

MINUTES OF THE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SELECT COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 8 September 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), Gail Exon (Church of England Southwark Diocesan Board of Education) and Monsignor N Rotheron (Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Southwark Commission for Schools and Colleges)

APOLOGIES: Councillors David Britton and Lisa Palin

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor Paul Maslin (Cabinet Member for Children and Young People), Chris Ashton (Interim Head of Service, Standards and Achievement), David Austin (Head of Corporate Resources), Katy Brown (Advisor to the Young Mayor), Alan Docksey (Head of Resources & Performance, CYP), Tyreese Hines (Young Advisor), Liam Islam (Young Mayor of Lewisham), Alastair Pettigrew (Interim Director, Childrens Social Care), Sara Williams (Executive Director, Children and Young People) and Katie Wood (Scrutiny Manager)

1. Minutes of the meeting held on 23 June 2015

1.1 RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting held on the 23 June be agreed subject to the following amendments:

Monsignor Nick Rotheron be recorded as being present.

Gail Exon be recorded as having sent apologies for absence.

2. Declarations of interest

2.1 Councillor Jacq Paschoud declared a personal interest in item 3 as she was a member of Lewisham Contact a Family and she was Chair of Lewisham Parents Forum.

2.2 Councillor John Paschoud declared a personal interest in item 3 as he was a member of Lewisham Contact a Family and Lewisham Parents Forum.

3. Savings Report

3.1 David Austin, Head of Corporate Resources introduced the savings report to the committee and explained that the report continued the work from the last financial year and could be looked at in the context of the Medium Term Financial Strategy. The following points were noted:

- Pending the Comprehensive Spending Review in November and the Local Government Financial Statement in December 2015, there was uncertainty as to the full amount needed for savings up to 2020.
- There was a minimum of £45 million of savings which would be needed over the next two financial years. The current report put forward £12 million of new savings for 2016/17 and a further £14 million of new savings for 2017/18.
- The Council had already made £120 million savings from 2010 up to 2015.
- Any referrals made by the Children and Young People Select Committee would go to Public Accounts Select Committee on the 29 September and then to Mayor and Cabinet on the 30 September 2015.

3.2 Sara Williams, Executive Director for Children and Young People, Alan Docksey, Head of Resources and Performance, and Alastair Pettigrew, Interim Director, Children's Social Care were also in attendance to provide additional clarifications on specific budget proposals.

3.5 In the discussion the following key points were raised relating to the budget process.

- The savings proposals had been categorised thematically under the broad themes of the six Select Committees. However all select committees had been provided with all the savings proposals so could comment on any proposal if it felt it was relevant to its committee.
- There was a predicted £20 million shortfall which would be a challenge to meet. It was possible that the option of using reserves to meet some of this shortfall could be used to help smooth the transition.

3.6 Sara Williams addressed the committee on the savings proposals listed in sections J and Q.

- The savings in section J were a combination of introducing additional charges for schools such as through the Service Level Agreements (SLAs) and charging for services previously provided in addition to the core statutory services.
- The reduction in funding to the Educational Psychologist Team represented removal of vacant posts and the service would be able to recruit to an additional trainee role.
- There would be additional charges for estate management and efficiency savings in the Standards and Achievements Team.
- The savings in section Q included a reduction in the budget for equipment for sensory teachers. This would now be charged directly to the Designated Schools Grant in line with other local authorities.

- The reorganisation in management in occupational therapy would make the team more efficient to avoid potential overlap with the occupational therapy service within the Health Service.
- The reductions in Q4 would involve improved management of placement costs, reducing the numbers of residential care and increasing the use of local authority foster placements where possible.

