

## **BATH AND NORTH EAST SOMERSET**

### **CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL**

Tuesday, 15th November, 2016

**Present:-** Councillors Matt Cochrane (Vice-Chair), Karen Warrington, Peter Turner, Lisa O'Brien (in place of Sally Davis), Alison Millar, Liz Hardman and Dine Romero (in place of Lisa Brett)

**Co-opted Members:** Andrew Tarrant, Chris Batten and Jake Bishop-Ponte

**Also in attendance:** Richard Baldwin (Divisional Director for Safeguarding & Social Care), Mike Bowden (Strategic Director for People & Communities), Deborah Forward (Senior Commissioning Manager - Preventative Services), Margaret Simmons-Bird (Head of Education Improvement), Sarah Watts (Complaints & Data Protection Team Manager), Paula Bromley (Service Manager for Connecting Families) and Tom Morrison (Senior School Improvement & Achievement Adviser)

#### **46 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

#### **47 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE**

The Chairman drew attention to the emergency evacuation procedure.

#### **48 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS**

Councillors Sally Davis and Lisa Brett had sent their apologies to the Panel. Councillors Lisa O'Brien and Dine Romero were their respective substitutes for the duration of the meeting.

David Williams had sent his apologies to the Panel.

Councillor Emma Dixon, Cabinet Member Assistant for Children's Services had sent her apologies to the Panel.

#### **49 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were none.

#### **50 TO ANNOUNCE ANY URGENT BUSINESS AGREED BY THE CHAIRMAN**

There was none.

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

Roz Lambert, First Steps CEO had registered to make a statement to the Panel on the Children's Centre Services agenda item. She agreed to make the statement when that item was reached on the agenda.

**52 MINUTES - 13TH SEPTEMBER 2016**

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

**53 CABINET MEMBER UPDATE**

Councillor Michael Evans, Cabinet Member for Children's Services addressed the Panel, a summary is set out below.

School Performance

I would like to preface my remarks by making clear my belief that our teachers work hard and that in my opinion teaching is a uniquely stressful occupation. I feel it is part of my job to point out where I would hope for better.

"At national average" has to be the general impression of these results. EYFS and KS1 – national average. KS2 varied, roughly national average. KS4 above national average, it is very pleasing to read. KS5 at national average.

The usual theme that I find in the BANES results is evidence that the higher ability child is relatively unchallenged. This year it is disappointing to read that at KS1 the proportion of pupils working at greater depth is now below national average, and at A level the percentage of students achieving three A\*-A or better is slightly below national average, and a fair bit below the national average for the south west.

BANES is a relatively affluent area and we should be aiming to achieve above the national average at all levels. Let's remember that the national average is low compared with other developed countries.

At KS4 the message should be: find out what Norton Hill and Somervale are doing, and copy. Their attainment scores are good and their Progress 8 figures are a clear cut above.

Devolution and 16-19 Education

One consequence of yesterday's decision by BANES, Bristol and South Gloucestershire Councils to go ahead with the deal to create the West of England Combined Authority is that responsibility and finance for 16-19 education will be devolved. This should make it easier to ensure that the courses offered meet employers' needs and give our young people a good chance of gaining employment locally.

## Children's Centres / Children's Services

The options listed in the report seek to preserve the services to vulnerable children and families while looking to transfer council-owned children's centre buildings to other bodies. There is interest from suitable bodies for all the buildings. The services in the future may be run from the same buildings or from other community buildings.

## Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children

We now have 10 UASC, and more are expected as a result of the clearing of the Calais camp. The Council is likely to have to finance about half the cost of looking after these children.

## Midsomer Norton Schools Partnership Primary School

Planning permission for the housing development and school in Mendip on the edge of Midsomer Norton has been refused. The Partnership is now in discussion with stakeholders, including BANES, on finding another site. They still intend to open the new Free School, but this planning refusal will delay it by at least a year. Meanwhile BANES will need to make arrangements for a bulge year in local primary provision. Normally when this happens, there is an attempt to give the school a legacy building, rather than just installing a portable classroom, and I hope that will prove possible in this case.

