

AT A MEETING of the Children and Young People Select Committee of
HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL held at the castle, Winchester on
Wednesday, 9th May, 2018

Chairman:
a Councillor Ray Bolton

Vice-Chairman:
p Councillor Roz Chadd

a Councillor Jackie Branson
p Councillor Zilliah Brooks
p Councillor Fran Carpenter
p Councillor Steve Forster
p Councillor Marge Harvey
p Councillor Wayne Irish
p Councillor Gavin James
p Councillor Kirsty Locke

p Councillor Russell Oppenheimer
p Councillor Neville Penman
p Councillor Jackie Porter
p Councillor Robert Taylor
p Councillor Malcolm Wade
p Councillor Michael Westbrook

Substitute Members:

P Councillor Pal Hayre, Conservative

Co-opted members:

p Ian Brewerton, Secondary School Parent Governor Representative
p Gareth Davies, Primary School Parent Governor Representative
p Jane Longman, Special School Parent Governor Representative
a Robert Sanders, Church of England Schools Representative
VACANT Roman Catholic Schools Representative

In attendance at the invitation of the Chairman:

p Councillor Keith Mans – Executive Lead Member for Children's Services

49. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors Bolton and Branson. Councillor Hayre was in attendance as the Conservative Substitute Member. Apologies were also received from Robert Sanders, Church of England Co-opted Member.

50. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

All Members who believe they have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in any matter to be considered at the meeting must declare that interest and, having regard to Part 3 Paragraph 1.5 of the County Council's Members' Code of Conduct, leave the meeting while the matter is discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with Paragraph 1.6 of the Code. Furthermore all Members with a Personal Interest in a matter being considered at the meeting should consider, having regard to Part 5, Paragraph 4 of the Code, whether such

interest should be declared, and having regard to Part 5, Paragraph 5 of the Code, consider whether it is appropriate to leave the meeting while the matter is discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with the Code.

Jane Longman, the Co-opted Parent Governor for Special Schools declared a personal interest in Item 6 as her son is eligible for home to school transport.

51. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the meeting held on 30 January 2018 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

52. DEPUTATIONS

The Committee received one deputation on Item 6 'Proposed Changes to the Home to school Transport Policy and Post 16 Transport Policy Statement'.

Eleanor Hayward and Claire Truswell made a deputation on behalf of the families of Ansell Farm, and requested that Ansell Farm should be excluded from the decision. Concerns were raised relating to the safety of children walking to school, increased traffic and pollution, increased parking around schools, and the time and impact on a parent's working day.

53. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman announced that Gareth Davies had been appointed as the new parent governor co-opted member for primary schools, and Robert Sanders had been formally appointed at the February Council meeting as the Church of England co-opted member.

The Chairman also updated the Committee on the health of the Chairman, Cllr Bolton, and it was noted that his health was improving. The Committee extended their best wishes to him and to the Executive Member for Education, Councillor Peter Edgar, who had also been ill recently.

54. PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE HOME TO SCHOOL TRANSPORT POLICY AND POST 16 TRANSPORT POLICY STATEMENT

The Committee received a report of the Director of Children's Services setting out recommendations to the Executive Lead Member for Children's Services regarding Proposed Changes to the Home to School Transport Policy and Post 16 Transport Policy Statement (see Item 6 in the Minute Book).

The report set out the outcomes of the public consultation on changes to the Home to School Transport and Post 16 Transport Policies to bring the policy in line with the County Council's statutory responsibilities and remove the discretionary elements from the service. The Committee also received a presentation which addressed key areas and set out the responsibility of the local authority to provide free home to school transport for children of compulsory school age in certain circumstances prescribed in legislation. The

circumstances for eligibility were set out, and the costs in providing both statutory and discretionary provision were explained to Members. Comparisons between the cost of home to school transport for rural and urban authorities was also highlighted as well as the discretionary features of the current home to school policy.

The recommendations in the report were detailed to the Committee, which would be considered by the Executive Lead Member for Children's Services at his decision day later in the afternoon.

