

MINUTES OF THE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SELECT COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 13 May 2015 at 7.30 pm

PRESENT: Councillors Hilary Moore (Chair), Luke Sorba (Vice-Chair), Chris Barnham, Andre Bourne, Liz Johnston-Franklin, Jacq Paschoud, John Paschoud, Jonathan Slater, Alan Till, Sharon Archibald (Parent Governor Representative), Mark Saunders (Parent Governor Representative) and Paul Maslin and

APOLOGIES: Councillors David Britton and Lisa Palin

ALSO PRESENT: Ruth Griffiths (14-19 Strategic Lead), Chris Threlfall (Head of Education Infrastructure), Warwick Tomsett (Head of Targeted Services and Joint Commissioning), Frankie Sulke (Executive Director for Children and Young People), Helen Glass (Principal Lawyer), Katie Wood (Scrutiny Manager) and Andrew Brown (Parent of pupil at Prendergast Vale) (Parent of pupil at Prendergast Vale)

1. Minutes of the meeting held on 22 April 2015

1.1 RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 22 April 2015 be agreed subject to the following amendments:

Paragraph 3.1 be amended to state that Councillor Slater was Chair of the advisory board of the Lewisham Pre-School Learning Alliance.

Paragraph 4.3 be amended to say that the additional item requested should be an "Update on Young Carers following implementation of the Care Act 2014".

2. Declarations of interest

2.1 Councillor Hilary Moore declared a personal interest in item 3 as she was employed by Barking and Dagenham College and was on the board of Lewisham Southwark College.

3. Post 16/18 education and the progress to further education or employment

3.1 At the meeting, the order of the agenda was varied and this item was taken after item 4.

3.2 Chris Threlfall, Head of Education Infrastructure, and Ruth Griffiths, 14-19 Strategic Leader, introduced the report to the committee and highlighted the following points:

- New requirements had been introduced in 2012 for schools to account for the progression of their pupils.

- Statistics were provided for progression at Key Stage 4 (KS4) and Key Stage 5 (KS5) in Lewisham, Inner London and Nationally.
- The KS4 statistics showed an increase in those in Education, Employment or Training (EET) in 2012/13 compared to 2011/12 but this was 1 percentage point lower than the Inner London and national average.
- The KS5 results showed a year on year improvement on those in EET with the 2012/13 results being higher in Lewisham than the inner London average but lower than the national average.
- The KS5 results for those on free school meals showed a higher percentage in Lewisham in EET than the inner London or national average.
- Through the Lewisham University Challenge work was being done to help ensure higher achievers were fulfilling their potential by going on to Russell Group Universities or Oxbridge.
- There was a focus on improving the options for young people in terms of apprenticeships including raising awareness of the options available and preparing young people to work. The Council was aiming to work more collaboratively with schools to ensure that this could be done.

3.3 In the discussion that followed the following key points were raised:

- Good quality careers advice was key and providing this was a challenge for many schools and colleges across London and nationally.
- The Lewisham Information Advice and Guidance (IAG) and careers forum met regularly to look at ways to improve the quality of, and access to, advice in schools and colleges.
- Future reports to the committee which included large datasets in tables, could benefit from a graphical depiction of the data.
- It was important that if young people were participating in apprenticeships, that these were of a high quality and genuinely developing the skillset and employability of the young people participating.

3.4 Standing orders were suspended to allow the business of the committee to be concluded.

- A similar scheme to the “Lewisham University Challenge” could be set up for participation in, and quality of outcomes from, apprenticeship schemes.

3.5 RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

4. Leatherseller's Consultation

4.1 Frankie Sulke, Executive Director of Children’s Services, introduced the report to the committee and raised the following key points:

- The committee’s views were being sought as part of the wider consultation being undertaken by the Leathersellers’ Federation of Schools into the proposed change of Prendergast School, Prendergast Vale School and Prendergast Ladywell School to Academy status.

- It was hoped that the responses from the Children and Young People's Select Committee could be part of a single Council response that would also include the views of Mayor and Cabinet.
- The Local Authority had three "bottom lines" required for providers of free schools and academies and these were:
 1. Strong collaboration with other schools and the Local Authority including the timely sharing of data and information.
 2. A fair and transparent admission policy which was comparable with that of the Local Authority.
 3. Adherence to the Local Authority's clear protocols for vulnerable children in relation to exclusions, fair access and managed moves.

4.2 David Sheppard, Executive Headteacher, Leathersellers' Federation spoke to the committee and handed round a summary of his comments, a copy of which will be interleaved with the agenda. He was joined by Christopher Barrow, Chair of Governors, Leathersellers' Federation. In their presentation to committee the following key points were highlighted:

- The Governors and management were committed to outstanding schools and teaching as well as excellent progress and achievement of pupils.
- They would be looking to preserve the identity of the individual schools and the autonomy of Heads but within an accountable and transparent governance framework.
- Governors understood and recognised the concerns of parents and were committed to a thorough consultation process.
- Becoming an academy would mean the teachers and schools had more control over the curriculum and budget enabling them to make decisions based on the specific needs and requirements of individual schools.
- The relationship between the Leathersellers' Federation and the London Borough of Lewisham was good and they were committed to continuing this positive relationship.

4.3 In the discussion that followed the following key points were raised:

- The committee report had been published after the main agenda as it was deemed that it would not be appropriate to include information on the consultation in a Council publication prior to the general election on the 7 May 2015 as this might have been seen as being in breach of the regulations on local authority publicity in a pre-election period.
- There would be a Governing Board of 14 people with three local governing boards below of 8 people each.
- Following and during the consultation, serious consideration would be given to looking at the layers of governance and improving the representation of all stakeholders by ensuring diversity within the Governing Bodies.
- It would be helpful for parents and other stakeholders if the schemes of delegation and the structure of Governance were clarified to ensure there was a thorough understanding of how they worked.

4.4 Mr Andrew Brown, parent of a pupil at Prendergast Vale spoke to the committee and highlighted the following key points:

- He was not speaking on behalf of all parents and was just representing his concerns and those of parents he had spoken to.
- The most important factor was the educational outcomes for the pupils of the three schools.
- There was concern that there would be a lot of effort in terms of the work around converting to academy status but little gain for the current pupils.
- There was concern that the process of consultation had been divisive and he hoped that parents' concerns and voices would be listened to.
- There were concerns that other forms of governance had not been sufficiently considered and he hoped this could still be done.

4.5 RESOLVED:

That, subject to approval by Mayor and Cabinet, the Children and Young People Select Committee's views be included in a single Council response to the consultation.

That the response from the Council reflect the Children and Young People Select Committee's discussion on this matter by including the following issues for governors to consider:

- Any decision must give primacy to raising achievements of pupils. There should be clarity about how conversion to an academy would improve outcomes for young people.
- If there were conversion to an academy it would be important to ensure that the Local Authority's 'bottom lines' were in place, namely:
 1. Strong collaboration with other schools and the local authority including the timely sharing of data and information.
 2. A fair and transparent admission policy which was comparable with that of the Local Authority.
 3. Adherence to the Local Authority's clear protocols for vulnerable children in relation to exclusions, fair access and managed moves.
- Ensuring that stakeholders are clear about the rationale for any preferred system of governance, including any schemes of delegation between different layers of governance.
- How governance can be used to involve and be representative of local communities, including how diversity can be secured.
- Whether there could be local authority representation within the governance structure and on the Trust Board.
- How, once the final decision on status is made, given that some have viewed the consultation process as divisive, efforts can best be made to reunite parents, staff and other stakeholders behind the preferred option and help recognise that everyone's priority is ensuring the best possible outcomes for students.

- How, should the Local Education Authority be looking for any of these schools to expand, a proper dialogue can be guaranteed to ensure that any expansion requests are properly considered and responded to by the leadership of the schools and the governing board.

5. Select Committee work programme

5.1 Katie Wood, Scrutiny Manager, introduced the report to the committee; asked for comments; and asked Members to specify any additional details or analysis required for the items scheduled for the next meeting.

5.2 **RESOLVED:** That

1. The report be noted.
2. A relevant organisation be invited to attend for the item on the implementation of recommendations for the Young People’s Mental Health Review.
3. The item on Young Carers should specifically consider changes and effects on young carers from the implementation of the Care Act 2014.

6. Referrals to Mayor and Cabinet

6.1 There were no referrals to Mayor and Cabinet

The meeting ended at 10.10 pm

Chair:

Date:
