

MINUTES OF THE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SELECT COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 19 April 2017 at 7.00 pm

PRESENT: Councillors Luke Sorba (Chair), Liz Johnston-Franklin (Vice-Chair), Chris Barnham, Andre Bourne, Councillor Joyce Jacca, Helen Klier, Jacq Paschoud, John Paschoud, Alan Till, Sharon Archibald (Parent Governor Representative), Monsignor N Rothon (Church Representative) and Kevin Mantle (Parent Governor representative for special schools) (Parent Governor Representative) and

APOLOGIES: Councillors Hilary Moore and Gail Exon

IN ATTENDANCE: Councillor Paul Maslin (Cabinet Member for Children and Young People)

ALSO PRESENT: Kate Bond (Head of Standards & Inclusion), Stephen Kitchman (Director of Children's Social Care), Sara Williams (Executive Director, Children and Young People), Emma Aye-Kumi (Scrutiny Manager), Jackie Jones (Service Manager - School Improvement), Dave Sheppard (Executive Head of Leathersellers' Federation of Schools) and Katie Wood (Scrutiny Manager)

1. Confirmation of Chair and Vice-Chair

It was RESOLVED that

- 1) Councillor Luke Sorba be confirmed as Chair of the committee
- 2) Councillor Liz Johnston-Franklin be confirmed as Vice-Chair of the committee.

The Chair welcomed Councillor Joyce Jacca as a new member of the committee, and Councillor John Paschoud who was returning to the committee after a break.

The Chair noted his thanks to Mark Saunders, parent governor representative (secondary) who had resigned from the role as he was moving out of borough.

The Chair thanked the existing non-councillor committee members for their valued and continued involvement with the committee.

The Chair also recorded his thanks to the previous Chair, Councillor Hilary Moore, who had chaired the committee for the previous 2 years.

The Chair welcomed David Sheppard, Executive Head of Leathersellers' Federation of Schools, to the meeting.

2. Minutes of the meeting held on 28 February 2017

RESOLVED that the minutes be agreed as an accurate record of the proceedings.

In relation to Item 8 of the minutes, regarding school funding, the Chair asked Sara Williams, Executive Director for Children and Young People's Services, to update the committee regarding school budget deficits, and in particular about Forest Hill School (FHS).

The following was noted:

- Sedgehill School, Forest Hill School and Prendergast Ladywell Fields College (PLFC) had received approval from the Mayor to deficits of over £500,000.
- PLFC was on target with its deficit payback plan and was now spending within its budget in-year.
- Sedgehill School's in-year budget was balanced and it was meeting its repayment schedule.
- FHS had worked hard to get its budget in reasonable shape through restructuring of support staff and teaching staff. This involved redundancies, with potentially one compulsory redundancy. Further strike action was anticipated this term.
- Other schools had smaller deficits and all were producing or had produced recovery plans to be signed off by the Executive Director for CYP.
- The council had arranged over 20 well-attended training sessions to support schools with budget management and to provide financial health checks.
- The council's financial escalation procedure had been tightened to ensure that schools were challenged and that any issues came to light early on.
- Around 50 schools were operating an in year deficit and all had been challenged, either to show that there were legitimate one-off expenses for which they had saved or that they were addressing and inherent overspend.
- Approximately 10 schools were carrying out major staffing restructures.
- Schools were sharing advice and best practice on matters such as use of pupil premium funds, to ensure that funds were being used efficiently.
- No further deficits were expected to be reported to the Mayor (ie over £500k).
- Members were concerned that schools would find it hard to achieve improved results while making the savings required by the government changes to the funding formula.

3. Declarations of interest

There was none.

4. Responses to Referrals to Mayor and Cabinet

None was due.

5. Annual Schools Standards Report 2015/16

Sara Williams (Executive Director for Children and Young People), Kate Bond (Head of Standards and Inclusion) and Jackie Jones (Service Manager – School Improvement) were available to take questions.

