

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

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 Thursday, 22 September 2016.

PRESENT: Mr L B Ridings, MBE (Chairman), Mrs P T Cole (Vice-Chairman), Mr D Brunning, Mr L Burgess, Mr G Cowan, Mrs M E Crabtree, Mrs T Dean, MBE (Substitute for Mr M J Vye), Mr S C Manion, Mr M J Northey, Mr J M Ozog, Mr C R Pearman, Mr T L Shonk, Mrs P A V Stockell and Mr R Truelove

ALSO PRESENT: Mr P J Oakford, Mr R W Gough and Mr P M Hill, OBE

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr P Leeson (Corporate Director Education and Young People's Services) and Mrs A Hunter (Principal Democratic Services Officer)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

203. Apologies and Substitutes

(Item A2)

- (1) Apologies for absence were received from Mr Roper and Mr Vye.
- (2) Mrs Dean attended as substitute for Mr Vye and Mrs Stockell attended the meeting to fill the vacancy.

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

(Item A3)

There were no declarations of interest.

205. Minutes of the meeting held on 1 July 2016

(Item A4)

Resolved that the minutes of the meeting held on 1 July 2016 are correctly recorded and that they be signed by the Chairman.

206. Verbal updates

(Item A5)

- (1) Mr Gough (Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform) said a new Secretary of State for Education, Justine Greening, had been appointed since the last meeting of the Cabinet Committee. She had deferred implementation of the national funding formula for schools for a year to enable further consideration and review. This deferral had mixed implications for Kent. It had been expected that Kent schools would benefit from a small increase in funding as a result of the introduction of the Fair Funding Formula which would have been welcome, particularly as schools had received "flat cash" for the

last six years and pressure on budgets continued. On the other hand, the deferral was welcome as there were concerns that some of the proposals, including a proposal to fund the Schools Block directly from the centre and separate it from the High Needs Block, would negatively impact on local flexibility and reduce incentives to work co-operatively across the whole system.

- (2) Mr Gough said the Secretary of State had set out Government policy in relation to the conversion of all schools to academies. While it was still policy that all schools would become academies, the previous deadline of 2020/22 had been relaxed.
- (3) Mr Gough referred to the green paper on Grammar Schools Expansion and said many points in it were similar in spirit and to the recommendations of the authority's recent Select Committee on Grammar Schools and Social Mobility. He said the proportion of grammar school places in the county was broadly correct and new grammar school places would be provided only in response to an increasing school population as a result of housing development and to fill egregious gaps in provision. The green paper also addressed some of the concerns of the Catholic Archdiocese which might result in the development of Catholic Free Schools which would have implications for schools expansion in Kent.
- (4) Mr Gough also referred to the consultation on converting to a mixed sex grammar school being undertaken by Meopham School in Gravesend.
- (5) Mr Hill (Cabinet Member for Community Services) said that the Community Learning and Skills service (Adult Education) had been inspected by Ofsted in June and had been assessed as good against a national standard that had been raised considerably. Mr Hill said this was an excellent achievement particularly in the light of the significant disruption experienced by the service in the past year and congratulated the service on the achievement.
- (6) Mr Hill said that 2016 was the sixtieth anniversary of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award and a celebratory event would be held at Detling to thank volunteers. He said that Kent County Council was one of the largest providers of opportunities to complete the Duke of Edinburgh Award in the country. He said he had been particularly proud to attend an award ceremony at St James Palace, a few years ago, where a complete room was full of young people from Kent receiving their gold award.
- (7) Mr Hill said that the Kent Youth County Council had asked to shadow County Councillors as part of Local Democracy week (10-16 October 2016). He said one of the young people would shadow him when he was attending the Community Safety Partnership meeting on 13 October.
- (8) Mr Oakford (Cabinet Member for Specialist Children's Services) said the number of unaccompanied asylum seeking minors (UASM) in the county remained at 1400 of whom 600 were over 18. From January 2017 the number of over 18s would increase to 800 and this had significant budgetary implications. The authority continued to lobby the Government to increase

funding as £100 per week was spent on each person over 18, only £50 of which was received directly from the government.

- (9) The number of UASM arriving until May 2016 was greater than the number arriving over the same period in the previous year, however, numbers were down by 25% since May when security measures had been put in place. Mr Oakford said that 70 UASM were being supported by other local authorities under the Voluntary Dispersal Scheme. In practice, new arrivals were being dispersed but the cohort remaining in Kent was not being reduced.
- (10) Mr Oakford said that the authority had written to the Children's Commissioner requesting a meeting to discuss concerns about children from other areas being placed in Kent without prior discussion. The letter included case studies illustrating the danger to the children of such practices. About 1300 children had been placed in Kent.
- (11) Mr Oakford said he had completed his visits to all children's centres in August and the review of improved utilisation of buildings was well underway. The aim of the review was to consider ways of generating additional income to maintain the viability of some of the buildings used by children's centres.
- (12) Mr Oakford said he had attended the VSK awards in Canterbury and that the authority was participating in the Children's Commissioner's Take Over Challenge. As part of the challenge his job would be done for one day by 8 young people and the plans for the day included an opportunity for the young people to consider a report on accommodation for care leavers, a report on foster care placements and a review of the Early Help and Preventative Services Scorecard.
- (13) Mr Oakford said he had spent a day at the Port of Dover following an invitation from the UK Border Agency and a joint meeting would be convened shortly to consider opportunities for joint working.
- (14) Mr Leeson (Corporate Director for Education and Young People's Services) said that 89.6% of schools in Kent had been assessed by Ofsted as good or outstanding and was ahead of the target for 2017 of 90% of schools being good or outstanding. 90% of primary schools, 84% of secondary schools, 96% of special schools and 86% of pupil referral units were judged to be good or outstanding. As of July 2016, 26 schools more schools were judged to be good or outstanding compared with July 2015 and this meant that 16,425 more pupils attended good or outstanding schools. Mr Leeson said this was a good outcome and that the upward trend was expected to continue.
- (15) Mr Leeson said there had been particular challenges in providing additional school places for the new school year and paid tribute to the work of the Property team and the area education officers who had ensured that every child who needed a place got one. 601 additional reception class places had been provided in 19 schools and 20 additional classes had been provided in primary schools. While at secondary level, 447 additional places had been created in 15 schools. 38% of additional places at primary level and 36% of additional places at secondary level had been provided in Dartford and Gravesham.

- (16) Comments were made in response to the verbal updates including:
- concerns about the frequency of changes to the Secretary of State for Education and to changes to the Government's education policies;
 - the possibility of a boys' grammar school on the Wilderness site in Sevenoaks;
 - the continuing need to improve performance at A-Level and to lobby the Government on making the voluntary dispersal scheme compulsory;
 - the ability of the Government to deal directly with 23000 schools nationally in the way local authorities traditionally had;
 - the potential impact of a loss of income on the viability of community centres run by volunteers when KCC ceased to provide community services from them.
- (17) In response to comments and questions, Mr Gough said that, as a result of legislative changes arising from the green paper, there might be a different way of making grammar school provision for both boys and girls in Sevenoaks.
- (18) Mr Oakford said that the authorities that placed children in Kent paid for their care but KCC met the costs of social care and support. He confirmed that the letter to the Children's Commissioner listed the authorities who had placed children in Kent without prior discussion.
- (19) In response to questions, Mr Leeson said the Lilac Sky School Academy Trust had failed, however, the regional and national schools commissioners had responded quickly to ensure the management of schools affected passed to other sponsors quickly and with minimum disruption.
- (20) In response to a further question, Mr Leeson said the recruitment of teachers was still a concern and not enough teachers were being trained nationally. He said the Department of Education was taking the matter seriously and work was underway to support recently qualified teachers to reduce the number of them that left within their first five years.
- (21) In response to a concern raised, Mr Oakford undertook to investigate the upkeep of the grounds around the Pie Factory in Thanet which were overgrown and poorly maintained.
- (22) Ian Watts (Area Education Officer – North Kent) and his team were thanked for their work in providing additional school places in Dartford and Gravesham.

207. Provisional Early Years and School Results 2016

(Item A6)

- (1) Mr Gough (Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform) introduced the report which provided a summary of the early provisional Kent Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Assessments, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 Standard Assessment Tests (SATs) and GCSE and post 16 results for 2016.
- (2) Mr Leeson (Corporate Director for Education and Young People's Services) drew the Cabinet Committee's attention to the results for the Early Years Foundation Stage for Kent which had improved; performance at Key Stage 1

which was above the national average; the gap in attainment between pupils with special educational needs compared with all pupils; and the performance at Key Stage 2 which was above the national average apart from measures relating to grammar, punctuation and spelling which were in line with the national average. He also said there was no attainment gap in reading, writing and mathematics combined for pupils for whom English was an additional language; the position at Key Stage 4 and GCSE results was pleasing and that the provisional results for the percentage of students achieving two A-Level grades A* to E showed a small decline compared with 2015 while the number of students gaining 2 plus substantial vocational qualifications was higher. He concluded by saying that the A-Level performance was of concern with a continuing decline in results and that this reflected a similar picture nationally.

- (3) Resolved that the provisional results be noted and that they are subject to change.

208. Order of Agenda Items

(Item)

Mr Ridings proposed, and the Cabinet Committee agreed, that consideration of items B4 – Early Help and Preventative Services and B5 – NEET Service Contract Award be deferred to the end of the meeting to enable the information contained in the exempt appendices to be discussed.

209. Decision number: 16/00085 - Special School Programme - Additional Costs for Portal House Special School, Dover

(Item B1)

- (1) David Adams (Area Education Officer- South Kent) and Keith Abbott (Director of Education Planning and Access) introduced the report which set out the reasons behind the request to increase the Education and Young People's Services Capital Budget allocation for the re-development and expansion of Portal House Special School, Dover from the agreed £9m to £10.39m. The report also asked the Cabinet Committee to consider and endorse or make recommendations to the Cabinet Member on the proposed decision to increase the funding.
- (2) Mr Adams drew particular attention to the changes to the scheme following strong local opposition that had resulted in pressure on the capital allocation.
- (3) The Committee welcomed the report.
- (4) Resolved that the Cabinet Committee endorsed the proposed decision of the Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform to increase the funding allocated from the Education and Young People's Capital Budget to the redevelopment and expansion of Portal House Special School, Dover from the agreed £9m to £10.39m.

210. Decision number: 16/00097 - Expansion of Joy Lane Primary School, Whitstable

(Item B2)

- (1) Marissa White (Area Education Officer-East Kent) introduced the report which set out the reasons for the request to increase the funding allocated from the Education Learning and Skills Capital Budget for the expansion of Joy Lane Primary School and informed the Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform of the revised costs of the project. It also asked the Cabinet Committee to consider and endorse or make recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform on the proposed decision to increase the funding from £1.5m to £3.5m.
- (2) Mrs White said that the original estimate of £1.5m was based on the provision of seven additional classrooms and ancillary facilities. She also said that the expansion of the school had to be phased in to ensure the school could accommodate the additional pupils that had been admitted and to undertake consultation relating to the main build project following local concerns about traffic management and parking.
- (3) The original scheme had to be re-designed to address potential planning objections arising from increased pressure on the road system. The revised scheme which would create a one-way traffic system required the demolition of a de-commissioned care home building to connect the internal roadway to Vulcan Close and the re-siting of fencing to take some of the care home site into the boundary of Joy Lane Primary School to provide additional parking spaces. This revised scheme required additional funding. The phasing of the project and the re-design of the main scheme had resulted in an increase in the overall cost of the project.
- (4) Resolved that the Cabinet Committee endorsed the proposed decision of the Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform to increase the funding allocated from the Education and Young People's Services Capital Budget to expand Joy Lane Primary School from £1.5m to £3.5m.

211. Decision number: 16/00069 - Additional Costs for the Expansion of Chantry Community Academy, Gravesend

(Item B3)

- (1) Ian Watts (Area Education Officer – North Kent) introduced the report which set out the revised project costs for the expansion of Chantry Community Academy. The report also asked the Cabinet Committee to consider and endorse or make recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform on his proposed decision to allocate £2.5m from the Education and Young People's Services Budget for the expansion of Chantry Community Academy.
- (2) Mr Watts said it was originally agreed to expand the academy from 1FE to 2FE in 2014, however, building work was required for the expansion to 2FE and £2.5m had been included in the KCC Capital programme submitted to Property Advisory Group.
- (3) Resolved that the decision of the Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform to allocate £2.5m from the Education and Young People's Services budget be endorsed.

212. Update - Education Traded Services Company

(Item C1)

- (1) Mr Gough (Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform) introduced the report which provided an update on the progress of developing an outline business case for an Education Trading Services Company.
- (2) Mr Gough said that in April 2016 it had been agreed to investigate the options for an Education Services Company which would include trading based around the existing EduKent model and drew Members' attention to the work undertaken with Ernst and Young to investigate the options for setting up an Educational Services Trading Company.
- (3) Mr Leeson (Corporate Director for Education and Young People's Services) said there were a number of drivers including Government policy in relation to schools and the role of local authorities; the desire of Kent schools to continue to work within the "Kent family" and to purchase services from Kent County Council as well as the continuing reduction in local authority funding and the potential for further income generation.
- (4) The proposal was welcomed by the Cabinet Committee and the importance of KCC retaining control and ownership of the Alternative Service Delivery Vehicle was emphasised.
- (5) In response to comments and questions Mr Leeson said that: the exact form of any trading arm had not yet decided; he chaired the working group which was comprised of officers; and he reported regularly to the Cabinet Member.
- (6) Resolved that the report be noted.

213. Work Programme 2016/17

(Item C2)

Resolved that the work programme be agreed subject to consideration, at the next agenda setting meeting, of the inclusion of measures relating to the performance of the youth service.

