

## **EDUCATION AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES CABINET COMMITTEE**

MINUTES of a meeting of the Education and Young People's Services Cabinet Committee held in the Darent Room, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Wednesday, 11 May 2016.

PRESENT: Mr L B Ridings, MBE (Chairman), Mrs P T Cole (Vice-Chairman), Mr L Burgess, Mr G Cowan, Mrs M E Crabtree, Mr S C Manion, Mr M J Northey, Mr J M Ozog, Mr T L Shonk and Mr M J Vye

ALSO PRESENT: Mr R W Gough

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr P Leeson (Corporate Director Education and Young People's Services), Mr K Abbott (Director of Education Planning and Access), Mr D Adams (Area Education Officer - South Kent), Mr S Bagshaw (Head of Fair Access), Mrs J Ely (Head of SEN Assessment and Resources), Mr J Nehra (Area Education Officer - West Kent), Mr I Watts (Area Education Officer – North Kent) and Mr A Saul (Democratic Services Officer)

### **UNRESTRICTED ITEMS**

#### **176. Introduction/Webcast announcement**

*(Item A1)*

#### **177. Apologies and Substitutes**

*(Item A2)*

1) Apologies were received from Mr Pearman, Mr Oakford, Mr Tear, Mr Roper and Mr Truelove.

#### **178. Declarations of Interest by Members in items on the Agenda**

*(Item A3)*

1) There were no declarations of interest.

#### **179. Minutes of the meeting held on 17 March 2016**

*(Item A4)*

1) The Chairman informed the Cabinet Committee that due to a technical error the minutes had duplicated items. This has since been corrected.

2) The amended minutes were distributed amongst the Cabinet Committee.

3) RESOLVED that Education and Young People's Services Cabinet Committee agree to approve the amended minutes.

#### **180. Verbal updates**

*(Item A5)*

1) The following updates were received from Roger Gough, Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform;

- a) Mr Gough welcomed the Government U-turn in regards to the forced academisation of schools and he emphasised to Members that he was very grateful for the cross party views and discussion on this subject.
- b) He emphasised to Members that where standards of a school were extremely low and the Local Authority judged to be unable to support them a school could still be academised. He further explained that as the Local Authority support function requires funding from Central Government power over this still lies with them.
- c) Members were reassured that the conditions for forced academisation do not apply in Kent and that schools should be congratulated for their positive Ofsted outcomes. Particular attention was brought to the bulk of Primary Schools, which have shown great improvement.
- d) In response to a concern raised in regards to the amount of academies opening and that the amount could overwhelm schools still under the Local Authority, Mr Gough explained that Kent County Council cannot seek to stop that process. He expressed a view that what matters more is Kent County Council continue to give a coherent offer to schools and is on that basis that schools will choose.
- e) In response to a query on the changing responsibilities of Local Authority in education Mr Gough explained that policy was shifting towards more distance between the Local Authority and academies. He further explained the ideology behind this implies a school led improvement programme and that Kent County Council would not be as involved to the same degree as has been done traditionally.

2) The following updates were received from Patrick Leeson, Corporate Director of Education and Young People's Services;

- a) Mr Leeson gave further information on the latest results from Ofsted;
  - i) Kent was ahead of target for summer, which is 90% of all schools at good or outstanding.
  - ii) He confirmed there was noticeable variability across the County with little movement in Gravesham.
  - iii) 97% of schools in Ashford Borough received good or outstanding.
  - iv) 87% of primary schools across Kent achieved good or outstanding.
  - v) 84% of secondary schools across Kent achieved good or outstanding.
- b) He also explained they would continue to drive forward on achieving their targets. Emphasis was put on the strong collaborative work with schools and that any step from further collaboration would be a step back.
- c) He informed Members that they would continue to support new multi-academy trusts opening new schools.

3) Mr Shonk requested greater attention be given to the progress in Thanet schools and that a visit be held. In response to this Mr Gough explained he would be delighted to share a visit to Thanet schools with Mr Shonk. Mr Leeson also explained that progress in the Thanet area had been very encouraging.

