

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

CHILDREN'S, YOUNG PEOPLE AND EDUCATION CABINET COMMITTEE

MINUTES of a meeting of the Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee held at Darent Room, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Tuesday, 1st October, 2019.

PRESENT: Mr G Cooke (Chairman), Mrs L Game (Vice-Chairman), Mr M J Angell, Mr M A C Balfour (Substitute for Mr R C Love, OBE), Mrs P M Beresford (Substitute for Mrs S Chandler), Mr D L Brazier, Mr D Brunning, Mrs P T Cole, Mrs T Dean, MBE, Ms S Hamilton, Ida Linfield, Mr P J Messenger, Mr D Murphy, Mrs S Prendergast and Dr L Sullivan

OTHER MEMBERS: Mr R Gough

OFFICERS: Ms N Anthony (Head of Fostering, East), Ms K Atkinson (Assistant Director, Management Information and Intelligence, Integrated Children's Services), Ms R Britt (Senior Commissioning Manager - Children's Services), Mr S Collins (Director of Integrated Children's Services (West Kent and Early Help and Preventative Services Lead)), Mr M Dunkley, CBE (Corporate Director for Children Young People and Education), Mr G Genoni (Project Director for Change for Kent Children), Ms C Grosskopf (Policy Manager), Ms S Hammond (Director of Integrated Children's Services, East), Ms C Holden (Senior Commissioning Manager), Mr K Kasaven (Assistant Director, Safeguarding, Professional Standards and Quality Assurance, Integrated Children's Services), Ms C Smith (Assistant Director, Corporate Parenting, Integrated Children's Services), Ms C Thomson (Complaints Officer (Children's)), Mr M Vening (Head of Fostering, West), Mr I Watts (Area Education Officer – North Kent), Ms M White (Area Education Officer - East Kent), Mr D Whittle (Director of Strategy, Policy, Relationships and Corporate Assurance) and Miss E West (Democratic Services Officer)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

2. Membership *(Item 2)*

The Chairman announced that Mr Angell, Mr Brazier and Mr Messenger had joined the Committee and Miss Dawson had resigned from the Committee.

3. Apologies and Substitutes *(Item 3)*

Apologies had been received from Mr Northey, Mr Love and Mrs Chandler.

Mr Balfour attended as a substitute for Mr Love and Mrs Beresford attended as a substitute for Mrs Chandler respectively.

4. Declarations of Interest by Members in items on the Agenda *(Item 4)*

- (1) Dr Sullivan made a declaration of interest as her husband worked as an Early Help Worker for Kent County Council. Dr L Sullivan also declared that her

husband was the Cabinet Member for Community and Leisure at Gravesham Borough Council and was a Council appointee at 'The Gr@nd Youth Hub' in Gravesend.

- (2) Mr Balfour made a declaration of interest as he was a Governor at Grange Park School.
- (3) Mrs Game made a declaration of interest as she was the Cabinet Member for Housing and Safer Neighbourhoods at Thanet District Council.

5. Minutes of the Corporate Parenting Panel meetings held on 27 March 2019 and 29 May 2019
(Item 5)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Corporate Parenting Panel held on 27 March 2019 and 29 May 2019 be noted.

6. Minutes of the Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee meeting held on 28 June 2019
(Item 6)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee held on 28 June 2019 are correctly recorded and that they be signed by the Chairman.

7. Verbal Update by Cabinet Member and Corporate Director
(Item 7)

- (1) Mr Gough (Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Education) gave a verbal update on the following issues:

a) Additional funding for Kent Schools

Government had recently made a substantial announcement on school funding, promising an increase in school funding of over £14.4bn, which represented the total cumulative cost over three years. This meant that, by 2022/23 school funding would be £7.1bn higher than at present. The announcement included a promise that all primary schools would receive minimum funding. Whilst there were still significant financial pressures, challenges would be debated at the schools funding forum at the end of November, following a consultation with schools as to how decisions could best be made. The £700m extra pledged by the government in 2020 would form part of the high needs block of the dedicated schools grant to Councils. Mr Gough welcomed the announcements from Government for additional funding.

b) Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC)

The recent uplift in the UASC funding rate for under 18-year olds was welcomed in Kent, as the number of young people that had come into Kent had increased significantly in 2019 when compared with previous years. Whilst funding pressures remained in Kent for care leavers, Kent County Council continued to engage extensively with Government in a bid to receive further funding to support UASC.