214. Education and Young People's Services Directorate Scorecard

(Item D1)

- (1) Mr Leeson (Corporate Director for Education and Young People's Services) introduced the report which set out the performance against the targets in the Strategic Priority Statement, the Vision and Priorities for Improvement and service business plans.
- (2) Data relating to the percentage of parents getting their first preference of primary school (EYPS 2), the percentage of parents getting first preference of secondary school (EYPS) and the percentage of pupils with a Statement or Education, Health and Care Plan (SEND10) appeared to be missing or incomplete and Mr Leeson undertook to take the matter up with the management information team.

- (3) Resolved that the report be noted.

215. Annual Equality and Diversity Report for Education and Young People's Services 2015-16

(Item D2)

- (1) Akua Agyepong (Corporate Lead, Equality and Diversity) introduced the report which provided a position statement for services within the Education and Young People's Services Directorate regarding equality and diversity work and provided an update on progress in the delivery of Kent County Council's Equality Objectives for 2015-16.
- (2) Mrs Agyepong said the Council had a statutory duty under the Equality Act 2010 to promote equality, undertake equality analyses to inform all policy decisions and to publish equality information.
- (3) Mrs Agyepong drew the Cabinet Committee's attention to some of the Directorate's achievements over the last year including the fall in youth unemployment for 18-24 year olds, the development of a new NEET Strategy and vulnerable learner strategy as well as the improvement in performance relating to the completion of SEN statutory assessments.
- (4) In response to comments, Mr Leeson said that, last year, action had been taken to reduce the numbers of primary school pupils permanently excluded and this was reflected in the report. Mr Gough said that most pupils attending the Royal School for the Deaf in Margate when it closed had been found suitable placements locally.
- (5) Resolved that:
- (a) the current performance of EYPS in relation to equality priorities in Appendix 1 to the report be noted;
 - (b) the progress EYPS had made in reducing inequalities in 2015-16 and future key actions proposed in Appendix 1 to the report be noted; and
 - (c) this report be received annually in order to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty.

216. Exclusion of the Press and Public

Resolved that under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

217. Decision number: 16/00073 - NEET Service Contract Award

(Item B5)

- (1) Mr Gough (Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform) introduced the report which documented the procurement process, evaluation methodology and the award decision for the Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) Support Services contract expected to commence on 1 December and

asked the Cabinet Committee to consider and endorse or make recommendations on his proposed decision.

- (2) In response to Members' comments, officers said that: the procurement process had been thorough; robust contract monitoring arrangements would be put in place; the successful contractor already had a clear mobilisation plan; and that Members would be kept up dated on the delivery of the contract.
- (3) Resolved that the Cabinet Committee endorsed the proposed decision of the Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform:
 - (a) To agree that the contracts for the delivery of commissioned NEET services across Kent be awarded on the terms and for the duration set out in the report and exempt appendix; and
 - (b) That the Head of Strategic Commissioning - Children's would, on behalf of the Corporate Director of Education and Young People's Services, take all such steps as are necessary to implement the decision.

218. Decision number: 16/00059 - Early Help and Preventative Services - Procurement of Youth Services

(Item B4)

- (1) Mr Hill (Cabinet Member for Community Services) introduced the report which asked the Cabinet Committee to consider and endorse or make recommendations on his proposed decision. Mr Hill said that, four years ago, KCC had been the first local authority to commission youth services from external providers and that he was keen to use the expertise of the voluntary sector. He outlined the extensive consultation that had taken place and said he was confident that the providers were in a position to give a good service locally.
- (2) Comments were made about: the position of the youth services four years ago; decisions that had been made relating to some purpose built youth centres; the fact that the current procurement process had been thorough; and the need for any youth service to be delivered professionally and to meet the aims and aspirations of young people.
- (3) In response to concerns about contract management and, in particular, the involvement of Members it was confirmed that: systematic and robust contract monitoring arrangements including monthly and quarterly reviews was planned; the Commissioning Advisory Board would receive regular reports similar to the in-house dashboard for Early Years Services; regular briefings for Members would be rolled out and this Cabinet Committee would receive half-yearly reports on performance. It was also confirmed that the Youth Advisory Groups had been re-structured and re-launched with increased opportunity for Member involvement.
- (4) Resolved that the Cabinet Committee endorsed the proposed decision of the Cabinet Member for Community Services:

- (a) To agree that the contracts for the delivery of commissioned youth services across Kent be awarded on the terms and for the duration set out in the report and exempt appendix; and
- (b) That the Head of Strategic Commissioning - Children's would, on behalf of the Corporate Director of Education and Young People's Services, take all such steps as are necessary to implement the decision.