

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

EDUCATION CABINET COMMITTEE

MINUTES of a meeting of the Education Cabinet Committee held in the Darent Room, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Friday, 27 September 2013.

PRESENT: Mr L B Ridings, MBE (Chairman), Mrs P T Cole (Vice-Chairman), Mr M A C Balfour, Mr H Birkby, Mr L Burgess (Substitute for Mr A D Crowther), Mr G Cowan, Mrs M E Crabtree, Mr M J Northey, Mr J M Ozog, Mr W Scobie, Mrs P A V Stockell and Mr M J Vye

ALSO PRESENT: Mr R W Gough

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr P Leeson (Corporate Director Education, Learning and Skills Directorate), Mr K Abbott (ELS Director Finance Business Partner), Mr D Adams (Area Education Officer - South Kent), Mr R Dalziel (Area Education Officer - North Kent), Ms S Dunn (Head of Skills and Employability), Mr J Nehra (Area Education Officer - West Kent), Mr D Shipton (Head of Financial Strategy), Mrs J Wiles (Area School Organisation Officer - East Kent) and Mrs C A Singh (Democratic Services Officer)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

129. Membership

(Item A2)

RESOLVED that the Education Cabinet Committee agreed the co-option of three Diocesan Representatives on a non voting basis on the Education Cabinet Committee. The nominees were Mr Alex Tear (Director of Education, Rochester Diocese), Mr Quentin Roper (Director of Education, Canterbury Diocese), and Dr Anne Bamford (Director of Education, The Archdiocese of Southwark).

130. Declarations of Members' Interest relating to items on today's Agenda

(Item A4)

1. Mrs Crabtree made a declaration regarding Item D4 advising that her sister was a governor at Bower Grove School, Maidstone.
2. Mr Balfour made a declaration regarding Item D5 as his wife ran a Montessori school.
3. Mr Scobie made a declaration regarding Item E1 advising that he had family members that worked at Laleham Gap (Special School), Margate.

131. Date of next meeting

(Item A5)

RESOLVED that the next meeting of this Cabinet Committee had been rescheduled for Wednesday, 4 December 2013 at 10.00 am and that the meeting scheduled for 20 November be deleted from the County Council diary.

132. Minutes of the meeting held on 21 June 2013

(Item A6)

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 21 June 2013 are correctly recorded subjected to the correction of typographical errors and that they be signed by the Chairman.

133. Verbal Update by Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform and Corporate Director, Education, Learning and Skills

(Item A7)

1. The Cabinet Member, Mr Gough, and the Corporate Director, Mr Leeson, gave their verbal updates and highlighted work undertaken since the last Cabinet Committee meeting which included the following:

- **Targeted Basic Need Fund** – KCC submitted 26 bids for the Targeted Basic Need Fund and was successful with 19 of those gaining £31 million in additional capital grant. Members would have the opportunity to discuss this in a later part of the agenda.
 - The tentative GCSE examination results in English and Maths in the 5 A*-C grades looked to have improved, at a time when nationally they were in decline. The Key Stage 1 and 2 results also looked positive. Mr Gough thanked the schools, their pupils and KCC officers for their hard work to gain this improvement.
 - **Private Finance Initiative** – There were 11 schools which had rebuilds under PFI. The cost of this would not change due to any school converting to an academy. The money that was paid for the affordability gap was not paid from council tax or from KCC's budget; it was to be paid from the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG), the overall school pot. The two things that have changed over the past 2 years were that, firstly, the DSG was flat in cost terms at a time when the affordability gap was going up in line with inflation, which meant that a gap was opening up and secondly, there had been a significant number of Kent schools, over 110, converting to academy status over the last 3 years and it was that, rather than any particular school converting, that reduced the pot that was available for paying for the PFI charges and put more of a burden on those schools that remain maintained.
 - **Sevenoaks Grammar School Annex** – An agreement was reached with Valley Invicta Academy Trust, Maidstone, in March 2013, to work in partnership on their bid. The Weald of Kent Grammar School, Tonbridge, brought in a later bid quite separately that was not discussed with KCC until it became public, since then KCC had worked with the Weald of Kent Grammar School. KCC's position is that these are two good Kent schools and KCC is delighted that they both wished to provide Sevenoaks Grammar School annex provision.
- Wilderness site, Sevenoaks** – An agreement was reached with the Department of Education (DfE) on the Wilderness site. The Wilderness site was originally susceptible to being taken over for the purposes of the Free School by the DfE. It had been agreed that part of the Wilderness site would be used for the Trinity Free School in 2015 and the remainder of the site would be available for the Sevenoaks Grammar School Annex, subject

to that being approved. This meant the site would no longer be a block on the annex happening. Mr Gough stressed it was important to emphasise that as far as the DfE and KCC were concerned these were two separate issues.

The principle to endorse either proposal from the Weald of Kent Grammar School, Tonbridge, or from Valley Invicta Academy Trust, rests with the Secretary of State.

- Mr Leeson advised on the headline attainment results available at this time. There had been changes to the way that early development at the end of the foundation stage, age 5, was being assessed. Kent was well above the national average. This year 64% of children at rising 5 were assessed to have achieved a good level of development in the early years against the national average of 54%. The achievement gap of children from more deprived areas had decreased further this year compared to the national picture.
- **Key Stage 1 (KS1)** – There were good levels of improvement in reading, writing and mathematics. KS1 continued to improve incrementally year on year. Improvements of 2, 3 and 4% had been achieved in the ranges of outcomes for KS1.
- **Key Stage 2 (KS2)** – Previously this was a combined measure of level 4 with a reading, writing and maths level. This year the government changed this to combine level 4 for reading and writing separately and mathematics. Previously it was possible to get a level 4 in English before getting a level 4 in reading and writing. The outcome for Kent was 74% of pupils reaching that level; the national average was 76%. The three year trend for Kent was continuing upwards. The comparable figure for 2012 was 72%, which meant an uplift of 2%. Mr Leeson considered that the schools that had not achieved enough were probably those that were not tracking pupils carefully enough in the 3 measures; reading, writing and mathematics at level 4.
- A key measure at Key Stage 2 was whether schools were achieving above the “Floor Standard”. There were 65% of pupils reaching above the standard level. In 2012 the number of schools achieving above the floor standard increased significantly. In 2011 there were 72 primary schools that achieved below the floor standard. In 2012 the number reduced to 22 schools. There were now 50 schools considered to be below the floor level. Those were schools that officers would work and talk with to improve their situation for 2014.
- **GCSEs results** – 65% of 16 year olds were achieving good GCSEs, with English and mathematics included, which was above the national picture. This had increased incrementally year on year nationally by 1%. In 2012 Kent was above the national average with 61%. In 2013 it was 65% with English and Mathematics.

Overall 61 secondary schools had improved or maintained their level of improvement and 14 secondary schools dropped their results of improvement by 1% or less. 75% of secondary schools maintained their performance at GCSE at a time when the standard was being pushed upwards and the grade boundary from examination boards had been altered to make GCSEs more challenging. The number of schools that were below the secondary floor standard, which was 40% of youngsters in each school achieving 5 good GCSEs with English and mathematics A-C, had reduced from 19 secondary schools being below the floor in 2012 to 9 secondary schools in 2013.

- **Post 16** – There continued to be a small incremental improvement although A-level results overall in Kent were below the national average. This year the pass level at A-level in A-E grades increased by nearly 1% to just above 93%. The upward trend was welcomed but it was not a significant increase. There was a substantial shift in the percentage for 2013 to 13.5% from 5% in 2012 of young people achieving A*, A or B grades.
- Attainment results had improved in every Key Stage in 2013. There were very ambitious targets in the Bold Steps for Education which are intended to take Kent much further in the next few years. To achieve these targets there is work being carried out in Kent schools to improve standards at each Key Stage and the results of that hard work on the part of the Headteachers and their staff is being seen across the County. There are still wide gaps in the attainment of young people on Free School Meals and other pupils, and there are still targets to be met for GCSE and Key Stage 1 and 2.
- Mr Leeson stated that the importance of reading and writing especially should not be underestimated for any child's success in the education system. The more that can be achieved at Key Stage 1 and in early years attainment the better the chances of succeeding in secondary education at GCSE level. He reminded Members that the number of young people Not in Education, Employment and Training (NEET) were largely those young people who had not developed good standards of literacy.
- **Facing the Challenge: Transformation agenda** – The Education, Learning and Skills Directorate would have three new functional groups, which all included further integration of services from across Kent and working with our partners; 1. 0-11 integrated services; 2. Kent Integrated Adolescent Services; and 3. 14-25 Skills and Employability.
- **The Number of Academy Conversions** – This had slowed down in the past year. There are now 117 academies in Kent out of a total of nearly 600 schools, 15 of which were from the old style of academy under the last government and 102 conversions since the Academies Act 2010. 13 schools were sponsored by an internal sponsor ie another school and 79 academies were stand alone.

2. Mr Gough and Mr Leeson noted the comments and responded to questions regarding the information given in their verbal updates by Members which included the following:

- a) Further to Minute 112/2013, agreement was given to Mr Scobie receiving a detailed note in response to his questions regarding the decision to expand Newington Community Primary School and nursery which included: the future of the site; why the Infant school site was not included in the information to Members; an assurance that the playing field was not going to be sold to developers; and the full cost of the security on site.
- b) Mr Gough concurred that the attainment gap remained between children on Free School meals and other children. He reflected that in 2012 there had been considerable progress in narrowing that gap against the national average however, the same improvement did not happen this year. He confirmed that considerable effort was still being made by the School Improvement Team to deal with this issue.
Mr Leeson advised that the attainment gap was a fundamental issue in this country. The present government was putting in significant

resources into schools through the Pupil Premium which had increased year on year.

KCC had carried out an enormous amount of work to ensure that the quality of teaching in Kent schools improved as children would not make good progress unless they were taught well. A 5% improvement for children on Free School Meals in Primary in 2012 was welcomed as a significant narrowing of the attainment gap. Kent was investigating this issue at present. The national figures were not available yet.

Mr Leeson advised that he would submit a detailed report on this issue to the next Cabinet meeting and this would include the results of his investigations about narrowing the attainment gap for pupils on Free School Meals and other children. The Chairman confirmed that Members would have the opportunity to discuss this at the Members Monitoring Group.

- c) Congratulations were extended to all staff who worked on improving the achievements for GCSE results.
- d) A request was made for the numbers of schools to be stated in reports when percentages are given.
- e) Agreement was given to Mr Cowan receiving a written reply regarding the Sevenoaks Grammar School annex provision answering his questions on: the legal position of annexes for grammar schools; the legality of the funds being issued by KCC supporting the Valley Invicta Academy Trust delivering a proposal to the Secretary of State for the Sevenoaks Grammar School annex; and whether this financial support would be extended to the Weald of Kent Grammar School's proposal for the Sevenoaks Grammar School annex.
- f) Mr Leeson gave his assurance that the County Council would not have put forward proposals to the Secretary of State unless it had assured itself that it was a legal proposition. Legal advice had been sought from legal council outside KCC. The following legal definition of what was an annex and what was not an annex was given as follows "*any proposed extension or expansion even at a distance from the host school can be an annex if there was single governance and management and accountability back to the host school, coherent admission arrangements and was clearly part of a wider host schools provision and not a stand alone school*". There was no enabling legislation to do this but there was no legislation forbidding this. Members were advised that this was a grey area in between where challenges could be made and this was not an easy decision to make. He reiterated that Kent had not put forward a proposal that was in anyway illegal.

3. RESOLVED that:-

- a) the responses to comments and questions by Members be noted;
- b) agreement was given to Mr Scobie receiving a detailed note in response to his questions regarding the decision to expand Newington Community Primary School and nursery;
- c) a detailed report be submitted to this Cabinet Committee on narrowing the attainment gap for pupils on Free School Meals;

- d) agreement was given to Mr Cowan receiving a written response to his questions regarding the Sevenoaks Grammar School annex provision; and
- e) the information given in the verbal update be noted with thanks.

134. 13/00070 - Proposal to expand Lamberhurst St Mary's Church of England Primary School

(Item B1)

135. Targeted Basic Need Funded Projects

(Item B2)

(Report by Mr P Leeson, Corporate Director for Education, Learning and Skills)

(Mr D Adams, Area Education Officer, South Kent, was present for this item)

1. The Corporate Director, Mr Leeson and the Area Education Officer, Mr Adams, introduced the report highlighting that Kent had submitted 26 school bids for the Targeted Basic Need fund and had been successful with 19 of those, gaining £31 million in additional capital grant, which would enable the Local Authority to commission five new primary schools, and provide places in a further seven primary schools and seven special schools by September 2015. The seven schools that were unsuccessful would be financed another way.

