

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL
CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & SKILLS COMMITTEE
4.00pm 16 NOVEMBER 2015
FRIENDS MEETING HOUSE, SHIP STREET, BRIGHTON
MINUTES

Present: Councillor Bewick (Chair)

Also in attendance: Councillor Chapman (Deputy Chair), Brown (Opposition Spokesperson), Phillips (Group Spokesperson), Daniel, Knight, Marsh, Taylor, Wealls and O'Quinn

Other Members present: Councillors

PART ONE

36 PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

36(a) Declarations of substitutes

36.1 Councillor O'Quinn declared that she was substituting for Councillor Barradell

36(b) Declarations of interest

36.2 Councillor Wealls declared a non-prejudicial interest as a Trustee of Impact Initiatives which was part of the Youth Collective.

Mr B Glazebrook declared a non-prejudicial interest as he was employed in a co-ordination role for the Brighton and Hove Youth Collective

36(c) Exclusion of press and public

36.3 In accordance with section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 ("the Act"), the Committee considered whether the press and public should be excluded from the meeting during an item of business on the grounds that it was likely, in view of the business to be transacted or the nature of proceedings, that if members of the press and public were present during that item, there would be disclosure to them of confidential information (as defined in section 100A(3) of the Act) or exempt information (as defined in section 100(l) of the Act).

36.4 **RESOLVED-** That the press and public not be excluded

37 MINUTES

- 37.1 **RESOLVED:** That the Minutes of the meeting held on 12 October 2015 be agreed as a correct record.

38 CHAIR'S COMMUNICATIONS

- 38.1 The Chair noted that this was the first public meeting held by Brighton & Hove City Council since the tragic events in Paris on 13 November 2015. Many people had sadly lost their lives and many more had been profoundly affected by what had happened, and he asked that a minutes silence be held to remember those involved.
- 38.2 The Chair said that this was the last meeting for the two Youth Council representatives, Riziki Millanzi and Amy-Lou Tilley. He thanked them both for their involvement with the Committee and wished them the best for the future. He said that the two new representatives, Krisztian Darvas and Kyra Kybble were in the public gallery and he welcomed them to the meeting.
- 38.3 The Chair said that since the last meeting of the Committee two Ofsted inspections had been held for local schools, and asked the Head of Standards & Achievement Education & Inclusion to update the Committee. The Committee were advised that St Mark's CE Primary had undergone a two day inspection, and that Ofsted had given the school a 'Good' rating. St John the Baptist Catholic Primary underwent a short inspection and also received a 'Good' rating. The Head of Standards & Achievement Education & Inclusion was very pleased to say that 84.7% of the schools in the city were now rated as 'Good' or 'Outstanding'.

The Chair welcomed the outcomes and said he would write to St Marks CE Primary and St John the Baptist Catholic Primary to congratulate them.

39 CALL OVER

- 39.1 It was agreed that all items be called

40 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT**40a Petitions**

- 40.1 There were none.

40b Written Questions**40.2 (i) Youth Service Trust**

Mr R Lowe presented the following question:

Will the youth voice vehicle be protected as part of the youth service trust?

The Chair provided the following response:

Yes. Detailed plans for a youth service trust or foundation are not yet formed and will need to be developed in partnership with young people. We have every intention of embedding robust mechanisms to enable young people to have a voice, express their views and influence strategy and decision making building on the current work within the Local authority and community and voluntary sector youth provision

There was no supplementary question

40.3 (ii) Learning Support Service

Mr O Sharpe presented the following question:

The logic supporting the Children's Centre cuts is partly that more children will benefit from free nursery placements. More children at nurseries means that proportionately more children will be referred to the Learning Support Service. Given that there are also significant 'savings' being planned for the pre-school element of that service, the resultant caseload per staff will more than double. Consequently parents of pre-school children with learning needs will be well advised to apply earlier for EHCP statutory support. Does the council therefore have any predictions of the net increase in statutory costs from this combination of pre-school 'savings'?

The Chair provided the following response:

The Local Authority is engaged in a consultation with staff on the future re-organisation of 8 current services supporting schools, one of which is the service that supports pre-school children with special needs. Parents and other stakeholders have been invited to give their views on the proposals. The consultation ends on 31.1.2016. No decisions have been made at this point and the Local Authority is committed to listening to all feedback. The Local Authority regrets very much a range of misinformation that has been disseminated in relation to this consultation and any consequent worry and distress caused to parents. There is a clear commitment in these proposals that all children with complex SEN will continue to get the support they need from a re-organised more flexible and responsive service. The proposals suggest a re-organisation of the current 8 teams into a new integrated support service with a commitment to provide appropriate and specialist support to all children with complex special needs from pre-school to 18 years. While there are efficiency savings proposed, there is a commitment to maintain and in some areas increase the frontline 'hands-on' support for children with complex needs. There is no proposed reduction in the funding for one to one support for pre-school children with complex special educational needs in their settings and all settings would continue to get the appropriate information, advice and guidance in relation to managing complex special educational needs. Additionally in other proposals, the Local Authority is consulting on plans to open an inclusive specialist nursery where pre-school children with the most complex needs can attend full-time in a mainstream nursery setting with a range of additional and specialist educational and health support on-site. In this context the Local Authority does not believe there would be any need arising from these proposals for parents to make applications for Education, Health and Care plans at an earlier stage and has made no predications in this area. However parents are of course entitled to request a statutory assessment

when they feel it is most appropriate to do so and the Local Authority will give their request the fullest consideration.

Mr Sharpe asked the following supplementary question:

Does the Council have models and expectations on how the cuts would impact on those with Special Educational Needs?

The Chair provided the following response:

Special Educational Needs provision was being reviewed, and the report on possible changes to Children's Centres would be considered later at the meeting.

40.4 (iii) Cornerstone Children's Centre

Ms L Erin-Jenkins presented the following question:

Proposals are due to be published this month to close Cornerstone Children's Centre in Hove and cut the groups in the remaining children's centres across the city, offering just one universal group per week in each centre. Brighton Children's Centres Campaign, consisting of 640 parents and carers across the city, are concerned this will lead to a tremendous strain on the remaining groups, in terms of staff, resources and space. It is very likely that if these proposals go ahead, that some parents and children arriving at these groups will be turned away. Brighton Children's Centres Campaign is also concerned that with the proposals to cut all library groups, apart from those held in Moulsecoomb and Whitehawk libraries, people will be forced to travel further with young children to access the remaining groups. Another consequence will be parents, carers and children being turned away from these groups as well, because they will be even more oversubscribed. Does the Council not think that by cutting these groups by almost half, that the demand will far exceed the supply? And what does the Council plan do about all the children left behind?

The Chair provided the following response:

I know that children's centre services are well used and valued by parents. In common with other councils across England we have to make savings across all service areas as result of reductions in Government funding and pressures on services. We have to find around £68 million savings over the next 4 years. In children's services this means finding around £5 million of savings next year. Faced with the current financial reality we simply have to change the way services are delivered in the city. Doing nothing is no longer an option. We will not be able to deliver the same number of services as we do now. The Children's Centre Review Board has developed proposals for how the service could change in the future. One proposal is that Cornerstone should not be registered as a designated children's centre. It is a community centre and is not closing. The proposals also include reducing the number of groups and giving priority to children under two. The Committee is being asked to agree to a consultation on the proposals today. I want this to be a genuine consultation. I welcome ideas from families and communities, about how we address the budget shortfall and at the same time protect our most vulnerable children in the city.

40c Deputations

40.3 (1) Literacy Support Service

40.4 The Committee considered the Deputation on the Literacy Support Service, which was presented by Ms J Kenny

40.5 The Chair provided the following response:

The council remains committed to ensuring that the needs of children with literacy needs, including dyslexia, are fully identified and met. We recognise the impact of literacy difficulties on learning and self-esteem and we will continue to work with our schools to ensure that young people have the support they need to overcome the challenges that arise from all special educational needs.

The Local Authority delegates approximately £12.5 million annually across its 63 mainstream schools to enable schools to put in place additional resources to meet special educational needs, including literacy needs. Literacy difficulties have a relatively high incidence and all schools will develop experience and expertise in this area.

The Literacy Support Service is a peripatetic team which supports schools and children with specific literacy difficulties also known as dyslexia. This is a traded service, bought in by schools who wish to purchase this support via a service level agreement. The LA also makes a contribution to the cost of the service, which enable training and support to be offered more widely.

As part of the consultation on the future re-organisation of the Educational Psychology Service and Learning Support Services which concludes at the end of January 2016, the council has said it will consult with schools on keeping this traded service in place and where possible, improving the traded offer to encourage even more schools to purchase.