4) The Chairman extended his gratitude to all parties of Kent County Council for their support in expressing a unified view on the Government's previous policy of forced academisation.

**181. Proposal to expand Whitfield Aspen School by 1FE across a split site**  
*(Item B1)*

1) David Adams, Area Education Officer for South Kent, introduced the report on the proposal to expand Whitfield Aspen School initially by 1FE across a split site. He explained to Members that £3.5m had already been secured towards this and that there was no reason for concern on the viability of this proposal.

2) As Members local to Whitfield Aspen School both Mr Cowan and Mr Manion expressed their full support.

3) Mr Adams informed Members that Geoff Lymer as the local Member to the school supports the application along with the Governors, Headteacher and the Area Education Officer. An Equality Impact Assessment has also been completed to Officers satisfaction.

4) RESOLVED that the Education and Young People's Services Cabinet Committee endorse the recommendations in the report.

**182. Proposal to expand Wyvern School**  
*(Item B2)*

1) David Adams, Area Education Officer for South Kent, introduced the report requesting an increase of the Education and Young People's Services Capital Budget allocation to the expansion of Wyvern Special School, Ashford, from the agreed £3.9m to £4.7m. He confirmed to Members that the original allocations were agreed at the meeting of this Cabinet Committee on 15 December 2015 following the public consultation. He gave further explanation that several issues explored in depth in 3.1 of the report have increased the cost estimate.

2) The Equalities Impact Assessment was confirmed to be complete and could be found, with the original Consultation, in the background documents of the report.

3) RESOLVED that the Education and Young People's Services Cabinet Committee endorsed the recommendations.

**183. Proposal to permanently expand St John's Catholic Primary School from a PAN of 3FE to 4FE**  
*(Item B3)*

1) Ian Watts, Area Education Officer for North Kent, introduced the report presenting the Cabinet Committee with the proposal to permanently expand St John's Catholic Primary School from a PAN of 3FE to 4FE. He stressed this expansion was part of ongoing work to relieve pressure on providing sufficient Primary School places in Gravesham. The proposal includes an Equality Impact Assessment and as an academy St John's has completed its own consultation.

2) He also confirmed to Members that local Members had been informed of the proposal and it was supported by the Headteacher, Chair of Governors, the Director of Planning and Access and the Area Education Officer.

3) Mr Brunning assured the Cabinet Committee that the Diocese of Southwark was fully behind the proposal.

4) RESOLVED that the Education and Young People's Services Cabinet Committee endorsed the recommendations.

**184. Proposal to permanently expand Brent Primary School from a PAN of 2FE to 3FE**

*(Item B4)*

1) Ian Watts, Area Education Officer for North Kent, introduced the report proposing the Cabinet Committee recommend the Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform agree to release sufficient funding to permanently expand Brent Primary School from a PAN of 2FE to 3FE. This is in response to local pressure on Reception class places being identified. He confirmed to Members as an academy it was currently conducting its own consultation and an Equality Impact Assessment had been completed.

2) He also confirmed that the Headteacher, Chair of Governors, the Director of Planning and Access and the Area Education Officer all support this proposal.

3) RESOLVED that the Education and Young People's Services Cabinet Committee endorsed the recommendations.

**185. Proposal to permanently expand Copperfield Academy from a PAN of 2FE to 3FE**

*(Item B5)*

1) Ian Watts, Area Education Officer for North Kent, introduced the report proposing the Cabinet Committee recommend the Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform agree to release sufficient funding to permanently expand Copperfield Academy from a PAN of 2FE to 3FE. He explained that there was a very high pressure for school places in the area and the school would need adaptations to cope with more students attending. He also confirmed that as an academy the school was conducting its own consultation and had an Equality Impact Assessment completed.

2) He confirmed the Headteacher, Chair of Governors, Area Education Officer and Director of Planning and Access all supported the proposal.

3) RESOLVED that the Education and Young People's Services Cabinet Committee agreed the recommendations.

**186. Proposed changes to Headcorn Primary School**

*(Item B6)*

1) Jared Nehra, Area Education Officer for West Kent, introduced the report to the Cabinet Committee on the proposed changes to Headcorn Primary School. He explained this was to provide more school places in response to the recent housing developments in the area.

2) He also gave a further assurance that over £2 million had already been secured from developers under Section 106 agreements.

3) Mr Nehra advised that the recommendations should include “This decision is subject to planning permission being granted.”

4) A view was expressed by Mr Northey that it was very positive to see the views of the Student Body in the report.

5) RESOLVED that the Education and Young People’s Services Cabinet Committee endorse the recommendation with the inclusion of the below line at the end of the record of decision;

*“This decision is subject to planning permission being granted.”*

### **187. Post 16 Transport Policy**

*(Item B7)*

1) Scott Bagshaw, Head of Fair Access, introduced the report updating the Cabinet Committee in regard to decision taken relation to the +16 travel card and giving the recommendation to endorse the future implementation of the proposed Post 16 Transport Policy. He explained that the consultation had only finished very recently. He further informed Members that there were significant differences between the young person’s travel card and the 16+ travel card.

2) In response to questions raised, Mr Bagshaw gave the following information;

a) He informed Mr Cowan that he would need to advice from colleagues on the negotiations with Public Transport providers and would respond to his query in the negotiation in full after the meeting.

b) Reassurance was given that the cost of this to the general public had not risen.

3) A view was expressed that this was a very generous scheme with many uses and that anything the Local Authority can do to propose the use of public transport should be encouraged.

4) Mr Cowan emphasised his main concern was the discrepancy between the 16+ Travel Card and the Young Person’s Travel Card and he would look forward to receiving further information on the reasons behind this from Mr Bagshaw.

5) RESOLVED that the Education and Young People’s Services Cabinet Committee took note of the content of the Post 16 Transport Policy and endorsed its future implementation.

### **188. Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Mediation and Disagreement Resolution Services**

*(Item C1)*

1) Julie Ely, Head of SEN Assessment & Placement, introduced the report providing the Cabinet Committee with an update on Kent County Council’s provision of Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Mediation and Disagreement Resolution Services. She informed Members that this was a very valuable service which enabled young people to ask for mediation themselves.

2) In regards to the procurement of this service Ms Ely gave the Cabinet Committee the following information:

- a) That 15 other Local Authorities had joined Kent in this procurement as a 3 year contract from 1 August 2015.
- b) An increased demand in this service has been identified and remains higher than was initially expected.
- c) 11 cases so far had proceeded to Tribunal.

3) Mrs Crabtree congratulated Ms Ely and her team on the success of this valuable service and expressed a view this was one of many projects that Ms Ely has been instrumental in making more cost effective.

4) Mr Leeson supported Mrs Crabtree's statement and in response to a concern raised stated he would ensure a view of the cost of tribunals and the money saved by this service would be included in future reports so that Members could measure the impact of the SEND Mediation and Disagreement Resolution Service.

5) RESOLVED that the Education and Young People's Services Cabinet Committee took note of the progress made in Kent County Council's provision of Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Mediation and Disagreement Resolution Services.

#### **189. Work Programme 2016**

*(Item C2)*

1) Members requested an item in regards to the possibility of establishing a task and finish group in regards to commissioning.

2) RESOLVED that the Education and Young People's Services agree the Work Programme.

#### **190. Education and Young People's Services Directorate Scorecard**

*(Item D1)*

1) Patrick Leeson, Corporate Director of Education and Young People's Services, introduced the report on the quarterly performance Education and Young People's Services Directorate Scorecard. He informed Members that the Scorecard showed positive news for the Directorate in that exclusion rates had been falling in Kent and that there had been a decrease in figures of young people Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET). He also expressed a view that the NEET figures were not yet falling fast enough.

2) In response to Members concerns Mr Leeson emphasised that his Directorate took ensuring access to Children's Centres and support in the local area for families across Kent as a key challenge. Progress in this area was evidenced by the increase in the percentage of families registered at Children's Centres that were engaging.

3) RESOLVED that the Education and Young People's Services commented and took note of the Education and Young People's Services Directorate Scorecard.

- (a) **FIELD**
- (b) **FIELD\_TITLE**