2. Mr Leeson responded to comments and questions by Members which included the following:

- a) Schools were chosen that best matched the criteria of the Targeted Basic Need fund.
- b) Members welcomed the new schools for the Tonbridge and Malling area.
- c) The Targeted Basic Need Fund was money allocated specifically to those 19 projects. Funding for schools expansions could also be gained through a wide range of funding including developer contributions and KCC borrowing the funding.
- d) There was acknowledgment that there were still enormous pressures in Thanet, which had been identified in the Commissioning Plan.
- e) Mr Leeson advised that the Local Authority was the commissioner of the provision of new schools that would be academies or free schools. The decision to select a sponsor for each of the five new schools rests with the Secretary of State.

The Secretary of State would be informed by an assessment and expression of preference which must be carried out by the Local Authority. Once the new schools were established they were free standing entities. Mr Adams added that Special Need provision would be written into the agreement of the SLA between the new schools and KCC. KCC would set out the criteria long term and if any of the new schools at any time did not want to continue running the Special Need provision this had to be decided unilaterally.

3. RESOLVED that:-

- a) the responses to comments and questions by Members be noted;
- b) the increase funding available through the Targeted Basic Need grant be noted; and
- c) the Education Cabinet Committee endorses the decision to be taken by the Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform on the proposed decisions to expand and build at the schools and in the areas identified.

136. Education, Learning & Skills Directorate Financial Monitoring 2013/14
(Item C1)

(Report by Mr R Gough, Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform and Mr P Leeson, Corporate Director for Education, Learning and Skills)

(Mr K Abbott, Finance Business Partner, Director School Resources was present for this item)

1. The Director of School Resources, Mr Abbott, introduced the report and highlighted the following:

- This was the first quarterly full monitoring budget report for 2013/14 that had been reported to the Cabinet on 16 September 2013. The monitoring in the report reflected the pre-election format as the Cabinet Member for Finance and Procurement had decided that we would continue to report in that format for the remainder of the financial year and reflect the portfolio changes as part of the structure of the 2014/15 budget.
- Schools were receiving support from officers from Finance and the Schools Improvement Team with their three year budget plans for 2014/15 and 2015/16 to avoid potential deficits and resolve any issues early.
- Although the Education, Learning and Skills Directorate was forecasting a £800k underspend for the current year in the revenue budget, there were significant pressures on budgets that were funded from the Dedicated Schools Grant, in particular the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Independent/Non-Maintained Provision and Redundancy (Schools). The longer term solutions to this lay in the SEND Strategy and the completion of the Special Schools Review. In the meantime discussions may need to be had with schools about rebalancing of the position of what was delegated and non delegated to find a way of funding those pressures until more long term solutions were found.
- Mr Leeson advised that the SEND Strategy was due to be published. The Strategy sets out clear proposals to expand the provision in Kent so that there was less need to have more expensive out of county provision.

2. Mr Abbott and Mr Leeson responded to comments and questions by Members which included the following:

- a) A request was made for a Budget Task and Finish Group to allow Members time to discuss potential budget savings. The Chairman agreed to speak with the Leader to seek permission.
- b) Requests were made for details of what expenditure was discretionary and what was statutory; details on the Dedicated Schools Grant; and the

role of the Schools Funding Forum. Mr Leeson advised that there was a review on the non-spending parts of the DSG at the request of the Schools Funding Forum and it agreed the number of areas that would be reviewed. The outcome of that review would be considered by the Schools Funding Forum in December. Mr Leeson agreed to provide details on the role of the DSG; the Schools Funding Forum and the outcome of the review at the next meeting of this Cabinet Committee.

- c) Concerns were raised regarding schools planned maintenance and those schools that were not in category A (i.e. in need of urgent repair) could over time go into category A if their repairs were not met in time. Mr Abbott agreed to produce information on the finance of schools maintenance and circulate to the Cabinet Committee.
- d) Mr Abbott confirmed that all of the figures excluded academies within the report. He advised that if an academy got into financial difficulty, it was unclear what would happen but the responsibility rests firmly with the Trust for the academy in the first instance and could mean intervention/support from the Education Funding Agency (EFA) and the DfE would also have a role to play.
- e) A request was made for acronyms to be in full at least once in any report.

3. RESOLVED that:-

- a) the responses to comments and questions by Members be noted;
- b) the Chairman seeks permission for a Budget Task and Finish Group from the Leader of the Council;
- c) this Cabinet Committee be provided with details on the role of the Dedicated Schools Grant; the Schools Funding Forum and the outcome of its review at the next meeting;
- d) this Cabinet Committee be provided with information on the schools maintenance budget; and
- e) the revenue and capital forecast variances in the budget for 2013/14 for the Education, Learning and Skills Directorate based on the first quarter's full monitoring that was considered by Cabinet on 16 September 2013 be noted.

137. Education, Learning and Skills Performance Scorecard

(Item C2)

(Report by Mr P Leeson, Corporate Director for Education, Learning and Skills)

1. The Corporate Director, Mr Leeson, introduced a report on the Education, Learning and Skills performance management framework, which is the monitoring tool for the targets and the milestones for each year up to 2016, set out in Bold Steps for Education.

2. Mr Leeson responded to comments and questions by Members which included the following:

- Mr Leeson advised that the data in the report was retrospective as it looked at past trends and the latest position. In the past year the PRU had already made a significant difference. As a result of the review all young people attending PRU provision would remain on the roll of the school and remain the responsibility of the school. There were now many more alternatives available to address the needs of those young people. There was far less recourse for permanent exclusion; much better proposals in place in most areas to managed moves and the use of in year fair access protocol where if necessary an alternative school or an alternative curriculum pathway could be found. Permanent exclusions had reduced from 210 in the year 2012 to 140 in 2013. The target was to reduce this further, to below 40, in the next two years.

3. RESOLVED that:-

- a) the responses to comments and questions by Members be noted; and
- b) the development of the Education, Learning and Skills Performance Management Framework and the current performance be noted.

138. Medium Term Financial Outlook

(Item D1)

(Report by Mr J Simmonds, Cabinet Member for Finance and Procurement and Mr A Wood Corporate Director Finance and Procurement)

(Mr D Shipton, Head of Financial Strategy and Mr K Abbott, Director, School Resources, were present for this item)

1. The Head of Financial Strategy, Mr Shipton, introduced a report that informed Members of the latest funding estimates for the next four years and the implications for KCC's financial planning.

2. Mr Shipton highlighted the following points:

- The launch of the consultation on next year's budget would take place in early November when this Cabinet Committee would have the opportunity to debate the findings at its meeting on 2 December in advance of Cabinet debate in January 2014 and then County Council in February 2014.
- The new funding arrangements were complex. The report outlined the baseline figures that the government was setting and those figures were being used as the level of funding that would be available to Kent. There would be some minor variation with business rate collection in local districts but it was considered that this would have a minimum impact on Kent.
- The position for 2014/15 had been set out in the report and Kent was expecting a £36 million reduction in its baseline compared to 2013/14 which was £3 million more than was expected in the settlement in February 2013. For 2014/15 across the whole of the County Council the 2013/14 budget had £25 million one-off actions to balance the budget and alternatives would need to be found for 2014/15 to balance the budget. There was a £36 million reduction in the funding and £25 million needed to be found and there would still be unavoidable spending pressures that would arise through the course of the year.

- The budget for 2015/16 was significantly worse than was previously anticipated; there was to be a 13% reduction in the core base line funding because some of the new initiatives that were announced were to be recycled money from the main baseline settlement and was not from new money.
- A government consultation was launched regarding the funding of the new Local Growth Fund (LGF). The Government had already determined that the LGF should be created by redirecting existing funding from education and skills, transport, and housing. This consultation dealt with the proposal that £400 million would be pooled from the New Homes Bonus (NHB) between authorities with each Local Enterprise Partnership. In essence legislation would be passed requiring local authorities to pass on a fixed % of NHB to the LEP which could have a significant impact on Kent's funding for 2015/16.
- For 2015/16 the government, in the new spending round in June, announced that there would be a 20% reduction in the Education Services Grant, which was money that was taken away from local authorities and given to the Department of Education (DfE) to fund local authority central services and then the DfE reissued it back, as a grant to local authorities and academies. It was not known how that 20% would be allocated. It was anticipated that Kent could be looking at a £56 to £64 million reduction in funding, compared to the £36 million for 2014/15.

3. Mr Shipton and Mr Abbott responded to comments and questions by Members which included the following:

- a) Mr Shipton advised that the Council Tax Freeze Grant for 2011/12 was already factored into the baseline therefore the £14 million was secured until 2015/16. The freeze money for 2013/14 was going to be added to the baseline for 2014/15 and 2015/16. There was no pro rata reduction in that money which meant that when the government transferred that money that element of Council Tax Freeze money was protected. Those authorities that did not take the Council Tax Freeze Grant would face a larger percentage reduction in their baseline than authorities that did take the Council Tax Freeze money because the money was protected. This would enable Kent to keep the Council Tax at the level set this year. For 2015 the Government had offered another Council Tax Freeze Grant which this County Council would need to decide on at its meeting in February 2014.
- b) Mr Gough advised that there were changes around the Post 16 funding which was a national formula which local authorities had no direct control over and Kent was aware of the issues for all schools including grammar schools.

4. RESOLVED that:-

- a) the responses to comments and questions by Members be noted; and
- b) the potential implications on future funding settlements; the Council's Budget/Medium Term Financial Plan; and the likely timetable for setting the 2014/15 budget be noted.

139. Proposed transfer of the Bower Grove secondary satellite provision and change of designated number of Bower Grove School
(Item D2)

(Report by Mr P Leeson, Corporate Director of Education, Learning and Skills)

(Mr J Nehra – Area Education Officer, West Kent, was present for this item)

1. The Cabinet Committee considered a report that proposed the transfer of Bower Grove secondary school satellite provision from Bower Grove School, Maidstone, to St Augustine Academy for September 2014 and to change the designated number of Bower Grove School.
2. RESOLVED that the public consultation on the proposal to transfer the Bower Grove secondary satellite provision from Bower Grove School, Maidstone, to St Augustine Academy and change the designated number of Bower Grove School, Maidstone, which was currently underway be noted.

140. Schools Sixth Form Funding and Comparison with FE Colleges

(Item D4)

(Report by Mr P Leeson, Corporate Director for Education, Learning and Skills)

(Ms S Dunn, Head of Skills and Employability and Mr K Abbott, Director, School Resources were present for this item)

1. Mr Abbott and Ms Dunn introduced a report that covered:
 - the background to the funding system for school sixth forms and FE colleges;
 - how the post-16 funding system worked;
 - what the funding should deliver;
 - funding High Needs Students;
 - the impact of the funding system on KCC;
 - the impact of the funding system on institutions; and
 - capital funding.
2. Mr Abbott and Ms Dunn responded to comments and questions by Members which included the following:
 - a) Ms Dunn clarified that young people aged 16-18 years did not have to stay on at school but had to be in training/learning with an emphasis on gaining functionality in English and mathematics. This could be met by an apprenticeship or workplace learning provider for which funding would be available.
 - b) Through facing funding reductions, there had been some innovative solutions by working in partnership across schools, colleges and workplace learning providers to deliver the Post 16 curriculum. Mr Leeson added that there were opportunities to gain funding for the study programme Post 16. No programme would be approved without

elements of English and mathematics for those young people who had not acquired this at the age of 16 years. There were other elements such as vocational learning, work experience and volunteering that also attracted funding. It was important for schools to look at other ways of attracting additional funding for Post 16 funding. There were two elements of change in the funding: 1. There was a redistribution of the funding across schools and the further education sectors; and 2. There was an increase in funding for some aspects of Post 16 learning, which was welcomed.

- c) The appendix to the report was drawn up using the old formula and was based on the schools' qualifications. As from this year there would be £4000 flat rate per learner. Mr Abbott added that there was no ringfencing of this funding.

3. RESOLVED that the responses to comments and questions by Members and the information in the report be noted with thanks.

141. 13/00068 - Commissioning Plan for Education 2013 - 2018

(Item D3)

(Report by Mr R Gough, Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform and Mr P Leeson, Corporate Director for Education, Learning and Skills)

(Mr D Adams, Area Education Officer, South Kent, Mr R Dalziel, Area Education officer, North Kent and Ms S Dunn, Head of Skills and Employability, were present for this item)

1. The Cabinet Member, Mr Gough, and Corporate Director, Mr Leeson, introduced a report that sets out the background and analysis of pressures in the Commissioning Plan for Education Provision 2013-18 prior to the final approval of the Plan by Cabinet on 14 October 2013.

2. Mr Leeson confirmed that the Commissioning Plan would be reviewed biannually and the next review would be in Spring 2014.

3. Mr Gough, Mr Leeson and Officers in attendance responded to comments and questions by Members which included the following:

- a) A comment was made regarding the difficulty in planning for the new influx of people migrating to Kent and commended the accuracy of the data in the report. The Chairman explained that the district councils were providing much more data, which included new housing developments, on which KCC could forecast student numbers.
- b) A comment was made that KCC should not be reliant on the number of new housing developments to indicate the number of school places needed in an area. Mr Adams advised that the forecast looked at the capacity long term for those families that were already living in the area and what additions may be required if housing developments happened at the pace that KCC was advised by the district councils. This allowed robust discussions to take place with the colleagues in the district councils about what future infrastructure needs there might be for KCC, the district council and Health etc and the cost of that could be estimated.

Projections could also be made for the next 10 to 20 years when KCC could identify; what capacity was needed, which S106 contribution would apply and the Community Levy charges, which came on line in 2014.

- c) Ms Dunn explained that work had been carried out on a "Curriculum Map Post 16", which identified modern foreign language for significant development. KCC was working with Kent University on how KCC could build in the capacity in some of Kent schools to reintroduce a broader offer of modern foreign languages as a positive option. This related back to the funding issue where KCC could introduce interesting collaborative pathways across a range of schools for giving those young people who want to do two or three languages at A-level the opportunity to do so. Mr Leeson added that the changes to the Qualification Framework at 16 years would contribute to this as well as the increased use of EBAC as a measure of secondary school performance and proposals for creating a new performance measure for schools which was the best outcomes across 8 curriculum subjects rather than 5 which we have now.
- d) Agreement was given to Mr Scobie receiving written confirmation regarding the school playing fields at Laleham Gap, Cliftonville.
- e) Mr Leeson explained that the temporary placements gave the local authority some degree of flexibility in the way it planned and delivered school places. If there was a one year bulge finding places on a temporary basis was a way of dealing with that issue. This was no reflection that KCC was unable to be specific in the short term. Some temporary placements were used to give time to gain planning permission or provision to become permanent.
- f) Mr Dalziel advised that the District Base Priorities Group in North Kent had highlighted the provision of high quality early years places as a priority. Increases were required for vulnerable families and the provision for two year olds. The Group had been working with private providers as well as KCC providers of this provision.
- g) In terms of committing to additional forms of entry beyond 2016 in North Kent, negotiations were ongoing with a number of different schools.
- h) Support was being offered to young people in their competencies for the work environment. This was being carried out by offering them appropriate courses, making sure that they understand why they were on that course and discussing whether they wished to go onto college, university or an apprenticeship etc. Mr Leeson added that employers had been saying that young people had not been presenting themselves well at interview. Young people needed to know what employers expected of them.

4. RESOLVED that the responses to comments and questions by Members be noted and considered by the Cabinet at its meeting on 14 October.

142. Early Years and Childcare Strategy 2014 - 17

(Item D5)

(Report by Mr R Gough, Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform and Mr P Leeson, Corporate Director for Education, Learning and Skills)

1. Mr Leeson introduced a report that provided the rationale for a new Early Years and Childcare Strategy, including its national and local context, its scope, what

it would aim to achieve and the process and timescales for its development, consultation, final agreement and implementation.

2. Mr Leeson highlighted that a high proportion of the Early Years provision in Kent was good quality and work was being undertaken to further develop that provision.

3. Mr Leeson responded to comments and questions by Members which included the following:

- Mr Leeson considered that the key for new parents was an understanding of education as well as care within Early Years provision and advised that there was carefully targeted information through the Children and Families Information Service on the provisions provided by childcare providers. None of the provision was funded unless it included the Early Years curriculum. It was the role of the Children's Centres to target those parents that may need help and how to access more affordable childcare. The free offer for 4 year olds had been in place for some time and parents were helped to take up that offer for 15 hours a week, the take-up of which was high in Kent and the expansion of the two year old provision would help in the future.
- Children's Centres were central in providing early years care and learning. Most of the Children's Centres in Kent were rated good or better. One of the roles of the Children's Centres was to target early learning and was part of the network of provision in any area for early years care and learning. Part of the Strategy was to create more integration between the local providers in the areas.
- Mr Gough advised that a good deal of work was being carried out on the Children's Centres consultation. The ELS Directorate was keen to be part of the detailed discussion in terms of looking at the detail of any of the individual Children Centres.