(2) Mr Dunkley (Corporate Director of Children, Young People and Education) gave a verbal update on the following issues:

a) Kent School's Funding

The Schools Funding Forum met recently to consider the additional funding announced by Government and the impact that the additional funding would have on schools, the national school funding figures were released on 30th September 2019. Kent County Council would launch a consultation with Kent's schools during October and November 2019 for a view by the Schools Funding Forum at the end of November on the choices that were available. Members of the Committee were encouraged to encourage schools within their division to respond to the consultation.

b) Virtual School Kent Awards Ceremony 2019

Mr Dunkley, Mr Gough and Mrs Prendergast attended the Virtual School Kent Awards Ceremony on 15th September 2019 which honoured the outstanding achievements of over 120 of Kent's Children in Care.

(3) RESOLVED that the verbal updates be noted.

8. SEND 'Written Statement of Action' Update

(Item 8)

Mr Genoni (Project Director for Change for Kent Children) was in attendance for this item

(1) Mr Gough (Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Education) introduced the report and updated Members on the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Written Statement of Action and the Informal Member Group (IMG).

Mr Dunkley, Mr Gough and Mr Genoni responded to comments and questions from Members, including the following: -

- a) Mr Dunkley referred to the re-establishment of the parent/carer forum and confirmed that the forum was an organisation that had to be independent of the County Council.
- b) Mr Dunkley referred to the engagement activities taking place between Kent County Council and parents and confirmed that an Engagement Officer had been appointed recently to lead on a range of group meetings with parents. An experience-based parental survey had received approximately 670 responses, and in conversation with the Department for Education, CQC and the Ofsted Lead Inspector, Kent County Council had discussed realistic targets to set for improvement in those parental views which would be reviewed regularly. Mr Genoni added that a Steering Group would take place on 2nd October to re-examine the figures and data within the report.
- c) Mr Dunkley stated that, through the IMG for SEN, arrangements were being put in place for Members to visit other local authorities to share best practice.

- d) Mr Dunkley referred to the meetings which regularly took place between Kent County Council, Kent Association of Headteachers and the Governors' Forum to discuss SEND provision and the Written Statement of Action and said that Members were welcome to attend the meetings.
- e) Mr Dunkley confirmed that internal resources had been redirected into SEND provision in Kent to ensure that a unified offer was in place that made sense for all children. Whilst concerns relating to SEND provision were raised as a significant pressure, further discussions would take place at full Council when the budget for 2020 would be agreed.
- f) Mr Dunkley emphasised the importance of ensuring that Kent County Council's partners felt confident about inclusiveness with health partners and engaging with Kent County Council in joint commissioning in relation to SEND provision. Mr Gough briefly referred to the significant pressures faced by many local authorities across the country in relation to SEND provision.
- g) Mr Gough referred to a specific item within the SEND Written Statement of Action which focused on inclusion within schools and emphasised the importance of schools' engagement. Mr Dunkley added that every school needed to feel confident in meeting the needs of every pupil, and that they were supported in doing so.
- h) Mr Gough said that despite expanding mainstream special school provision in Kent, many children with SEND attended independent special schools.
- i) Mr Gough talked briefly about the increase in demand in relation to Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP). Mr Dunkley added that children with previously life-limiting illnesses were now living longer as a result of medical advances and that the prevalence and diagnosis of autism in Kent had dramatically increased, becoming the single biggest identified condition within EHCPs.

(2) RESOLVED that the report be noted.

9. Update on the Kent Safeguarding Children Multi-agency Arrangements
(Item 9)

Mr Whittle (Director of Strategy, Policy, Relationships and Corporate Assurance) was in attendance for this item

- (1) Mr Whittle introduced the report which updated the Committee on the recently established Kent Safeguarding Children Multi-agency Partnership (KSCMP), the new statutory body which had replaced the previous local safeguarding children board.

Mr Dunkley and Mr Whittle responded to comments and questions from Members, including the following: -

- a) Mr Dunkley briefly explained the difference between the role of a Corporate parent and safeguarding functions.
 - b) Mr Whittle said that the voice of children and families was presented through the Scrutiny and Assurance Framework and confirmed that the first meeting of the Kent Safeguarding Children Multi-agency Executive Board would take place on 9th October 2019 to set out its key priorities.
- (2) Mr Whittle reminded Members of the Committee of their practice responsibilities of each of the statutory partners.
 - (3) Mr Whittle confirmed that a progress report would be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee.
 - (4) RESOLVED that the report be noted.