## Early Years Settings

A good news story: research shows that Early Years Settings which have a qualified teacher on the staff have 10% better outcomes than those that don't. BANES comes in the top 10% of all local authorities for this resource.

## Secondary School Admissions

As has been previously reported, BANES needs to prepare for the possible closing of Bath Community Academy, so that all pupils can be accommodated. It is therefore proposing to ask parents to name five choices of secondary school rather than the current three, so that there is less likelihood of all choices being turned down and South Gloucestershire or other out-of-district children taking places at BANES schools like Oldfield, and BANES children being left without a school. The new head of Oldfield is comfortable with this. There has to be a consultation for this change to admissions policy, and this went live on 7th November.

## National Social Care Conference

A small party from BANES attended the National Children and Adults Social Care Conference at the beginning of this month, after missing it last year. The partnership theme was prominent, and a lot of interesting and up to date information was gained.

Councillor Liz Hardman expressed her concern for members of the public, particularly parents and pupils from Twerton with regard to Bath Community Academy (BCA). She said that the cancelled open evening could have been

opportunity for all concerned to address the situation. She asked if there was yet a timetable for when a decision would be made.

The Strategic Director for People & Communities replied that discussions have been held with Cabot and the Regional Schools Commissioner and that he expected an announcement from the Regional Schools Commissioner to be made soon. He added that the Department for Education has to weigh up the options before a decision can be made.

He stated that the regular admissions deadline of October 31<sup>st</sup> had passed, but said that should BCA confirm that they will be accepting pupils in September 2017 then an extension of application time will be put in place until the end of December 2016.

Councillor Liz Hardman asked what plans have been considered for current BCA pupils.

The Strategic Director for People & Communities replied that the issue has been raised with other local Secondary Schools.

Councillor Dine Romero said that she was concerned for pupils that attend and have chosen BCA on the basis of its provision and questioned if other schools could provide the same service. She also asked if pupils were currently being turned away if seeking to move within this academic year.

The Strategic Director for People & Communities replied that in terms of specific need that all schools should be able to provide the same level of service. He said that he was not aware of any issues relating to current in year admission requests, but acknowledged that such a request would put the school in a tricky position.

Councillor Dine Romero asked if BCA were to close what effect would there be on the Home to School Transport budget.

The Strategic Director for People & Communities replied that if parents choose to move their children who are currently in Years 7 and 10 to St Mark's School, they will receive free transport should BCA close.

Councillor Dine Romero asked the Cabinet Member if he felt there was a link between pupil performance and the structure of a school.

Councillor Michael Evans replied that he did.

Councillor Liz Hardman asked if he still felt there was a risk that all Children's Centres could close.

Councillor Michael Evans replied that the current direction of travel was that none were under threat of closure.

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

## 54 SENIOR IN CARE COUNCIL

Lisa Mukherjee, Participation Development Worker, Off the Record introduced this item and said that representatives of the Senior In Care Council and the B&NES Youth Forum would give two presentations. The presentations will be available on the Panel's Minute Book and online as an appendix to these minutes. A summary is set out below.

Destiny, Jaz M and Jaz L from the Senior In Care Council addressed the Panel.

### What we do

We are a group of young people aged 11-18 who campaign on issues affecting young people looked after in care by BANES. We'd like to tell you about the work we have been doing and some of our campaigns.

### Our Approach

We use a 'You said we did' approach with everyone we work with. This means we give them feedback about what they are doing well and what they can do even better and then ask them to report back to us on the changes they have made. We are positive and friendly towards everyone we meet and that way they want to work with us.

SICC won Young Volunteer Group of the Year at the Chairman of Bath Awards 2016

### Our Campaigns

We promote our campaigns in lots of different ways, for example creating Podcasts with Somer Valley FM. We also attend the In Care Council Steering Group Meeting and the Corporate Parents meeting so we can tell them what we think and they can help us to make changes. We created a postcard about our group and sent it to all LAC young people.

The Pledge – we monitor the Pledge and discuss with BANES what we think they are doing well and what needs to be built on

We are working on a PSHE Curriculum for Life and have discussed our ideas with Kate Murphy (BANES Anti-Bullying and PSHE Lead).

We fed back the importance of LAC young people's right to work experience being promoted to them, as a result Virtual Schools put on a work experience event.

We fed back to Corporate Parents about how our confidentiality was being compromised and as a result Ashley Ayre sent out a letter reminding schools of their obligation to respect our confidentiality.

We have been involved in recruitment for roles such as LAC Nurse, Deputy Safeguarding Lead and Participation Commissioner. We have looked at job descriptions, sat on interview panels and fed back to applicants. We have even offered candidates their jobs.

We ran a creative workshop to speak to Social Work Students about what we look for in a social worker. As part of our involvement in recruitment – we carried out a consultation on what makes a good Social Worker with the JICC and BANES care leavers and created a document which is now featured on the recruitment section of the BANES website.

### Podcasts

Last year we launched our Podcasts, created with Somer Valley FM, in which we:

- Promote SICC and encourage other young people to join their local In Care Council
- Discuss what it is like to be in care
- Bust the myths of being in care and talk about our work and campaigns.

If you would like to listen to them they are on the Off the Record Website

### IRO's (Independent Reviewing Officers)

- SICC and JICC altered the forms used by IRO's.
- We met IRO's & created a Powerpoint for their team training day.
- As a result the IRO's have put a reminder out in their letters to young people that they can choose where, when and who attends their review.
- Have promised to promote work experience opportunities.
- Will remind young people they can see their IRO on their own.
- Will make sure young people are happy with the date & time of their next review.
- Will make sure all LAC young people receive the appropriate age LAC pack

### Consultations & Commissions

We have taken part in (some as part of BANES Youth Forum):

- Your Care Your Way
- Health Project (run by PHD student who is a Care Leaver)
- Sexual Health Project Research
- Immunisations commission

### What Next?

- Make a film/video about being in care which can be used in PSHE lessons.
- Meet the PSHE Leads in schools so they understand why this campaign is so important for us.
- Create a 'model' Confidentiality Policy around working with young people in Care that can be used in BANES and beyond...
- I (Jaz M) am also Deputy Member of Youth Parliament and am currently working as part of a team analysing over 800 responses to a Mental Health Survey written and circulated by BANES Youth Forum. I was a key note speaker at Primary Parliament Day and have pledged to go back next year and tell them what changes have been made.

Members of the Youth Forum addressed the Panel.

### Make Your Mark

This is the UK's largest youth consultation.

978, 216 votes were cast nationally.

Curriculum for Life was the top subject matter both locally (776 votes) and nationally (142,471 votes)

Jake Bishop-Ponte said that he attended the House of Commons on the 11th November and spoke during the debate on tackling racial and religious discrimination.

### What next?

A member of the Youth Forum said they would discuss as group soon what areas to focus on, whether it would be the two main items from Jake's manifesto which were Transport and Gender Equality or the issues raised through Make Your Mark.

The Chairman offered his congratulations to all who took part in the presentations.

Councillor Liz Hardman asked how do other Looked After Children find out about your work.

Lisa Mukherjee replied that all IRO letters have details of the In Care Council's on them.

Councillor Dine Romero asked what the response had been to the postcard campaign.

Jaz L replied that it had been very positive and that through suggestions from Social Workers two young people may be joining the Senior In Care Council.

Jaz M added that the group has helped all its members develop so much.

Councillor Peter Turner asked how they felt about the issue of voting at 16.

Jaz M replied that this is why the Curriculum for Life is so important to enable young people to vote confidently in their own right.

Jake Bishop-Ponte said that it was a very important issue as he pays taxes currently yet has no say in how they are spent. He added that he hoped that the Council would support young people as they progress the issues raised.

Dawn, a member of the public, recalled that when her son was at school that not many children discussed their problems with members of the School Council and would talk to him instead. She asked how many of the young people were aware of safeguarding issues.

Lisa Mukherjee replied that Off The Record explains confidentiality to all the young people that it works with.

## **55 UNICEF - CHILD FRIENDLY CITY**

The Divisional Director for Safeguarding & Social Care introduced this item by saying that following the September meeting of the Panel he had met with Penny Hay and agreed a basis for ongoing discussion regarding this initiative.

Penny Hay, Child Friendly City Steering Group addressed the Panel, a copy of her statement will be available on the Panel's Minute Book and online as an appendix to these minutes. A summary is set out below.

The Child and Youth Friendly Community initiative has been driven by a diverse range of creative and cultural organisations across B&NES. Our vision involves the right of every child and young person to experience a safe, healthy and happy childhood, with an emphasis on respect and engagement.

The Child Friendly City Initiative Steering Group are keen to work with the Unicef Child Rights Partners Team alongside the Council and young people. Child Rights Partners is a ground-breaking programme - systematically embedding children's rights in public services at both policy and practice level.

In B&NES, we want all children and young people to have equal life chances with positive mental health and well-being, with higher aspirations. B&NES has identified health and socio-economic inequalities and is working towards reducing these; this project would actively support the Council's work.

We are inviting the Council to be a Unicef Child Rights Partner and asking the Scrutiny Panel to consider making a recommendation to Cabinet to support this initiative. We are keen that there is a political commitment to this initiative, with co-operation across the Local Authority together with robust engagement and cross-Council participation.

Naomi Danquah, Programme Director, Child Rights Partners addressed the Panel, a copy of her briefing will be available on the Panel's Minute Book and online as an appendix to these minutes. A summary is set out below.

Unicef UK, a registered UK charity, runs programmes to protect and promote the rights of children and young people in the UK, working with national and local government and institutions to implement and advocate for lasting change.

Our Child Rights Partners programme builds on and is a part of the Child Friendly Cities Initiative, an international programme aiming to translate Unicef's mission into practical commitments and action at the local level. Child Rights Partners (CRP) brings Unicef UK and local authorities together to put children's rights at the heart of public services and ensure all children have the same opportunity to flourish.

During the course of a three year pilot, launched in November 2013, Unicef UK has been supporting 5 local authorities to use the UNCRC as a framework to transform



local policy and practice in a range of areas, from developing area-wide children and families' plans, to training elected members to embedding a child rights-based approach in corporate parenting strategies.

In 2017, Unicef UK is incorporating learning from the pilot into a developed programme model and is inviting up to 5 local authorities to join the programme.

Over the course of 3 – 5 years, Unicef UK will support Local Authorities to achieve six 'badges' demonstrating sustainable progress towards embedding child rights across the city or community. The badges will recognise the authority's progress and development in key areas such as political commitment to children's rights, workforce knowledge and understanding of children's rights, meaningful participation, and child rights innovation.

The support package offered to local authorities and their partners includes a tried and tested combination of collaborative activities and approaches that can be tailored to each partner's needs. This includes:

40 days of Unicef staff time (50% face to face & 50% back office)

- Access to CPD accredited training
- Technical assistance
- Project management support
- Mentoring

Access to resources

Access to local authority networks

Unicef UK is a registered charity operating on a not-for-profit basis and all income raised will go towards cost recovery. Local authorities will be expected to pay an annual participation fee of £25,000 and allow for indirect costs such as releasing staff for training and planning, providing training venues and ensuring there is capacity to co-ordinate and oversee the programme locally.

The participation fee could be met via a range of partners.

Councillor Matt Cochrane asked how they would quantify outcomes from the pilot stage of the programme.

Naomi Danquah replied that outcomes could be judged on improvements in partnership working, increased use of the referrals service and the number of young people remaining engaged.

Councillor Dine Romero asked if the initiative would impact on the Troubled Families work.

Naomi Danquah replied that it does not gel directly with that work area, but could improve some parts of it.

Councillor Alison Millar asked why only five local authorities would join the programme in 2017.

Naomi Danquah replied that they have to scale the programme carefully and that there would be a rolling application process. She added that they were currently talking with twenty local authorities.

Councillor Lisa O'Brien asked if the initiative would cover B&NES or the City of Bath.

Penny Hay replied that it would be for the whole of B&NES.

The Divisional Director for Safeguarding & Social Care added that this has to be available for the whole of our community.

Councillor Lisa O'Brien asked how the initiative would overlay our current services.

The Divisional Director for Safeguarding & Social Care replied that it should be seen as a way of bringing certain services together.

Penny Hay said that it should be seen as a way of starting from the bottom up to work with young people and experts to understand the particular needs and context of the community and co-design a suitable plan of action.

Councillor Peter Turner commented that given the possible uncertain future of the particular next two decades that he welcomed any initiative that would help our children. He added that having worked within the Prince's Trust he saw some parallels with this work.

Jake Bishop-Ponte said this was a real opportunity for us to lead the way and enable young people to scope their own services.

The Panel **RESOLVED** to recommend to the Cabinet to support this initiative and join the Unicef Child Rights Partners programme.

## **56 CHILDREN'S CENTRE SERVICES**

Roz Lambert, First Steps CEO addressed the Panel, a copy of her statement will be available on the Panel's Minute Book and online as an appendix to these minutes. A summary is set out below.

We are very concerned about the long term outcomes for children and families in Bath West. We are not assured that the options put forward in the Children's Centre briefing paper outlining the Local Authorities option appraisal process to decide on a model of Children's Centre Service Delivery have been fully or fairly thought through.

We feel that some of the options unfairly disadvantage First Steps and this is a concern as First Steps is a community organisation working in the heart of the most disadvantaged areas.

It is completely inappropriate for First Steps as the organisation delivering the Children's Centres in Bath West to contribute to or be damaged by measures taken to resolve an overspend by Local Authority officers on the budget for the internally delivered 9 children's centres.

A third sector organisation which is managing resources more effectively and efficiently should be encouraged and supported by the Council not destroyed.

About First Steps – what we do.

First steps is a charity and company limited by guarantee, it is a registered social enterprise, operating three Child Care settings and two Children's Centres, one in Moorlands and one in Twerton. First Steps IS a community organisation, it grew from the community and has kept to the original mission to "Work in partnership with children, families colleagues and the community"

It has been in operation for almost 25 years; First Steps was the Children's Centre before the term was used by the Government and seeded the Children's Centres in the rest of B&NES.

Our parent led services help parents to form positive and joyful relationships with their children, address debt, worklessness, lack of training, loneliness. The result is that over the years the levels of school achievement in the area have been rising and the gap in achievement has been narrowing.

Our social enterprise model of Childcare delivery builds social capital, funding stays in the community. First Steps has a strategy to employ local people and use a parent led approach to family support. As a result First Steps staff are seen as community champions and accepted. Over 50% of participants on the First Steps Volunteering programme are in further education or employment.

Councillor Peter Turner asked what would happen if First Steps was to be brought within the Council.

Roz Lambert replied that it would have a huge effect and would likely lead to the loss of Children's Centre funding and changes to their management team.

Councillor Karen Warrington asked if this proposal would lead to any savings.

Roz Lambert replied that she believed there would be no savings in reality as existing staff would transfer across to the Council.

Councillor Liz Hardman asked if they had received assurances from the Council that no decision had yet been made.

Roz Lambert replied that they had been assured that proposals were still being discussed and said the current joint working has worked well.

Councillor Liz Hardman asked if she felt that there should be one provider for Bath and North East Somerset.

Roz Lambert replied that she would welcome that.

Councillor Dine Romero asked what levels of funding were First Steps able to achieve.

Roz Lambert replied that they were on target to receive £45,000 in funding this year.

The Senior Commissioning Manager for Preventative Services explained that a range of options were currently being considered and that First Steps had influenced these. She added that provision did not have to necessarily come from one provider.

Councillor Lisa O'Brien asked officers to confirm that there are sufficient nursery places within Midsomer Norton & Keynsham should the two temporary nurseries close.

