

MINUTES of the meeting of the **EDUCATION AND SKILLS BOARD** held at 10.00 am on 22 October 2015 at Ashcombe Suite, County Hall, Kingston upon Thames, Surrey KT1 2DN.

These minutes are subject to confirmation by the Committee at its meeting on Thursday, 26 November 2015.

Elected Members:

- * Mrs Liz Bowes
- * Mr Mark Brett-Warburton (Chairman)
- A Mr Ben Carasco, Substituted by Mr Chris Pitt
- * Mr Robert Evans
- * Mr Denis Fuller
- * Mr David Goodwin
- * Miss Marisa Heath
- * Mrs Margaret Hicks
- * Mr Colin Kemp
- * Mrs Marsha Moseley (Vice-Chairman)
- * Mr Chris Norman
- * Mr Chris Townsend

- * denotes in attendance
- A denotes apologies

Ex officio Members:

Mrs Sally Ann B Marks, Chairman of the County Council
Mr Nick Skellett CBE, Vice-Chairman of the County Council

Substitute Members:

Mr Ben Carasco, Substituted by Mr Chris Pitt

10 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS [Item 1]

Apologies were received from Ben Carasco. Chris Pitt substituted for Ben Carsaco.

11 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST [Item 2]

None.

12 QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS [Item 3]

There were no questions or petitions.

13 RESPONSES FROM THE CABINET TO ISSUES REFERRED BY THE SCRUTINY BOARD [Item 4]

There were no responses from Cabinet to report.

14 RECOMMENDATIONS TRACKER AND FORWARD WORK PLAN [Item 5]

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. The subject of pupils being home educated was discussed. A suggestion to scrutinise the Council's role in their education was noted.
2. The Board was asked to note that recommendations concerning funding schools for deprivation had been referred to the Cabinet meeting on Tuesday 27 October 2015.

Actions:

- Scrutiny of the education of pupils outside of the education system added to the forward work plan.

15 SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES [Item 6]

Declarations of interest:

None.

Witnesses:

Peter-John Wilkinson, Assistant Director for Schools and Learning
Liz Mills, SEND Strategic Programme Lead
Jo Holtom, Senior Strategy and Policy Development Manager
Fran Morgan, Family Voice Representative
Andrea Collins, Family Voice Representative

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. The Board was informed that Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) overlapped on all levels of education, and was subject to concerns for the Council around aspects such as; the quality of service and support received children and young people; the speed

- of assessing need and delivering services, and implementing of recent changes to legislation around SEND.
2. The Board was informed that the cost of providing SEND support in Surrey was higher than the national average. The Board raised concerns over the costs for provisions and requested a further update on the cost of delivering statutory responsibilities through residential SEND provisions.
 3. The Board was informed that new government legislation introduced in 2014 raised the upper age cut-off for SEND provisions to 25 years. The Board raised concerns around what additional resource would be required in order to support young people with SEND, aged 16-25.
 4. The Board asked whether the Council will reach the 2018 deadline to transfer SEND statements to Education, Health and Care Plans. Officers assured Members that staff are working on target to meet the 2018 deadlines.
The Board was informed that the legislation brought additional responsibilities for the Council without significant additional resource being made available from central Government. Officers commented this created a challenge in implementing the required changes. As a result, the deadline for customer assessments being completed within the mandated 20 weeks was currently being missed.
 5. The Board was informed that within the Education budgets, some money has been reassigned from mainstream schools for the funding of SEND projects. This decision was made so to encourage good change in the provision and support for SEND customers. Alongside this, a programme is being drawn up to greater improve SEND inclusion in mainstream schools. The programme will help support the SEND strategy across all education agencies.
 6. Further Education colleges have responded positively to future changes and implications of the new legislation, and had been very supportive with officers. The Board was informed that the SEND programme aimed to bring together secondary schools and colleges with their SEND provisions.
Surrey's current Special Education Colleges were working well in partnership and there were pilot schemes being run to test out potential future pathways for the service in further education.
 7. Officers highlighted that within the SEND strategy programme will be a customer experience work-stream. Members suggested that the Resident Experience Board could engage with this piece of work and feed back to the Education and Skills Board in due course.
 8. Members commented that health and school partners should meet with the Wellbeing and Social Care sub-group to help ensure that all aspects of future SEND provisions are covered effectively.

Recommendations:

- That a further report is presented to the Board demonstrating analysis of statutory requirements and the comparative financial costs for residential SEND provisions.

- That officers provide further information on the logistical and financial challenges of the additional responsibilities related to 16-25 young people with SEND needs.
- That the Chairman of the Resident Experience Board engages with the Customer Experience work-stream of the SEND programme, and reports back to the Education and Skills Board on progress.
- That health and school partners in the SEND programme are invited to meet with the Wellbeing and Social Care sub-group, with additional representation when reported back.

Break 11.35am - 11.40am

16 INTERNAL AUDIT - HENRIETTA PARKER TRUST FUNDS [Item 7]

Declarations of interest:

None.

Witnesses:

Paul Hoffman, Principal Community Learning and Skills.
David John, Audit Performance Manager

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. Officers gave the Board a report on the internal audit of the Henrietta Parker Trust Fund and an overview of the history and purpose of the Fund.
2. In the process of creating the audit report, investigations discovered that there was some uncertainty over the Fund governance structure. Members suggested that this needed to be explored further.
3. The report also highlighted that Surrey County Council was the sole trustee for the Fund. Members expressed that this was not appropriate and that more robust governance arrangements needed to be put in place.
Within this discussion Members commented that the Fund could be perhaps better managed by a third party. Members requested an update be made available. Officers highlighted that timescales would be dependent on the Charity Commission as their timescales differ to that of Surrey County Council.

Recommendations:

- That officers explore the legal options available to pass management of the trust to a suitable body with appropriate governance arrangements.
- That temporary trustee arrangements are put in place.
- The Education and Skills Board requests a report back on progress in January 2016.

17 DATE OF NEXT MEETING [Item 8]

The Board was asked to note that the next meeting of the Education and Skills Board will be held at 10am on Thursday 24 November 2015.

Meeting ended at: 12.20 pm

Chairman