10. 19/00073 - Proposed Commissioning of Refugee Resettlement Support Service in Kent
(Item 10)

Ms Grosskopf (Refugee Resettlement Programme Manager, Strategic and Corporate Services) and Ms Holden (Strategic Commissioning Manager, Strategic and Corporate Services) were in attendance for this item

- (1) Ms Grosskopf introduced the report which concerned proposals to externally commission the majority of the resettlement support (including the property set-up elements) of refugee resettlement in Kent.
 - a) In response to a question, Ms Grosskopf confirmed that the secure ring-fenced Government grant that was attached to each individual refugee was paid in three instalments throughout the year. She also confirmed that there was no call on the general Kent County Council or district budgets as all expenditure was paid from the Government grant.
- (2) It was proposed and agreed by the Committee that point (ii) of the recommendation be amended from *'To delegate decisions about the commissioning process and the implementation of the new contracts to the Corporate Director of Children, Young People and Education'* to *'To delegate decisions about the commissioning process and the implementation of the new contracts to the Corporate Director of Children, Young People and Education, **in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Education**'*.
- (3) RESOLVED that the decision proposed to be taken by the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Education to:
 - (i) Commission via a competitive tender the refugee resettlement support service in Kent; and
 - (ii) To delegate decisions about the commissioning process and the implementation of the new contracts to the Corporate Director of Children, Young People and Education, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Education,

be endorsed.

11. Private Fostering Arrangements
(Item 11)

Mr Kasaven (Assistant Director of Safeguarding, Professional Standards & Quality Assurance) was in attendance for this item

- (1) Ms Hammond introduced the report, and Mr Kasaven presented a series of slides to the Committee which set out information relating to private fostering arrangements, the reasons in which children may become privately fostered, private fostering vulnerabilities and social work intervention and duties.

Ms Hammond and Mr Kasaven responded to comments and questions from Members, including the following: -

- a) Mr Kasaven talked about raising awareness of private fostering and stated that training had been put in place for multi-agencies, and work undertaken with local religious groups, local communities and youth centres.
- b) Mr Kasaven said that many young people presented themselves as homeless and others did not actually realise that they were in a private fostering arrangement.
- c) Ms Hammond confirmed that if a child under 16 years old (or under 18 years old if they had a disability) was in a 'casual arrangement' for over 28 days, the arrangement became a private fostering arrangement under current regulations.
- d) Ms Hammond said that if children were in a registered boarding school, they were not subject to private fostering arrangements.
- e) Ms Hammond confirmed that in some circumstances, children were privately fostered and continued to be subject to a child protection plan.
- f) Ms Hammond said that Kent County Council were not directly paid to undertake assessments for private fostering, subsequent visits or social work allocation.

- (2) RESOLVED that the report be noted.

12. Kent Fostering Service Annual Report 2018 / 2019
(Item 12)

Ms Smith (Assistant Director for Corporate Parenting, Integrated Children's Services) Mr Vening (Head of Fostering, West, Children's Social Work Services) and Ms Anthony (Head of Fostering, East, Children's Social Work Services) were in attendance for this item

- (1) Ms Smith introduced the report which provided the Committee with an overview of the Kent Fostering Service from March 2018 - April 2019. The report

detailed statistical information relating to the approval of new foster carers along with recruitment activity undertaken by the service.

Ms Smith responded to comments and questions from Members, including the following: -

- a) Ms Smith said that 64 foster carers had been recruited since April 2019 and confirmed that the recruitment of foster carers' target considered the possibility of current foster carers retiring or resigning.
- b) Ms Smith referred to Kent Independent Fostering Agencies and said that a large amount were either based in Kent or worked out of Kent.
- c) Ms Smith confirmed that she would liaise with Kent's Fostering Recruitment Co-ordinator to ensure that local Members were invited to Fostering events.
- d) Ms Smith emphasised the desperate need for foster carers in Kent and mentioned the valuable mapping work carried out by Kent's Management Information Unit to look at significant areas of need in Kent.
- e) Ms Smith confirmed that a small number of Kent's foster carers were recruited by Independent Fostering Agencies, compared to the large number of foster carers that were recruited by Kent from Independent Fostering Agencies. She added that a marketing campaign was in place to attract experienced foster carers into Kent and enhanced packages of support were available to retain carers.
- f) Ms Smith said that recruitment activity focused on targeted needs, including Hub Families.