3.7 In the discussion that followed, the following key points were raised:

- With respect to the managing and improving of transition plans (A11) additional clarification outlining the localised options and the full details of how the savings would be achieved would help to inform any decision on savings in this area.
- Ceasing the free swimming programme and the cycling in schools programme as listed in saving proposal A16 could go against the aim of tackling childhood obesity. Further information on the uptake of the schemes and the costs would help to understand the effect of reducing spending in this area.
- The additional proposed charges to schools as outlined in I9e and section J of the savings report would be discussed at the Schools Forum meeting in October. Minutes of this meeting could be sent round to CYP Select Committee members as soon as they were available.
- The Changes to charging outlined in J2b would bring Lewisham in line with other Local Authorities where there are charges to schools for additional services.
- Lewisham's Passenger Transport Services had a significant overspend of £700,000 in the 2014/15 financial year. The proposals listed in N5 were to reduce the costs per journey and not to change the eligibility criteria in order to reduce number of service users.
- The reduction in carers funding (Q3e) needed further clarification. The "Contact a Family" scheme was highly valued by families and clarification and additional details on the savings reduction including assurances that it would not be replicating unsuccessful models that had been previously trialled was sought.
- With respect to saving proposal Q3e, The Dedicated Schools Grant was being reviewed constantly in the light of changing legislation to assess what would be permissible and the current Lewisham situation.
- It would be helpful to have additional details of the risk matrix and risk analysis methods to help with scrutiny of the savings proposals.
- Concerns were raised over the complexities of foster arrangements for very challenging placements and that the savings outlined in Q4c may not be deliverable.
- Following concerns raised regarding the Youth Service mutual (Q5), the committee were informed that the report due in November to CYP Select Committee would include considerations of options.

3.7 **RESOLVED:**

That the following comments on the savings proposals be referred to the Public Accounts Select Committee for consideration.

A11: Managing and Improving Transition Plans.

The Committee raised concerns about the ability for the Council to increase the number of localised options for young people with complex needs and requested further clarification on the localised options being proposed, and further details of exactly how the savings would be achieved, and the timescale to be provided before a decision is taken on this proposal.

A16: Public Health (Obesity and Physical Activity)

The Committee highlighted that reductions in Council spending in this area could have a negative impact on the health of young people and increase the risk of childhood obesity. The Committee was concerned regarding the proposal to cease the free swimming programme for under 16s and adults over 60 and to cease the cycling in schools programme. The Committee requested further information on the current uptake of the schemes and the costings and savings predicted, before a decision be taken on this proposal.

I9e: Realign Schools HR Recharge

The Committee requested additional information on the exact nature of the proposal to charge schools for HR functions such as recruitment, occupational health, policy advice and DBS clearance. After hearing that the proposal around charging for HR functions would be considered by the Schools Forum in October, the Committee requested that the minutes from the Schools Forum meeting in which these matters would be discussed be circulated to members of the Children and Young People Select Committee at the earliest possible stage.

J2a: Schools Service Level Agreement

The Committee requested that copies of the minutes of the meeting of the Schools Forum where the proposed 2.5% increase in the cost to schools would be considered, be circulated to the Children and Young People Select Committee as soon as they were available.

J2b: Schools Attendance and Welfare

The committee had concerns regarding the impact this proposal would have on schools and felt additional information on this was needed, particularly with respect to Primary Schools which they felt may have less capacity to manage these changes. The Committee raised concerns that the impact could be greater than predicted and requested assurances that the impact predictions had been fully researched, to be received before a decision on this proposal be taken.

N5: Review of Lewisham's Passenger Transport Service

The Committee was reassured that there would be no changes to the eligibility criteria as a result of the proposed savings but requested further information to ensure that the proposals were realistic given the current deficit of £700,000 in that service area, to be received before a decision on this proposal be taken.

Q3a&b: Sensory Teachers

The Committee requested additional information on how these savings would be achieved and any potential negative effects on students as a result of passing on costs to the Dedicated Schools Grant, to be received before a decision on this proposal be taken.

Q3c: Educational Psychologists

The Committee had concerns regarding the reduction in staffing and requested additional information on the proposal and impact, to be received before a decision on this proposal be taken.

Q3e: Reducing Carers Funding

The Committee requested further clarification on the savings proposal and highlighted the importance of the Contact a Family scheme. The Committee requested assurance be given, that this proposal was not replicating a previously trialled programme, before a decision on this proposal be taken.

Q5: Youth Service

The committee requested more detail on the proposed changes to services and the potential impact on young people as well as additional detail on other alternative options considered

4. Lewisham Safeguarding Children's Board

4.1 Alastair Pettigrew presented the report to committee noting that the Committee Chair and report author, Chris Doorly was unable to attend and sent her apologies. In his presentation the following key points were highlighted:

- The remit of the Lewisham Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB) was set out in the Children Act 2004 with the principal function being to coordinate what is done by each person or body represented on the Board for the purpose of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the area and to ensure the effectiveness of what is done for those purposes.
- The board provides an independent opinion of services and highlights and audits performance. In addition to this their remit includes: examining serious case reviews including every death of a child.

- The budget for the LSCB had more than doubled in the last year reflecting the importance of the work undertaken.
- The LSCB had established a Child Sexual Exploitation task group and were working in collaboration with the Met Police.
- National measures for lengths of foster placements included “Number of children who have 3 or more placements in one year should be less than 16%. The current Lewisham figure is 9.5%.

4.3 Standing Orders were suspended at 9.45pm

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

5. All Schools Results

5.1 Chris Ashton, Interim Head of Standards and Achievements and Sara Williams gave a presentation to the committee which was handed round to committee members, a copy of which will be interleaved with the agenda. During the presentation and discussion the following key points were highlighted:

- The results at Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) were continuing to improve with Lewisham being in the top 5% of local authorities nationally.
- The results for Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 (KS1) and (KS2) had also improved since 2013.
- At Key Stage 4 (KS4) the percentage of those gaining 5 A*-C was similar to 2014 but likely to be below London and National Average.
- At Key Stage 5 (KS5) there had been an improvement in numbers of grades A* - C.
- Full details of the results with comparisons with National and London averages could be brought to committee once these figures were available.
- The figures for Looked After Children and those on Pupil Premium were currently not available as a separate statistic but these could be provided with the full statistical report.
- Improving secondary schools and results at KS4 and KS5 was a key priority for the Council. This was being looked at in a broad context including: consulting with schools on ways of working; looking at best practice; managing the transition to year 7 successfully; improving behaviour and attendance.

RESOLVED: That

1. The report be noted.
2. The full 2014/15 Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5 results be brought back to the committee as part of the 2015/16 work programme.

3. A report outlining best practice in secondary schools be added to the select committee work programme for the 2015/16 municipal year.

6. Key Issues Update Report

6.1 RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

7. Select Committee work programme

7.1 Cllr Hilary Moore, Chair of the Children and Young People Select Committee, introduced the item and explained that following a meeting with the young advisors, she was proposing that the committee undertake an in-depth review into Independent Advice and Guidance (IAG) in schools. This topic had been a key concern for many of the young advisors and Cllr Moore proposed that the review be carried out in such a way as to ensure the continued involvement of some of the young people.

7.2 Cllr Moore introduced Liam Islam, Young Mayor of Lewisham and Tyreese Hines, Young Advisor, to the committee. Liam and Tyreese addressed the committee and stated that they felt there were disparities between schools in post-16 guidance. Some schools and individuals had significantly more support than others. Moving on to post 16 and post 18 education, training or employment could be a stressful time for young people and not having the right support was adding additional pressures.

7.3 Katie Wood, Scrutiny Manager introduced the remaining items on the work programme asking for members to specify whether they required any additional detail or analysis for items scheduled for the next meeting, or had any other requested additions to the work programme.

7.2 RESOLVED: That

- Liam Islam be congratulated and thanked for all his work as Young Mayor of Lewisham over the previous year.
- The committee undertake an in-depth review into Independent Advice and Guidance in Schools.
- The full KS4 and KS5 results be reported back to the committee as part of the Secondary schools Improvement Monitoring report scheduled for March 2016.
- A report on best practice in secondary schools be scheduled as part of the 2015/16 work programme for the Children and Young People Select Committee.

8. Referrals to Mayor and Cabinet

8.1 There were no referrals to Mayor and Cabinet. However there were referrals to the Public Accounts Select committee on item 3 as listed in the resolved section under item 3.

The meeting ended at 10.45 pm

Chair:

Date:
