

Children and Young People's Services Select Committee

20 June 2018

Children and Young People's Services Select Committee Business Planning Group

Report by the Chairman of the Business Planning Group

Executive Summary

Each Select Committee has a Business Planning Group (BPG) to oversee the Committee's work programme and prioritise issues for consideration by the Committee. This report provides an update of the last meeting of the outgoing BPG held virtually on 2 May 2018, setting out the key issues discussed.

Recommendations

1. The Committee is asked to endorse the contents of the report.
2. The Business Planning Group recommend that the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills write to the Secretary of State to request that government review the powers of Local Authorities to intervene in academies where they are in difficulties in order to enable them to fulfil their statutory duties and champion their children and young people to ensure they get the best start in life.

1. Declarations of Interest

- 1.1 None.

2. Background/Context

- 2.1 The BPG met virtually on 4 May 2018.

3. Education and Skills Update

3.1 Thomas Bennett Community College (Crawley)

- 3.1.1 The BPG heard that: -

- Thomas Bennett Community College is an academy run by The Kemnal Academies Trust (TKAT). TKAT have proposed to cut £987k from the school's budget which would see implications such as loss of jobs, a reduction in SEND support, and no provision for post-16 education after 2020.
- TKAT have advised the cuts are necessary due to a growing deficit the school is facing. The National Education Union (NEU) has called upon TKAT to properly fund the school, and the BPG received 7 requests, from both members and the public, for the Children and Young People's Services Select Committee to consider formal scrutiny into this issue. However, as Thomas Bennett Community College is an academy, all decisions regarding the

school's future are to be made by the Academy Trust in agreement with the Regional Schools Commissioner.

- The County Council's lack of jurisdiction in this situation means there is little that can be done by way of intervention. There is no mechanism for an academy to be returned to local authority control, as is amongst the requests from parents and the public. Academies that are considered as failing may be transferred to another Multi Academy Trust (MAT), or subject to other mediation from the Regional Schools Commissioner.
- The Business Planning Group therefore recommend that the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills write to the Secretary of State to request that government review the powers of Local Authorities to intervene in academies where they are in difficulties in order to enable them to fulfil their statutory duties and champion their children and young people to ensure they get the best start in life.

4. Total Performance Monitor Update

- 4.1 The BPG was updated on the current financial position for the Education and Skills and Children and Young People portfolios.

5. Work Programme Planning

5.1 Forward Plan

- 5.1.1 The BPG identified the following for decision preview by the Committee:

- i. Procurement of a new Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) for Children's Placement and other Accommodation and Support Services.

5.2 Agree the work programme for the coming year and plan the June meeting

- 5.2.1 The BPG agreed the Committee's work programme as at appendix A.

6. Implications

- 6.1 There are no resource, risk management, Crime and Disorder Act or Human Rights Act implications arising directly from this report. However, many of the substantive reports to the Committee will have some implications and a Equality Impact Report will be included in appropriate substantive reports to the Committee.

Michael Cloake

Chairman

Children and Young People's Services Select Committee Business Planning Group

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Background Papers: None

Appendix A – Work Programme for Children and Young People’s Services Select Committee.