(2) RESOLVED that the report be noted.

13. Period Poverty *(Item 13)*

- (1) Mr Collins introduced the report which provided an overview of statistical estimates on the prevalence and impact of Period Poverty in the UK, details of national initiatives (and their local delivery) tackling the issue of Period Poverty, and the UK Government's response.

Mr Collins and Mr Dunkley responded to comments and questions from Members, including the following: -

- a) Mr Collins recognised that Thanet was an area of potential need and agreed to provide further information relating to its pilot project to a future meeting of the Committee.
- b) Mr Collins confirmed that engagement would take place within both primary and secondary schools in Kent.

- c) Mr Collins confirmed that he would provide further information to the Committee at a later date in relation to the funding that would be allocated to tackling period poverty in Kent.
 - d) Mr Collins confirmed that he would contact colleagues in Libraries, Registrations and Archives to provide further information to the Committee at a later date in relation to why Westgate and Newington libraries were chosen as distribution points for sanitary products. Mr Messenger suggested that this may be due to the proximity of a number of secondary schools.
- (2) It was proposed and agreed by the Committee that a further report be submitted to the Cabinet Committee in January 2020.
- (3) RESOLVED that the report be noted.

14. Complaints and Representations 2018-19 *(Item 14)*

Ms Thomson (Complaints Officer) was in attendance for this item

- (1) Ms Thomson introduced the report which provided information about the operation of the Children Act 1989 Complaints and Representations Procedure in 2018/19 as required by the Statutory regulations. The report also provided information about the 'non-statutory' social care complaints and complaints received about Education Services.

Ms Thomson responded to comments and questions from Members, including the following: -

- a) Mr Dunkley talked about the current complaints and representations procedure and explained the reasoning behind the increase in complaints received across the whole of the Children, Young People and Education (CYPE) directorate in 2018/19.
 - b) Ms Thomson referred to the significant increase in the volume of complaints received within Kent's CYPE directorate and confirmed that a 12-month secondment had been secured to help support the complaint's team manage the increase in complaints.
 - c) Ms Thomson referred to the number of complaints received within Kent's Special Education Needs (SEN) service and confirmed that measures had been put in place to resolve some of the performance issues and appointments within SEN and to ensure that dedicated staff were appointed within each of the areas to respond to complaints.
 - d) Mr Dunkley suggested that information relating to complaints within Kent's SEN service be included in the SEND Written Statement of Action, the Informal Member Group and brought back to the Committee.
- (2) RESOLVED that the report be noted.

15. School Expansions/Alterations

(Item 15)

Mr Watts (Area Education Officer – North Kent) and Ms White (Area Education Officer – East Kent) were in attendance for this item.

- (1) The Chairman set out the proposed decisions to expand or alter the following schools: Sunny Bank Primary School, Sittingbourne, and Thamesview School, Gravesend.

15. **19/00061 - Following the amalgamation of the former Murston Infant and Junior Schools to establish Sunny Bank Primary School, relocation of Sunny Bank Infant and Nursery departments to Sunny Bank Junior department site, with infrastructure for an expansion from 1.5FE to 2FE.**

(Item 15a)

- (1) Ms White introduced the report which set out information relating to the proposal to relocate Sunny Bank Primary School's Infant and Nursery departments onto the Junior Site with the infrastructure for an expansion from 1.5FE to 2FE, following the academisation of the school.
- (2) Ms White clarified that although section 4 of the report stated that planning agreement had been confirmed, this did not mean that planning permission had yet been granted.
- (3) RESOLVED that the decision proposed to be taken by the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Education to:
 - (i) Allocate £4.2M from the Children, Young People and Education Capital budget;
 - (ii) Authorise the Director of Infrastructure in consultation with the General Counsel (Interim) to enter into any necessary contracts/ agreements on behalf of the County Council; and
 - (iii) Authorise the Director of Infrastructure to be the nominated Authority Representative within the relevant agreements and to enter into variations as envisaged under the contracts. Variations to contract value to be no more than 10% above the capital funding agreed by the Cabinet Member without requiring a new Record of Decision,

be endorsed, subject to planning agreement.

