

AT A MEETING of the Children and Young People Select Committee of
HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL held at the castle, Winchester on Tuesday
11th July 2023

Chairman:
p Councillor Neville Penman

p Councillor Juliet Henderson	p Councillor Zoe Huggins
p Councillor Prad Bains	a Councillor Gavin James
p Councillor Jackie Branson	a Councillor Arun Mummalaneni
p Councillor Ann Briggs	a Councillor Jackie Porter
p Councillor Steven Broomfield	p Councillor Martin Tod
p Councillor Tim Davies	a Councillor Jacky Tustain
p Councillor Christopher Donnelly	p Councillor Malcolm Wade
p Councillor David Drew	
a Councillor Pal Hayre	

Co-opted members

p Robert Sanders, Church of England Schools Representative
p Gemma Rainger, Parent Governor for Primary Schools
a Hannah Cheek, Parent Governor for Secondary Schools

104. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies have been received from Cllr Hayre, Cllr Mummalaneni, Cllr Tustain and Hannah Cheek, Parent Governor Representative for Secondary Schools.

Apologies have also been received from Cllr Porter and Cllr James; Cllr Groves is present as the deputy for the Liberal Democrat Group.

105. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were mindful that where they believed they had a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in any matter considered at the meeting they must declare that interest at the time of the relevant debate and, having regard to the circumstances described in Part 3, Paragraph 1.5 of the County Council's Members' Code of Conduct, leave the meeting while the matter was discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with Paragraph 1.6 of the Code. Furthermore, Members were mindful that where they believed they had a Personal interest in a matter being considered at the meeting they considered whether such interest should be declared, and having regard to Part 5, Paragraph 5 of the Code, considered whether it was appropriate to leave the meeting whilst the matter was discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with the Code.

No declarations were made.

95. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 6 March 2023 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

96. **DEPUTATIONS**

The Committee did not receive any deputations.

97. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman made no announcements.

98. **SCHOOL TRANSPORT UPDATE**

The Committee received a report and presentation from the Director of Children's Services providing an update on the School Transport Service as requested by the Committee in July 2022 (see Item 6 in the Minute Book).

Members noted that following a public consultation, the Executive Lead Member for Children's Services agreed changes to the School Transport Entitlement Policy which included:

- An increased use of co-ordinated pick up and drop off points for SEND children.
- Journey arrangements to serve multiple schools, colleges and age groups including journeys more commonly which served both mainstream and special schools and colleges.

The Committee heard that these new transport arrangements were not implemented for the 2022/23 academic year as plans had already been set and it was determined that it would not be easy to make changes. The Service was considering arrangements on a case-by-case basis when commissioning transport for the 2023/24 academic and subsequent years.

Officers explained how driver shortages and operators exiting the market following Brexit and the Pandemic had resulted in a challenging national market. It was noted that since 2012/13, there had been an increase of over 30% in SEND children requiring transport to school and costs have more than trebled.

Members noted a summary of service improvements, issues, and priorities for the School Transport Service.

In response to questions members heard that:

- The School Transport Service worked alongside independent schools were this could be arranged.
- Efforts are made to encourage walking to school where possible.

RESOLVED:

That the Children and Young People Select Committee note the contents of the report.

99. **SERVICES SUPPORTING CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE WITH DOWN SYNDROME IN HAMPSHIRE**

The Committee received a report from the Director of Children's Services providing an overview of services supporting children and young people with Down Syndrome in Hampshire (see Item 7 in the Minute Book).

Members noted that support was provided through a range of universal and specialist services and received a summary of those available in Hampshire.

The Committee heard that much of the provision children with Down Syndrome require should be made through inclusive teaching and ordinarily available provision. Children with Down Syndrome should have the opportunity to work with a range of adults across the school day but while spending much of their time in their class being taught alongside their peers. This support should allow the child to practice new skills independently and build their independence and personal responsibility over time. Where a child has more complex medical and other additional needs which require greater levels of adjustment, specialist interventions may be set out in an Education, Health & Care Plan and be updated as the child develops.

In response to questions members heard that:

- Children with Down Syndrome are supported into independence or will be transferred to Adult's Services if further support is still required.

RESOLVED:

That the Children and Young People Select Committee note the contents of the report.