4. RESOLVED that:-

- a) the responses to comments and questions by Members be noted; and
- b) a draft of the Early Years and Childcare Strategy for 2014 – 2017 be submitted to this Cabinet Committee in December prior to consultation and further to the consultation, the final draft of the Strategy be presented to the next appropriate Education Cabinet Committee in 2014 for comment.

143. Alternative Provision Health Needs Service

(Item D6)

(Report by Mr R Gough, Cabinet Member for Education Health and Reform and Mr P Leeson, Corporate Director for Education Learning and Skills)

(Ms S Dunn, Head of Skills and Employability was present for this item)

1. The Cabinet Member, Mr Gough, introduced a report that outlined the proposals to develop an effective Health Needs Service across Kent, which enabled young people with Health Needs to access appropriate education provision.

2. Following a brief discussion, the Chairman asked Members to vote on Option 1 and Option 2 set out in the report. Member voted unanimously for Option 1.
3. RESOLVED that the Education Cabinet Committee recommends Option 1, *“Establish a county service with no PRU, based on the 8 Alternative Provision hubs recently established. Expand the Management Committees to ensure appropriate representation of Health Needs learners. This would assimilate the Health Needs service within the new PRU and Alternative Provision”*, to establish a new Health Needs service for Kent to the Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform and endorses the intention to carry out a consultation with Schools, FE Colleges and other Stakeholders.

144. A Review of Ofsted School Inspections in Kent 2012-2013 (Item D7)

(Report by Mr R Gough, Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform and Mr P Leeson, Corporate Director for Education, Learning and Skills)

1. The Cabinet Member, Mr Gough, introduced a report that provided an overview of Ofsted inspections in Kent for the school year 2012/13 and the overall improvement rate for Kent overall in Ofsted outcomes, in particular the improvement and progress achieved in improving the quality of education in Kent schools in 2012/13.
2. Mr Gough highlighted that there was good progress with narrowing the gap for schools that were good and outstanding. There were still demanding targets to be met with the schools that were inspected and judged to require improvement and found to be inadequate. Work continued to be carried out to improve those results.
3. Mr Leeson considered the Ofsted results a good outcome for all the work carried out by many Kent Schools and a number of service providers that supported schools improvement. The uplift of 70% of schools being good or outstanding overall in Kent compared with 59% of schools in 2012 were judged good or outstanding was a good rate of improvement. Nationally, the rate of improvement was 9%. In Kent the rate of improvement was 11%.
4. Mr Gough and Mr Leeson responded to comments and questions by Members which included the following:
 - Mr Leeson stated that the reasons why a special school's Ofsted judgement may go down was not due to the type of special needs of the children but due to the leadership of the school not being effective enough, the children were not being taught well enough and the progress the children were making was not good enough.
 - A comment was made that the method of reporting the figures first then percentages was preferred.
 - Members considered this a good and fair report.

5. RESOLVED that:-

- a) the responses to comments and questions by Members be noted; and
- b) the positive outcomes and improved progress for Kent schools in Ofsted inspection outcomes in the 2012-3 school year be noted.

145. Decisions taken outside of the Cabinet Committee meeting cycle
(Item E1)

(Report by Mr R Gough, Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform and Mr P Leeson, Corporate Director for Education, Learning and Skills)

1. Members commented on the decisions that were taken in accordance with the urgency procedure set out in the County Council Constitution.

2. The Opposition Spokesmen for the Liberal Democrat and Labour Groups considered that they were not given enough notice and time to respond to the email regarding the urgent decision and requested that the electronic email be accompanied by a telephone call.

3. RESOLVED that:-

- a) the responses to comments and questions by Members be noted; and
- b) Decision numbers: 13/00013/2 – Proposed relocation of Laleham Gap (Special) School and 13/00065 – Valley Invicta Partnership agreement were taken in accordance with the urgency procedure set out in appendix 4 Part 7 paragraph 7.18 of the Constitution be noted.