

## **Cabinet Member's Briefing for Children's PDS, 19 September 2017**

### **Schools news**

Midsomer Norton Primary School became an academy on 1<sup>st</sup> September and Farmborough CE Primary is working towards a conversion date of 1<sup>st</sup> November. We anticipate a number of Primary Schools joining the Bath and Wells Multi-Academy Trust in the spring of 2018 and we know that schools in the Chew Valley area are looking to form a 'hub' of the Lighthouse Trust (based in Gordano). As the number of maintained schools reduces (having now fallen below 50% of local schools, hosting less than 40% of pupils) we need to consider the future role of the Local Authority in Education – both in terms of reviewing how we ensure a sustainable supporting infrastructure for the remaining LA schools and how we transition to a role which is less about supporting schools and more about being a champion of parents and vulnerable children. I will be keen to hear all stakeholders' views as we contemplate those changes.

I anticipate finalising a Single Member Decision this month to commit a capital project to replace some very poor condition temporary buildings at Swainswick Primary School as we continue to support maintenance and replacement of the poorest condition buildings and to expand and provide new places where necessary.

The consultation on the proposed closure of Camerton School commences this month and the results will be considered by Cabinet in December, allowing time for a decision to be confirmed in time for formal closure in August 2018. With only 7 pupils on roll for September 2017, the remaining pupils are already attending another local school within the same federation.

### **Children's Centres**

I visited Parkside Children's Centre in August to understand the issues with the building and the views of service users about the proposals to relocate the service to another site. A Single Member Decision on relocation is expected this month. We are hoping that the current Youth Offending Service offices at 12 Charlotte Street, adjacent to Parkside, can be made suitable to bring the Children's Centre together with the Family Intervention Service from 117 Newbridge Hill in a better facility than either of them currently occupies. Youth Offending Service staff would be hosted in other Council offices and continue to see young people flexibly in a range of local venues as they do now.

I have also agreed to proposals for the future management of a number of other Children's Centres, reducing our overhead costs in line with the previously agreed direction of travel.

**Councillor Paul May**  
**Cabinet Member for Children & Young People**