The following was noted in discussion:

- The secondary sector in Lewisham was experiencing a significant culture change. Nine new heads had been appointed and schools were working to build closer relationships with each other. A challenge lead with extensive school improvement experience had been in place for this academic year. Cultural change would not bring immediate results but would create a solid foundation upon which to build.
- The borough's primary schools were achieving very well, with all but one primary school achieving Outstanding or Good Ofsted ratings. It was noted that the Ofsted threshold for good/ outstanding had been raised and recent inspections were comfortably meeting the standard.
- Gap analyses had been conducted to establish the reasons for the dip in KS2 results last year and officers were confident that this year's results would be better.
- David Sheppard, Executive Headteacher - Leathersellers' Federation suggested that individual schools were particularly vulnerable, since schools belonging to federations could combine resources and better withstand curriculum and financial pressures. He cited PLFC's rapid deficit recovery as an example of how federations were beneficial to schools.
- Sedgehill School was in a difficult position as it was subject to an academy order but no sponsor had come forward. Around 60-100 schools nationally were in the same predicament. The council would continue to navigate the situation with the government but a quick resolution was proving challenging.
- Secondary school results were improving slowly and in 2016 the low results from FHS and Sedgehill School had been critical in putting Lewisham at the bottom of the London league table.
- Officers did not feel that migration patterns impacted significantly on secondary results.
- Fluctuating results reflected challenges with leadership and management. The council's emphasis was on improving senior and middle management in secondary schools.

- While white low income children were the lowest performing group overall, vulnerable groups varied between schools. Officers were confident that every school in the borough was 'Ofsted-ready' and could identify which pupil groups were vulnerable or struggling and what was being done to support them.

RESOLVED:

1. That the report be noted.
2. That Kate Bond, Head of Standards and Achievements, would update the Committee regarding Sedgehill School at the next meeting.

6. Update on Ofsted Improvement Plan

Stephen Kitchman, Director for Children's Social Care, presented the report.

Supplementary detail was provided in response to questions on the plan and the committee heard that:

- This was the quarter 3 report in relation to the Ofsted improvement plan.
- In response to a question regarding Viewpoint progress, officers advised that a revised questionnaire was being progressed.
- Changes to IT meant that social workers now had smart phones and ipads to enable them to complete paperwork in any suitable confidential place, freeing up space in the office. Staff could access LiquidLogic – the social work recording system – from their ipads and also secure-link to e-case files from home. This offered flexibility to social workers as well as time savings.
- Around 1/3 of the Ofsted recommendations were in relation to the 'front door'. Fundamental changes had been made to initial contact, and the MASH was providing a more holistic view. Housing, schools representative (currently being advertised), and CAMHS had committed to joining the MASH but this had not yet happened.
- A new early help team had been established.
- Within the MASH there was an outcome for every referral.
- The quarter 4 Ofsted improvement plan report would be presented to Committee as scheduled within the work programme.

It was RESOLVED that the contents of the report, and the extension of a small number of target completion dates as set out in the report, be noted.

7. Select Committee work programme

Emma Aye-Kumi, Scrutiny Manager, introduced the item. She invited Katie Wood to present the scoping paper for the review of recruitment and retention of staff in Lewisham schools.

The following was noted:

- The committee was broadly happy with the scope but wanted additional emphasis on school budgets/ finances.
- The annual report on School Budgets, currently scheduled for 7 June, should be considered jointly with the Public Accounts Select Committee (PAC) .
- The committee wanted to reschedule the June meeting, currently scheduled for the eve of the general election. The Chair agreed to address this outside of the meeting, and to coordinate with PAC.
- Officers felt that the item on the Lewisham Music Service – implementation of new Trust arrangements, currently scheduled for consideration at the July meeting, should be postponed until September to allow the new arrangements to be in place for longer so an accurate picture could be reported.
- The human trafficking item that was postponed from the previous year's work programme should be timetabled for July, subject to the external speaker's availability.
- There was support in principle for inviting the Mayor to attend in December, with the topic for discussion to be decided nearer the time.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the KLOE and timetable proposed in the scoping report be agreed.
- 2) That the review places additional emphasis on budget/ finance issues.
- 3) That an item on child trafficking be added to the work programme for July, subject to the external speaker's availability.
- 4) That the schools funding item scheduled for the June meeting be held jointly with PAC.
- 5) That the Chair correspond with the committee outside of the meeting regarding potentially changing the date of the 7 June meeting.
- 6) That the item on the Lewisham Music Service currently scheduled for July be postponed until September.
- 7) That a session with the Mayor be scheduled into the work programme for December.

8) That the work programme be presented to Business Panel for consideration.

8. Referrals to Mayor and Cabinet

No referrals were made.

The meeting ended at 9:12pm

Chair:

Date:
