to be very tough in whom we can help, as we have to achieve the very best value from the public money that we are spending. We have to turn down many good applicants as we cannot afford to help everyone we would want to, so I would not wish to raise anyone's expectations of getting funding through us.

Could activity providers charge participants for their activities, instead of getting money from you?

Most already do. They earn some money from charging for participation, ticket sales and subsidiary sales, and get some money from grants, such as lottery funding. Projects never get 100% of their funding from any one source. We signpost them to sources of funding to which they can apply.

One way to evaluate the success of Extended Services is to link young people's creativity to their employability. Can you suggest any ways to measure this?

There are a few ways of doing this;

- The Museums, Libraries and Archives have developed Generic Learning Outcomes (GLOs) as a simple way to measure the benefits of engagement and participation;
- 'Folkestone Forward', run by Des Crilley, evaluates its success by using a star rating model; and
- 'Shepway Find Your Talent' gathers data in a very simple, child-friendly way. Children can add stickers to an evaluation questionnaire to say 'Yes I do' or 'No I don't'. This model in particular is designed to measure the depth and breadth of a child's cultural engagement.

The 'People United' programme was started in 2000 by Tom Andrews, following his time on the Clore Leadership Programme, a national programme to develop cultural leadership. Tom was part of the first wave of people to undergo the Clore training, and later set up People United to promote kindness. This project comprises a series of engagement activities for children, to develop the idea of being kind to each other.

A pilot scheme started in three primary schools in the UK. He is currently working on a town-wide project with Herne Bay. The outcomes of this are being monitored by the University of Kent.

Please could you send the Select Committee some examples of the people who apply to you for funding, examples of those who are successful in winning funding, and an explanation of the criteria you use to determine applications?

28. Interview with Linda Leith, Director of Quality in Study Support and Extended Services, Canterbury Christ Church University

(Item 3)

Please introduce yourself and outline the duties and responsibilities that your post involves.

I am the National Director of QiSS, based in the Faculty of Education at Canterbury Christ Church University. QiSS is one of the National Study Support Partners and has a contract with the former DCSF, now DfE, to work with all Local Authorities across the UK to support the quality for Extended Services and Study Support provision. I am the Programme Director of the MA in Critical Friendship. QiSS academics are responsible for the PG Certificate in Critical Friendship which allows those who successfully complete the accreditation chair QiSS and QES recognition meetings. I am also the course director for The Certificate in Supporting Children and Young People, which can be taken at MA and undergraduate level. I am part of the Knowledge Transfer Board at the University and I am currently part of the team supporting the evaluation for Kent Community Youth Pilot. I wrote the original model for, and set up, the Kent HE Compact, which I am now researching as part of my PhD. The aim of this is to widen participation and outcomes for Kent students whose aim to progress on to HE study

What is Quality in Study Support (QiSS), and what are Quality in Extended Services (QES) recognition schemes? How are these schemes organised and run?

There are two recognition schemes – The Quality Development Framework (QDF) and the DfE Extended Learning Opportunities, which replaces the older Study Support Code of Practice. Both of these documents are used by KCC to ensure the quality of their provision across the county. . The Frameworks and supporting information packs of materials and documents are sent to the schools who want to assure the quality of their Extended Services or/and Study Support provision. Schools and other organisations who successfully meet the recognition criteria are awarded the kite mark at one of three levels (emerged, established or advanced). The applicant completes the pack and provides a folio of evidence, which is judged by a panel of peer scrutineers and a chair who is a National Critical Friend.

The QDF relates to the whole of a school's Extended Services provision; the core offer, plus the value for money that they deliver, plus the partnership working, and the whole scope of activity is judged to help identify the quality of the service and provision. QiSS provides training on how to use these framework documents so the very best of provision can be achieved. QiSS supports and pulls all these threads together so that the services become embedded as part of a school or clusters culture.

The Select Committee has previously been told that the Dover Extended Services (DES) model had achieved accreditation.

Yes, Dover has achieved the advanced level accreditation, along with several other schools in Kent. We keep a database which lists all schools who have achieved a quality mark, which we run as part of the contract with the DfE.

What are the main benefits of undertaking the Quality in Extended Services recognition schemes, for schools, partner organisations and for the local community? Can these schemes promote the engagement of schools and other partner organisations in offering Extended Services, and can these schemes support schools and partner organisations when providing Extended Services?

The main benefits are that these schemes provide a bench mark that has rigour and establishes a national standard; they enable schools and other services to work in partnership or link together; by having a quality assurance mark, they give confidence to customers; they enable schools and clusters to work together, to take a more strategic approach to Extended Services, which develops into a very cost-effective model for partnership working; and allow schools to record and share data on the raising attainment and achievement of students. It is known that for every 17 days of schooling that a child misses, they will score one grade lower at GCSE. A national study by McBeath in 2002 has shown that children who are actively engaged in additional learning activities will score at least 3.5% higher grades.

Schools say they are delivering the core offer, but quality is not always good. The accreditation schemes that we have heard about would give us confidence that good quality Extended Services was there.

'ContinYou', one of the National Partners, are responsible for the monitoring of the Extended Services core offer delivery. It has become apparent that many schools were asked to assess their Extended Services provision. This was a tick-box exercise to count the provision, but no measure of the quality of provision was attempted. The government has recorded that 98% of schools were delivering the core offer, so the initial roll out of Extended Services was thought to be complete. Therefore, the initial funding for the roll out of Extended Services was discontinued.

QiSS hosts the National database for all schools across the country, including Kent schools who have or are working towards the QiSS or QES Quality Mark - eg 52 in Dover and Deal. I can supply the Select Committee with data, listing schools individually or by cluster, if required.

As we face the situation of the present Extended Services team being reduced, could CCCU help schools to carry on with work towards the Quality Mark, at a sufficient level, without the Extended Services team's support?

If schools want a clear focus and are seeking good provision and value for money, the QDF document will help to guide and support them. When schools start out towards accreditation, QiSS acts in a supportive role for the schools and can provide a national or local critical friends to support and broker the working partnership they need to ensure the quality of their provision. In our Annual Programme of work for the DfE, QiSS set out what we aim to deliver each year, and this year our focus is on the quality of provision. We have developed workshops that we can offer to support staff, and also training for KCC staff to become Local or National Critical Friends. These trained people can then go into schools and ask the difficult questions about the quality and focus of Extended Services and study support provision which need

to be asked, and can build a supportive and challenging relationship to ensure the quality of provision is fit for purpose. This work is currently undertaken through the county and it is different in each area, based on community need and provision. QiSS has Co-ordinators in every Government Office region who are there to support and offer challenge for the effective provision of Extended Services. At the moment, KCC has officers who directly support schools, and has developed established relationship to support the development of good practice that benefits Extended Services, school improvement students and the community.

Which types of consortia of ES providers are most successful?

There is a wide variety of Extended Services provision across the country and the differences across the UK are due to local priorities and needs of the local communities. There are differing sorts of partnerships which have been established, according to need of the local community for the delivery of Extended Services. Kent is such a large county that it features examples of all sorts of local arrangements, dependent on the local community in which the clusters operate; e.g. a rural cluster will have a different set of priorities which will influence their operational model, and these priorities will differ from the priorities of a city cluster.

Can you give an example of a successful initiative in a rural area, and how this has overcome the challenge of rural transport?

Some isolated rural schools, which tend mostly to be primary schools, link to other schools in the nearest town or to other partnerships which are present in their community – e.g. the Police or Women’s Institute. This sort of arrangement needs a little lateral thinking about who could be approached to engage in the delivery of Extended Services for the local community.

What makes the difference between the success and failure of these partnerships?

Leadership vision, and a willingness to take risks and make the initial approach to potential partners.

How can schools promote this?

They can share examples of their good practice and the model they have developed successfully elsewhere, (for which QiSS collates the data for the DfE), and emphasise that Extended Services delivered in this way feeds into three Ofsted criteria:- community cohesion, spiritual and moral guidance/education/progression, and, most importantly, achievement and attainment.

Are there Extended Services good practice examples in other local authorities in the country, from which Kent can learn?

Kent is at the cutting edge with its Extended Services provision, and is one of five outstanding authorities in the UK. This is due to the vision of its officers. Other local authorities in this category are Sandwell, Durham and Lincoln. I can give you some examples of good practice elsewhere in the country:-

- in Sandwell (a Metropolitan Authority in the West Midlands), the Community Police have had an extensive role and much engagement. Extended Services co-ordinators have helped to support the families of primary school children by addressing housing and learning issues. In one example, a mother’s learning needs have been addressed, allowing her to enrol successfully at FE college, and as her confidence has grown, so has that of her children, which has had a major impact on their attainment at school;

- in Bermondsey, the whole ethos of a school had been changed by linking up with CAMHS and the Healthy Schools initiative, and channelling available funds to gain optimum benefit from them. For instance, four children from very deprived homes have taken part in a tall ships race to increase their confidence and attainment at school, this is one example of a very successful outcome for their students, who would never otherwise have had such an opportunity.