100. **ANNUAL CHILDREN IN CARE REPORT 2022-23**

The Committee received a report from the Director of Children's Services providing the annual report on Children in Care for 2022-23 (see Item 8 in the Minute Book).

Members received a detailed overview of the current cohort of Children in Care, including the length of time in care, their current setting, and numbers of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children. The Corporate Parenting role of Councillors was detailed alongside an update from the Virtual School, including details of Personal Education Plans.

Officers concluded with the positive outcomes of the Ofsted inspection focused on Children in Care in January 2023.

In response to questions members heard that:

- For a Child to be considered 'missing' can be due to not being where they are expected to be for as little as two hours. This is monitored and as part of the safeguarding processes to prevent children being exploited.
- The family is at the centre of all interventions with a strength-based approach which aims to keep children with their families where safe to do so.
- There is a national consultation aiming to reduce the reliance on agency workers through recruitment and retention of social workers.
- Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children are assigned Personal Assistants in the same way as other Care Leavers.

RESOLVED:

The Children & Young People Select Committee support the priority areas for Children's Services, in relation to our children in care as being:

- Strengthening the voice of the Looked After Child and impact on service delivery.
- Promoting the effectiveness and efficiency of the CLA Health Assessment process and service so that it meets the physical and mental health needs of Children in Care (including dental and immunisations).
- Improve the educational outcomes of Children in Care and effectiveness of the process and service, including the service provided by the Hampshire Virtual School.
- Improve placement stability and increase placement choice for Children in Care.
- Children in our care will be safeguarded from harm including, all aspects of exploitation.
- Increase opportunities for Children in Care to safely live outside of the care system through Special Guardianship (SGO) assessments and reunification to family where appropriate.
- Ensure the needs of all children seeking asylum in the UK are understood and met through new service delivery.
- Improve the training for all social workers for Children in Care resulting in measurable impact.

101. **ANNUAL CARE LEAVERS REPORT 2022**

The Committee received a report from the Director of Children's Services providing the annual report on Care Leavers 2022 (see Item 9 in the Minute Book).

Members received a detailed overview of the current cohort of Care Leavers and the four different categories and their entitlement status. The Corporate Parenting role of Councillors alongside the authority's statutory responsibility to Care Leavers was detailed, setting out the authorities 'local offer'. This included the role of the Care Leaver teams and Personal Assistants and the opportunities for participation and engagement.

In response to questions members heard that:

- Hampshire has created a specialist role focused on promoting accommodation stability for young people.

- While a higher proportion of Care Leavers entered the Criminal Justice system than the general population, it was noted that Hampshire has low numbers in this regard compared to other authorities in the region.

RESOLVED:

That the Children & Young People Select Committee notes the good outcomes that are being achieved by Hampshire's Care Leavers and the plans of the Care Leaver Service to continue to improve those outcomes further in 2023.

102. UPDATE ON AUTISM SERVICES COMMISSIONING FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN HAMPSHIRE

To receive a regular information update (written only) on Autism Services Commissioning for Children and Young People in Hampshire, from the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Partnership of Clinical Commissioning Groups (see Item 10 in the Minute Book).

RESOLVED:

That the Children and Young People Select Committee noted the issues outlined in the update report, in particular:

- The HIOW ICB has successfully achieved the increases in Autism Assessment activity that it set out to achieve, moving from an average of 600-700 assessments per year before 2020 to approximately 1,500 per year from 2021 onwards.
- Increased waiting lists times continue to put pressure on Hampshire services since October 2021 when the contract first commenced.
- Autism assessment capacity in Hampshire is not sufficient to achieve the objective of 3 month (12 week) wait by March 2024. The current average wait in Hampshire is now 18 months.
- Continued partnership with HCC SEND services and other education colleagues will be necessary to help understand, address and potentially reduce (if appropriate) current levels of referrals.

That the next report be provided to the Select Committee in November 2023 via in person attendance to enable the ICB to focus on service transformation.

101. WORK PROGRAMME

The Director of People and Organisation presented the Committee's work programme (see Item 11 in the Minute Book).

RESOLVED:

That the work programme, subject to any amendments made during the meeting, is agreed.

Chairman, Children and Young People
Select Committee