

MINUTES OF THE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SELECT COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 8 June 2016 at 7.00 pm

PRESENT: Councillors Hilary Moore (Chair), Luke Sorba (Vice-Chair), Chris Barnham, Andre Bourne, David Britton, Simon Hooks, Liz Johnston-Franklin, Helen Klier, Jacq Paschoud, Sharon Archibald (Parent Governor Representative), Mark Saunders (Parent Governor Representative), Gail Exon (Church Representative), Monsignor N Rotheron (Church Representative) and Kevin Mantle (Parent Governor representative for special schools) (Parent Governor Representative) and

APOLOGIES: Councillors Alan Till

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor Alan Hall (Chair of Overview & Scrutiny Committee), Councillor Paul Maslin (Cabinet Member for Children and Young People), Timothy Andrew (Interim Overview and Scrutiny Manager), Kate Bond (Head of Standards & Achievement), Christine Gilbert (Chair Lewisham Education Commission), Ruth Griffiths (14-19 Strategic Lead), Stephen Kitchman (Director of Children's Social Care), David Minahan (Digital Transformation Manager), Warwick Tomsett (Head of Targeted Services and Joint Commissioning), Sara Williams (Executive Director, Children and Young People), Katie Wood (Scrutiny Manager), Councillor Joe Dromey (Cabinet Member Policy & Performance) and Councillor Jim Mallory

1. Minutes of the meeting held on 13 April 2016

1.1 RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 13 April be agreed as an accurate record of proceedings and the Chair be authorised to sign them.

2. Declarations of interest

Councillor Alan Hall declared a personal interest in item 5 as he was Chair of the Lewisham Cooperative Party.

Councillor Jacq Paschoud declared a personal interest in item 4 as she was on the Brent Knoll and Watergate Education Trust and a Governor of Watergate School.

Kevin Mantel declared a personal interest in item 4 as he was a parent governor of Brent Knoll and as he worked for the Department of Education.

3. Response to referral by CYP Select Committee on the Ofsted Action Plan

3.1 Stephen Kitchman, Director of Children's Social Care and David Minahan, Digital Transformation Manager, were in attendance. The following point was raised in response to questions from members of the Committee.

- As part of the plan there was a commitment to the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub running by October 2016. All information on cases would be shared in line with agreed protocols. Timelines for responses were pre-defined on set protocols depending on the cases.

3.2 **RESOLVED:**

That the response be noted.

4. **Lewisham Education Commission - Progress Report**

4.1 Christine Gilbert, Chair of the Lewisham Education Commission presented the report to the Committee and highlighted the following five key messages from the report's finding:

1. The report urged LB Lewisham to build on its strengths in collaborative working across schools. This included the work of the Head's Leadership Forum building partnerships across the borough and providing a school-led approach to school improvement.
2. The report suggested that Lewisham should be more active in managing the Government's agenda and shaping the academisation policy to the needs of Lewisham. The Council should support schools that are interested in becoming Multi Academy Trusts or Academies to ensure they were not alienated.
3. There should be the creation of a Lewisham Secondary Challenge to create targeted support based loosely on the London Challenge model.
4. The pride in and achievements of Lewisham schools should be celebrated and channelled into a shared vision for education locally.
5. The Council should continue to work to support schools and have positive relationships with them no matter what changes arose as a result of changes in its legal responsibilities.

4.2 Nicky Dixon, local resident and parent addressed the Committee outlining her views on the report. During her address to committee, she highlighted the following key points:

- With cross party support at national level, government legislation on academisation could be defeated.
- There were some recommendations in the report that Ms Dixon felt were positive such as: the collaborative approach and partnership working; emulating the London challenge; and consulting with third party experts.
- Parents should have a voice as to whether their school becomes an academy or part of a Multi Academy Trust (MAT). Home-grown MATs should have the support of the whole school community.
- Through the organisation "Rescue our Schools", Lewisham parents were given a voice at the House of Commons Education Select Committee. It was important that parents' voices continued to be

heard at a local level and that the introduction of Regional Schools Commissioners did not reduce this.

4.3 During the discussion and following questions and challenge from members of the Committee, the following key points were raised:

- Partnerships between schools could include a role for the local authority. There were various options listed in the report but schools and the local authority could shape their own model of a secondary challenge style support network.
- To be a Multi Academy Trust there needed to be a partnership of at least three schools. The current Government believed that stand alone academies were not the way forward and MATs offered more advantages to school.
- It was important for the Council to work with all schools and support each of them to make their own decisions, in order to maintain a positive relationships between the local authority and schools even if some schools decided to become academies.
- There had been a number of assumptions on places planning at secondary level and work needed to be done to test these. It would be helpful to renew direction on places planning and this could include consultation with the community and parents.
- During the course of the work the Commission undertook, they had heard a very high level of parent dissatisfaction about their own childrens' secondary schools and their voices not being heard and schools needed to address this.
- There should be a strong focus on the classroom including retaining and recruiting high quality teaching staff. This was addressed in chapter 5 which focussed on better practice within the classroom. Improving secondary schools' relationships with parents was a challenge but more needed to be done to improve this.
- Schools should be more than just producers of good exam results. The overall well-being of students and their preparation for adulthood and the world of work or further education needed to be considered.
- Nicky Dixon and Christine Gilbert were thanked by the Chair and Committee for attending and Ms Gilbert and her fellow Commissioners were thanked for their work.

4.4 **RESOLVED:**

The Committee resolved to make the following referral to Mayor and Cabinet:

That any action plan to take forward the recommendations from the Education Commission Report be presented to the Children and Young People Select Committee for consultation.

5. Update on Youth Service

- 5.1 The Chair announced the exclusion of press and public as this item had been classed as Exempt under Section 100 (A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972.
- 5.2 Warwick Tomsett, Head of Targeted Services and Joint Commissioning was in attendance. In response to questions and challenge from members of the Committee, the following key points were highlighted:
- The current proposal calculated £350,000 savings over the 3-year period of the contract.
 - There was a number of options and models looked at over the last few years and the mutual option was preferred to protect the level of service but reduce costs.
 - After 3 years there would be a retendering process in the open market.

5.3 RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

6. Annual Report on Attendance and Exclusions

- 6.1 Ruth Griffiths, 14-19 Strategic Leader and Kate Bond, Head of Standards and Achievements presented the report to the Committee. Following questions and challenge from members of the Committee the following key points were highlighted:
- The exclusion rates amongst different ethnic groups was broadly in line with overall numbers within schools.
 - In 2014/15 there had been 58 exclusions, the majority of which were due to “persistent disruptive behaviour”. 14 exclusions had been for weapon and knife crime in this period.
 - There had been an increase in the number of exclusions from the 2013/14 figures to the 2014/15 figures.
 - The rate of secondary permanent exclusions was 0.38%. Additional information on the change of pupil population and the year on year percentages could be provided to the Committee.
 - It was of great concern that the rate of permanent exclusions was substantially higher in Lewisham than statistical neighbours and it was therefore very important for the review of alternative provision to be undertaken.
 - Youth crime statistics were high and increasing. Young people needed to succeed and be integrated into the education system. Exclusion strategies and intervention strategies needed to be looked at carefully.
 - The figures for exclusion rates amongst looked after children were more positive with high attendance rates and very low exclusion rates. The work of the Virtual School had provided high-level support for these young people and been very successful with intervention strategies.

- Early intervention strategies should include family level intervention. Pupils at risk of exclusion may have complicated family circumstances such as chaotic families, or incidences of domestic violence or substance misuse. Schools were working closely with the Teams Around the Child (TACs) but there were many challenges.
- From the sixth day of a permanent exclusion, local authorities had the responsibility for the education of a child. This could be in an alternative provision or another educational setting depending on the particular circumstances of the child.

6.2 **RESOLVED:**

That the report be noted.

That additional information on the change of pupil population and the year on year percentages could be provided to the Committee.

7. **Alternative Education Provision**

7.1 Ruth Griffiths and Kate Bond introduced the report. Following questions and challenge from members of the Committee, the following key points were highlighted:

- In table 7.10, the 2016/17 figure for “outreach at key stages 1-3” should be listed as 300.
- The projections were based on extensive analysis of need and of population data.
- To reduce the number of exclusions it was important to offer the best possible early interventions.
- Targeted and focussed work was being undertaken looking at persistent absences at Abbey Manor. A new attendance officer had been appointed in November and significant improvements had already been made but there was still more work to do.
- Options were being considered to reduce the number of fixed term and permanent exclusions. A conference was taking place in June and various strategies would be discussed.
- Out of borough alternative provision needed to be used on occasions to support the individual needs of some children. The specific circumstances and interests of a young person were paramount. For example, it would not be appropriate to send one girl to a school of 80 boys.
- Schools were responsible for monitoring absences but the Local Authority retained the responsibility for issuing legal penalties and for monitoring home educated children.
- More work on the transition between primary and secondary school would be beneficial. Pupils move from having one teacher who knows them well and with whom they have an attachment to secondary school where often this disappears.

