

BATH AND NORTH EAST SOMERSET COUNCIL

EARLY YEARS, CHILDREN AND YOUTH POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

Monday, 28th November, 2011

Present:- Councillors: Sally Davis (Chair), Dine Romero (Vice-Chair), Liz Hardman, Mathew Blankley, David Veale and Ian Gilchrist

Co-opted Voting Members:- Mrs T Daly and Sanjeev Chaddha

Co-opted Non-voting Members:-Chris Batten and Dawn Harris

Also in attendance: Ashley Ayre (Strategic Director - People and Communities), Tony Parker (Divisional Director Learning and Inclusion Service), Briony Waite (Strategic Planning Officer, Children's Health & Commissioning Service) and Maurice Lindsay (Divisional Director - Children, Young People and Family Support), Richard Morgan (Finance & Resources Manager), Wendy Hiscock (Head of School Improvement and Achievement) and Lin Bartlett (Senior Secondary Adviser)

Cabinet Member for Early Years, Children & Youth: Councillor Nathan Hartley

Cabinet Member for Resources: Councillor David Bellotti

37 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

38 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

The Chairman drew attention to the emergency evacuation procedure.

39 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS

David Williams, Stuart Bradfield and Peter Mountstephen who are all Co-opted Members of the Panel had sent their apologies.

40 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST UNDER THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

There were none.

41 TO ANNOUNCE ANY URGENT BUSINESS AGREED BY THE CHAIRMAN

There was none.

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

Councillor Ian Gilchrist made a statement to the Panel on the subject of 'The Shape of Things to Come' / Schools' Collaborative Future. A summary is set out below and a copy of the statement can be found on the Panel's Minute Book.

He stated that he was directly involved in this matter as Chair of Governors at Widcombe Junior School, and would like to bring to the attention of this panel his deep unease at what is going on under this heading.

'We have for years in B&NES enjoyed a Schools Service which has for the most part worked extremely well. The result has been a set of well-run schools which has delivered good results and has on the whole delivered well-adjusted children who are credit to their parents and to the LA. This does not happen by accident. However, the prospect in front of us is the gradual disintegration of this beautiful machine principally because of the introduction of academies, where we now have 9 secondaries and 1 primary. This is resulting in the withdrawal of these schools from the LA system and is having the inevitable consequence that quite a number of current LA services (mainly Improvement, Specialist Behaviour, and Inclusion) will not be viable for B&NES to deliver any more. So schools wanting to use these and other services will have to organise themselves to obtain from elsewhere, by one form or another of 'collaboration'.'

'My concern arises in that I see no short-term benefits to the children currently in the system, and what is worse there will arguably be a possible long-term decline in standards as school resources are diverted to the effort of making collaborations and then running them. And speaking selfishly from a governor perspective I see a massive rise in work expected of us, as we look at the implications of these changes and then work out how we respond to them.'

'So what do I ask of this panel? Firstly that you be aware of these changes that are coming in, whether we like them or not, and secondly be willing to take a long-term interest in developments and their aftermath. If in 2 years' time we discover that B&NES is simply no longer in the business of providing an education service to school, does that mean we can simply wash our hands of responsibility for what may happen to the quality of education and standards in what is geographically our area?'

The Chairman commented that the Panel were expecting to receive an update from the next Headteachers / Chair of Governor Conference at their meeting in January.

Councillor Dine Romero commented that the Panel rarely had the opportunity to hear from school governors and wondered if there was a process whereby they could pass on their comments to the Panel representative.

Sanjeev Chaddha replied that he was not aware of such a process. He added that as a decision was expected by Christmas, additional Governor meetings were being held to gather views.

The People and Communities Strategic Director commented that a strategic briefing for all Chairs of Governors was held every term and he offered to let the Panel and

other interested parties when those meetings would take place. He added that the Council was looking for a steer by Christmas, not a decision.

Dawn Harris commented that resources for the Specialist Behaviour Service would not be lost, but become more targeted and better allocated.

Councillor Dine Romero asked if Primary & Secondary Academy Headteachers would still retain involvement in Council wide Headteacher meetings. She added she would also like to see full Governor representation on the Panel.