The Service Manager for Connecting Families replied that sufficient provision does exist and that they recognise the importance of easing transitions as much as possible.

Councillor Dine Romero asked if budget pressures were the driving force behind these proposals.

The Service Manager for Connecting Families replied that there are internal budget pressures owing to additional traded services not coming to fruition. She added there was an aim to reduce inspection costs through managing buildings differently.

The Chairman suggested that officers review how they got the figures relating to this issue wrong.

The Divisional Director for Safeguarding & Social Care replied that the gap had been identified at the beginning of this financial year.

Councillor Liz Hardman asked if the service could be commissioned by a range of providers.

The Senior Commissioning Manager for Preventative Services replied that the aim is to provide one service in lots of different ways, possibly through a consortium.

Councillor Liz Hardman asked if there was a timetable for the next steps in the process.

The Senior Commissioning Manager for Preventative Services replied that parties would meet again before Christmas and then with other stakeholders in January / February with a preferred option decision being reached in March / April 2017.

The Divisional Director for Safeguarding & Social Care commented that a number of services have been successful and in particular some at certain times of the year.

The Panel **RESOLVED** that the following actions will need to be considered and discussed as emerging proposals develop.

- i) Transferring the management of some outlying Children's Centre buildings to other community organisations
- ii) Reducing Council delivered nursery provision, especially in areas where there is sufficiency

- iii) Ceasing traded activity where this is not viable and increasing activities after the initial trial period that are working well and are viable, extending the business model now tested and operating effectively.
- iv) Exploring options to commission and deliver a more efficient and sustainable Bath and North East Somerset Council Children's Centre Service when the contract with First Steps for Bath West Children's Centre service expires at the end of September 2017.
  - The options which will be considered as part of the commissioning process currently include:
    - Maintain current arrangements and mixed economy and proceed with tender for Bath West.
    - Explore and strengthen partnership arrangements between Bath West and B&NES delivered Children's Centre services.
    - Bring Bath West into the Council to deliver as one Council managed Children's Centre service.
    - Tender both the council run and external Children's Centre services to procure one new contract for one Children's Centre service. This service could be provided by a consortium.
    - Include the Children's Centre Service within Your Care, Your Way (YCYW).

## **57 ANNUAL REPORT ON CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMPLAINTS AND REPRESENTATIONS PROCEDURE 2015 - 16**

Councillor Liz Hardman commented that it was good to note that 44 compliments or letters of thanks had been recorded. She asked how could the practise of Social Workers be improved and what was the timeframe in responding to complaints.

The Divisional Director for Safeguarding & Social Care replied that he felt that Social Workers within B&NES are a very good and talented group. He added that a lot of work had been done regarding the culture of the service and that workshops had been delivered on how to handle complaints.

He said that the timescale for complaints was challenging and that the aim is to contact the complainant within 10 days to discuss the matter, not necessarily answer all concerns by then.

Councillor Alison Millar said that she welcomed the implementation of the Caldicott Function Plan. She asked if the Complaints Service was staffed across the week.

The Complaints & Data Protection Team Manager replied that it was.

Councillor Dine Romero asked if locally Social Workers felt pressure within their role.

The Divisional Director for Safeguarding & Social Care replied that good support was in place for Social Workers especially within their first year and that B&NES has a good level of retention.

The Panel **RESOLVED** to note the report.

## **58 LOCAL EDUCATION RESULTS**

Councillor Liz Hardman asked in terms of the number of schools in the area now being Academies, how achievable were the recommendations.

The Head of Education Improvement replied that they would look to challenge all educational settings as part of their statutory duty.

Councillor Alison Millar commented that the figures contained within section 4.8 of the report were low and asked how these were to be addressed.

The Senior School Improvement & Achievement Adviser replied that the Better Maths Project had been launched in September with 23 schools participating. He added that the project has been commissioned from the Bath and Mendip Partnership Teaching School with a clear focus on effective strategies to build teachers' confidence and help pupils achieve the higher standard.