- The Committee was due to undertake an in-depth review into the transition between primary and secondary school later in the municipal year.
- There was some very good work in the primary sector in Lewisham with four primaries being models of excellence for inclusion. Attendance, inclusion and attainment were all related and more work needed to be done at secondary level to emulate successes at primary.

7.2 **RESOLVED:**

That the report be noted.

8. **Independent Advice and Guidance in Schools - Draft Report**

8.1 Katie Wood, Scrutiny Manager introduced the report to the Committee. During the discussion the following key points were highlighted:

- Councillor Hilary Moore tabled suggested recommendations for the review. These were agreed and listed in full as resolved below.
- A recommendation was proposed regarding supporting young carers. This is included at recommendation 10 below.

8.2 **RESOLVED:**

That the following recommendations be agreed to be included in the Committee's review and the full review referred to Mayor and Cabinet:

1. That LB Lewisham supports schools and careers advisors across the borough to identify and use up to date labour market information to ensure they are providing the best Careers Information, Advice and Guidance (CIAG) to young people and that there is an emphasis on one to one sessions wherever possible.
2. That LB Lewisham ensure that governor training highlights the recommendation from the Gatsby Report for each school to have one governor with oversight of CIAG and that this is included in the annual governor training programme.
3. That LB Lewisham ensure Looked After Children not educated in Lewisham get as good CIAG offer as those that are, including 100 hours of experience of the world of work. Further, that there is an increased focus on partnership working with other local authorities and providers to enable this outcome.
4. That the focus on tracking, supporting and monitoring NEETS (young people not in education, employment, or training) is maintained and that tracking and monitoring of 'unknowns' is improved. LB Lewisham should continue to look at good practice to ensure the numbers and percentage of both NEETS and unknowns are reduced.
5. The Committee notes that apprenticeships and traineeships are not uniform in quality and recommends that support should be put in place to help young people assess the quality and relevance of potential apprenticeships and traineeships. For example the use of the National

Apprenticeship Framework 'kite mark' system. Advisors should be receiving training and guidance as to how to support young people to gauge the relevance and quality of potential offers.

6. That traineeships, apprenticeships and alternative education routes be understood and promoted as equally valid progression routes as Higher Education and degrees.
7. That the LB Lewisham Participation Team continue to support schools to improve their careers offer and emulate good practice both through the peer review on careers provision and through the careers guidance network and forum and the positive relationships these have fostered.
8. That the planning policy on targets for numbers of apprenticeships as part of large developments should be monitored and the impact measured to ensure developers are meeting their obligations.
9. Taking into account concerns raised by the Young Advisors, the Committee recommends that advisors, schools and other education settings should ensure they take into consideration young peoples' mental health and wellbeing when providing careers advice.
10. That LB Lewisham should put an increased focus on supporting young carers to access high quality careers information, advice and guidance. Statistically this group of young people are very much more likely to be not in education, employment or training or be "unknown".
11. Support should be put in place to ensure young people are apprenticeship/work or college ready. This should include skills such as time management, financial awareness, resilience, emotional support and understanding their rights and requirements. Further, a children's rights officer should be appointed to work across the borough and support young people.

9. Select Committee work programme

9.1 Katie Wood introduced the report to the Committee. In response to questions and challenge from members of the Committee, the following key points were made:

- Any action plan from the results of the Education Commission report should come back to CYP Select Committee as listed in the referral to Mayor and Cabinet. This should be scheduled onto the Committee's work programme accordingly.
- All paper agendas should be stapled in future as it was very difficult to manage large agendas that were loose leaf.

9.2 RESOLVED: That

1. Any action plan from the results of the Education Commission report should come back to CYP Select Committee as listed in the referral to Mayor and Cabinet and scheduled onto the Committee's work programme accordingly.

2. That future agendas should be stapled rather than loose leaf and the print room be requested to purchase equipment to ensure that even large agendas can be attached or stapled in some way.

10. Referrals to Mayor and Cabinet

10.1 RESOLVED:

That the referral as listed under agenda item 4 on the Education Commission be referred to Mayor and Cabinet.

The meeting ended at 9.30 pm

Chair:

Date:
