

AT A MEETING of the CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SELECT COMMITTEE of the COUNTY COUNCIL held at Ashburton Hall, Winchester on Friday, 27 July 2012.

PRESENT

Chairman:
p Councillor Ray Bolton

Vice Chairman:
a Councillor John West

Councillors:

p Charlotte Bailey	p Keith Evans
p Graham Burgess	a Jonathan Glen
p Rita Burgess	p David Keast
a Roz Chadd	p Roger Kimber
p Brian Collin	a Anna McNair Scott
p Brian Dash	p Pam Mutton
p Sam Darragh	p Jackie Porter
p David Drew	p Jenny Radley
p Adrian Evans	p Bruce Tennent

Co-opted Members:

p Mohammed Ansar – Parent Governor (primary)
a Rosemary Olivier – RC schools representative
a Tony Blackshaw – CoE schools representative
a Phil Watson – Parent Governor (secondary)

At the invitation of the Chairman:

a Councillor Roy Perry, Executive Lead Member for Children's Services;
p Councillor Peter Edgar, Assistant Executive Member for Education and
a Councillor Marilyn Tucker, Assistant Executive Member for Safeguarding.

104. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors Roz Chadd, Jonathan Glen and John West. Co-opted member Rosemary Oliver was unable to attend and sent her apologies.

The Executive Lead Member for Children's Services, Councillor Roy Perry and the Assistant Executive Member for Safeguarding, Councillor Marilyn Tucker were also unable to attend and sent their apologies.

105. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Chairman drew Members' attention to the recent changes to the County Council's code of conduct, following the County Council meeting on 19 July 2012.

Members were mindful that where they believed they had a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in any matter considered at the meeting they must declare that interest at the time of the relevant debate and, having regard to the circumstances described in Part 3 Paragraph 1.5 of the County Council's Members' Code of Conduct, leave the meeting while the matter was discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with Paragraph 1.6 of the Code. Furthermore Members were mindful that where they believed they had a Non-Pecuniary interest in a matter being considered at the meeting they considered whether such interest should be declared, and having regard to Part 5, Paragraph 2 of the Code, considered whether it was appropriate to leave the meeting whilst the matter was discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with the Code.

106. MINUTES

Minutes of the meeting held on 31 May 2012 were considered by the Committee. It was agreed that the discussion on adoption (Minute 101 refers) also contained reference to the difficulty of placing children from Black and Minority Ethnic Backgrounds. The Director of Children's Services briefly outlined further process changes in adoption, introduced since the May meeting.

With regard to the above, the Minutes were agreed to be a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

107. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman noted that Councillor McNair Scott had replaced Cllr Gibson on the Committee. He took the opportunity to thank Councillor Gibson for his contribution to the Select Committee.

On the opening day of the 2012 London Olympics, the Chairman also hoped that Members would enjoy the event.

108. HAMPSHIRE SCHOOLS' CHALLENGE

The Committee received a verbal presentation from the Director of Children's Services and the Chief Executive, regarding the recent Hampshire Schools' Challenge event, which was organised by the Leader's "Futures Group".

Members heard details of the background to the Olympic themed project and photographs from the judged presentation event were shown. The judging criteria were outlined and it was explained that Connaught School's

winning project was particularly strong in the areas of community engagement and legacy. The projects from the respective second and third placed schools (Icknield Special School and Swanmore College) were also outlined to Members and a short film that had been part of Icknield's presentation was shown. The Committee was impressed with the very high quality of the projects from all schools and it was noted that this was able to reflect a school in a way that formal exam results could not. Members were supportive of the event and discussed the possibility of follow-up work, particularly to engage the local community.

The Select Committee agreed that the Hampshire School's Challenge was an uplifting and inspiring event and thanked the Officers for their presentation.

109. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S PLAN 2012-15

The Committee considered the report of the Director of Children's Services, item 7 in the Minute Book regarding the Children and Young People's Plan 2012-15.

The Director updated the Committee on the current position of the Plan, confirming that it was not a statutory requirement, although the Children's Trust arrangements were statutory. The Plan had already received approval from the Executive Lead Member for Children's Services and appeared before the Committee on the recommendation of the Cabinet. It was explained that the Plan was an umbrella document and had evolved from the previous Children and Young People's Plan, with a number of changes between the two being highlighted.

Several elements of the Plan were discussed by the Committee and their relationship with the associated Action Plan considered. It was noted that in order to evaluate performance, objectives needed to be measurable and that it was not the role of the Plan to cover every area of the school curriculum. The limits of the role of the County Council, especially in terms of the national economic situation was also noted. With this in mind, the inclusion of targets related to a number of areas, including childhood poverty and spirituality was raised and discussed. The Director clarified a number of points raised by Members. The inclusion of targets regarding the incidence of childhood poverty came under particular scrutiny and it was suggested by some Members that this was a product of the wider economic situation and therefore should not be included in the Plan, whilst other Members cited examples of the County Council actively reducing the incidence of poverty.

Members questioned the appropriateness of the Plan's title, proposing that as it predominantly addressed the needs of children in need of support, that should be reflected. The Director explained that in order to retain widespread support, it was important that the Plan related to all children in Hampshire.

It was resolved:

That the Committee welcomes the Children and Young People's Plan and encourages the Director of Children's Services to consider amendments on the basis of the points raised during the discussion.

That the action plan be presented to the Committee for consideration at a future meeting.

110. CHILDREN'S CENTRES

The Committee received a report of the Director of Children's Services, item 8 in the Minute Book, setting out the progress made on the implementation of changes to Children's Centres.

With reference to the report, the Director updated Members on the contractual situation of the service provision and on staffing changes. He highlighted that changes in service delivery had taken place, as was always the case over time. It was confirmed that the expected financial savings had been realised and that a number of issues relating to IT equipment had been resolved. Despite some individual issues, which had been addressed, the new structure was working well and services were being delivered.

Several Members expressed their support for the work carried out by Officers and praised the smooth implementation. Questions were also raised regarding the extent of issues at specific Centres in the New Forest and it was agreed that comments on the Director's report supplied by Councillor Dash be circulated after the meeting for Members' consideration. There was also some criticism of the federated model, which it was felt by some Members disadvantaged local people. The Director explained that there had been a need to focus resources on the areas of greatest need and that the federated structure allowed a range of services to be delivered across multiple locations.

Opportunities to scrutinise the level of access at each Centre were discussed and it was confirmed that this was central to the annual performance review.

It was resolved that:

Members of the Committee bring future matters of concern to the attention of the Director of Children's Services and the Executive Lead Member for Children's Services.

That progress on the implementation of changes to the Centres is noted and Officers be invited to present a further update at a future meeting in approximately nine months.

111. WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee considered the report of the Chief Executive, setting out the work programme, item 9 in the Minute Book.

It was confirmed that monitoring of the 2012/13 Children's Services budget and a review of the principles behind budget setting be included on the agenda for 26 September 2012. In addition to this, a briefing on Teaching Schools was on the agenda. It was furthermore agreed that a private briefing on the 2013/14 Children's Services budget be arranged for Select Committee Members in December 2012.

Members requested the inclusion of additional items, including Troubled Families, the Race Strategy Policy and changes to Youth Services, as well as a review of school places. It was noted that in the time available prior to the meeting on 26 September, the preparation of a comprehensive report on these matters would be difficult.

It was resolved:

That the Chairman review the agenda for 26 September 2012.

Chairman, 26 September 2012