

**MINUTES** of the meeting of the **EDUCATION SELECT COMMITTEE** held at 10.00 am on 28 March 2013 at Ashcombe Suite, County Hall, Kingston upon Thames, Surrey KT1 2DN.

These minutes are subject to confirmation by the Committee at its meeting.

**Elected Members:**

Mrs Denise Turner-Stewart (Chairman)  
Denis Fuller (Vice-Chairman)  
Mrs Carol Coleman  
Nigel Cooper  
Mr Tim Hall  
Mrs Marsha Moseley  
Mr Chris Pitt  
Mr Keith Taylor

**Independent Members**

Sean Whetstone  
Cecile White

**Apologies:**

Mr Peter Lambell  
Mrs Diana Smith  
Mr Chris Townsend  
Derek Holbird

**13/12 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS [Item 1]**

Apologies were received from Diana Smith, Peter Lambell, Chris Townsend and Derek Holbird.

**14/12 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING: [Item 2]**

The minutes were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting, subject to the following amendment:

Councillor Keith Taylor be recorded as being in attendance.

**15/12 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST [Item 3]**

There were no declarations of interests.

**16/12 QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS [Item 4]**

There were no questions or petitions.

**17/12 RESPONSES FROM THE CABINET TO ISSUES REFERRED BY THE SELECT COMMITTEE [Item 5]**

None

**18/12 RECOMMENDATION TRACKER AND FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME [Item 6]**

Members were asked to contact the Scrutiny Officer with any suggestions for the Select Committee's future forward programme.

**19/12 2012 SECONDARY EDUCATION PERFORMANCE AND OFSTED INSPECTION OUTCOMES [Item 7]**

**Declarations of interest:** None.

**Witnesses:**

Maria Dawes, Head of School Effectiveness, Babcock 4S

Ian Wilson, Principal Consultant, Babcock 4S

Amanda Peck, General Manager, Babcock 4S

Kathy Beresford, Performance & Intelligence Manager

Rhona Barnfield, Chairman of Secondary Phase Council

PJ Wilkinson, Assistant Director for Schools and Learning

**Key points raised during the discussion:**

- The Head of School Effectiveness presented Members of the Select Committee with a presentation. The presentation was a follow up to headline statistics presented to the Committee in November 2012. The presentation was based on Secondary Education performance and looked at results after the Ofsted inspection changes in September 2012.
- The Head of School Effectiveness commented that at Key Stage 3 pupils in Surrey were performing better than their peers in the South East and nationally in achieving levels 5 and 6 in all three core subjects. Similarly, when considering Key Stage 4, the proportion of pupils in Surrey achieving 5+ A\* to C including English and Maths was higher than other pupils in the South East. When looking at Surrey Maintained Schools and Academies, 75.8% of these were deemed good or outstanding at the end of the 2012/13 autumn term, compared to 74.3% nationally.
- The Head of School Effectiveness commented on how the GCSE English results of 2012 had a serious impact on overall English results at Key Stage 4. Although a legal challenge had been launched by head teachers and local authorities, the challenge was rejected by the courts which meant the results stood. The Head of School Effectiveness explained that on the national level there had been serious impact on GCSE English results but the number of Surrey pupils achieving 5+ A\*-C GCSE or equivalents including English and maths GCSE had actually gone up.
- Even though the overall Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 results had improved, the Head of School Effectiveness stated a key priority going forward would be to work with schools that had performed below the national average of 59% of pupils achieving 5+ A\* to C including English and maths. At the moment this stood at 17 out of 53 maintained secondary schools in Surrey which were performing below this national average. 13 schools had below 55% of pupils achieving this measure. Seven schools had below 50% of pupils achieving this measure whom would be the focus of Babcock 4S.
- Importantly the Head of School Effectiveness pointed out that the attainment and progress of disadvantaged pupils in Surrey suffered when compared to peers nationally. This gap had widened in 2012 in

comparison to 2011. The Head of School Effectiveness went on to say that a focus on disadvantaged pupils in Surrey would be a key priority for the coming year. A number of schools in Surrey had received letters from David Laws MP informing them they were amongst the lowest performing schools in the county for disadvantaged pupils.