In response to questions, Members heard:

- Consultation feedback and responses had been examined and taken into account as well as taking into account managing statutory and discretionary home to school transport services within a reduced budget.
- That currently 152 children were eligible for home to school transport from Ancells Farm to Fleet Infant and Velmead Junior schools, with transport provided by way of three contracted vehicles.
- That most catchment area schools were within walking distance for parents and children.
- Whilst it was proposed to implement the walking distance of three miles on a child's eighth birthday, thus removing the discretionary policy of waiting until the end of the school year, in many case families would be able to purchase spare seats when they are available on the contracted service that they have previously used, as well as having the opportunity to appeal.
- That Post 16 students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) could qualify for transport based on their individual circumstances.
- Individual schools could work with families to look at opportunities for providing home to school transport 'in-house'.
- All children in care have a distinct service that will continue to provide home to school transport and other travel requirements within their social care provision.
- That changes to the Post 16-Transport policy statement would not influence commercial bus routes.
- That national road safety guidelines state that children should be accompanied as necessary by parents/guardians when walking to school. The County Council appreciates that this isn't always practical. In the past the County Council's Regulatory Panel B has carried out assessments to determine safe walking routes to school.
- That families in rural areas with no means of transport could apply to pay for a spare available seat, but availability wouldn't be clear until the start of the school academic year and this could delay children's attendance at school if parents chose to wait until the outcome was determined.

The Chairman moved to debate.

A variety of arguments were heard, including:

- The view that schools could work collaboratively in providing home to school transport for children, with the possibility of exploring advertising with local companies to help with fundraising.

- That the cost of providing Home to School transport differs greatly based on whether the area is urban or rural, with Hampshire incurring particularly high spend due to its rural geography. It was added that this point had been reinforced to the Secretary of State for Education by the Executive Lead Member.
- Some Members raised concern that the majority of people who responded to the consultation didn't support the proposals.
- That concern was raised that this was a cost driven exercise and some Members wouldn't support the proposals because of the effect on families.
- The view that schools could liaise with Parish and District Councils to explore possibilities of providing assistance in their local areas.
- That some Members raised concern from an environmental perspective due to increased car usage, and building problems for the future.
- That some Members extended their thanks to Officers involved for their hard work.

Following debate the Chairman moved to consideration of the recommendations. A number of additional recommendations to the Executive Lead Member were proposed and considered by the Committee and a vote was held on each as set out below:

- a. Proposed by Councillor Jackie Porter and seconded by Councillor Michael Westbrook as set out below.

'Re-consider the options for pre-school and rising 5's school transport particularly to encourage rising 5's the opportunity to attend school'.

For: 8
Against: 10
Abstained: None

- b. Proposed by Councillor Malcolm Wade and seconded by Councillor Gavin James as set out below.

'Offer a continuing place to 8 year olds (Year 3) on the school bus, even if they have to pay'.

For: 8
Against: 9
Abstained: 1

- c. Proposed by Councillor Gavin James and seconded by Councillor Jackie Porter as set out below.

'To reinstate the councillor panel to determine appeals'.

Following legal advice, this was withdrawn.

- d. Proposed by Councillor Michael Westbrook and seconded by Councillor Wayne Irish as set out below.

'To carry out impact assessments on schools with rural catchments to deal with any extra traffic'.

For: 5
Against: 13
Abstained: None

The Chairman moved to consider the recommendation in the report to the Committee as set out below:

'That the Children and Young People Select Committee consider and support the recommendations being proposed to the Executive Lead Member for Children's Services in the attached report'.

For: 10
Against: 8
Abstained: None

RESOLVED:

That the Children and Young People Select Committee support the recommendations being proposed to the Executive Lead Member for Children's Services in the attached report.

55. FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICE PROGRESS REPORT

The Committee received a report (Item 7 in the Minute Book) from the Director of Children's Services which provided an update on the Family Support Service, following on from the commencement of the Service on the 1 December 2016.

The background to the Service was explained and the positive impact of the new service in combining Children's Centres, Early Helps Hubs and the Youth Support Budgets was highlighted. The role of the Early Help Hub in playing a vital role to vulnerable families at Level 3 was noted and it was heard that the number of cases open at Level 3 and receiving multi-agency response at the end of February 2018 was 3288 children. It was highlighted that Quarter 3 recorded the highest number of children and families being reached with 45 per cent held by the Family Support Service in the Early Help Co-ordinator role and 55 per cent were co-ordinated by other agencies. Key to the effectiveness of the multi-agency group was the strong working relationships and Members noted the sharing of experiences and good practice.

Members heard that outcomes of the Service were measured and evidenced as a priority and the Outcomes Star assessment tool was implemented in April 2017 which tracked progress and outcomes for all Level 3 families. For practitioners, this provided valuable feedback and audited case files in 2017 indicated that 76 per cent of children's wishes or feelings were recorded and even higher numbers evidenced positive impact of the Service.

