

MINUTES of the meeting of the **CHILDREN AND EDUCATION SELECT COMMITTEE** held at 10.00 am on 6 September 2017 at Ashcombe Suite, County Hall, Penrhyn Road, Kingston upon Thames, KT1 2DN.

These minutes are subject to confirmation by the Committee at its meeting on Friday, 17 November 2017.

Elected Members:

Mr Chris Botten
Mrs Liz Bowes
* Mr Mark Brett-Warburton (Chairman)
* Mr Tim Evans
Mr Stuart Getty
Mr Stephen Green
* Mr Tim Hall
* Mr Jeff Harris
* Mrs Julie Iles
* Mrs Yvonna Lay
* Ms Charlotte Morley
* Mrs Marsha Moseley (Vice-Chairman)
* Mrs Tina Mountain
Mr Simon Parr
* Dr Peter Szanto
* Mr Chris Townsend
Mr Mike Wainhouse

Substitute Members:

* Mr Tim Hall

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS [Item 1]

Apologies were received from Chris Botten, Liz Bowes, Stuart Getty, Stephen Green, Simon Parr and Mike Wainhouse. Tim Hall Substituted for Liz Bowes.

2 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING: 8 MARCH 2017 [Item 2]

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as a true and accurate record of proceedings.

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST [Item 3]

There were no declarations of interest received.

4 QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS [Item 4]

There were no questions or petitions received.

5 RESPONSES FROM THE CABINET TO ISSUES REFERRED BY THE SELECT COMMITTEE [Item 5]

There were no responses from Cabinet.

6 CHILDREN, SCHOOLS AND FAMILIES COMMISSIONING PLAN [Item 6]

Witnesses:

Belinda Newth, Head of Quality & Experience
Will Balakrishnan, Head of Insight & Innovation
Frank Offer, Head of Market Strategy
Clare Curran, Cabinet Member for Children
Mary Lewis, Cabinet Member for Education

Declarations of Interest:

None

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. Officers outlined the Children, Schools and Families Commissioning plan, noting that it set out the challenges and service delivery objectives for SEND services. It was highlighted that this Plan feeds into the work of the Children and Young People Partnership Strategy.
2. It was noted by officers that the service was working closely with a significant number of partners to ensure that the service was working to deliver in a cost effective manner.
3. Several outcomes of the commissioning plan were highlighted by officers as key points of improvement:
 - a. Improving outcomes for children and vulnerable groups; and
 - b. Managing growing demand
4. It was noted that there was an increase in needs based demand, but that the service must work to manage this growing need with the requirement to make budgetary savings. It was stressed that Early Help would be a crucial aspect of ensuring delivery.
5. Officers highlighted that the service was shifting to a strength based model of delivery, highlighting the Safer Surrey practice guide as an example. It was explained that these models would ensure that there was sufficient support available to improve outcomes for service users.
6. The Committee questioned the proposed new approach of working with families. It was highlighted that there was a requirement to change the expectations of families and young people to how services are offered and delivered. Officers and the Cabinet Members stressed that this was a key concern, and that there was a need for a significant culture change in the service to achieve this. However, it was stressed that the service would maintain an in depth level of assessment to determine the needs of a child and what approach is working for the individual child. The Cabinet Member for Children also highlighted that there would be a fundamental change in how the service works with families, but that the service was looking at more inclusive ways of working with them to help resolve this issue.

7. The Committee questioned the disparity between the quality of education in general in comparison with poorer outcomes for vulnerable children. It was stressed that the service recognised the contradiction between these two outcomes and that it was a shortcoming of the service that needed to be addressed as part of this new strategy of commissioning.
8. The Cabinet Member for Education noted that the service, as part of its new Commissioning Plan, was moving to a more data focussed approach. It was highlighted that there was a greater requirement for provision of disadvantaged children and that improved datasets would help the service focus on individual children's needs more effectively and that the service needed to define the datasets used.
9. Officers responded to Member concerns regarding places to meet for families and young people. It was stressed that these were important for the wellbeing of both families and young people, but noted that there was a need to look into new ways of delivering these services. Officers explained that the service was working to build closer networks with partners to deliver services as part of the new commissioning plan.
10. Members highlighted the requirement for stability for disadvantaged children, particularly with relation to school places, but also with the need to ensure that accommodation is appropriate to ensure that children have good outcomes. Officers stressed that there was a need to ensure that school stability was achieved for young people, noting that instability and absence in schools was a key reason for poorer outcomes for disadvantaged children. It was also noted by the Cabinet Member for Children that the service was working closer with Early Help and accommodation providers to ensure that accommodation was appropriate and available for disadvantaged children to provide more positive outcomes and avoid issues in future.
11. Members noted that there was a requirement for £6.4 million in savings in 2018/19 and that this needed to be reconciled with how the service presents its key performance indicators (KPIs), noting that the KPIs for service plans detailed within the overarching CSF Commissioning plan were not outlined in the report. Officers stressed that the Commissioning Plan was a top level strategic document and that there was other data available within the individual commissioning plans which would be offered to the committee.
12. Officers noted that savings planned for 2017/18 were in progress, and that future savings were being identified. Members questioned whether the service could provide additional information to aid in measuring savings and targets set. Officers noted that there was scope to improve the datasets within the strategy. It was also suggested by officers that individual plans highlighted in the report could be looked into more closely in future by the Committee.

13. Officers confirmed that models of good practice in other comparable local authorities and partners had been observed and that officers had undertaken scoping visits to identify these instances of good practice. The Cabinet Member for Children also highlighted that they had been in contact with their peers in other local authorities and had identified instances of good practice and suggested ways to improve the Surrey offer.
14. The Committee suggested several amendments to the report regarding its role as a public facing document noting several areas of focus:
 - a. Members suggested that the language of the report reflect children as individuals as part of the commissioning plan;
 - b. It was noted that there should be a clear definition of Child Sexual Exploitation and suggested that it should be highlighted as unacceptable explicitly in the report;
 - c. It was suggested that the report should be presented as a public facing document and that officers note that there was a requirement to ensure that members of the public understand the commissioning process.

Recommendations:

The Committee recommends that:

1. The Chairmen to meet with service leads to scope which Programmes and Commissioning Plans will be considered by the Committee to assess progress against the CSF Strategic Actions.
2. That a summary of findings from these meetings will be circulated with the Committee before the next meeting of the Committee.

7 YOUTH SERVICES - GOVERNANCE AND BUSINESS MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS FOLLOW UP AUDIT 2016/17 [Item 7]

Witnesses:

Nick Charalambous, Young People and Families Strategic Lead – East
David John, Audit Performance Manager
Tasneem Ali, Auditor

Declarations of Interest:

None

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. Officers outlined the actions undertaken by the service to resolve the recommendations highlighted as a priority. The youth services officers noted improvement in governance arrangements and continued work regarding the resolution of phone contract misuse.
2. The Audit Performance Manager highlighted that the risk register and ratings that had been assigned by the youth services had been

monitored by auditors to ensure progress.

3. Auditors noted that the ongoing self-audit was working to resolve longstanding issues undertaken by the service. It was also noted that internal audit had not yet undertaken a follow up audit, but that there would be one undertaken in future to monitor actions taken. However, auditors noted the positive progress highlighted in the self-audit.
4. Members questioned the misuse of mobile technology within the service. It was queried whether lessons learnt from the recuperating of misuses in mobile technology could be shared with other services to ensure good practice. Youth service officers stressed that they were sharing this good practice data with staff in youth services and with other services. Auditors also noted that they were also highlighting evidences of abuse within other services and ensuring that any irregularities were resolved.
5. The Committee were satisfied the current progress of youth services and highlighted that they welcomed a follow up audit.

Recommendations

1. That the Committee notes the audit report and Management Action Plan and requests that the follow up audit is shared with the Committee on its publication.

8 SEND DEVELOPMENT PLAN (2017 REFRESH) [Item 8]

Witnesses:

Julie Stockdale, SEND & School Organisation Strategic Lead

Declarations of Interest:

None

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. Officers outlined the background of the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities reforms legislated by central government, noting that there was a requirement for the publication of a local offer in response to reforms in 2014. The SEND 2020 plan was published as an additional to this requirement and detailed the Surrey local offer. Officers followed that the plan put to the select committee was a refresh of this plan to take into account the Ofsted/Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspection of SEND services in October 2016 and the long term recommendations of the Written Statement of Action published in May 2017.
2. It was noted by officers that the SEND Improvement Board and SEND Partnership Board had influenced the changes in the SEND Development Plan. Officers noted that there was a culture of collaboration being developed within the service between the Children's Services and partners. Members highlighted and expressed

appreciation for the collaborative nature of these groups.

3. Officers highlighted opportunities to review the SEND services offer, noting that there was a potential to look into options to reduce costs to these services.
4. Officers highlighted that there were several (remove text) special schools being expanded and 2 successful new specialist free school bids in Surrey as part of the Development Plan. Members questioned where the funding was being allocated from. Officers explained that there was funding awarded by the Department for Education (DfE) to build two special needs Free Schools. It was also noted that specialist, purpose-built "Cullum Centres" have been funded by the Cullum Family Trust, with an SCC contribution, to serve children with high functioning autism, highlighting that the service was innovating to fund new ways of supporting Special Education Needs children.
5. Officers noted that there was demand within schools to deliver inclusive SEND services. Officers noted (remove text) that an index for inclusion had been developed for SCC in conjunction with all schools and partners.
6. Officers highlighted that there was a requirement to balance inclusion with the cost of the service to ensure that there was a quality and cost effective service in future.
7. Officers explained that the refreshed plan was to be published online in conjunction with the local offer.

Recommendations:

1. That the Select Committee to endorses the draft SEND Development Plan for publication.

9 SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES IMPROVEMENT TASK AND FINISH GROUP [Item 9]

Witnesses:

None

Declarations of Interest:

None

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. Members noted the terms of reference of the Task and Finish Group and recommended that they be submitted to the Overview and Budget Scrutiny Board for approval.
2. Members noted that the proposed Membership for the Task and Finish Group was as follows:
 - a. Mark Brett-Warburton

- b. Chris Townsend
- c. Christopher Botten
- d. Tina Mountain
- e. Yvonna Lay

10 PERFORMANCE MEMBER REFERENCE GROUP [Item 10]

Witnesses:

None

Declarations of Interest:

None

Key points raised during the discussion:

1. Members noted the terms of reference of the Task and Finish Group and recommended that they be submitted to the Overview and Budget Scrutiny Board for approval with the addition of an emphasis for Key Performance Indicator analysis.
2. Members noted that the proposed Membership for the Task and Finish Group was as follows:
 - a. Mark Brett-Warburton
 - b. Chris Townsend
 - c. Tim Evans
 - d. Jeff Harris
 - e. Charlotte Morley

11 FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME AND RECOMMENDATIONS TRACKER [Item 11]

Members noted and approved the forward work programme.

12 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING [Item 12]

The next meeting of the Committee will be held on 17 November 2017 at County Hall.

Meeting ended at: 12.00 pm

Chairman