MINUTES OF THE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SELECT COMMITTEE
Tuesday, 6 December 2011 at 7.30 pm

PRESENT: Councillors Paschoud (Chair), Clutten (Vice-Chair), Janet Daby, Paschoud, Peake and Till

ALSO PRESENT: Alan Docksey, Christine Grice, Conrad Hall, Salena Mulhere, Ian Smith, Frankie Sulke, Warwick Tomsett, Nicole Nurse (Parents Forum) and Nancy Woodcock (Contact a Family)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor David Britton, Councillor Carl Handley, Councillor Stella Jeffrey, Councillor Marion Nisbet and Henrii Webb

1. Minutes 27 October 2011

Subject to noting that the Councillor Jacq Paschoud is Vice Chair of Governors of the "temporary" governing body of Drumbeat school, the minutes were agreed as a true record.

2. Declarations of Interest

In relation to item 5, Councillor Jacq Paschoud declared that she is Chair of Governors of Meadowgate School and the Vice Chair of Governors of the temporary governing body of Drumbeat School.

In relation to item 3, Councillor Jacq Paschoud declared that she is a Trustee of the Ravensbourne Project.

Councillor Till declared that he is a governor of Kilmorie school.

Gail Exon declared that she is a governor of Trinity school.

Councillor Peake declared that his wife is a teacher in Lewisham

Councillor John Paschoud declared that he is a governor of Perrymount school.

3. Short Breaks for Disabled Children

The Chair invited Warwick Tomsett to introduce the report. The key points to note were:

- On April 1 2011 the breaks for Carers of Disabled Children Regulations came into force, which place a statutory obligation on local authorities to develop and publish a “Short Breaks Services Statement”
- Local parents and carers of disabled children were consulted about the content of the statement.
- Lewisham short breaks services statement was co-produced by the council, a representative from contact a family ands a working group of local parents and carers.
When the statement was published as a website, revisions were made as a consequence of limitations to the functionality of the Council website. Parents were unhappy with some of the revisions. Some of these have now been remedied and a few are pending.

Nancy Woodcock and Nicole Nurse demonstrated the short breaks section of the Lewisham Website to the Committee and described their involvement in developing the pages. The key points to note were:

- Parents felt very involved in the process of discussing how the statement should look and what should be in it, and came to a number of meetings to discuss in detail the plans for the statement.
- They gave a lot of input into the language and layout of the statement, so that it was parent friendly and easy to read.
- The website is now much improved from when it was first published.
- They would suggest that paper copies of the statement are made available for families by staff at appropriate locations and times, for example at the Kaleidoscope centre, within a pack of relevant information that could be given to families at time of diagnosis.

In response to questions, the Committee were advised:

- It is a core responsibility of the relevant services to ensure the information made available on the website is kept up to date.
- Printed versions of the statement would quickly become outdated and are costly to produce then reproduce, so there were no current plans to produce a printed version of the plan, but the statement is designed so that it can be printed off, staff across the partnership can print the relevant pages for families, as requested.
- The parents involved in the development of the statement felt that it was a very good model for involving parents in producing information for parents, they enjoyed sharing their experience and knowledge and felt that the Council and other professionals listened to them and took their views on board.

RESOLVED: The Committee noted their thanks to contact a family and the parents who took part in producing the statement.

4. Revenue Budget Savings Proposals

4.1 Conrad Hall and Frankie Sulke introduced the report. The key points to note were:

- The original savings agreed by the Council for the CYP directorate last year was £7m, an update on the implementation of which throughout the current year was provided at the last meeting, Conrad Hall will provide exact figures as to number of staff who have left the organisation as a result.
- There are less savings to be made this year, totalling £4m across the Council.
- The savings proposals are based on the assumptions set out in section 4.7 of the report.

4.2 The Chair requested that in addition to the CYP directorate savings proposals, the Committee also be given detail about three proposals in the resources directorate.
that he believed would impact on children and young people: RES 03, 12 and 13.
The Committee were briefed on each saving proposal, the key points to note were:

- **RES03**: Officers are not aware of any higher use of the service by CYP staff than any other area. Ian Smith advised that social workers receive a high level of support through supervision meetings so do not use this service any more than any other staff group. The reduction is in line with the reduction of staff numbers in the organisation.

- **RES12**: The proposal mentions the secondary schools admissions booklet as an example, but it is not a CYP specific saving. The admissions booklet is now in a very good format, so there is a template that can be used every year, rather than being re-designed.

- **RES13**: There will be no reduction in the number or quality of apprenticeship opportunities, as the scheme is now well established the administration and marketing costs are now lower than those needed initially to set up the scheme.

- **CYP 01**: Will lead to the reduction of one back-office post.

- **CYP02**: Will not reduce any payments to families.

- **CYP03**: A recent evaluation showed there was scope for efficiency in this team and will lead to the reduction of one administrative post.

- **CYP05, 8, 10, 12**: The “core” data collection service will still be provided free of charge, and there will be Service Level Agreements developed for those services to be charged for – schools will be able to decide if they wish to purchase the enhanced services. Schools currently access different amount of support. Alan Docksey advised that the rough estimates done so far showed that, if all of the charged for services were taken up, the smallest school (1FE) was likely to pay £1900 (0.02% of their total budget), with the largest paying £2400 (0.04% of total budget).

- **Frankie Sulke** advised that the increase in charges were still provided below cost price, and that in the context of the Council needing to save 88 million pounds, the Council had to start introducing charges to schools for these services.

- **CYP14**: Frankie Sulke advised that until the Special Educational Needs reviews currently underway were concluded, it was not possible to be sure of the total amount to be saved, but it was anticipated that the savings would be mostly management costs.

### 4.3 The Committee discussed the savings proposals and made the following comments:

**CYP 5, 8, 10 and 12**

- The Committee suggests that modelling of the cumulative impact of these savings proposals, on the range of schools in Lewisham: from a 1FE primary school to a large secondary school, is carried out so that the impact on school budgets is clear. The Committee feels there is the potential for a disproportionate impact on smaller schools with smaller budgets. The Committee notes that the services are currently charged below the cost of providing them and that officers will discuss the impact of these proposals with the Schools Forum and include the views of the Schools Forum in the budget report to Mayor and Cabinet.

**CYP14**

- The Committee supports the objectives of the proposal to rationalise management and bring services together to streamline processes and improve services for parents and children. However, the Committee notes that there are some
uncertainties in relation to the delivery of the total saving put forward pending the completion of the management review and therefore the Committee is not yet assured that the 200k will be achieved.

RESOLVED: The comments set out in section 4.4 and 4.5 be referred to Public Accounts Select Committee

5. Monitoring the implementation of the Strengthening Specialist Provision Programme

5.1 Christine Grice introduced the report. The key points to note were:

- The new Executive head teacher for Drumbeat was appointed in September 2011, in order to undertake work with the two existing schools and the temporary governing body in advance of the merge into the new school.
- On the 5th of October 2011, the Mayor agreed to retain the former Meadowgate school site to provide extra places to meet the shortfall in places at Drumbeat in September 2012, so the school will operate across the two sites beyond Easter 2013.
- After a successful tender process for the Parent Partnership Services, the contract will be awarded shortly with the successful bidder expected to commence service delivery by 31 January 2012. The contract will be awarded for an initial period of 3 years, with the possibility of extension for a further two years at the Council’s discretion.
- Work is underway to develop two further resource bases at Deptford Park and Kelvin Grove primary schools. The original feasibility study at Deptford Park has proved unaffordable, so alternative solutions are being considered. It is intended that both resource bases will offer 16 places for pupils with ASD.
- Service Level Agreements (SLA) for resource bases are being developed by working groups comprising of key partners, to strengthen the monitoring and accountability arrangements for SEN provision.

5.2 In response to questions from the Committee, Christine Grice and Frankie Sulke advised:

- It is anticipated that the first draft SLAs will be signed off in January.
- At the moment there are 12 children placed at Tidemill, 6 with statements and 6 are currently there for two terms and then hopefully returning to their “home” school without the need for a statement, due to the intensive support given.
- Increasing the capacity of mainstream schools to support children with SEN at an earlier stage is a key part of the recent green paper aims, and this is something being expanded with the development of Drumbeat.
- There is a graduation of complexity of need across the SEN schools, which will also be true of Drumbeat, and mainstream schools are being supported to meet the needs of SEN pupils where their need can be met in mainstream with additional support. Officers review statistics where schools say they can’t meet the pupils needs, and support is brought in to the mainstream school as and when necessary to ensure the child’s needs are met.

RESOLVED: To note the report
6. **Select Committee Work Programme**

   RESOLVED: To note the report.

7. **Items to be referred to Mayor and Cabinet**

   There were none.

   The meeting ended at 9.50pm.