Officers explained the range of interventions that continued to be available to those families assessed at Level 2, and how specific needs were addressed

through innovative ways such as e-safety advice, joint working with libraries and emotional mental health. The effectiveness of the multi-agency group was also detailed and the positive outcomes of partnership working was stressed and Members noted that a Service Review in 2017 collated positive and encouraging feedback.

In response to questions, Members heard:

- That information relating to the Family Support Service in Basingstoke would be sent to Members, as due to an oversight, this wasn't included in the report.
- That in spite of its large geographical area, the New Forest by means of multi-agency support, is able to reach vulnerable families and children, with the implementation of bespoke arrangements if necessary.
- That in response to a Member question regarding the relationship with the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS), a separate update on CAMHS will be provided at the November meeting of the Select Committee.
- That people recruited to the multi-agency group bring with them a wide range of excellent skills to benefit the Service and there are no issues with recruitment or retention.
- That positive feedback had been received relating to the Talking Teens programme in the New Forest which offered ideas and strategies for parents to maintain boundaries, motivation and support for young people in an emotionally healthy context. Members asked that information on such programmes be cascaded to them, when these are launched.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the continued progress of the Family Support Service is noted.

56. SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES (SEND) REFORMS

The Committee received a presentation (Item 8 in the Minute Book) from the Director of Children's Services and representatives of the NHS providing an update on Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Reforms, following on from a previous update to the Committee in November 2017.

The context of SEND Reforms was set out for Members' information and it was highlighted that as a result of the Children and Families Act (Part 3) in September 2014, there was a strengthened focus on parents and children collaboration as well as improvements in other areas such as the introduction of Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs). The Committee noted that as a result of the introduction of the EHCPs, 5,277 Statements of SEN had to be transferred by the 31 March 2018 to EHCPs, of which 99.9% were completed, and the six (0.1%) not transferred were due to particular circumstances including Tribunal appeals. It was noted that three were still to be transferred, and Members noted that these would be completed soon. It was heard that there had been a significant increase in the figure of EHCPs produced within the statutory 20 week deadline and this had risen from 4.5% in 2016 to 46% in March 2018, and this figure was expected to rise in the future.

Members heard that there had been an increase in requests for EHCPs, which was also being seen nationally, and where previously SEN Statements covered children and young people up to the age of 19, EHCPs included children and young people up to 25 years of age. Officers also drew attention to the benefits of the digital EHC hub and explained that the final version of the digital EHC hub system had been received and would be launched via a phased approach later in the year, and the benefits of this system were highlighted.

Officers explained the relationship between SEN support and managing demand, and outlined the key areas of focus which included working with mainstream schools and colleges as well as close working with Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators. The department recognised that there were a large number of SEN out of county placements, and reviews were being undertaken to determine needs and whether these could be met within the community. A total of 43 cases had been identified as ready to move on, saving £605,000 from a total spend of £20,483,212 on SEN costs. Key areas of SEND post 16 preparation for adulthood strategy were outlined with an emphasis on gaining valuable work skills which would lead to future employment.

The presentation also outlined other key areas such as capital place planning strategy and close working with the Hampshire Parent Carer Network (HPCN) in understanding concerns of parents and building supportive relationships between parents and professionals. The importance of Public Health early identification and early intervention was noted as well as its significant role in working to strengthen parental support.

Officers outlined that a number of workstreams were currently in place as part of the NHS Maternity and Children's collaborative and a number of key appointments had been made which included a learning disabilities commissioning assessor. Officers concluded the presentation by outlining the process for the First-Tier SENDIST Tribunal and explaining the stages of this to Members.

In response to questions, Members heard:

- That the number of live tribunals amounted to 100, but this reflected a national rising trend for tribunals due to the creation of a conflict resolution process.
- That the majority of SEND requests were received at school age.
- That struggles and delays in obtaining a diagnosis for autism, wouldn't delay or obstruct the implementation of an EHCP. It was noted that diagnosis could take place in late teens and early twenties and appropriate support mechanisms would be implemented in each case.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the overview provided in relation to the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Reforms presentation is noted.

57. **WORK PROGRAMME**

The Director of Transformation and Governance presented the Committee's work programme (see Item 9 in the Minute Book), and the Chairman invited Members to contribute items for consideration through either the Chairman or the Democratic Services Officer.

RESOLVED:

That the work programme is agreed.

Cllr Porter and other Members of the Committee wished to record their thanks to Cllr Chadd for Chairing the meeting.

Chairman,