

## KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

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### 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 Tuesday, 5th December, 2017.

PRESENT: Mr G Cooke (Chairman), Mrs A D Allen, MBE (Vice-Chairman), Mrs R Binks, Mrs S Chandler, Mrs T Dean, MBE, Mrs L Game, Ida Linfield, Mr R C Love, Mr S C Manion, Mr M J Northey, Mrs S Prendergast, Mr K Pugh (Substitute for Mrs S Gent), Mrs P A V Stockell (Substitute for Mrs P T Cole) and Dr L Sullivan

OTHER MEMBERS: Roger Gough

OFFICERS: Stuart Collins (Interim Director, Early Help), Helen Cook (Commissioning Manager), Matt Dunkley (Corporate Director for Children Young People and Education), Patrick Leeson (Corporate Director Children, Young People and Education), Simon Pleace (Finance Business Partner for Children, Young People and Education) and Emma West (Democratic Services Officer)

#### UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

##### **58. Introduction/Webcast announcement**

*(Item 1)*

1. The Chairman welcomed the new Corporate Director of Children, Young People and Education, Matt Dunkley to his first meeting of the Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee.

##### **59. Apologies and Substitutes**

*(Item 2)*

Apologies were received from Mr D Brunning, Mrs P Cole, Mrs S Gent, Mr D Murphy and Mr Q Roper.

Mr K Pugh and Mrs S Stockell attended as substitutes for Mrs S Gent and Mrs P Cole respectively.

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

*(Item 3)*

1. Mrs Game made a declaration of interest as her grandson had SEN with severe autism and her granddaughter had SEN with dyspraxia.
2. Dr Sullivan made a declaration of interest as her husband worked as an Early Help Worker for Kent County Council.

##### **61. High Needs Funding Update**

*(Item 4)*

1. Roger Gough (Cabinet Member of Children, Young People and Education) introduced the report which set out a recent review of Kent's approach to High Needs funding for children and young people with Special Educational Needs (SEN) and disabilities in mainstream schools and academies. He also outlined the planned improvements from April 2018, to manage overall affordability and target the funding more effectively to pupils with the most complex needs.
2. The Chairman thanked the officers for the briefings provided on High Needs Funding.
3. Patrick Leeson (Corporate Director of Children, Young People and Education) said that High Needs Funding was provided as 'top-up' funding as schools were spending £6,000 of their own resources on supporting pupils with Special Educational Needs. He said that whilst carrying out the review of High Needs Funding, there was a range of practice in Kent schools in terms of how schools interpreted their own responsibility of pupils with SEN and the resources required in order to support these children with SEN. The review had highlighted the need to return to clearer criteria for what the purpose of High Needs Funding was and the level of need that it was there to address. He said that a very generous proportion of Kent's funding available for education had been spent on supporting pupils with special educational needs. He said that although there had been substantial growth in the budget, Kent needed to work within existing budgets and continue to ensure that the pupils with the most severe and complex needs received the funding that they needed.
  - a) In response to a question, Patrick Leeson said that pupils that were taught in a separate unit within a mainstream school were resourced separately. He said that Kent would allocate High Needs Funding to pupils in mainstream schools without the need for a statutory Education Health and Care (EHC) plan, this was to ensure that children were placed in schools more quickly. He said that there was a high level of cross over between the numbers of pupils in mainstream schools that received Pupil Premium funding and the pupils that received High Needs Funding.
  - b) In response to a question, Patrick Leeson said that Kent had not stopped paying High Needs Funding to schools for new applications. He said that payments had been delayed until 1<sup>st</sup> December 2017, this was because the schools were expected to spend the first £6,000 on supporting the SEN pupils themselves, and therefore they would have had to do this for the first few months of the school year. He said that schools recognised that this approach was fair and that the processes being put into place now were also fair.
  - c) In response to a question, Patrick Leeson confirmed that Kent's current investment of £30.7 million included the £23 million highlighted in the report.

4. RESOLVED that the outcome of the review be noted, and the recommendations to implement revision to the current approach, be endorsed.