He stated that officers have identified those schools with the biggest gap in boy's attainment and progress in writing and asked them participate in a writing project jointly with the Bath and Mendip partnership Teaching school and Bath Spa University to develop strategies to support teachers to improve outcomes for boys.

Andrew Tarrant commented that he welcomed the intervention of Local Authority officers.

The Panel **RESOLVED** to approve the officer recommendations;

- i) Raise the teacher expectation in the Reception classes; validate the on entry data and extend EYFS moderation beyond the DfE statutory requirements (to moderate 25% of Reception classes on a four year cycle) to all schools where the proportion of children achieving a good level of development is below the national average.
- ii) Work collaboratively with the Bath and Mendip Partnership Teaching School and Bath Spa University to provide a programme of support for teachers to improve boys writing across the primary phase.
- iii) As part of our statutory duty for assessment, work in partnership with surrounding local authorities and headteachers in Bath and North East Somerset to ensure consistency in the interpretation and application of the new assessment system, including any recommendations from the Parliamentary Inquiry into the new primary assessment system.

## 59 PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES STRATEGIC DIRECTOR'S BRIEFING

The Strategic Director for People & Communities addressed the Panel, a copy of the briefing can be found on the Panel's Minute Book and as an appendix to these minutes online, a summary is set out below.

### **Head of Education Transformation**

He announced that Margaret Simmons-Bird had been appointed as the new Head of Education Transformation, following an interview process. He stated that this post completes his Senior Leadership Team and means that Margaret will be the strategic lead for education, leading the development of the future role of the Local Authority in Education as well as taking on my previous management responsibilities across the spectrum of School Improvement and Achievement, Early Years Foundation Stage, Governor Services, Music Service, Virtual School and Business Support.

### **MASH Launched**

He explained that the joint Children's Services and Adult Services Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub had been launched. He said that the MASH has staff from both services sitting with Police officers and Health staff to share information on cases where safeguarding concerns have been identified, but access to further information is required in order that we make informed decisions about the most appropriate next steps. He added that each agency within the MASH will have access to their own database, and so for any case that is passed to the MASH, they will be able to check the information they have on that case and highlight concerns much more effectively.

He said that the MASH approach to sharing information is already in use in a large number of Councils across the country and has proved to be advantageous in speeding up decision making and in terms of improving communication and information sharing.

### **Academies**

He informed the Panel of the current numbers of Maintained Schools and Academies.

Primary – 43 Maintained; 18 Academy  
Secondary – 3 Maintained; 10 Academy  
Studio – 0 Maintained; 3 Academy  
Special – 0 Maintained; 3 Academy

Total – 46 Maintained; 34 Academy

He explained that there are 7 more planned primary conversions between now and April 2017 and 12 schools understood to be working with the Bath 'Architects Group' to draw up plans for a Primary MAT.

Councillor Liz Hardman asked if there will be sufficient services, like School Improvement available to support the remaining Maintained Primary Schools.

The Strategic Director for People & Communities replied that capacity is stretched, but that they continue to hold responsibility for their statutory duties. He added that changes may be applied to some services should a lower number be reached.

Councillor Liz Hardman asked how far the Teckal option had been progressed.

The Strategic Director for People & Communities replied that a report on this could be brought to the January meeting of the Panel.

Andrew Tarrant asked if Academies within B&NES buy back services from the Local Authority.

The Strategic Director for People & Communities replied that some do.

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

## 60 PANEL WORKPLAN

The Chairman introduced this item. He said that a report regarding the Teckal would be added to the workplan for January.

Councillor Dine Romero suggested that the Panel receive a progress report at some point in relation to Make Your Mark presentation that they had received earlier in the meeting.

Councillor Liz Hardman said that she would like the Panel to discuss BCA in more detail at a future meeting and that they should be kept informed of the process as far as Children's Centres are concerned.

The Panel **RESOLVED** to add these proposals to their workplan.

The meeting ended at 8.15 pm

Chair(person) .....

Date Confirmed and Signed .....

Prepared by Democratic Services