- Since September 2012 there had been a succession of 'Outstanding' or 'Good' Ofsted inspection results. The Head of School Effectiveness stated that 78.4% of Surrey schools had been judged to be 'Outstanding' or 'Good' by Ofsted as at 12 March 2013. Babcock 4S hoped to achieve a level of 80% 'Outstanding' or 'Good' by the end of March 2014. A number of additional support measures would be put in place to ensure head teachers and schools achieved Ofsted priorities.
- A Member of the Select Committee raised concerns over the performance of Academies in comparison to Maintained Schools and questioned whether the Local Authority took on different approaches when dealing with both. Both academies and maintained schools had performed well when considering overall results. The Head School Effectiveness stated that Local Authorities took the responsibility of looking at standards of all schools regardless of status and offered support where required.
- Members of the Committee raised concerns as to why names of schools were not being listed with school performance results provided to the Committee. The Head of School Effectiveness explained that these details could be provided but with the large number of schools this information would be very detailed and could potentially get overly complex.
- A member of the Committee went on to state that in the past there had been a link between poor performance and demographics. If names of schools were highlighted this relationship could be further explored. The Head of School Effectiveness confirmed that demographics were not ignored when considering performance and that performance could be monitored on an individual basis for every school.
- The Assistant Director for Schools and Learning commented that elements of sensitivity surrounded making public the details of poor performing schools. The Assistant Director for Schools and Learning acknowledged the importance of having details available but also stated the importance of lending support to schools rather than putting them in an increasingly difficult position.
- Members of the Committee raised concerns around poor performance of disadvantaged pupils in Surrey. The Head of School Effectiveness explained how the issues in Surrey were similar to those of the South East region as a whole. Results showed the only four Local Authorities in the South East outperformed Surrey in terms of the proportion of pupils achieving 5+ A\* to C GCSE or equivalents including English and mathematics for pupils receiving free school meals. The Assistant Director for Schools and Learning acknowledged that disadvantaged pupils in Surrey were not currently achieving the

same successful results as some of their peers across the country. This would be a priority and focus for the Directorate going forward.

- The Chairman asked the Committee to consider setting up a task group specifically looking at education performance amongst disadvantaged pupils in Surrey.

**Recommendations:**

- That further consideration be given to the level of detail to be included in future agenda papers, to help members better understand the performance of individual schools.
- That consideration be given to the establishment of a task group to consider support offered to disadvantaged pupils in Surrey.

**Actions/further information to be provided:**

None.

**20/12 BABCOCK 4S SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT STRATEGY FROM APRIL 2013  
[Item 8]**

**Declarations of interest:** None.

**Witnesses:**

Maria Dawes, Head of School Effectiveness, Babcock 4S

Ian Wilson, Principal Consultant, Babcock 4S

Amanda Peck, General Manager, Babcock 4S

Kathy Beresford, Performance & Intelligence Manager

Rhona Barnfield, Chairman of Secondary Phase Council

PJ Wilkinson, Assistant Director for Schools and Learning

**Key points raised during the discussion:**

- The Head of School Effectiveness introduced the presentation to Members of the Select Committee.
- In the following presentation the Head of School Effectiveness stated the focus of work had been the ambition of having all schools in Surrey judged as 'good' by 2017. In order to do this, the way in which schools

were supported and challenged had to be addressed. The Head of School Effectiveness pointed out that Surrey continued to perform among the top quartile of all 152 local authorities nationally for the majority of key attainment measures at all key stages.

- The Head of School Effectiveness noted that there were a number of specific challenges the County faced which included a more challenging inspection framework, greater focus and monitoring on schools that were not yet good, a reorganisation of Ofsted and the assumption that failing schools would be turned into sponsored academies.
- A detailed analysis of 2012 inspection and performance data was undertaken and resulted in discussions taking place between the wider school improvement team, head teachers, Area Education Officers (AEO's), wider 4S personnel and the Dioceses.
- There had been some real successes in Surrey's approach to School Improvement. Strong relationships between the school improvement team and schools had improved overall partnership working objectives. Many of the 4S staff were now Ofsted trained and could bring specific support and expertise to the arena. The Head of School Effectiveness commented that a more responsive data management system that enabled the identification of schools at risk needed to be considered. Leadership and management must also be seen as a central focus when considering a school improvement strategy. It was further commented that a consistent approach in respect of support and training was required.
- With the findings from researchers, the proposals suggested by the Head of School Effectiveness for school improvement included Leadership Support, Support for Governors and Specialist Teaching and Learning and Inclusion Support. It was explained that the funding for school improvement had been increased by £1.9M per year for the next 5 years, enabling Surrey to engage earlier and in a more focused manner.
- From April 2013 a revised risk assessment process identifying schools in need of support would be put into place. The improvement strategy identified 110 Focused Support Schools as part of the strategy. A bespoke action plan which is half termly monitored would be put in place for each of these schools. If there was found to be no improvement in performance, the local authority would then need to intervene, providing academy solutions and leadership support where necessary. The Head of School Effectiveness expressed the centrality of school to school support in the Surrey school improvement strategy and confirmed that success would be measured around KPI's.
- Going forward it was stated that designated Overview and Focused Support School would be written to, informing them of their Leadership Partner. Guidance documents explaining the plan in more detail would go out to schools in April 2013.

- Members of the Committee commented on the positive robustness of the school improvement strategy. Following questions concerning risks affecting the strategy, The Head of School Effectiveness stated the greatest risk would be a lack of engagement from schools but importantly schools had engaged with the programme. Hence the need for Babcock 4S to ensure training and quality assurance were in place. The Head of School Effectiveness commented that if the programme was successful in schools, a plan going forward with a successful leadership team in place would need to be developed.
- Members were advised by Babcock 4S officers that there had been a great amount of support from SCC colleagues and school head teachers. The Assistant Director for Schools and Learning stated that Surrey's AEO's were playing a crucial role in the strategy and were happy with the way their role had developed in the programme.
- Members raised concerns over what was being done to prepare for population increase in Surrey and the increasing requirement for teachers. Officers commented that recruitment was essential when thinking about population increase and work would be done with other local authorities to address recruitment issues.
- Referring to the National Union of Teachers, (NUT) March 2013, vote of no confidence towards the Education Secretary, a Member questioned officers on how teaching could be promoted as a career within Surrey. The Head of School Effectiveness expressed the need to promote 'training' for teachers in Surrey. The importance of celebrating the success of Surrey schools would also be of paramount importance in attracting potential teachers to the profession.
- A Member of the Committee asked if the names of schools identified as 'focused support schools' as part of the school improvement strategy could be provided. The Head of School Effectiveness stated that all information relating to the 110 focused support schools was available.
- Officers from Babcock 4S stated the key to success was support from head teachers and governors. Officers expressed their confidence in the strategy and would return to the Committee with a future update. The Chair of the Committee thanked officers from Babcock 4S for all their hard work throughout the year.

### **Recommendations:**

- That officers continue to carefully consider the issue of succession planning to ensure that Surrey schools are able to recruit high quality head teachers in the future.
- That officers explore a mechanism by which local councillors can be informed of instances where a school in their division is identified on requiring focussed support.

- That Babcock 4S are encouraged to aim to have 98% of schools defined as 'good' by 2017.

**Actions/further information to be provided:**

None.

**21/12 REVIEW OF PROVISION FOR PUPILS WITH LEARNING DIFFICULTIES  
[Item 9]**

**Declarations of interest:** None.

**Witnesses:**

Susie Campbell, Surrey SEND Pathfinder Manager

PJ Wilkinson, Assistant Director for Schools and Learning

**Key points raised during the discussion:**

- The Surrey SEND Pathfinder Manager introduced the report to the Committee. A concern of officers was the number of young people leaving Surrey for additional services and the economic and social impacts this was having. The Surrey SEND Pathfinder Manager stated that many young people commented on the difficulty in making friends within their home settings (when attending schools outside of Surrey) which was a motivation for exploring what could be done in Surrey to improve outcomes for children with learning difficulties.
- The Assistant Director for Schools and Learning stated that there were difficult decisions over whether to place individual young people with learning difficulties in mainstream schools or specialist schools. Members raised concerns around the difficulty in convincing parents to choose mainstream schools over specialist schools that provided specialist therapy packages. The Surrey SEND Pathfinder Manager commented that officers had spoken to families and found that parents preferred therapies to be provided in schools, which meant specialist schools were favoured over mainstream schools.
- The Surrey SEND Pathfinder Manager stated the challenge for officers would be how to strengthen Surrey's therapies offer. After speaking to families, the choice of sending children to specialist schools outside Surrey would be rethought if a therapies offer in the local community could be provided.
- Some Members raised concerns over whether teaching young people with learning difficulties in the same mainstream schools as those with



no special needs had a negative impact on teaching. The Assistant Director for Schools and Learning commented that there were well documented benefits for young people with learning difficulties to attend mainstream schools, including the culture of inclusion this helped foster.

- Some Members commented on the progress of services provided for young people with learning difficulties and the resulting need for a more joined up approach. The Assistant Director for Schools and Learning explained how the change to the structure of the health sector and the resulting Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCG's), had caused some disruption regarding funding measures. The funding for speech and language therapies was subject to change and further discussions around the amount of money required was needed.
- Members of the Committee pointed to the importance of early intervention when considering educational needs for young people with learning difficulties. The Surrey SEND Pathfinder Manager commented that the Surrey Special Education Needs & Disability (SEND) Pathfinder had not yet been completed but new planning mechanisms for 0-25 years focused on early intervention and transition. Current work was focused on developing new assessment and development pathways. The Surrey SEND Pathfinder Manager explained a new joint education, health and care plan was being developed, with the opportunity for partners such as the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) to be involved. This joined up approach would allow partners to revisit relations in a new way.
- Questions over the possibility of having units in Surrey dedicated to meeting all special needs locally were raised by Members. The Assistant Director for Schools and Learning commented very expert providers of specialist support were based outside of Surrey. The aim of the Directorate was to look at specific needs in the community and how this weighed up with keeping spending to a minimum.

**Recommendations:**

- That Recommendations relating to the development of Surreys Special Education Needs provision be provided to the Committee after the June-July 2013 consultation

**Actions/further information to be provided:**

None

**22/12 UPDATE ON SURREY SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS & DISABILITY (SEND) PATHFINDER [Item 10]**

**Declarations of interest:** None.

**Witnesses:**

Susie Campbell, Surrey SEND Pathfinder Manager

PJ Wilkinson, Assistant Director for Schools and Learning

**Key points raised during the discussion:**

- The Committee received a report setting out progress in relation to the Surrey SEND Pathfinder and an outline of the new legislative challenges presented by the Children and Families Bill.
- The Surrey SEND Pathfinder Manager informed the Committee that from September 2014 Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) would be offered to all new referrals aged between 0 and 25. Statements would no longer be used, nor would School Action and School Action Plus.
- The new approach to SEN would be better able to identify the needs of individuals and bring together the support they and their families needed from across the education, health and social care sectors.
- The County Council had to publish a local offer setting out the education, care and health provision available for all the Children and Young People (CYP) with SEN in the area, and for all those in other areas for whom the Council had responsibility.
- The timetable for implementation of the new system was very rapid, with full implementation required by September 2014. Having been involved in the Pathfinder, Surrey was at an advantage compared with some other local authorities and would be working with non-pathfinder authorities to support the process.
- Despite being in a good position, Surrey would still need to significantly scale up its existing work to bring in a further 5,000 families, and this would present a significant challenge. Nonetheless, the Department for Education had publically acknowledged the positive progress already achieved by Surrey.
- Officers were currently looking to implement a robust governance structure in order to take the project forward and a new implementation group was in the process of being formed.
- The Assistant Director for Schools and Learning stated that he was pleased that as part of the Pathfinder the County Council had been able to form positive relationships with previous hostile groups. The Surrey SEND Pathfinder Manager added that the legislative would hopefully result in a move away from a historically adversarial system to system that was far more family-centric.

- The upscale from 50 to 5000 families would be challenging and new IT systems and procedures were being developed to support the process. There was also the danger that many service users did not yet fully understand the new system.
- Whilst EHCPs made a lot of sense for severely disabled children, some individuals would require a more educationally focussed plan and it was currently unclear how to differentiate between these two groups without creating a two-tier system.
- It was acknowledged that not all young people were in a family context and that it was important that these individuals were still able to input into the care they received. The Committee were informed that many older children already provided feedback on their care and that young people were directly involved in the development of the new process.
- The relationship with the newly formed CCGs was currently poorly defined and it was expected that there would be some initial problems as the individuals involved learnt to navigate the new systems. However, in Surrey, many of those involved in education had good working relationships with health practitioners and it was hoped that this would help smooth the process, operationally at least. Once CCGs had had time to establish themselves, Surrey could once again examine this high-level, strategic relationship.

**Recommendations:**

None

**Actions/further information to be provided:**

None

**Committee Next Steps:**

None

**23/12 HOME TO SCHOOL PROVISION [Item 11]**

**Declarations of interest:** None.

**Witnesses:**

Paul Millin, Travel and Transport Group Manager

Tracey Coventry, Transport Co-Ordination Team Manager

Claire Potier, Principal Manager for Admissions and Transport

PJ Wilkinson, Assistant Director for Schools and Learning

**Key points raised during the discussion:**

- The Travel and Transport Group Manager introduced the report which set out details of how transport is provided for mainstream and special education needs (SEN) students and the costs involved. The Assistant Director for Schools and Learning commented that the Council had a statutory duty to provide transport for young people to schools. The judgement of officers was required to a greater degree when organising transport for students with SEN. The Assistant Director for Schools and Learning further commented that two thirds of the budget for home to school transport was spent on transport costs for students with SEN whilst the other third was spent on mainstream students transport costs.
- Members of the Committee questioned whether school location was considered when considering school place planning. The Assistant Director for Schools and Learning explained that transport provision was part of the school planning process and that children were placed in schools closest to them, which in turn kept transport costs for the Council to a minimum. When considering SEN students, the cost of boarding in comparison to daily transport costs was considered when making a transport assessment.
- Some Members of the Committee raised concerns over the data that was being used to make decisions over travel costs. The Travel and Transport Group Manager commented that a journey planning system linked to a SAP system with pupil details was used. Going forward a new system containing more details needed to be implemented. The Travel and Transport Group Manager stated that a new system would be implemented by October/November.
- A Member of the Committee raised concerns over transport provision for students progressing from school to college. The Travel and Transport Group Manager commented that independent travel training was being provided by the Transport project team. The team provided one to one travel support to vulnerable students so they could learn skills such as reading a bus timetable and speaking to staff at a train station. The Travel and Transport Group Manager stated that the effectiveness of independent travel training would be reviewed over the next six months and future plans regarding the programme would be discussed.

**Recommendations:**

None

**Actions/further information to be provided:**

None

## **24/12 CHAMPIONING PARENTS TASK GROUP UPDATE [Item 12]**

**Declarations of interest:** None.

**Witnesses:**

PJ Wilkinson, Assistant Director for Schools and Learning

**Key points raised during the discussion:**

- The Assistant Director for Schools and Learning introduced the report to the Committee, stating how the report addressed the 36 recommendations made by the Task Group and the progress that had been made.
- No questions were raised by the Committee.

**Recommendations:**

None

**Actions/further information to be provided:**

None.

## **25/12 BUDGET MONITORING 2012/13 [Item 13]**

**Declarations of interest:** None.

**Witnesses:**

Paula Chowdhury, Strategic Finance Manager for Children, Schools and Families

PJ Wilkinson, Assistant Director for Schools and Learning

**Key points raised during the discussion:**

- Members of the Committee received relevant pages of the Mid Term Financial Plan for Schools and Learning.

- The Strategic Finance Manager for Children, Schools and Families introduced the report commenting that the Schools and Learning service had an underspend of £5.9M for 2012/13. If the net underspend on the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) funded services were excluded, then the SCC related underspend for the service was £3.5M.
- Members of the Committee raised concerns over the underspend for Early Years provision, which stood at £2.4M. The Assistant Director for Schools and Learning explained that the underspend was due to a number of factors such as a decrease in two year olds taking up nursery places. The Assistant Director for Schools and Learning further commented that the Early Years service had received more funding from the government and would rather have the service under spending than over spending when considering future budgeting.

**Recommendations:**

None

**Actions/further information to be provided:**

None.

**Committee Next Steps:**

None.

**26/12 SCHOOL PLACE PLANNING [Item 14]**

**Declarations of interest:** None.

**Witnesses:**

None

**Key points raised during the discussion:**

- Due to time constraints, presentations on the progress of School Place Planning were circulated amongst the Committee.

**Recommendations:**

None

**Actions/further information to be provided:**

None.

**Committee Next Steps:**

None.

**27/12 DATE OF NEXT MEETING [Item 15]**

The Committee noted that this would be the last Committee meeting before the Local Elections in May 2013.

Meeting ended at: 1.05 pm

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**Chairman**

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