**62. 17/00109 - School Funding Arrangements for 2018-19 including the introduction of a National Funding Formula**  
*(Item 5)*

1. Roger Gough (Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Education) introduced the report which provided Members with an update on the implications of introducing a National Funding Formula for Kent schools and Kent County Council. He also provided an update on the consultation held with all Kent schools regarding a number of proposals to change KCC's local funding formula from 1 April 2018.
2. Simon Pleace (Finance Business Partner for Children, Young People and Education) said that the Secretary of State had announced an additional investment of £1.3 billion into schools budgets nationally, at the same time as moving to a National Funding Formula. The additional investment represented an increase of approximately 3% over the next two years and Kent was likely to receive an increase of approximately 7%. He said that the introduction of a National Funding Formula would benefit Kent greatly and this was welcomed. He referred to the report in further detail and provided an overall summary of the impact that the introduction of a National Funding Formula would have on Kent County Council. Kent received £839.4 million for the current financial year which funded all school budgets, both maintained schools and academies. This block of funding would increase by £27.6 million in 2018-2019 and would then increase by a further £22.3 million in 2019-2020. This meant that there would be an additional £50 million to allocate over the next 2 financial years, which was significantly more than Kent currently had to allocate. He said that consultation had taken place to decide how best to allocate the additional money to schools in Kent. He said that Kent would receive an additional £12.2 million once the National Funding Formula had been implemented. Mr Pleace was not able to confirm when the additional funding of £12.2 million would be available to Kent. He said that the methodology for calculating the funding had been by applying the National Funding Formula factors and rates; he referred to Appendix 1 in the report and highlighted the potential issues that the introduction of the National Funding Formula could bring.
  - a) In response to a question, Simon Pleace discussed the Looked After Children (LAC) factor and its interaction with Pupil Premium Plus. He said that the money that each school spent on the Pupil Premium Plus had to be reported. He said that in the local funding formula, £525 was allocated per pupil and how that was spent as a school was at the school's discretion. He said that 50% of the Pupil Premium Plus allocation went directly to the school on a per capita based on eligible pupils, the other part was held back

and allocated out based on an application basis in regards to what the school was doing with the money. He discussed the rate that had been set by Government for the National Funding Formula and said that it was a set rate; he said that schools and funding forums thought that the rate should be lowered.

- b) In response to a question, Roger Gough (Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Education) discussed the focus that there had been in previous years regarding the local formula and said that there had been a lot of emphasis on the Pupil Premium funding level and low prior attainment.
  - c) In response to comments and questions, Simon Pleace outlined the additional support that had been recommended by the funding formula group. This included support for the introduction of the minimum funding levels, increasing the basic entitlement for pupils to the maximum level, and introducing the sparsity factor which would support more rural schools.
  - d) In response to a question, Patrick Leeson said that Ofsted expected all schools to be able to account for Pupil Premium and were expected to provide details on their website to allow the public to see what the impact of this funding was and how it was being spent. He added that schools were expected to account for other funding they receive.
  - e) In response to a question, Simon Pleace said that as part of the consultation documentation that was provided to schools in October 2017, a spreadsheet accompanied the document which enabled individual schools to enter their DFE number which would provide them with the option of selecting certain criteria from the proposal and assess the impact that it had on their budget. He said that the Age weighted pupil unit (AWPU) had increased the basic entitlement and a number of other factors to the maximum National Funding Formula rates. The balance within the model was based on what had been perceived as affordable in the context of Kent, therefore it did not provide the National Funding Formula rates for some of the additional needs factors. This meant that the expectation would not have been raised from that illustration that the funding was going to be higher than what the report had suggested. He said that the expectation had been raised from what was published by the Department for Education (DFE), because what was published by the DFE would be what was implemented as the National Funding Formula. He said that the DFE had also published what Kent County Council was receiving within its school funding based on individual schools expectations.
3. Roger Gough (Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Education) discussed the deprivation indicators and the proposals set out in the report in more detail.

- a) In response to a question, Roger Gough (Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Education) confirmed that he had received correspondence from Barton Court Grammar School regarding minimum pupil funding levels and this was being addressed.
- b) In response to a question, Roger Gough (Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Education) said that there were still judgements to be made and work to be done with regards to implementing the National Funding Formula.

4. RESOLVED that the report be noted.

**63. Update - Kent Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education**

*(Item 6)*

1. Steve Manion provided an update on the Kent Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education.
2. RESOLVED that the report be noted.

**64. Revenue & Capital Budget Monitoring - 2017-18 Financial Year**

*(Item 7)*

1. Simon Pleace introduced the report which set out the revenue and capital forecast variances for the 2017-18 budget that were in the remit of the Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee, based on the August monitoring position presented to Cabinet on 30 October 2017.
  - a) In response to a question, Roger Gough (Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Education) confirmed that the government funding for the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (SACRE) was £5,000 for Kent County Council.
  - b) In response to a question, Simon Pleace confirmed that front line services were considered 'essential', he said that he would provide a list to Members of the Committee to clarify the essential and non-essential vacancies.
  - c) In response to a question, Simon Pleace confirmed that the next report that would be brought to the Committee would provide more detail with regards to the overall position and the impact that the additional grant funding had had.
  - d) In response to a question, Simon Pleace confirmed that the additional income for EduKent services was a small increase which explained the movement from the forecast position from July 2017 to August 2017, he said that although the increase was small, it was positive. With regards to Early Years

and Child Care services, he said that Kent had undertaken a review of product pricing to stimulate the market and generate more income.

2. RESOLVED that the revenue and capital forecast variances for the 2017-18 budget, be noted.

### **Motion to Exclude the Press and Public**

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

### **65. Commissioned Children's Centres and Future Arrangements (Item 8)**

*(Helen Cook (Commissioning Manager – Early Help and Preventative Services) was in attendance for this item)*

1. Stuart Collins (Interim Director of Early Help and Preventative Services) introduced the report which outlined the business and financial case for reviewing the cost, the effectiveness and the value for money delivered by the six commissioned children's centres listed in the report. He presented a set of slides to the Committee which set out contract details, current provisions and financial impacts.
  - a) In response to a question, Stuart Collins and Roger Gough (Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Education) discussed the savings opportunities and further opportunities to consider moving forward.
  - b) Stuart Collins discussed the maps within the presentation in further detail. He talked about the need for extra space for two of the children's centres in particular and said that further analysis would be carried out for each of the centres.
2. Patrick Leeson discussed the need to deliver consistently good outcomes at a low cost. He said that Kent had delivered very good services despite reductions by utilising resources and by bringing different resources together within districts.
  - a) In response to a question, Stuart Collins said that he would liaise with the Property team in Kent to discuss property costs.
  - b) In response to comments and questions, Stuart Collins said that altering the recommendation to phase the changes highlighted in the report was an option.
  - c) In response to a question, Stuart Collins discussed venue opportunities and additional support needs. He said that Kent needed to ensure that all of the parents needs were being met and to ensure that they were able to access all of the services offered.

- d) In response to a question, Stuart Collins discussed how local residents could access the services and how Kent County Council could communicate with residents and parents to ensure that they were well informed.
3. Members expressed concern about the recommendation and during debate it became clear that many Members were not able to support the original recommendation.
4. After the discussion the Chairman proposed that the recommendation be changed so that four of the six centres listed be brought in house and the existing Early Help offer be re-provisioned to allow for the reduction in commissioned services.

*Upon being put to the vote, this was carried by 9 votes to 3 with 1 abstention.*

5. The remaining part of the recommendation in the report, that the current funding levels of the two remaining centres be reduced was then discussed and it was suggested that the service be re-procured in twelve months' time.

*Upon being put to the vote, this was carried by 8 votes to 4 with 1 abstention.*

6. RESOLVED that:

- a) four of the six centres listed be brought in house and the existing Early Help offer be re-provisioned to allow for the reduction in commissioned services; and
- b) the current funding levels of the two remaining centres be reduced and the re-procurement of these two centres be undertaken in twelve months' time.