

Children and Young People's Services Select Committee

31 October 2018 – At a meeting of the Children and Young People's Services Select Committee held at 10.30 am at County Hall, Chichester.

Present: Mr Cloake (Chairman)

Mr High	Ms Flynn	Mr Wickremaratchi
Mr Baldwin	Mrs Hall	Mr Lozzi
Mrs Bennett	Mrs Jones	Mrs Ryan, Left at 1.30pm
Mrs Bridges	Ms Lord	Mr Cristin, Left at 1.30pm
Mrs Dennis	Mrs Mullins	

Absent: Mr Arnold

Also in attendance: Mr Marshall, Mr Burrett

Part I

23. Declarations of Interests

23.1 The following personal interests were declared:

- Mr Baldwin declared a personal interest in item 5 (School Effectiveness Strategy 2018-2022) as a governor of Holbrook Primary School.
- Mrs Bennett declared a personal interest in item 6 (Alterations to the IPEH Service) as she has worked with service users.
- Mr Cloake declared a personal interest in item 6 (Alterations to the IPEH Service) as his wife is a social worker.
- Mrs Dennis declared a personal interest in item 5 (School Effectiveness Strategy 2018-2022) as a governor of The Gattons Infant School, and item 6 (Alterations to the IPEH Service) as an appointed representative on the West Sussex Rural Mobile Youth Trust (Purple Bus).
- Mr High declared a personal interest in item 5 (School Effectiveness Strategy 2018-22) as a member of his family has an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP).
- Mr Lozzi declared a personal interest in item 5 (School Effectiveness Strategy 2018-2022) as a parent governor of Tanbridge House School and a Local Authority Governor at Horsham Nursey School.
- Mrs Mullins declared a personal interest in item 6 (Alterations to the IPEH Service) as a representative on the Duke of Edinburgh's Award County Committee.

24. Minutes of the last meeting of the Committee

24.1 Resolved – that the minutes of the last meeting held on 12 September 2018 be approved as a correct record and that they be signed by the Chairman.

25. Forward Plan of Key Decisions

25.1 The Committee considered a tabled paper which was a new version of the Forward Plan dated 26 October 2018 (copy appended to the signed minutes). This version of the Forward Plan was not included in the Committee papers as it had been published following the statutory despatch of the agenda.

25.2 Resolved – that the Forward Plan be noted.

26. School Effectiveness Strategy 2018-2022

26.1 The Committee considered a report by the Executive Director Children, Adults, Families, Health and Education. The report was introduced by Mark Jenner, Head of School Effectiveness, who took the Committee through a presentation which was in two parts (copy appended to the signed minutes). The first part outlined key headlines in terms of outcomes from inspections by Ofsted and pupil performance data. The Committee heard the following:

- An average of 83.1% of schools in West Sussex were Ofsted rated good or outstanding in September 2018. An average of 84.4% of pupils were attending schools with an overall good or outstanding rating in September 2018.
- The target for the service is to have 92% of schools as good or outstanding, and the same percentage of pupils in those schools by 2022. This would mean 6,500 children in better schools.
- Good progress continues to be made in terms of narrowing the gap of attainment between West Sussex and national averages at Key Stages 1 and 2.
- West Sussex children with EHCPs or a statement of Special Educational Needs were now achieving higher than the nationally expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics. This showed a vast improvement from 2017.
- Although generally improvements were being seen in results, there was still some distance to go. The new School Effectiveness Strategy would continue to secure improved educational outcomes in West Sussex.

26.2 The second part of the presentation outlined the key aims and objectives for organisation and improvement in the new School Effectiveness Strategy. A summary of key points included the following:

- The learning experiences of children remain at the heart of the strategy.
- For school organisation, the aim by 2022 is to have a strong model of sustainable education for all types of school and key stages. For improvement, there would be an effective process to challenge and support all schools to increase quality and standards of education.
- The aspiration for the Strategy is to be in the top quartile of local authorities nationally for the quality and provision of learning across all age groups and abilities by 2022.

- The new School Effectiveness Strategy would see all schools visited by link advisers at varying frequencies depending on their Ofsted category rating. This would mean ongoing work with outstanding schools to maintain those standards.
- A new inspection regime from Ofsted would increase the range of leadership responsibilities for all schools. This had the potential to be particularly challenging for smaller schools, as they would need to provide more but with less funding.
- With their agreement, opportunities to federate smaller schools would be considered in order to strengthen expertise, governance and specialisms.
- In order to establish fewer dips in attainment, the strategy encourages the transition to an all-through primary school model where opportunities present themselves.

26.3 In discussion after the presentation, the following points were considered by members and answered by the Head of School Effectiveness.

- Members were keen to understand who would facilitate the formation of federations. The Head of School Effectiveness explained that conversations would take place with schools when opportunities arose, however no school would be forced to unify. Link advisers would establish a head teacher's readiness to lead more than one school, and inspections would indicate if a school was resilient enough to federate. Wider models of consideration would be required, including consultation with boards of governors.
- Members questioned whether governors undertook any training and if they were effectively holding leadership teams to account. The Head of School Effectiveness advised training was undertaken, and that whilst governance was robust in some areas, development needed to continue to strengthen the quality of support and challenge.
- Members asked if federations would help with the recruitment and retention of staff. The Head of School Effectiveness advised that collaborative approaches often spurred new ideas and could really help to move a school on, which could make for an attractive career prospect.
- Members asked about West Sussex's position amongst statistical neighbours in terms of meeting the national average for expected standards or better. The Committee was advised that for reading, writing and mathematics combined we were currently 8th out of 11. The Committee also heard that for reading alone, we were 4th out of 11 which was a good achievement on 2017. Improvements had also been made in mathematics and writing.
- Members were interested to see the positive results of disadvantaged groups in Crawley. They asked what had been done to achieve this, and how this could be moved out wider across the county. They heard that Crawley schools had been under pressure for some time and inclusion strategies were a high priority. A Quality First Teaching (QFT) model was used in order to meet the needs of all learners, resulting in an inclusive practice and changed culture for the schools overall. The question for the Education and

Skills directorate was now how to spread these projects out, resulting in adaptive leadership to meet a diverse group of needs.

- Members asked about the local authority's relationship with academies. The Head of School Effectiveness advised the new strategy applied to all West Sussex children, and the majority of schools in the county were still local authority maintained. West Sussex would continue to have conversations with academies where children were not achieving. The Cabinet Member for Education and Skills advised he would soon be meeting with an academy trust responsible for a number of schools in the county, in order to work to improve and maintain these relationships.
- Members noted that as well as continued support for disadvantaged groups, the needs of high achievers should also be a priority for the service.

26.4 The Cabinet Member for Education and Skills thanked members and the Head of School Effectiveness for their input, and advised the School Effectiveness Strategy 2018-2022 was a key document for the Education and Skills portfolio. He explained that the consultation process had opened up useful conversations resulting in this encouraging document.

26.5 Resolved that the Committee:-

1. acknowledge the pupil performance improvement at Key Stages 1 and 2 since 2016 and recent improvements in the quality of schools.
2. considers how it can actively support the Cabinet Member and officers in the strategy's implementation.
3. recommends that yearly updates are provided to the full committee.
4. notes the successes in the Crawley area, and would like the QFT model replicated throughout West Sussex.
5. recommends that quality governors are recruited to all schools, and that an extensive training programme be in place.
6. notes the positive impact of potential federations in terms of recruitment and retention, and recommends the service explores these opportunities when appropriate in consultation with the local member.
7. recommends the service aim for West Sussex to exceed national averages by 2020.

27. Alterations to the Integrated Prevention and Earliest Help (IPEH) Service

27.1 The Committee considered a report by the Executive Director Children, Adults, Families, Health and Education, and the Director of Children and Family Services. The report was introduced by Hayley Connor, Head of Integrated Prevention and Earliest Help (IPEH), who told the Committee:

- Following a reduction in government funding for the Troubled Families Initiative (TFI), IPEH must adapt its service to manage this loss of funds in order to maintain its successful Think Family

programme, which supports families and has prevented children being taken into local authority care.

- Savings of £560,000 were required in 2019/20, and the service has had to think carefully about IPEH's spending and delivery. £560,000 represented 3.8% of the net IPEH budget.
- 3 services were proposed for alteration in order to realise the saving of £560,000 as follows:
 - Operating authority for the Duke of Edinburgh's (D of E) Award Scheme
 - Administration and delivery of National Citizen Service (NCS) in Chichester and Arun
 - Mobile Offer – Purple Bus
- Vacancies within the service would also be managed by reassigning existing staff to operate in a more flexible way, as opposed to recruiting to fill these roles.
- It was necessary that the service act now to ensure the protection of essential elements of the IPEH service. The grant will reduce from 2019.

27.2 The Committee discussed the following key points, and questions were answered by the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People, the Head of IPEH, Jo Millward, Service Leader for IPEH and Mark Frankland, Principal Manager Operations Safeguarding and Child Protection.

- Members were very concerned about the implications for children going forward and noted the positive difference that these initiatives made to their lives. The Cabinet Member and Head of IPEH explained that provision for the continuation of these services outside of the local authority was being explored. The plan to relinquish the Duke of Edinburgh Award licence would not impact any young person currently enrolled on the scheme. Members also heard that WSCC would not be unique in no longer co-ordinating or administering the service, and many other LAs had relinquished the licence in the same way. For the NCS, officers advised that the regional contract provider had indicated a willingness to deliver the service from January 2019.
- Members questioned whether this was a short-term solution to what might be the beginning of many further cuts to come, and if so, what degradation of service would be next. The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People explained that the service could deal only with the current circumstances, however every effort would be made to continue to maintain key areas of support.
- Members considered the risk that IPEH might drop from being a pioneering service to offering just average targeted and universal services. The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People advised that financial challenges meant services would be inevitably be in transient positions, and as with other portfolios, service propositions have to be reviewed in order to operate within their funding parameters.
- Members considered the risk to children and vulnerable families by losing some of IPEH's workforce. The Head of IPEH advised these vacant positions were not being removed from frontline areas, and the staff in question were being reassigned in order to deliver more face-to-face work with families. The purpose of not filling these

vacancy gaps, and the withdrawal of some services, was to further strengthen and invest in the Think Family programme to continue to operate a high level of service for the most vulnerable children and families.

- Members noted that 11% of the IPEH budget was for resourcing intentionally homeless issues, and asked how WSCC could address and share the burden of this. The Head of IPEH advised that partnership working with district and borough councils did take place, however the drivers for homelessness were many and varied. She added that the Worthing Hub was trialling a homelessness intervention scheme which was already showing dividends. Members hoped this might be an area to help neutralize further cost pressures in the future.

27.3 The Chairman of the Committee had received a letter from the Chairman of the Trustees for the Purple Bus, which requested the content be considered at the meeting. The letter asked that West Sussex County Council (WSCC) continue to fund the Purple Bus scheme until the end of the 2018/19 financial year (31st March 2019) as had been understood, and not cease in December 2018. This would enable them time to secure new funding streams and continue the work of the Trust. The Committee suggested that WSCC should continue to fund the scheme until the end of the current financial year. The Head of IPEH noted there were operational details to be considered, however a commitment had been made with the Trust to manage the transition.

27.4 Resolved that the Committee endorses the proposals to reshape IPEH in order to manage the reduction in resources in 2019/20, subject to the consideration of appropriate contingency arrangements as detailed in Recommendation 4. The Committee further recommends:

1. that the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People write to the relevant Government Minister to strongly request the continuation of the Troubled Families Initiative (TFI).
2. that the Cabinet Member consider the wider impact these changes may have on other IPEH services.
3. that the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People contact local MPs, District, Borough, Town and Parish councils to strengthen collaborative working with IPEH, particularly earliest help, to keep this offer strong.
4. that the Cabinet Member considers whether contingency arrangements can be put in place for all three affected areas to allow effective continuation of service beyond IPEH, and that no children are disadvantaged or discouraged.
5. that the IPEH service returns to the Committee at the earliest possible opportunity to consider any further reductions that may be required resulting from future declines in funding.

