

BATH AND NORTH EAST SOMERSET COUNCIL

EARLY YEARS, CHILDREN AND YOUTH POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

Monday, 19th May, 2014

Present:- Councillors: Sarah Bevan (Vice-Chair), Liz Hardman, David Veale, Loraine Morgan-Brinkhurst MBE, Michael Evans, Colin Barrett (In place of Sally Davis) and Nicholas Coombes

Co-opted Non-voting Members:- Chris Batten and Edward Joseph

Also in attendance: Ashley Ayre (Strategic Director, People and Communities), Spencer Cartwright (Primary Teaching & Learning Consultant), Judy Allies (Director of Public Health Award Coordinator), Louise Bizley (Service Team Manager), Deborah Forward (Senior Commissioning Manager - Preventative Services) and Duncan Kerr (Principal EEB Development Officer)

Cabinet Member for Early Years, Children & Youth: Councillor Dine Romero

1 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

The Chair drew attention to the emergency evacuation procedure.

3 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Councillor Sally Davis had sent her apologies to the Panel. Councillor Colin Barrett was present as her substitute for the duration of the meeting.

Peter Mountstephen and David Williams, two co-opted members of the Panel had also sent their apologies for the meeting.

4 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

5 TO ANNOUNCE ANY URGENT BUSINESS AGREED BY THE CHAIRMAN

There was none.

6 ITEMS FROM THE PUBLIC OR COUNCILLORS - TO RECEIVE DEPUTATIONS, STATEMENTS, PETITIONS OR QUESTIONS RELATING TO THE BUSINESS OF THIS MEETING

Councillor Eleanor Jackson addressed the Panel. She spoke of how she had addressed the Panel about a year ago on the work of the Radstock Youth Partnership and had pleaded for more of a focus to be given to working with young people. She informed the Panel about three successful local initiatives, the Trampolining Project in the Methodist Hall, Battle of the Bands which was held two weeks ago and the Radical Project.

She added that she would welcome any action to help progress the Secret Garden Project that she highlighted to the Panel last year.

She stated that as part of the development of the former Alcan site that the Strategic Director for People & Communities had £22,500 worth of funding at his disposal.

The Strategic Director for People & Communities spoke a little later in the meeting and wished to make it very clear that he had no knowledge of funding mentioned by Councillor Jackson.

The Chair thanked Councillor Jackson for her statement.

7 MINUTES - 24TH MARCH 2014

The Panel confirmed the minutes of the previous meeting as a true record and they were duly signed by the Chair.

Councillor Liz Hardman commented that she was unhappy about the process of the report relating to School Term dates for 2015 – 16 following its discussion at the Panel. She questioned why the Cabinet were not presented with Appendix C to the report especially when that had been the option voted for by the Panel.

Councillor Dine Romero, Cabinet Member for Early Years, Children & Youth replied that it was not within the Panel's powers to say what should be presented to Cabinet.

Councillor Liz Hardman asked if Cabinet had knowledge of the Panel's discussion.

Councillor Romero replied that they were aware of it.

8 CHILDREN'S CENTRES RESTRUCTURE - VERBAL UPDATE

The Senior Commissioning Manager for Preventative Services gave an update to the Panel regarding this item. She explained that the consultation was now underway and questionnaires were available in hard copy and online. She added that drop in sessions were also arranged to consult directly with affected families.

She stated that key stakeholders were also being consulted alongside voluntary groups. She added that Councillors, Parishes, Centre Staff, Building Users, Primary Schools and GP's would also be consulted. She said that some interesting points

were already being raised, including that some parents would be willing to pay a small amount for some services.

She concluded by saying that following the consultation a report would be presented to Cabinet in July.

Councillor Liz Hardman commented that she thought that it was a very thorough questionnaire and asked if the Panel would see the results of the consultation.

The Senior Commissioning Manager for Preventative Services replied that a summary of findings would form part of the report.

Councillor Liz Hardman asked how the £300,000 allocated in the latest budget to aid transition would be spent.

The Senior Commissioning Manager for Preventative Services replied that a decision had not been made yet and would only be made after the consultation results had been analysed.

Councillor David Veale asked how useful was the involvement of the Panel in the early stages of the review.

The Strategic Director for People & Communities replied that it was very valuable in ascertaining what the concerns of the public and those that worked in and used the centres were.

Councillor Dine Romero added that it was very helpful to hear first-hand what they wanted us to try and achieve.

Councillor Liz Hardman said that on hearing their concerns it made us determined to fight for their cause.

The Chair thanked the Senior Commissioning Manager for Preventative Services for her update.

9 SCHOOL MEALS SERVICES

The Director of Public Health Award Coordinator introduced this item to the Panel. She praised the work of the B&NES Food Forum for offering help and support to schools on this matter.

She stated that all capital funding (£406k) had been allocated following a survey of all the schools and an assessment of the impact that each individual school will have in September.

She explained that the recruitment process had started for the potential 56 extra staff that will be needed across BANES schools.

Councillor Liz Hardman asked if the allocated funding was enough.

The Director of Public Health Award Coordinator replied that a kitchen cannot be provided for every school, but that she felt sure that they had the best plan in place.

The Strategic Director for People and Communities added that the capital budget within the Council was available if a shortfall was found. He said that he expected the high quality of meals to be maintained across the Council.

Councillor Nicholas Coombes asked how they planned to increase take up of the service to 87% given that the current take up was only 43%.

The Director of Public Health Award Coordinator replied that successful pilots had been carried out in other Local Authorities which gave them the expectation that numbers would increase. She added that they were aiming for 70% of pupils to have a meal on day one and then anticipated that more would choose to use the service after seeing other pupils enjoy the meals. She said that they were hoping to achieve 87% take up if not higher.

Councillor Loraine Morgan-Brinkhurst commented that she would have liked to have seen more produce providers from B&NES on their list.

The Catering Service Team Manager replied that the current contract is held jointly between B&NES & Bristol and was due for renewal in November. She added that it was hoped for more local procurement to be established in the new contract.

The Strategic Director for People and Communities wished to pass on his praise for the work carried out by the Director of Public Health Award Coordinator and the Catering Service Team Manager and all their staff on this project.

10 CHANGES TO THE PRIMARY CURRICULUM

The Primary Teaching & Learning Consultant delivered a presentation to the Panel regarding this item. A copy of it is available on the Panel's Minute Book, a summary is set out below.

Citizenship

- To be taught at Key Stages 3 & 4

Core, Computing & PE

- To be taught at all Key Stages

Non- National Curriculum Subjects

Religious Education

- To be taught at all Key Stages

Sex and relationship education

- To be taught at Key Stages 3 & 4

The School Curriculum

Every state-funded school must offer a curriculum which is balanced and broadly based and which:

- promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society,
- and prepares pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.

All schools must publish their school curriculum by subject and academic year online.

All schools should make provision for personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE), drawing on good practice. Schools are also free to include other subjects or topics of their choice in planning and designing their own programme of education.

Cultural Literacy - certain facts, ideas, literary works that people need to know in order to operate effectively as citizens of the country in which they live. These facts need to be learnt in a highly organised, structured way.

DfE Statutory Assessments 2016+

Key stage 1

English reading
English grammar, punctuation and spelling
Mathematics
Phonics screening check

Key stage 2

English reading
English grammar, punctuation and spelling
Mathematics
Science (sampling test)

Floor Standards

- pupils make sufficient progress at key stage 2 from their starting point in the reception baseline/Key Stage 1; or
- 85% or more of pupils meet the new expected standard at the end of key stage 2 (similar to a level 4b under the current system).

Councillor Liz Hardman asked how much consultation took place before a decision was made.

The Primary Teaching & Learning Consultant replied that three drafts were circulated during the consultation.

Edward Joseph asked to what level coding would be taught.

The Primary Teaching & Learning Consultant replied that simplified versions of Flash were being devised to enable pupils to write code efficiently. He added that they would also have access to code libraries.

11 RESULTS OF YOUTH PUBLIC TRANSPORT SURVEY

Edward Joseph, the Panel's Youth Parliament Representative gave a presentation on this matter. He highlighted some of the results to the Panel.

How often do you use a bus?

Every day – 26.9%

A couple of times per week – 12.9%

A couple of times per month – 27.3%

A couple of times per year – 18.5%

Never – 14.4%

Are there any improvements you would like to see to bus facilities in Bath & North East Somerset?

More seats as there as usually quite a lot of people having to stand up.

They need to be on time. I sometimes rely on First buses to get to school and they are mostly late, making me late for school.

More bus shelters because where I get on the bus there isn't one and we all get soaking wet and cold.

Cheaper bus fares, for example 16 & 17 year olds should be classed as children as they still are.

Decrease in price, or at least make a middle price for people aged 16-19 who are still in school.

More frequent buses going through Timsbury, going to Bath, Midsomer Norton, Frome.

Cleaner busses / better (friendlier) staff / lower prices for students.

He asked if the Panel would support a reduction in fare prices for young people under the age of 16.

The Chair replied that she would support such a proposal.

Councillor Dine Romero commented that it would be interesting to see the results of the recent survey that had been carried out by First.

The Chair added that she would also support young people classified as NEETS in accessing public transport.

Councillor Dine Romero said that she would ask Councillor Caroline Roberts, Cabinet Member for Transport to forward this information to the Department for Transport.

The Chair thanked Edward for his presentation on behalf of the Panel.

12 APPRENTICESHIPS

The Senior Employment and Skills Officer introduced this item to the Panel. He informed them that from April 2012 to April 2014 two Engagement Officers have worked with the Worklessness Programme Manager to develop a programme of effective engagement with target client groups, achieving, amongst others, the following outputs and outcomes:

1. Successfully engaged 120+ (aged 16-59) clients both at early stage support, through to 6 months off out of work benefit or in Employment.
2. 47 individuals in over 16 hours Jobs and Apprenticeships, while taking an active role in increasing their paid hours and sustaining such clients.

He explained that the Economy, Enterprise & Business Development (EEB) Team have been successful in securing a range of targeted recruitment & training (TR&T) outcomes on development sites including Crest Nicholson Bath Western Riverside development, where to date 10 apprentices, 14 unemployed skilled trades have gained employment, 26 Educational visits and a total of 201 up skilling outcomes have been achieved.

He added that the Bovis Homes residential development on the old Purnells factory site in Paulton was providing work experience placements for Norton Radstock construction students for the next year and that this would see at least 20 students undertaking 2 day work experience placements on site.

Councillor Liz Hardman asked how careers advice could be improved in school.

The Senior Employment and Skills Officer replied that the team were addressing schools individually and approaching them about embarking on some work prior to pupils making their GCSE subject choices.

Councillor Loraine Morgan-Brinkhurst commented that any further work in this area would be welcomed.

13 EDUCATIONAL RESULTS 2013

Councillor Michael Evans commented that he was more concerned that not as much attention was being placed on the top achieving pupils and felt that the Council should address that as well as the widening gap of pupils who are eligible for free school meals (FSM).

Councillor Nicholas Coombes commented that the widening gap was a concern and asked for the Panel to receive a future report on how the Pupil Premium is spent.

Councillor Dine Romero, Cabinet Member for Early Years, Children & Youth replied that as most Secondary Schools were now Academies it was difficult to put pressure upon them or intervene.

The People & Communities Strategic Director said that the gap between pupils who are eligible for free school meals (FSM) and those who are not was one of the biggest challenges that the Council faces. He stated that the gap was unacceptable.

He added that this area of work, alongside schools targeting their top tier of pupils were both a priority of Ofsted.

Councillor Nicholas Coombes asked if the Panel had any powers to summon any members of school governing bodies to address them.

The People & Communities Strategic Director replied that the Panel could consider holding an inquiry day on how schools are working on addressing the gap. He added that it would require a great deal of organisation, but that it could be very worthwhile.