15. **19/00071 - Proposal to expand Thamesview School, Thong Lane, Gravesend, Kent, DA12 4LF by increasing the Published Admission Number (PAN) from 150 places to 210 places from September 2021**

(Item 15b)

- (1) RESOLVED that the decision proposed to be taken by the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Education to publish a Public Notice on a proposal to expand Thamesview School, Thong Lane, Gravesend, Kent, DA12

4LF by increasing the Published Admission Number (PAN) from 150 places to 210 places from September 2021, be endorsed.

16. Performance Monitoring

(Item 16)

Ms Atkinson (Assistant Director of Management Information and Intelligence) was in attendance for this item

- (1) Ms Atkinson introduced the Children, Young People and Education (CYPE) Directorate Performance Scorecard.

Ms Atkinson responded to comments and questions from Members, including the following: -

- a) Ms Atkinson referred to the recent restructure within CYPE and the new services within the directorate. She emphasised the importance of monitoring performance within each service, ensuring data was always recorded accurately.
- b) Ms Atkinson briefly explained the figures within the Scorecard which related to Early Help unit case closures.
- c) Mr Gough (Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Education) stated that although social work caseloads had recently increased, many newly qualified social workers had been recruited in Kent. Ms Hammond talked about the national shortage of child protection social workers and said that although Kent had over recruited newly qualified social workers, they continued to receive training and support in their role.
- d) Ms Hammond referred to the increase in the number of frontline early help workers as a result of the recent CYPE restructure and explained the process in relation to how referrals were considered.
- e) Mr Dunkley referred to the Change for Kent Children programme and integrated ways of working within the CYPE directorate to better support families and ensure better co-ordination between services.
- f) Ms Atkinson confirmed that information within Kent's 'Not in Education, Employment or Training' (NEET) cohort, was reported to the Department for Education (DFE) on a monthly basis and explained how the percentages within the NEET cohort were calculated.

- (2) RESOLVED that the report be noted.

17. Ofsted Update

(Item 17)

The information within the agenda was noted without discussion.

18. Work Programme 2019/20

(Item 18)

RESOLVED that the Work Programme for 2019/20 be noted, subject to the inclusion of:

- Period Poverty

19. Kent County Council's Youth Offer
(Item 19)

Ms Britt (Senior Commissioning Manager – Children's Services) was in attendance for this item.

- (1) Mr Collins introduced the report which followed the Youth Deep Dive report presented to the Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee in September 2018 and set out the total Kent County Council funded youth offer of £3,989,199 and how this was utilised to meet the needs of young people in Kent.
- (2) Mr Collins clarified that the figure of £160k referred to within the final paragraph of the summary on the first page of the report, and within section 4.2 of the report, had since reduced to £90k.

Mr Collins responded to comments and questions from Members, including the following: -

- a) Mr Collins reassured Members that they could contact him directly if they had queries relating to information within the exempt appendices.
- b) Mr Collins confirmed that Open Access was a universal service which supported targeted and additional work.
- c) Mr Collins referred to the first bullet point within section 3.13 of the report and confirmed that contextual safeguarding was an approach that looked at risk which occurred predominantly outside of the family environment. He added that contextual safeguarding training would be developed across the workforce in Open Access settings.
- d) Mr Collins emphasised the importance of early intervention and joint partnership working in order to reduce gang and youth crime in Kent and engage with both individuals and schools to better understand the risks. He referred to Kent's recent Knife Crime Select Committee and the positive work that had been undertaken by the Council and Kent's partners in relation to managing the risks of gangs by intervening early, liaising with individual's, families and the Youth Justice System and understanding the dangers surrounding gang crime. He added that a report would be brought to a future meeting of the Committee which would outline Kent's approach to adolescent risk management.
- e) Mr Dunkley stated that the number of knife related incidents involving under 18-year olds had decreased in Kent over the last four years. He emphasised the importance in ensuring strong co-ordination of diversionary activity throughout schools and Open Access activity and better coordination with Kent police in responding to incidents of anti-social behaviour.

- f) Mr Collins stated that HeadStart Kent was fully funded until 2021.
- g) Mr Collins said that Kent's new 'Core+' system had been tested extensively and was more integrated with other areas of the children's service's systems.

(3) RESOLVED that the report be noted.