

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL
CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & SKILLS COMMITTEE

4.00pm 13 NOVEMBER 2017

COUNCIL CHAMBER, HOVE TOWN HALL

MINUTES

Present: Councillor Chapman (Chair); Councillor Penn (Deputy Chair), Brown (Opposition Spokesperson), Hamilton, Phillips (Group Spokesperson), Knight, O'Quinn, Wealls, Horan and Janio.

Other Members present: Ms. B. Connor and Ms. J. Sumner.

PART ONE

31 PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

31 (a) Declarations of substitutes

31.1 Councillor Horan was present as a substitute for Councillor Russell-Moyle
Councillor Janio was present as a substitute for Councillor Taylor
Ms B Connor was present as a substitute for Ms M Ryan
Ms J Sumner was present as a substitute for Mr B Glazebrook

31 (b) Declarations of Interest

31.2 There were none.

31 (c) Exclusion of press and public

31.3 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(I) of the Act).

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

32 CHAIR'S COMMUNICATIONS

32.1 The Chair gave the following communication.

Webcasting

I'd like to inform those present that this meeting will be webcast live and will be capable of repeated viewing.

Blatchington Mill

As this committee will be familiar, during both the Sussex Area Review and the Local Area Review, concerns were expressed about the viability of post 16 provision where numbers of students are below 200 students across the 6th form. In March 2016, guidance was issued by the Department of Education which states: "The Area Review encourages school sixth forms to collaborate to a greater extent to help drive efficiencies. Similar provision in sixth forms is often duplicated in relatively small geographical areas, when it could be delivered in a more joined up way. This may be particularly the case where sixth forms are very small, as some evidence raises concerns about costs, breadth of offer and outcomes for these providers."

The Governing Body of Blatchington Mill School and Sixth Form have carefully considered the position of the sixth form provision Blatch Six, and have concluded that its provision should be closed. I am confident that the governors of the school have considered the variety of options for the sixth form provision over a number of years and recognise much thought will have gone into reaching this conclusion.

Due to the timescales involved, the Executive Director for F, C & L used his delegated authority to make a decision to initiate a consultation, a position I support and therefore a consultation on a proposal to change the age range of the school from 11 to 18 as it is as present to 11 to 16 has started. The proposal has to be taken forward by the Local Authority in accordance with DfE statutory guidance Making 'prescribed alterations' to maintained schools (April 2016).

The results of this consultation will be reported to the January meeting of the Children Young People and Skills Committee where a decision will be made as to whether to proceed to the next stage which would be the publication of a statutory notice and a further period of consultation.

Should the sixth form provision close the school will work more closely with Hove Park who will retain 6th form provision in the area.

Minutes

You will note that Item 33 has the minutes from the last CYPS meeting, together with an addendum to the minutes of the meeting held on 19 June 2017. The minutes of the 19 June meeting have already been agreed, but Mr Jones has asked that comments he said he made at the meeting be added. I am aware that a number of emails have been circulated on this matter, and I would suggest that when we come to Item 33 that the wording be noted without further discussion and added as an addendum to the Minutes of the meeting held on 19 June 2017.

33 MINUTES

33.1 RESOLVED:

- (1) That the Minutes of the meeting held on 18 September 2017 be approved and signed as the correct record.
- (2) That the addendum to the Minutes of the meeting held on 19 June 2017 be noted.

34 CALL OVER

- 34.1 All items on the agenda were reserved for discussion.

35 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

35 (a) Petitions

- 35.1 The Committee considered a petition signed by 1489 people (167 on a paper petition and 1322 on an e-petition) which called for Brighton & Hove City Council to abandon the proposal to halve the admission number for Benfield Primary School. The petition was submitted by Ms J Keilthy.

- 35.2 The Chair provided the following response:
Thank you for taking the time to put forward your petition to the meeting. I can assure you all that in this period of public consultation your views and the views of all respondents will be taken into consideration. This is the very purpose of a consultation. The Council has put forward proposals for the city wide solution to the specific issues of rising surplus places in primary schools, and an imbalance on pupil numbers in the catchment areas of our city's secondary schools. When public consultation closed we will take time to consider all the points raised and this will be discussed by the cross party group that looks at admission arrangements. It is the Council's aim to ensure that all schools remain open, to help serve communities and to future proof the city for when pupil numbers rise. We need to find a solution that works across the city. In the meantime I would encourage residents to respond to the consultation through the Have Your Say consultation portal on the Brighton & Hove City Council website. Thank you for taking the time to come along today.

- 35.3 **RESOLVED:** That the petition be noted.

- 35.4 The Committee considered the petition referred from Full Council of 2 November 2017 which had 1570 signatures, and which called for the Council to abandon the proposal to halve the admission numbers for Hertford Infant School.

- 35.5 The Chair provided the following response:
At Full Council on 2 November 2017 action was required for the Committee to receive the petition regarding proposed changes to the Published Admission Number of Hertford Infant School. It was recommended that the petition be considered and the Committee request a report outlining the options for maintaining the current entry intake for Hertford Infants, including consideration of the outcomes and feasibility of adjusting the number of four-form schools, and that as part of this report an Equalities Impact Assessment be carried out. This Committee is already scheduled to receive a detailed report on the outcome of the consultation which will make recommendations to us for how admission arrangements for September 2019 should be organised. This report will include a full Equalities Impact Assessment. This will be how the Committee will be able to take

forward the recommendations from Full Council. Members of the Committee will know from the last Full Council, and from those who attended the consultation event at Hertford Infant School, the strength of feeling around this proposal. I also met with the head teacher and governors of Hertford Infant School this morning, and with Councillor Penn and Councillor Hill to discuss this proposal. All of this will be taken into consideration along with the other consultation results when the cross party group next meet. I'd like to thank again the petitioners for bringing this petition to the Committee.

35.6 RESOLVED:

- (1) That the petition be noted;
- (2) That the committee should receive a report outlining the options for maintaining the current entry intake for Hertford Infant School, including consideration of the outcomes and feasibility of adjusting the numbers of other four-form schools; and
- (3) That as part of the above report, an Equalities Impact Assessment be carried out on the reduction of Hertford Infant School intake for consideration.

35 (b) Written Questions

35.7 There were none.

35 (c) Deputations

35.8 The Committee considered a deputation presented by Ms S Scerri regarding the proposal to reduce the Published Admission Number for Benfield Primary School.

35.9 The Chair provided the following response: "The proposals to reduce the Published Admission Number of five schools is not a reflection on the quality of provision delivered in those schools or a reflection of the impact the school has on its community. These proposals were put forward to help address the lower primary numbers in some areas of the city and the surplus places that will therefore be in our city's schools. This will be an additional problem for school leaders to manage and the Council does not want to see any school close. This deputation outlines views that are essential to inform the development of proposals after a period of consultation. No decisions have been made. When the public consultation closes we will take time to consider all the points raised and how best to respond. We will receive a report in January 2018 with a considered proposal for the city's admission arrangements for September 2019. Thank you for making your deputation."

35.10 **RESOLVED:** That the deputation be noted.

35.11 The Committee considered a deputation presented by Mr D Boyle regarding the proposal to amend the secondary school catchment areas.

35.12 The Chair provided the following response: "Thank you for coming today and taking the time to bring your deputation to the Committee. The views and comments that you have outlined today will be taken into consideration when the cross party group meet after the consultation has closed to discuss school admission arrangement for September 2019. I

am aware of the strength of feeling on this issue as I have attended many of the consultation meetings that have been held across the city, and indeed I was at the meeting on Thursday last week at Elm Grove Primary School. The feedback from these meetings, and all the consultation responses, will be taken into consideration. With regards to the new school, I do understand your concern but I do wish to reiterate that the expectation of all stakeholders is that the new Brighton & Hove Academy will open in September 2019, though this decision is taken by the Education and Skills Funding Agency and not the Council. The proposal put forward was to help form a city wide solution to the imbalance in numbers of secondary school pupils in the city, and the consultation period allows families and school communities to clearly outline their concerns about how they will be impacted by these proposals and I welcome the points made in this deputation. When the public consultation closes on 19 November 2017 we will take time to consider all the points raised and how best to respond. This Committee will receive a report in January 2018 with a considered proposal for the city's admission arrangement for September 2019. Thank you for taking the time to make this deputation."

35.13 **RESOLVED:** That the deputation be noted.

36 MEMBER INVOLVEMENT

36a Petitions

36.1 There were none.

36b Written Questions

36.2 There were none.

36c Letters

36.3 There were none.

36d Notices of Motion

36.4 There were none.

37 SCHOOL OFSTED PRESENTATION

37.1 The Head of Education, Standards and Achievements provided an update on schools which had recently been inspected by Ofsted.

37.2 The Head of Education, Standards and Achievements said that six schools had been inspected since the last meeting of the Committee, but only had two had so far been reported. He was pleased to advise that Elm Grove Primary had retained its 'Good' rating, and St Martin's CE Primary had moved from 'Requires Improvement' to 'Good'.

37.3 **RESOLVED:** That the update be noted.

38 OFSTED - AN UPDATE ON THE 2015 CHILDREN'S SERVICES INSPECTION

- 38.1 The Committee considered the report of the Executive Director, Families, Children & Learning, which provided an update on progress made since the 2015 Children's Services Ofsted inspection. The report was introduced by the Assistant Director for Safeguarding and Care and the Service Manager for Policy & Business Support.
- 38.2 Councillor Brown thanked officers for the update, and commended the department on their willingness to have outside verification for the changes happening in the service. Councillor Brown noted that there had been a 10% decrease in both children with Child protection plans and those in care, and as the number had increased for other authorities was concerned that the Council's threshold for services had been raised, but was assured that that wasn't the case and it was the new model of practice which had provided more early support and stability which had reduced the number. The recent audit for social work showed that the quality of supervision was good or better in 89% of cases which was a huge improvement and hope that next time the Authority is inspected we will receive a 'Good' rating.
- 38.3 Councillor Phillips asked for more information on the process for Child in Need assessments, and asked what steps would be taken to increase the percentage from 70%. The Assistant Director for Safeguarding and Care said previously the Authority undertook an initial assessment which had to be completed within 10 working days, or a core assessment which was more comprehensive which needed to be completed within 45 working days, but that was changed two and half years ago and was replaced by a more proportionate assessment. So rather than being tied up with timescales it was looking at the presenting issues and what was the proportionate response.
- 38.4 Councillor O'Quinn was pleased to note so many positive actions being put in place. With regard to fostering, there had been a big effort to get more foster carers but she was aware that it was difficult to get ones to care for children with complex needs and asked for more information. The Assistant Director for Safeguarding & Care said it was difficult and that the Authority were building in wrap around support for both the young person in placement and for the carers, and looking at things such as providing respite care for all parties, and looking carefully at the needs of the young people to ensure the right support was being provided. The Authority worked closely with the child's school and social workers, and provided a team around a child so the foster carers did not feel they were being left on their own.
- 38.5 Councillor Wealls was pleased to note that 96% of care leavers were deemed to be in suitable accommodation and asked why was that figure so high when there were known problems with housing in the city. The Assistant Director for Safeguarding and Care said that the authority were lucky to have good third sector providers such as the YMCA.
- 38.6 Councillor Wealls noted that 96% of assessments were completed within 45 working days, and asked if that was a national standard. The Assistant Director for Safeguarding & Care said that 45 days was a national standard, but locally there was an expectation that the assessments would be completed within 30 working days. However, in more complex cases it could take up to 45 days.
- 38.7 Mr Jones was concerned to note that a child would not be seen by a social worker until an assessment had been undertaken. The Assistant Director for Safeguarding & Care

Assurance said that if a referral came in and it was a child protection matter, the child would be seen within twenty-four hours, and if it were a lower level child in need matter the child would be seen within three working day.

38.8 Councillor Penn said that it was brave of the Council to accept that things weren't working as well as it could, and to make changes. It was a credit to the social work team that the new model was working so well, and to have a ten percent decrease in children in care and on child protection plans was fantastic. Councillor Penn asked if the main differences between the models could be outlined. The Assistant Director for Safeguarding & Care said that the new model focused on social workers spending time with children and families, and rather than referring children to external services the social worker would build a relationship with families to effect change. The new model ensured social workers had manageable caseloads and that the bureaucracy was kept to a minimum, and now rather than a family being moved to different people as their case progressed through the system, the same social worker would remain with a family throughout. Councillor Penn noted that the new model had also assisted with the retention of social workers. The Assistant Director for Safeguarding & Care agreed and said that previously twenty percent of social workers were agency workers, but now there were no agency staff.

38.9 Councillor Janio was surprised to note that 669 children were seen over a three month period, and asked if that figure was correct. He was advised it was, but could include siblings so that wasn't individual families. The Executive Director of Families, Children and Learning reminded that Committee, that there were 51,000 children in the city.

38.10 RESOLVED:

- (1) That the progress made around the recommendations arising from the Ofsted inspection in 2015 be noted; and
- (2) That future updates should focus on the new inspection framework referred to in the body of the report.

39 USE OF HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT FUNDING IN YOUTH SERVICES

39.1 The Committee considered a report of the Executive Director, Families, Children & Learning which provided members with an update on changes to the youth service, including the use of the Housing Revenue Account's (HRA) annual £250,000 contribution to the budget. The report was introduced by the Head of Service - Early Years, Youth & Family Support with contributions from Kyra Kibble (Youth Council).

39.2 Kyra Kibble said that Youth Council representatives and others from different youth services, met over half term. It was agreed that they would meet every six weeks, at different venues, to discuss various issue such as mental health.

39.3 Councillor Brown asked if any further steps had been taken to revive the Ask, Report, Change (ARC) programme, and was advised that there hadn't but an update would be provided in due course.

- 39.4 Councillor Brown referred to the Participation Team which delivered the Youth Advocacy Project and asked if the right number of people were involved. The Head of Service - Early Years, Youth & Family Support advised that an update would be provided in the next report on youth services to be presented to the Committee's meeting. Councillor Brown referred to paragraph 3.6 in the report, and asked what would happen when the funding ended in September 2018. The Head of Service - Early Years & Family Support said that more information about funding would be known in the spring next year, and decisions could be taken then.
- 39.5 Councillor Brown suggested that it would be useful to have a report in six months on the Youth Grant Programme, which was agreed by the Head of Service - Early Years, Youth & Family Support.
- 39.6 Councillor Brown referred to Appendix 4 to the report and noted that under 'Other Costs', there was a figure of £15k for 'Independent Visitors for children in care', but there was also a figure of £46k for 'Independent Visitors', and asked what that referred to. The Head of Service - Early Years & Family Support the £15k was a contribution from the youth budget, and the £46k was the budget they already had.
- 39.7 Councillor Phillips thanked officers for the report, but suggested it would have been helpful to have information about what had been provided before and what had been lost with regard to the £250k from the HRA budget. Councillor Phillips was concerned that whilst the Youth Voice project was great it did not adequately replace the one to one youth work. There seemed to be an emphasis on anti-social behaviour and employability, which was good but she did not think they were in the spirit of the amendments to the funding which was agreed at Budget Council earlier this year. Councillor Phillips suggested that it would be useful to have regular updates on the youth service provision, and asked how many council employees were involved in this area. The Head of Service - Early Years & Family Support said that the overall savings to the Council were £255k. There was no longer a detached youth work team within the Council, but the voluntary sector now provided that. The Chair said that the cross party group could review the youth service provision on a regular basis.
- 39.8 Councillor O'Quinn noted that one of the expected outcomes for the Youth Grant programme was a reduction in anti-social behaviour, and asked if the Council were liaising with the police. The Head of Service - Early Years, Youth & Family Support said that they did and the police had set up an early intervention team. The Executive Director of Families, Children and Learning said that children were now living more complicated lives and there were a range of services for young people outside of the youth service. Around six months ago the Council reorganised the range of provision to make more integrated arrangements. There had been a reduction of the number of children involved in youth crime, which had allowed some funding to be used for preventative work.
- 39.9 Ms J Sumner thanked Councillors and Officers for the continued investment in this vital service and commended the fact that funding arrangements had been changed to a grant rather than a contract service. She asked that where possible, and where procurement allowed, officers sought to establish grant arrangements to ensure that as much resource went into communities as possible. Ms Sumner referred to the Council Youth Participation Team Budget, and asked what the £10,000 for small grants referred

to. The Head of Service - Early Years & Family Support said that the aim is the Youth Voice forum and the cross party group would have a say in how that money was spent.

39.10 Councillor Penn asked that Moulsecomb and Patcham were taken into account, as areas such as the Bates Estate had significant levels of deprivation, and there was a lack of facilities or projects in those places. Councillor Penn said that it was important that the funding was spent wisely, and asked how the outcomes would be measured. The Head of Service - Early Years, Youth & Family Support said that regular meetings would be held with voluntary sector providers, and to measure outcomes they would use Aspire (Council run IT system) to monitor the number of young people they were in contact with, together with feedback from residents groups.

39.11 Councillor Wealls referred to the Youth Participation Team budget and felt that there was a lot of consultation and talking rather than actual provision. He noted that there was a lot of advocacy within the Council, and asked whether it would be more appropriate for a non-council entity to do a great deal of that work. The Head of Service - Early Years, Youth & Family Support said that the amount of funding being spent on the participation was not just looking at how the youth service budget would be spent but was also looking at how the Council were working with young people. With regard to the advocacy the Youth Participation Team were managed by outside social work to ensure some independence. The Executive Director, Families, Children & Learning said that participation also included young people having an input on recruitment of officers and social workers, so they would be involved in decisions the Council made. More information on that would be provided in an interim report. He added that advocacy was a statutory requirement for children in care. Mr J Cliff said that youth involvement was being addressed; young people usually didn't get much say and so it was good that they had the opportunity to have their voice heard.

39.12 Councillor Janio said that it was important to keep young people informed, and it was good to talk with them. He felt that sometimes the Council were clinging on to some of the internal services, which the community and voluntary sector within the city could provide.

39.13 Mr M Jones asked if the Committee could have a report from young people rather than from officers. The Executive Director, Families, Children & Learning referred to Appendix 1 to the report which was direct feedback from young people.

39.14 The Chair proposed the following amendment to Recommendation 2.2 '*That a progress report is considered by the Committee in June 2018*'. The amendment was seconded by Councillor Brown. The Committee agreed to the amendment.

39.15 **RESOLVED:**

(1) That the report be noted; and

(2) That a progress report be considered by the Committee in June 2018.

40 BRIGHTON & HOVE CHILDREN IN CARE - INTERIM REPORT

- 40.1 The Committee considered the report of the Executive Director, Families, Children & Learning, which provided a summary of Brighton & Hove's Children in Care's educational progress and attainment at the end of Key Stage 2, 4 and 5 for the academic year 2016/7. The report was introduced by the Head of Education Standards & Achievement.
- 40.2 Councillor O'Quinn referred to children who were fostered and said that it was preferable for them to have long term foster carers, rather than be moved a number of times to different carers as that could impact on their education. The Head of Education Standards & Achievement agreed and said that it was a known fact that when children were moved it did have a negative impact on their education. One of the purposes of a virtual school was to bring some stability. The Assistant Director Education & Skills said there was a Virtual School Steering Group, which was similar to a governing body of a school, and on that group were foster carers who worked closely with the Council.
- 40.3 Councillor Brown referred to the Maths tutor and asked how they would be utilised. The Head of Education Standards & Achievement said that it was primary school teacher who specialised in Maths, and they would be working with a few children. He added that the virtual school had a school improvement role to see what they could do to enhance the child's maths if they weren't achieving their potential. The Assistant Director Education & Skills said that maths was an issue all children not just those in care, and a range of work was being undertaken to support schools.
- 40.4 Councillor Wealls asked if there was an objective way to see whether the virtual school did a good job. The Assistant Director Education & Skills said that there were data comparisons, such as looking at neighbouring authorities but it was difficult as the number of children involved was small. Also when Ofsted inspected they looked at the work of the virtual school and its outcomes.
- 40.5 Mr M Jones understood that with the small number of children in care that it was difficult to make comparisons with previous years, but he asked whether there was a graph to show how we compared nationally with other authorities. The Head of Education Standards & Achievement said there wasn't as it was difficult to compare like for like, and comparing different years could be very misleading. Mr Jones said that exam grades had changed, and asked whether under the new system it was harder for a pupil to move from a grade 3 to a 4. The Head of Education Standards & Achievement said that under the new system there was an end of year exam rather than continual course work, and that could disadvantage some children. However, the data was not yet available to see whether there had been any impact.
- 40.6 Councillor Janio agreed that it was correct not to base data on small samples, but he felt that over a number of years it would be possible to see a trend.
- 40.7 **RESOLVED:** That the report be noted.

41 ITEMS REFERRED FOR COUNCIL

- 41.1 Councillor Phillips requested that the petition submitted under item 35(a) be referred to the next meeting of Full Council. However the lawyer advised that it was not possible as a response to the petition, and all other issues raised during the consultation, would be

responded to in a report which would come to the CYPS Committee in January 2018. The provision for the Committee to refer items to Full Council relates to substantive items, rather than issues raised under Public Involvement.

41.2 **RESOLVED:** That no items be referred to Full Council.

The meeting concluded at 6.15pm

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of

2018