Councillor Liz Hardman commented that she was pleased to see that the attainment and achievement of Looked After Children was better than average.

The Headteacher of BANES Virtual School for Children In Care replied that they had been working closely with pupils to develop individual plans. He added that 1:1 tuition was also provided to them on subjects that they needed the most help with.

Councillor Liz Hardman asked what action was being taken with regard to pupil absence.

The People & Communities Strategic Director replied that he had written to all Headteachers and Chairs of Governors and had now identified certain schools where there is a problem and followed up with individual letters.

14 CABINET MEMBER UPDATE

The Cabinet Member for Early Years, Children & Youth, Councillor Dine Romero addressed the Panel.

She said that she had spoken with the acting Headteacher of Oldfield School and had been assured that appropriate support was being offered to teachers and pupils and that training for governors would be provided. She added that the school wished to become more engaged than it previously was with other schools.

She informed the Panel that she had become a member of the Food Forum.

The Chair thanked her for her update.

15 PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES STRATEGIC DIRECTOR'S BRIEFING

The People and Communities Strategic Director addressed the Panel.

Oldfield School

He said he was sure the Panel were aware of the recently published report by the Education and Funding Agency (EFA) concerning the leadership and governance of Oldfield School. The report was the outcome of a review by the EFA which was in turn triggered by an inspection by Ofsted in December 2013. He said that the new Chair of Governors of Oldfield School had been in regular contact with the Council and there was a clear intention to begin to work with local schools and the Council. He added that through the EFA the school are also accessing support from academies with outstanding professional leadership and governance with a view to developing their understanding and practice. He stated that the Council was providing services to Oldfield School and would support the Acting Head Teacher as requested.

He commented that over the last six months Councillors had asked questions about the role of the Council in addressing concerns regarding Oldfield School and about how the Council holds such schools to account for its actions or omissions. He said that in this regard, the law was clear. The Council has no power to intervene or to demand answers either on behalf of a parent or on its own behalf as local education authority. He said that events at Oldfield School demonstrated a fundamental flaw in the legislation which resulted in an accountability vacuum regarding academies and free schools.

He stated that the Council had maintained active oversight of Oldfield School and other academies. He said that when parents had approached us with concerns or complaints we advised them on the process they had to follow and we have assiduously notified the EFA and, where relevant, Ofsted. We have also actively queried and challenged Academies over particular incidents to ensure that children and parents are offered fair process.

He said that the reality was that any system can be made to work if relationships are strong and that required respect, discussion and transparency. He added that he would be pleased to see Oldfield School working with other schools and the LA.

Staff Changes

A number of valued colleagues were leaving over the next few months.

Chris Kavanagh, Team Leader Schools Capital & Organisation will retire on 30 June after 42 years of service.

Jen Southall, Senior School Improvement Adviser will leave us on 31 August.

Amber Gillani, Commissioning and Contracts Manager will leave us in late June.

Joe Duncan, Data and Performance Manager has also decided to leave us for pastures new.

He said that he wished to pay tribute to these colleagues who have all contributed enormously in their own way to the delivery of good outcomes to our children and young people and families.

Children and Young Peoples Plan

The new three year plan (2014-2017) is now published.

LSCB Annual Plan

The annual business plan for Safeguarding Children's Board has just been published and sets out our safeguarding priorities for the next year.

Councillor Loraine Morgan-Brinkhurst wished to thank him on behalf of all concerned parents with regard to the work undertaken relating to Oldfield School. She added that she hoped that it was now a time to look forward.

16 PANEL WORKPLAN

The Chair introduced this item to the Panel. She requested that the Panel receives a report on the role of the Local Authority alongside Academies, Free Schools and Studio.

Councillor Nicholas Coombes requested that the Panel receives a report on how the Pupil Premium is spent with regard to addressing the need to narrow the gap of pupils who are eligible for free school meals.

The Panel agreed to both of these proposals being added to the workplan.

The meeting ended at 7.20 pm

Chair(person)

Date Confirmed and Signed

Prepared by Democratic Services