

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 Council Chamber, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Friday, 10th January, 2020.

PRESENT: Mrs L Game (Chairman), Mr D Murphy (Vice-Chairman), Mr D L Brazier, Mr D Brunning, Mrs P T Cole, Mr G Cooke, Mrs T Dean, MBE, Robyn Ford (Substitute for Mr Q Roper), Ms S Hamilton, Mr B H Lewis (Substitute for Dr L Sullivan), Ida Linfield, Mr R C Love, OBE and Mr S C Manion

OTHER MEMBERS: Sue Chandler, Richard Long, TD and Ann Allen, MBE

OFFICERS: Nick Abrahams (Area Education Officer – West Kent), David Adams (Area Education Officer - South Kent), Nicola Anthony (Head of Fostering, East), Katherine Atkinson (Assistant Director, Management Information and Intelligence, Integrated Children's Services), Craig Chapman (County Transport Eligibility and Co-ordinated Admissions Manager), Stuart Collins (Director of Integrated Children's Services (West Kent and Early Help and Preventative Services Lead)), Matt Dunkley CBE (Corporate Director for Children Young People and Education), Jamie Griggs (Team Manager), Sarah Hammond (Director of Integrated Children's Services, East), Nimesh Patel (Team Manager, Care Leavers Service), Simon Pleace (Revenue and Tax Strategy Manager), Sarah Skinner (Head of Adoption Service), Caroline Smith (Assistant Director, Corporate Parenting, Integrated Children's Services), Ian Watts (Area Education Officer – North Kent), Marisa White (Area Education Officer - East Kent) and Emma West (Democratic Services Officer)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

145. Apologies and Substitutes

(Item 2)

Apologies for absence had been received from Mr Angell, Dr Sullivan and Mr Roper.

Mr Lewis attended as a substitute for Dr Sullivan and Ms Ford attended as a substitute for Mr Roper.

146. Membership

(Item 3)

Mrs Prendergast and Mr Messenger had formally resigned as Members of the Committee.

147. Declarations of Interest by Members in items on the Agenda

(Item 4)

Mr Manion declared an interest in relation to item 10 on the agenda, as his partner worked at a school listed within the Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent 2020-24.

148. Minutes of the meeting held on 15 November 2019
(Item 5)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee held on 15 November 2019 are correctly recorded and that they be signed by the Chairman.

149. Minutes of the Corporate Parenting Panel held on 17 September 2019
(Item 6)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Corporate Parenting Panel held on 17 September 2019 be noted.

150. Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee meeting dates for 2020/2021 - For Information Only
(Item 7)

RESOLVED that the 2020/2021 meeting dates for the Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee be noted.

151. Verbal Update by Cabinet Members and Corporate Director
(Item 8)

(1) Mrs Chandler (Cabinet Member for Integrated Children's Services) gave a verbal update on the following issues:

(a) Meeting of the Kent Youth County Council – 14 December 2019

On 14 December 2019, Mrs Chandler attended the first meeting of the Kent Youth County Council since the general elections had taken place. She stated that the event was well attended, and she had presented awards to outgoing Councillors. She added that the young people held an impressive, light-hearted debate at the meeting and said that it was apparent that the new intake of Councillors and young people would provide continuation of the high standards of representation in Kent.

(2) Mr Long (Cabinet Member for Education and Skills) gave a verbal update on the following issues:

(a) Recent Visits to Kent Schools

Mr Long stated that he had visited St Nicholas School, Canterbury, Queen Elizabeth Grammar School, Faversham, and the official opening and dedication of Benenden Church of England Primary School, Benenden, in December 2019.

(b) Recent Visits to Kent Districts

Mr Long stated that so far, he had visited five out of Kent's twelve districts with Kent County Council's Area Education Officers to consult with district leaders and planning officers in relation to Kent's Commissioning Plan. He emphasised the importance of engagement

with districts in relation to school expansions and adapting capacity in Kent.

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

(a) Corporate Parenting Giving Tree

Mr Dunkley expressed his thanks to Members and officers for their generosity in donating gifts at Christmas to Kent's care leavers and said that the target of 1,700 gifts had been met.

(b) The Children in Care Council's Christmas Concert

Mr Dunkley referred to the Christmas concert which had taken place on 17 December 2019, hosted by the Children in Care Council, and commended the performance and thanked officers for their involvement in the concert.

- (4) In response to a question, Mr Long confirmed that the 5 districts that he had visited were Gravesham, Sevenoaks, Dover, Tonbridge and Malling and Tunbridge Wells.

- (5) RESOLVED that the verbal updates be noted.

152. Draft Capital Programme 2020-23 and Revenue Budget 2020-21

(Item 9)

Mr Pleace (Revenue and Tax Strategy Manager) was in attendance for this item

- (6) Mr Pleace briefly introduced the report which provided Members with the opportunity to comment on the Draft Budget proposals for 2020-21 and make recommendations to Cabinet Members prior to presentation at Cabinet on 27 January 2020 and full Council on 13 February 2020.

Officers then responded to comments and questions from Members, including the following: -

- a) Mr Pleace confirmed that he would provide further information to Committee Members outside of the meeting in relation to the potential impact on staff within the Children, Young People and Education Directorate.
- b) Mr Pleace said that he would provide further information to Committee Members outside of the meeting in relation to the NEST2 project referred to within the budget book. The project sought to provide a residential facility for children and young people in Kent and Medway with Autistic Spectrum Conditions. Mr Collins added that the project had been undertaken in partnership with the NHS and stated that an update report could be brought to a future meeting of the Committee.
- c) Mr Pleace explained the rationale behind the £1.9m shortfall within the draft budget. He said that Kent County Council had received revised estimates from all of Kent's district councils in relation to council tax (tax base and collection fund balances) and believed that the gap could be

closed successfully without negatively impacting individual directorates or new savings proposals.

- d) Mr Pleace stated that the budget gap had significantly reduced compared to the previous year. He added that the budget gap reduction was largely as a result of receiving additional government grant funding and council tax increases.

(7) RESOLVED that the report be noted.

153. 19/00079 - The Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent 2020-24
(Item 10)

Mr Adams (Area Education Officer – South Kent), Mr Watts (Area Education Officer – North Kent), Ms White (Area Education Officer – East Kent) and Mr Abrahams (Area Education Officer – West Kent) were in attendance for this item

- (1) Mr Adams briefly introduced the report which provided the Committee with the opportunity to comment on the Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent 2020-24, prior to final approval by Cabinet on 27 January 2020.

Officers then responded to comments and questions from Members, including the following: -

- a) Mr Adams referred to section 5.6 (Planning Guidelines – Expansion of Popular Schools and New Provision) within the Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent 2020-2024 document and the expectation for individuals to adhere to the planning principles and guidelines set out within the plan. He welcomed a comment from a Committee Member in relation to potentially rewording the final bullet point within section 5.6, prior to the plan being submitted to Cabinet for approval on 27 January 2020, to outline the degree of flexibility in relation to the planning principles and guidelines.
- b) Mr Dunkley referred to a proposal which related to Newington Community Primary Academy and explained the reasons behind the Leaders' decision not to progress with the proposal.
- c) Mr Adams responded to a question about commissioning school sixth form places, explaining that the County Council had a statutory duty to ensure that every young person had access to education, employment or training. He said that Kent did not receive capital funding from central government to build post-16 capacity. The Department for Education operated a Post-16 capital bidding process, but to be eligible, the Authority would have to demonstrate a shortfall of provision across the Post-16 sector. Mr Long (Cabinet Member for Education and Skills) and Mr Dunkley reassured Members that every young person in Kent would have access to education, employment or training as appropriate and Kent County Council would continue to engage with central government through Ministers and in partnership with the Regional Schools Commissioner in relation to post-16 provision.

- d) Mr Adams referred to Kent County Council's aspiration to maintain a 5% surplus capacity in both the primary and secondary sector and the financial pressures and challenges that maintaining the 5% surplus capacity would bring, particularly in relation to the secondary sector. He explained in detail each of the colour-coded bandings within the plan, referring specifically to the 'Surplus/Deficit of places' fields.
 - e) Mr Adams said once the legal and statutory processes had been completed to commission a particular provision, it appeared as available capacity within the charts. Provision yet to be commissioned was contained within the commissioning tables.
 - f) Mr Adams and Mr Abrahams explained the process in relation to determining the location for the establishment of new schools and referred specifically to two schools in Maidstone. Mr Abrahams stated that he could provide further information to a Member of the Committee outside of the meeting in relation to school capacity in Maidstone.
 - g) Mr Adams briefly explained the school appeals process in relation to infant-aged children and empathised with the difficult situation that families with more than one child were faced with if their children could not attend the same school.
- (2) The Chairman thanked the officers for providing such a detailed report and for answering questions from Members of the Committee comprehensively.
- (3) RESOLVED that the report be noted.

Ida Linfield stated that whilst the report was noted, she did not wish to endorse it.

154. 20/00003 - Proposed Co-ordinated Schemes for Primary and Secondary Schools in Kent and Admission Arrangements for Primary and Secondary Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools 2021/22
(Item 11)

Mr Chapman (County Transport Eligibility and Co-ordinated Admissions Manager) was in attendance for this item

- (1) RESOLVED that the decision proposed to be taken by the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills to determine:
- (a) the Coordinated Primary Admissions Scheme 2021/22 incorporating the In Year admissions process as detailed in Appendix A;
 - (b) the Co-ordinated Secondary Admissions Scheme 2021/22 incorporating the In Year admissions process as detailed in Appendix B;
 - (c) the oversubscription criteria relating to Community and Voluntary Controlled Infant, Junior and Primary Schools in Kent 2021/22 as detailed in Appendix C (1);
 - (d) the oversubscription criteria relating to Community and Voluntary Controlled

Secondary Schools in Kent 2021/22 as detailed in Appendix D (1);

- (e) the Published Admissions Number for Community and Voluntary Controlled Infant, Junior and Primary Schools 2021/22 as set out in Appendix C (2);
- (f) the Published Admissions Number for Community and Voluntary Controlled Secondary Schools 2021/22 as set out in Appendix D (2); and
- (g) the relevant statutory consultation areas for Kent Infant, Junior and Primary Schools 2021/22 as detailed in Appendix C (3) and the relevant statutory consultation areas for Kent Secondary Schools 2021/22 as set out in Appendix D (3),

be endorsed.

155. 20/00005 - Funding for Council Tax payments for Kent young people who are Care Leavers aged 18-21 years
(Item 12)

Ms Smith (Assistant Director for Corporate Parenting) and Mr Patel (Team Manager, Care Leavers Service) were in attendance for this item

- (1) Ms Smith briefly introduced the report which set out a proposal for Kent County Council to fund council tax payments for all young people eligible to pay council tax, who were Kent Care Leavers aged from 18 years, up to the age of 21 years.

Officers then responded to comments and questions from Members, including the following: -

- (a) Ms Smith referred to the estimated cost implication for Kent County Council paying council tax for care leavers aged 18-21 of £594,230 per annum and confirmed that the estimated figure was based on the current amount that Kent's care leavers were paying in council tax per year.
- (b) Ms Smith stated that Kent's care leavers would still be expected and eligible to claim for discounts, for example, Single Person Discount.
- (c) Ms Smith confirmed that out of the 90 local authorities that currently offered council tax exemption or the funding of council tax, there were 11 that funded council tax up to the age of 25. Mr Dunkley added that the more substantive cost to funding council tax for care leavers was the cost of the social work associated with the care leavers and that Kent County Council did not have the social work capacity to offer to individuals who were not receiving a service.
- (d) Ms Smith explained the ways in which Kent's care leavers would be kept informed in relation to the funding of their council tax payments.
- (e) Ms Hammond confirmed that all care leavers between the ages of 18 and 21 had to have a personal advisor and were open to Kent's service.

(2) RESOLVED that the decision proposed to be taken by the Cabinet Member for Integrated Children's Services to:

- (i) agree that Kent County Council will fund the council tax payments for Kent young people who are Care Leavers from the age of 18 years, up to the age of 21 years. All young people will be supported and expected to claim any council tax benefit/discount entitlement that they are eligible for. e.g. singled person, student, severe impairment of mental capacity etc. No back dated payments or arrears will be funded by Kent County Council;
- (ii) implement from 1st April 2020 and to be published in the Kent Local Offer for Care Leavers; and
- (iii) delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Children, Young People and Education, or other nominated officer, to undertake the necessary actions to implement the decision,

be endorsed.

156. 20/00006 - The proposal for an updated policy for Emergency Bed In house Foster Care
(Item 13)

Ms Smith (Assistant Director for Corporate Parenting), Ms Anthony (Head of Fostering - East) and Mr Griggs (Team Manager) were in attendance for this item

- (1) Ms Anthony introduced the report which set out the proposal to increase the support package, including an increase to fostering payments, specifically for Kent County Council foster carers undertaking the Emergency Bed scheme.

Officers then responded to comments and questions from Members, including the following: -

- (a) Ms Smith stated that the current emergency bed scheme was up to maximum capacity and that the updated scheme would increase the amount emergency beds available and would extend the time in which the emergency beds were available for individuals in need.
- (b) Ms Smith explained the rationale behind the proposed increase in emergency beds and confirmed that it did not take planned moves for individuals into account. She added that the increase would be manageable within the current placement budget.
- (c) Ms Smith explained the rationale behind the proposed increase in emergency beds and confirmed that it was based on the number of referrals for emergency placements and did not include referrals of planned moves for children. She added that the increase would be manageable within the current placement budget.
- (d) Ms Smith explained that the proposal was solely based on the number of emergency type situations that surfaced in Kent and said that many of the referrals related to young people with complex needs.

(2) RESOLVED that the decision proposed to be taken by the Cabinet Member for Integrated Children's Services to:

- (i) agree the new payment structure for in house Emergency Bed Foster Carers for immediate implementation; and
- (ii) delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Children, Young People and Education, or other nominated officer, to undertake the necessary actions to implement the decision,

be endorsed.

157. London Borough of Bexley, Kent County Council & Medway Council Regional Adoption Agency
(Item 14)

Ms Skinner (Interim Head of Regional Adoption Agency) was in attendance for this item

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

- (a) Ms Skinner confirmed that the plans for a Regional Adoption Agency (RAA) is to form a legal partnership between Bexley, Kent and Medway, in which staff remain employed by their own local authority and will be committed to their local authority's terms and conditions. She added that the legal workstream had started and lead solicitors from all three of the authorities were in the process of drafting the legal agreement.
- (b) Ms Skinner explained that the aim was for the RAA to function as a single service.
- (c) Ms Skinner referred to the work that had been undertaken with Human Resources in respect of the comprehensive HR workstream and said that the HR Leads from each of the three local authorities had met and included in their discussion was the identification of differences in relation to terms and conditions.
- (d) Ms Skinner emphasised the importance of making best use of resources and deploying resources across the borders, if required.
- (e) Ms Skinner stated that there did not appear to be significant variations in relation to social workers' terms and conditions.
- (f) Ms Skinner referred to the future performance monitoring arrangements in relation to the RAA and confirmed that within the governance arrangements, the Executive Board would transform into a Partnership Board to monitor the RAA's performance.
- (g) Mr Dunkley and Mrs Chandler (Cabinet Member for Integrated Children's Services) suggested that the Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee reported on the progress of the RAA, once

established, bi-annually in 2020 and then reviewed future monitoring arrangements to ensure that Members' received the appropriate and relevant information in relation to the RAA.

- (1) RESOLVED that the report be noted.

158. School Expansions and Alterations

(Item 15)

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

- (2) The Chairman set out the proposed decisions to expand or alter the following schools: Pilgrims Way Primary School (Canterbury), Water Meadows Primary School (Canterbury) and Tunbridge Wells Grammar School for Boys (Tunbridge Wells).
- (3) Ms White confirmed that for every school expansion/alteration project undertaken in Kent, a transport assessment was undertaken to identify potential issues. Once a transport assessment had been undertaken, schools were required to develop a travel plan to demonstrate how they would address encouraging parents to bring their children to their school using sustainable methods, the travel plan then had to be submitted to Kent County Council for endorsement. If a transport assessment raised significant issues, for example, the need for a crossing, slip road or improved public transport, then the issues would be addressed as appropriate.

20/00007 – Proposal to expand Pilgrims Way Primary School, Canterbury, by increasing the Published Admissions Number (PAN) from 45 places to 60 places from September 2021

(Item 15a)

- (1) Ms White reassured Committee Members that through the transport assessment and project planning, transport-related concerns from local residents relating to the need for a crossing to ensure safe passage to and from school, particularly for children travelling from the former Howe Barracks site, would be addressed through engagement with the relevant Kent Highways Officer and local planners.
- (2) RESOLVED that the decision proposed to be taken by the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills to expand Pilgrims Way Primary School, Pilgrims Way, Canterbury CT1 1XU increasing the Published Admissions Number (PAN) from 45 places to 60 places from September 2021, be endorsed.

20/00008 – Proposal to expand Water Meadows Primary School, Canterbury, by increasing the Published Admissions Number (PAN) from 15 places to 30 places from September 2020

(Item 15b)

- (1) RESOLVED that the decision proposed to be taken by the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills to expand Water Meadows Primary school, Shaftesbury Road, Hersden, Canterbury, Kent, CT3 4HS increasing the Published

Admissions Number (PAN) from 15 places to 30 places from September 2020, be endorsed.

20/00009 – Proposal to expand Tunbridge Wells Grammar School for Boys, by increasing the Published Admissions Number (PAN) from 210 places to 300 places from September 2021

(Item 15c)

- (1) In response to a question, Mr Watts referred to the overwhelming support from local residents throughout the consultation process in relation to the proposal. Mr Long (Cabinet Member for Education and Skills) referred to the comments from residents against the proposal and said that the majority lived in the Canterbury postal area.
- (2) In response to a question, Mr Watts referred to the considerable amount of school expansions/alterations being undertaken in Kent, predominantly in non-selective schools, and stated that whilst Kent County Council were not able to form new grammar provision, the capacity would be increased within grammar schools wherever possible, without resulting in a breach.
- (3) Mr Long said that the proposal would provide a net transport benefit, as the majority of children who would be attending the annex currently had to travel to Tonbridge or Tunbridge Wells.
- (4) RESOLVED that the decision proposed to be taken by the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills to expand Tunbridge Wells Grammar School for Boys, by increasing the Published Admission Number (PAN) from 210 places to 300 places, facilitated by the establishment of a satellite of the school on the Wildernesse site in Sevenoaks, from September 2021, be endorsed.

159. Performance Monitoring

(Item 16)

Ms Atkinson (Assistant Director - Management Information & Intelligence) was in attendance for this item

- (1) Ms Atkinson provided a brief update in relation to the performance scorecard and the work that had been carried out since the Committee last met.
- (2) In response to a question, Ms Atkinson referred to the school level data that was produced and which could be shared more widely looking at trends in the Free School Meal (FSM) attainment gaps.
- (3) RESOLVED that the Performance Scorecard be noted.

160. Ofsted Update

(Item 17)

The information within the agenda was noted without discussion.

161. Work Programme 2020/21

(Item 18)

RESOLVED that the work programme for 2020/21 be noted.