28. Provision of accommodation for Care Leavers

28.1 The Committee considered a report by the Executive Director Children, Adults, Families, Health and Education. The report was introduced by Catherine Galvin, Programme Director Transformation and

Infrastructure, and Stuart Gibbons, Strategic Market Development Manager. The Committee heard the following:

- WSCC has a responsibility to provide support for children and young people expected to cease, or who have ceased to be looked after.
- As part of the Children's Commissioning Strategy 2018-2021, a proposal had been developed to provide accommodation to support these Children Looked After (CLA) to move towards independence in adult life.
- The Leaving Care Service currently supports around 600 young people. Of that number, approximately 150 are in some form of supported accommodation supplied by external providers.
- The proposal aims to purchase around 20 supported and training accommodation units for these young people to take their final steps from local authority care towards independent living. If approved, a business case would be developed in collaboration with external partners, which would consider a range of types of accommodation and locations.
- Giving young people a history of maintaining a tenancy in one of these units would make them more attractive to the private rented sector. The current private rental market is extremely competitive, with a shortage of self-contained flats.
- As well as effectively supporting West Sussex care leavers, this proposal would also realise savings for the service. The current cost for an externally provided bed space could be anywhere from £500 to £1000 per week. Providing in-house accommodation for these young people would cost WSCC approximately between £250 and £350 per week.

28.2 Members thanked the Strategic Market Development Manager and the Programme Director Transformation and Infrastructure for a very positive and informative account of the proposal. The following points were considered in discussion:

- Members queried whether 20 of these units would be enough. Officers advised that as part of the Commissioning Strategy, this would be a trial which offered quite targeted support. It would likely be uncovered as part of the trial and business case if more than 20 were required. The emphasis on these units would be to educate the young people to work, manage their health and budget, and would be relatively short term. It was anticipated they would house approximately 40 to 60 young people per year, on 4 to 6 month stays.
- Members were interested to know if these units of accommodation would be available for foster care leavers, and those with special needs or disabilities. Officers advised that they would be available to all types of young people leaving the care system, and that no demographic would be excluded. This would also include young parents. The Programme Director for Transformation and Infrastructure advised work was also currently ongoing with Lifelong Services colleagues.
- Members asked if the overall aim for West Sussex was to own all accommodation for these types of young people. The Strategic Market Development Manager advised WSCC needed and wanted to

provide the best for our care leavers, and if this initial investment worked out well there would ultimately be more than 20 units.

- The proposals were welcomed by the Committee.

28.3 Resolved that the Committee:

1. supports the principles and aims of the proposal
2. recommends that caution is exercised when choosing the location and quality of the properties used.
3. recommends that work is undertaken with local members, the Corporate Parenting Panel and local councils (including district, borough, town and parish) when planning possible locations.
4. strongly supports the running of a best practice model.
5. requests that an update is provided to the Select Committee at the business case stage.

29. Business Planning Group Report

29.1 The Committee considered a report from the Business Planning Group. The report was introduced by Rachel Allan, Senior Adviser Democratic Services.

29.2 The Education and Skills Annual Report Task and Finish Group would take place in early 2019; the membership would comprise Mr High, Ms Lord, Mrs Mullins and Mrs Dennis.

29.3 Resolved that the Committee endorses the contents of the Business Planning Group Report, with the addition of an item in January on Demand and Capacity in Children's Social Care, and an update on the proposals for the creation of additional Special Support Centres (SSCs).

30. Date of Next Meeting

30.1 The Committee noted that the next scheduled meeting will be held on 10 January 2019 at 10.30am at County Hall, Chichester.

The meeting ended at 2.43 pm

Chairman