We are committed to listening to feedback and I welcome the information that you have provided about the support that Oscar has received and how this has benefitted him. As you will be aware from my response to the earlier question we believe that the new service should work with young people up to the age of 18 rather than 16 as is the case at the moment.

I would therefore like to assure you that dyslexia is not a forgotten disability in Brighton & Hove.

40.12 RESOLVED- That the Deputation be noted.

41 MEMBER INVOLVEMENT**41a Petitions**

41.1 There were none.

41b Written Questions

41.2 There were none.

41c Letters

41.3 (i) Road Safety Close to Schools - Councillor Peltzer Dunn

The Committee considered a Letter from Councillor Peltzer Dunn regarding road safety close to Hove Junior School (Portland Road)

41.4 The Chair gave the following response:

Thank you for bringing this matter to the Committee's attention. You point out in your question that if the van is parked in a legal parking space and no regulations have been broken that the council is unable to take action. You also refer to public health concerns about the nature of the products being sold. Our preference would be that children enjoy a healthy snack rather than something high in sugar content.

With regard to the regulations this is covered by the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982 and our standard conditions for street trading which seek to ensure that the trading does not constitute a public safety concern on the grounds of danger, obstruction and nuisance. Following your question I have asked that our regulatory services visit this site to ensure that the trader is acting appropriately. The Head of Regulatory Services has confirmed that the matter will be passed to the Environmental Health & Licensing Team to investigate.

RESOLVED: That the letter be noted.

41d Notices of Motion

41.5 There were none.

42 YOUTH SERVICES REVIEW

42.1 The Committee considered the report of the Executive Director of Children's Services which reported on the Review of the Youth Work Services (provided and commissioned by the Council), which made recommendations to support financial and service plans for 2016/17. The report was presented by the Assistant Director Stronger Families Youth and Communities and the Service Manager Youth & Communities, together with James Holmes and Wednesday Croft, who were members of the Youth Review Group (Youth Council).

42.2 Councillor Phillips was concerned at the potential 25% cut to a service which provided great support to many people. Councillor Phillips asked how many staff could lose their jobs. The Assistant Director Stronger Families Youth and Communities said that there would be a likely reduction of around 25% to the budget most of which would lead to cuts in staffing levels, but said he didn't have the exact figure. Councillor Phillips asked what consultation would be

undertaken, and was advised that formal consultations would be held with staff in line with Council procedures and consultation would be held with the public. Councillor Phillips asked if the Committee could see the wording of the consultation before it was undertaken. The Assistant Director Stronger Families Youth and Communities said there was no reason why they couldn't, but it could be difficult to that in the available time before the consultation would need to begin. Councillor Phillips noted that four young people had sat on the Youth Review Group and wanted assurance that their views had been considered. James Holmes and Wednesday Croft said that they had been given the opportunity to be fully involved and had felt that their view and opinions had been considered. Councillor Phillips noted that the Council had an Internal Conferences Budget 'subvention budget' of £1.2m and asked if that could not be used to address the budget cut. The Executive Director of Children's Services said that use of other council budgets would be a matter for other committees.

42.3 Councillor Daniel thanked officers for the report and thought that having a tiered service made sense.

42.4 Ms Millanzi said she accepted that cuts had to be made, but wanted officers to see what options would be available to minimize any impact on a great service.

42.5 Councillor Brown agreed there was a need to explore alternative delivery models, but hoped that targeted advice for areas such as drugs, youth pregnancy etc. would not be lost. Councillor Brown suggested that a directory showing what support was available for young people would be useful. The Assistant Director Stronger Families Youth and Communities agreed that a directory would be very useful, and would look into doing that.

42.6 Councillor Brown said that the Conservative Group wanted to ensure that the Youth Collective had a full voice and were therefore proposing the following amendment to Recommendation 2.2.1.

- 2.1 *That the Committee notes the attached Youth Work Review Report of the Youth Work Review Group and principles of service design set out therein.*
- 2.2 *That in light of the anticipated budget position described at paragraph 4.2 of this report, and upon the basis of the recommendations in the attached Youth Work Review Report, the Committee authorises the DCS to consult with staff, young people and partners on proposals for:*
 - 2.2.1. *An alternative delivery model, for example a Youth Trust or Foundation, **or reconfiguration and re-commissioning of the Youth Collective and other CVS organisations** for the provision of services to vulnerable and disadvantaged children, young people and their families.*
 - 2.2.2. *The future use of the council's youth centre buildings.*
 - 2.2.3 *Future arrangements for the delivery and/or external commissioning of the flexible continuum' of youth work provision recommended by the Youth Work Review Group including:*
 - *community based open access youth work;*

- *targeted youth work including provision as part of the Stronger Families Stronger Communities programme;*
- *central support and strategic planning.*

The Amendment was seconded by Councillor Taylor, who said that the city was fortunate to have such strong voluntary services, and Children's Services should continue to support and encourage those groups.

42.7 Councillor Daniel said the Labour Group would not support an amendment from a Recommendation and would therefore abstain from voting to agree the proposed amendment.

42.8 Ms Mortensen referred to section 5.2, 'Young People–Disability' in Appendix 1 which stated that "*The Disabled Young People's Council say inclusive provision is still lacking locally and nationally*", and "*Young people with SEN are more likely to report that they have experienced bullying as well as being more likely to bully others*" and asked if firstly there were plans to increase provision, and secondly whether the issue of bullying was a problem within the city. The Service Manager Youth & Communities said that it may not be possible for inclusion provision to be increased, but it was hoped that the current level could be maintained and that the issue of bullying was being looked into.

42.9 Mr Jones agreed with Ms Mortensen that those issues were a concern, and asked that if the inclusion provision were not increased whether the service could be reviewed to find alternative ways of providing the support. The Assistant Director Stronger Families Youth and Communities said that there would a reduction in funding and therefore the service would change, and officers would look at different models and interventions.

42.10 Councillor Wealls asked for reassurance that any consultation would also include minority groups. The Assistant Director Stronger Families Youth and Communities said that all groups would be included in the consultation.

42.11 The Councillors on the Committee voted on the proposed amendment to the Recommendations. It was agreed to accept the amendment with 3 votes in favour, 2 against and 5 abstentions.

42.12 **RESOLVED:** That the Committee agreed:

- (i) That the Committee noted the Youth Work Review Report of the Youth Work Review Group and principles of service design set out therein.
- (ii) That in light of the anticipated budget position described at paragraph 4.2 of the report, and upon the basis of the recommendations in the attached Youth Work Review Report, the Committee authorises the Director of Children's Services to consult with staff, young people and partners on proposals for:
- (iii) An alternative delivery model, for example a Youth Trust or Foundation, or reconfiguration and re-commissioning of the Youth Collective and other CVS organisations for the provision of services to vulnerable and disadvantaged children, young people and their families.
- (iv) The future use of the council's youth centre buildings.

- (v) Future arrangements for the delivery and/or external commissioning of the flexible continuum' of youth work provision recommended by the Youth Work Review Group including:
- community based open access youth work;
 - targeted youth work including provision as part of the Stronger Families Stronger Communities programme;
 - central support and strategic planning.

43 CHILDREN'S CENTRE REVIEW

43.1 The Committee considered the report of the Executive Director of Children's Services which reported on the review of the Children's Centre Service and which made recommendations on the proposal for consultation to achieve budget savings. The report was introduced by the Head of Sure Start and The Assistant Director Stronger Families Youth and Communities.

43.2 Councillor O'Quinn thanked officers for the report and said that given the financial pressures the authority was facing that proposals were very good.

43.3 Councillor Brown and said that whilst no one would want to see the closure of Children's Centres, the Council had to be realistic and consider closing some of them. She said that it was good that seven centres could be kept, and said that it was essential that those centres be able to deliver services to everyone in the city. The Conservative Group would support the recommendation to consult on any changes.

43.4 Councillor Phillips felt that the cuts were short sighted and a lack of intervention could lead to more and expensive provision being needed in the future. She said it was important to maintain provision for people from all backgrounds, and was concerned that any reduction in service could impact on minority groups. Councillor Phillips felt that the proposal to consult was not genuine as there wasn't an option to continue with the current provision, and said that a possible 35% to the service was huge and would impact on service provision, and because of that the Green Group would not support the recommendations. The Chair said that the administration would certainly prefer to be able to continue with twelve Children's Centres, but due to the budget cuts that was not possible and alternative ways of delivering the service had to be looked at.

43.1 **RESOLVED:** That the Committee agreed:

- (i) To note the report from the Children's Centre Review Board
- (ii) To agree to a consultation on future options for the delivery of children's centres to report to the January 2016 Committee.
- (iii) To agree to consultation on proposals for:
 - Seven designated children's centres with outreach to delivery points across the city
 - A revised core offer of services which will include:
 - Open access baby groups in venues across the city

- One open access drop-in group in venues across the city with priority for families with identified needs and children under two
- Offering more parenting talks and discussion groups to reach more parents at an earlier stage and fewer longer parenting courses
- Promoting volunteering and community/parent run groups
- Evidence based interventions delivered in groups and home visits for families most in need.
- Improved support for families with young children facing multiple disadvantage as part of the city's Stronger Families Stronger Communities Programme
- More focus on support for training and employment

44 SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

44.1 The Committee considered the report of the Executive Director of Children's Services which provided information on school attendance for all children and young people in Brighton & Hove. The report was presented by **Ellen and Gill manton**

44.2 Councillor Chapman asked if the authority had considered the Isle of Wight case regarding unauthorised absence. He was advised that the case, at this stage, had only been considered by the Magistrates Court and the matter would be monitored.

44.3 Councillor Brown referred to the petition presented to the last meeting of the Committee regarding unauthorised absence, and asked what options were being considered. **Jo Lyons** said that a number of issues were being looked at, and a full report would come to the next meeting of the Committee.

44.4 Councillor Wealls noted that the unauthorised absence for secondary schools in the city was low compared to neighbouring authorities. **Gill** said that the issue was being monitored and, although the rate was slightly lower than nearby authorities, schools did have good attendance overall.

44.5 Councillor Daniel said it was important that children attend school, but there shouldn't be a complete focus on 100% attendance; if a child was genuinely ill they shouldn't be at school and shouldn't be pressured into going. The Chair agreed and said a mechanism was needed to deal with those children who were not attending without good reason.

44.6 Mr Jones said he agreed with Councillor Daniel, and said there needed to be an understanding that some children would be ill. **Ellen** agreed.

44.7 **RESOLVED:** That the Committee noted the report and endorsed the focus on improving school attendance.

45 POST 16 REVIEW

45.1 The Committee considered the report of the Executive Director of Children's Services regarding the review of Post 16 provision in the Sussex Coast Area. The report was presented by **Hilary and Rachel**.

45.2 Councillor Phillips referred to paragraph 3.3 of the report which stated that the Council wanted 'variety, choice and value for money', and suggested that variety and value for money were two different things. Rachel said that curriculums varied across the city and the provision needed to be able to meet the needs of all.

45.3 The Chair confirmed that a further report on this area would come to a future meeting of the Committee.

45.4 **RESOLVED:** That the Committee noted the arrangements for the Sussex Coast review and agreed to the proposed methodology for the post 16 school based provision across Brighton and Hove.

46 MUSIC & ARTS SERVICE

46.1 The Committee considered the report of the Executive Director of Children's Services regarding the Music and Arts Service. The report asked for approval to allow work to continue to prepare the Music and Arts service and the SoundCity the Music Education Hub to merge with the Brighton Dome & Brighton Festival Trust.

46.2 Councillor Marsh asked for whether the musical instruments currently owned by the Music and Arts Service would be included in the merge and whether any such merger would impact on the Arts Council grant. Chivers said that any grant would be ring fenced, and any resources held by the Music and Arts Service would play a key part in the business plan.

46.3 Councillor Phillips asked if, the merger went ahead, all staff would be TUPEd across to the new service. Chivers said they would, but that would be a matter for the Policy & Resources Committee when they considered the fuller report at their meeting in January 2016.

46.4 Councillor Brown said the Music and Arts Service was excellent and she would the proposals put forward.

46.5 Mr Jones said that learning to play a musical instrument was expensive and asked if current subsidies would continue. Chivers said that the aim was to continue to subsidise the service for those who needed it.

46.1 **RESOLVED:** That the Committee agreed:

- (i) That the work to develop a full business case for the merger of the Music & Arts service with the Brighton Dome & Brighton Festival trust continues
- (ii) That the full business case be presented for approval to the Policy & Resources Committee in January 2016

47 ITEMS REFERRED FOR COUNCIL

47.1 **RESOLVED:** That no items be referred to Council

The meeting concluded at 6.45pm

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of