In your view, what are the main challenges – if any - when providing Extended Services, and how can these challenges be resolved?

I would say that the two main challenges for providers are funding and vision, and unless a Head Teacher is fully committed to it, it will not go ahead. Schools need to be able to see the impact of what Extended Services can bring, and see that it is worthwhile. As part of our contract with the DfE, we are working with Ofsted, SSAT, NCSL and HEFCE, etc, to promote the value of Extended Services and study support. QiSS has a role to play in advising schools, via the QES and ELO Quality Frameworks, on how to access resources and support the setting up of good Extended Services provision.

What are the risks and how do these weigh against the benefits?

There is a risk where the school does not know the external providers, and they would need to build up that trust at the start of provision. For instance, part of the QES process identifies, in the themes for good practice, guidance on observing and monitoring a provider to ensure that what they are delivering is useful and worthwhile. One provider used Tai Chi teaching to reduce challenging behaviour, and monitored the difference that this strategy made to the children's academic achievement. It is important that a research evaluator supports schools in the recording of impact data which can be used to demonstrate the impact and effects of the Extended Services provision they are delivering. I can supply the Select Committee with data to show the effectiveness of the MIDES model being used in the Dover region.

Could the MIDES model be replicated elsewhere in Kent?

Yes, it could be very successfully, as clusters with a more diverse mixture of schools can contribute a variety of different provision, and each of the threads will contribute to the whole impact of Extended Services for those children in that community.

In which ways, if any, might the reduction of Government funding for Extended Services in future years, and the possible shrinking of the Extended Services Team, affect the provision of Extended Services? It takes money and time to establish sustainable services. How long could Extended Services be sustained?

I don't think it will collapse. The funding which is being withdrawn by the Government was only meant to be set-up money, so Extended Services should be sustainable in the local communities beyond the initial set-up phase. There is still some funding for Extended Services, if Head Teachers can see the value in claiming it.

Which Extended Services activities have the greatest impact and benefit for the community, and which programmes are most likely to be sustainable in the future? How can the County Council, together with schools and other providers of Extended Services, ensure the sustainability of Extended Services into the future?

A model which has been used very successfully by the Canterbury High School and by Swan Valley is to provide all services on one site. However, we know that one model does not suit all, as each area has a unique set of criteria. Schools have a challenge; they need to look at the data available from other successful models and identify the best model for them and their community, and QiSS can help them with this.

We train critical friends to ask challenging questions of schools in their local clusters, and they can chair the recognition meetings. Two people in Kent have been trained in this way. This process raises attainment and achievement, and is linked to school improvement, and some schools are using this model as part of their professional development programme.

There are two levels of assessment – the recognition scheme, which is a full process, and a simpler ‘health check’. Using this simpler tool, could teachers at one school assess the performance of a neighbouring school? Would this help with sharing and spreading best practice, and could this be done free of charge?

The first stage is free but the recognition stage has some cost. In Norfolk and Suffolk, critical friends look to support other colleagues and schools, they swap provision and chair each other’s recognition meetings, which reduces the costs involved in the assessment process and allows best practice to be shared.

Can you suggest any innovative and creative ways in which KCC could promote and deliver Extended Services in the County? I am concerned that you say that government funding was withdrawn as they believed 98% of schools to have completed the initial set-up of the core offer. They must have used some very bad data! What submission did Kent make to show what level of set-up it had achieved, and did we/could we have influenced the government’s decision?

My remit does not include measurement of the core offer, but you could ask ‘ContinYou’ what data they found, as they collated the data which was used. QiSS has always questioned the quality of set-up, and what questions were asked when data was being gathered. It seems that there is a big gap between what schools say they have achieved and the quality of service they are actually able to offer. Schools need to be creative and cost effective. Many good models have been put in place on a shoestring budget. QiSS has always monitored the quality of provision against the QES framework.

Should available resources be concentrated on areas of multiple deprivation?

The impact of Extended Services can certainly be greatest in these areas, and it is important to get people to see the value of setting up Extended Services in these areas. For instance, in a pilot project, I worked with family learning in Medway. They were working with some very tough schools where parents did not value learning as they had not had very good experiences of their own schooling, and these negative experiences had impacted on their children

To measure the impact of Extended Services, you would need to be able to evidence how it benefits children’s behaviour and attainment, and benefits the community’s access to services.