The Divisional Director for Learning & Inclusion replied that all Academies are required to be represented on the Schools Forum.

The Chairman assured Councillor Gilchrist that the process would be monitored as it was vital to ensure that all children received a fair deal.

Briony Waite, Strategic Planning Officer for the Children's Health & Commissioning Service addressed the Panel on the subject of Young Leaders. She stated that a wide range of young people from many groups had met on Saturday afternoon with a view to establishing priorities and learning more about becoming a Young Leader. She added that she wished to thank Councillors Hardman and Hartley for their attendance as well as the Project Workers who were present.

Luke, one of the young people who attended the meeting stated the group had a discussion on what makes a good leader and decided upon three key themes to pursue in the future (i) Transport, (ii) activities for Young People and (iii) the negative image of young people. He added that the group intends to meet once a month and would hope at some point to have a representative on the Scrutiny Panel.

Briony commented that it had been a very positive first meeting and she hoped that numbers of the group would increase to give young people a true voice.

The Chairman on behalf of the Panel thanked them for making their statement.

43 MINUTES - 10TH OCTOBER 2011

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

44 SCHOOL PERFORMANCE DATA

The Head of School Improvement and Achievement and the Senior Secondary Adviser introduced this item to the Panel and gave them a visual presentation. A copy of the presentation can be found on the Panel's Minute Book, a summary is set out below.

Early Years Foundation Stage:

- The proportion of 5 year olds scoring the LA threshold target of 78 points and 6+ in all scales in communication language and literacy and personal social and emotional development has increased to 58.2% compared to 56% in 2010.
- Very good progress has been made in narrowing the gap between the lowest attaining 20% of children and their peers. This is now 28.2% compared to 29% in 2010.

Key Stage 1, Level 2b+:

- The local expectation and priority has been to increase the proportion of pupils attaining the more secure level of 2b +
- This remains a priority as outcomes are overall the same as last year. The greatest gap is between boys and girls attainment in writing at 15%, the same as the national gap.

Key Stage 1, Level 3:

- At Level 3 outcomes are significantly above those nationally. Reading is a particular strength (42% girls attained level 3). Whilst writing results are comparatively high, it is a local priority to improve the proportion reaching this higher level.

Key Stage 2, Level 4+ and Level 5:

- Attainment in English and mathematics combined at Level 4+ is 77%, 3 percentage points above national outcomes. Higher attaining pupils have achieved well, 24% gaining Level 5, 3% above national outcomes.
- English remains a strength results being above those nationally. 85% have attained Level 4+ and 35% Level 5. The gap between boys and girls remains at 7% compared to 9% nationally.

Progress from Key Stage 1 – 2 :

- The proportion making at least 2 levels progress from Key Stage 1 to 2 in English is 85% (83% nationally).
- In mathematics 83% make expected progress (82% nationally).

Vulnerable groups:

At Key Stage 2, the gaps in attainment at Level 4+ in English and mathematics combined are as follows:

- Free School Meals (FSM) attainment gap is 30.5% having narrowed slightly by 1 percentage point since 2009. Progress of FSM pupils is closer to that of non-FSM pupils with a difference of 3%.
- Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) attainment gap between this group of pupils and all pupils overall is 8.6%, the greatest being between those of mixed ethnicity and all pupils. Numbers are low and results are analysed by individual school and pupil.

Key Stage 4:

- Provisional data from the DfE for GCSE results show another increase in the proportion of pupils achieving 5+A*-C grades in any subject and 5+ A*-C grades including English and Mathematics has also increased for schools within Bath and North East Somerset.
- Only one school in the LA is performing below the floor target of 35%. A priority still remains to reduce the achievement gap between the 5+A*-C figure with and without English and maths ensuring that even more young people include English and maths in their GCSE successes.
- There has been a percentage increase again this year in the proportion of young people achieving 5 or more A* - C grades at GCSEs from 77.5% (2010) to 80.9% (2011)/ Nationally the figures 78.8% in the South West 76.4%. Boys have improved their performance by 0.6% to 75.8% and girls by 6.5% to 85.7% exceeding both the figures for the South West LAs and national figures.
- Students attained 96.1% 5 A*-G grades compared to 95.3% in the South West and nationally 93.1%. A new measure now includes 5 A*-G including English and Maths. Students in Bath and NE Somerset attained 95.1% compared to 94.8% for the South West and 91.6% nationally.

Expected levels of Progress:

- Progress levels are taken from Key Stage 2 to 4 at 3 levels of progress in both English and maths. There has been an increase in both English and maths. 78% of students achieved 3 levels of progress in English (75% 2010) the highest percentage in the South West and 68.2% achieved 3 levels of progress in maths (66% 2010) the third highest in the South West.

English Baccalaureate:

- This new measure of performance identifies English, mathematics, science, a modern or classical language, and either history or geography as qualifying subjects. For all schools 22.7 per cent of students were entered for all of the subject areas of the English Baccalaureate and 16.5 per cent passed every subject area with grades A* to C. In the South West 23.6% of students were entered and 16.4% passed with grades A*-C and in Bath and NE Somerset

31.2% of students were entered with 22.9% of those students achieving A* to C in all subjects.

Councillor Liz Hardman asked if figures relating to attendance and persistent absence were still recorded.

The Divisional Director for Learning & Inclusion replied that yes those figures were recorded. He added that the national threshold had changed to make it a tougher indicator to achieve.

Councillor Ian Gilchrist asked how much the Pupil Premium was.

The Head of School Improvement and Achievement replied that it was £488 per pupil.

Councillor Ian Gilchrist asked when schools were expecting to see a difference from the use of the premium.

The Head of School Improvement and Achievement replied that work was planned to take place over the next four terms that would include the introduction of Breakfast Clubs to those schools that do not currently operate them so that the children are 'ready to learn'. She added that schools must inform parents on their use of the premium.

The Panel **RESOLVED** to:

(i) Note that pupils in Foundation stage, key stages 1, 2 and 4 continue to attain well compared with other local authorities and beyond national expectations on all measures. Post 16 results 2011 show a significant improvement on the previous two years and this year provisional data indicates students' attainment is above the national figures on two key indicators.

(ii) Commend schools and Local Authority staff for their continuing high quality work and high standards achieved.

(iii) Agree that raising the achievement of particular underperforming groups of pupils and improving pupil progress are priorities for Local Authority support and challenge to schools and settings.

45 DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT FROM THE LOCAL SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD

The Divisional Director for Safeguarding, Social Care and Family Services introduced this item to the Panel. He informed them that it is a draft report which remains a work in progress which should be used a critical appraisal to identify the priorities of the Board. He added that a successful Annual Stakeholders' Event had been held on 23rd November 2011.

Tess Daly asked for further information in relation to developing a media strategy as mentioned within the draft report.

The Divisional Director for Safeguarding, Social Care and Family Services replied that the LSCB still had a rather underdeveloped media strategy which had fundamentally been reactive rather than proactive. He added that work had progressed during 2011/12 to develop this and it was now hoped that the profile of the LSCB and its safeguarding agenda could be raised through effective communication and media strategies.

Councillor Liz Hardman asked what measures were being taken to tackle the challenging budgetary conditions mentioned within the report.

The Divisional Director for Safeguarding, Social Care and Family Services replied that the Local Authority has a lead responsibility alongside other agencies to undertake an annual audit as a Board. The key thing is ensure that we maintain capacity across partner agencies for preventative and early intervention services in amidst of severe budgetary pressures.

The Panel **RESOLVED** to:

- (i) Approve the Draft Report in its current form.
- (ii) Note that the Annual Report 2011/2012 will be published on 1st April 2012.

46 MEDIUM TERM SERVICE & RESOURCE PLAN - CHILDREN'S SERVICES

The People and Communities Strategic Director introduced this item to the Panel. He wished to highlight some of the key messages from within the report.

For 2012 -13 a funding gap exists of £826k.

Growth Areas:

Social Care pressures total £200k
£100k Care placements
£100k Care leaver's services

The pressure that was anticipated to impact upon our Social Care functions had materialised. Our 'In Care' population has remained broadly stable at around 155-160 children and young people. However this is 30-35 placements above the population in the years up to 2009-10 i.e. a rise of 24 – 28% in the numbers in our care population.

Additionally pressures exist in servicing borrowing for the capital programme totalling £130k which relates to the decision of the administration to support the development of a sixth form for St. Mark's CE School and St. Gregory's RC College.

He stated that he had sought to protect preventative services whilst remaining efficient.

All Secondary Schools and a proportion of Primary Schools were expected to move to Academy status, this would reduce the central education function of the directorate.

A radical redesign of the service may be required in future years.

Sanjeev Chaddha asked if temporary and contract staff were included in the FTE figures within the report.

The People and Communities Strategic Director replied that yes they were.

Councillor Ian Gilchrist asked if the size of the funding gap alarmed him.

The People and Communities Strategic Director replied that the gap is very significant and that he would need to look at the central education functions in future years. He added that the service had taken a previously large hit to its budget and that Cabinet discussions had taken place to seek a way forward.

Councillor Ian Gilchrist asked if the costs associated with Culverhay School were anticipated.

The People and Communities Strategic Director replied that this was a one off Capital cost to enable the restructure of some of the school premises.

Councillor David Veale asked how much of an account balance a school should retain.

The Finance & Resources Manager replied that a balance control mechanism was in place on all school accounts and that this was 5% for a Secondary School and 8% for a Primary School.

The Chairman thanked the officers for the budget training they had received earlier in the month and endorsed the request for the Cabinet to find the current shortfall in the budget.

Councillor David Bellotti, the Cabinet Member for Resources was present and addressed the Panel. He hoped to be able to respond positively to the Panel's request, but stressed that he was awaiting the decision from the DfE as to whether they were going to implement the proposed 'top slice' of £1.5m.

47 CABINET MEMBER UPDATE

Councillor Nathan Hartley, Cabinet Member for Early Years, Children & Youth addressed the Panel. He informed of some of his latest work and plans for the future.

Project 28: Its parent company has gone into liquidation and a replacement service has been identified. The Drugs & Housing Initiative has provided a temporary phone number and a support worker to the project has agreed to carry on their role.

The People and Communities Strategic Director added that this is a temporary arrangement until the end of this financial year and that a one year commissioned service will be in place from April 2012.

Youth Unemployment / Skills & Employability: The Council is looking to work with Connexions and other agencies in an attempt to bid for further funding.

Academies: He stated he was working with the local MP to address the fact that it is not compulsory for them to deliver sexual relationship education.

Youth / Foster Service: Plans were being made to hold celebration events for both of these services.

Youth Service Pledge: He informed the Panel that the Principal Youth Officer is in the process of writing this document and that the Panel would be notified when it was ready for publication.

Listening Matters: This is a group that is actively engaging young people and will fund five Community Organisers. The Link School will be central to this work.

Youth Parliament Elections: Off The Record our delivering our Youth Democracy Service and it has been proposed that at these next elections the winning candidates will serve a term of 2 years.

Councillor Ian Gilchrist invited him to visit Widcombe Junior School to see first-hand the condition of their school hall.

Councillor Nathan Hartley replied that he would be happy to visit the school.

The Chairman on behalf of the Panel thanked him for his update.

48 PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES STRATEGIC DIRECTOR'S BRIEFING

The People and Communities Strategic Director addressed the Panel.

He informed them that he expected to bring a report to the Panel in March next year on the 'Redesign of the People and Communities Service'.

He also made them aware that the Safeguarding and Looked After Children team were due to receive an announced inspection before April 2012.

The Panel thanked him for his update.

49 PANEL WORKPLAN

The Chairman introduced this item to the Panel. She also requested that they receive an interim report on Admissions in January as well as a full report in March.

Councillor Dine Romero requested that her School Recycling report be deferred to March from January.

Dawn Harris Suggested the Panel should receive a report on School Partnerships at its March meeting.

The Chairman proposed that the Panel has an update on the 'Shape of Things to Come' project at its January meeting.

Councillor Nathan Hartley, Cabinet Member for Early Years, Children & Youth proposed that the Youth Democracy & Participation report be moved to March, a Skills & Employability Update be given in May and that the Youth Service Pledge be placed as a future item on the workplan.

The Panel **RESOLVED** to approve all of these proposals.

The meeting ended at 6.40pm

Chair(person)

Date Confirmed and Signed

Prepared by Democratic Services