

# **BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL**

## **CHILDREN, FAMILIES & SCHOOLS COMMITTEE**

**5.00PM – 6 JUNE 2005**

**COMMITTEE ROOMS 2/3  
BRIGHTON TOWN HALL**

### **MINUTES**

Present: Councillor Hawkes (Chair); Councillors McCaffery (Deputy Chair), Mrs Brown (OS), Giebeler, Hazelgrove, Hyde, John, Mallender, Norman, and Young.

#### **PART ONE**

#### **ACTION**

#### **1. PROCEDURAL BUSINESS**

##### **1A Declarations of Substitutes**

1.1 There were none

##### **1B Declarations of Interest**

1.2 There were none.

##### **1C Exclusion of Press and Public**

1.3 The Committee considered whether the press and public should be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of any items contained in the agenda, having regard to the nature of the business to be transacted and the nature of the proceedings and the likelihood as to whether, if members of the press and public were present, there would be disclosure to them of confidential or exempt information as defined in Section 100A(3) or 100 1 of the Local Government Act 1972.

**1.4 RESOLVED** - That the press and public not be excluded from the meeting during consideration of any items on the agenda.

#### **2. MINUTES**

2.1 **RESOLVED** - That the minutes of the meeting held on 14 March 2005 be approved and signed by the Chair.

### 3. CALLOVER

3.1 **RESOLVED** – That with the exception of the items reserved (and marked with an asterisk), the recommendations and resolutions contained therein be approved and adopted without debate.

### 4. NOTICE OF MOTION – Secondary School Admissions Policy in Brighton & Hove

4.1 The Committee considered the following Notice of Motion submitted to Council on 28 April 2005 by Councillors Randall and Taylor. The Notice of Motion was presented to the Committee by Councillor Mallender

4.2 “Given that some children in Elm Grove, Hanover, Kemptown, Queens Park and Whitehawk have failed to get into any of the three schools they nominated this year and that the Schools Admission Team has told their parents that they are given ‘what’s left over’ when the popular schools are full.

And recognising that the admissions system ‘is unfair’ in the words of Director of Children, Families and Schools, David Hawker and that Kemptown MP, Des Turner concedes that parents in East Brighton cannot ‘exercise any meaningful choice whatsoever’ in the secondary education of their children:

This Council calls for:

(1) Immediate steps to rectify this year’s unfair geographical exclusion of children in East Brighton from the schools of their choice. If necessary, consideration should be given to opening extra classes in preferred schools.

(2) An all-party review of the school admission criteria so that from next year future generations of East Brighton children do not suffer unfairly.”

4.3 The Solicitor to the Committee cautioned the Committee that to implement part (1) of the Notice of Motion, and to expand a schools number above its published admission number could leave the Council open to a legal challenge.

4.4 The Committee considered the following amendment to the Notice of Motion proposed by Councillor McCaffery and seconded by Councillor Brown,

“ Given that the change in the admissions arrangements introduced in 2005 has resulted in a number of children in the East Brighton and Southeast Hove areas not being allocated their first preference

school, this Council resolves to establish a cross party review group, to include one secondary headteacher and one secondary school governor with an independent chair, to review the 2005 arrangements, and to make any recommendations for changes to the system for 2007”

4.5 This amendment to replace in its entirety the Notice of Motion proposed by Councillors Randall and Taylor

**4.6 RESOLVED** – That the amended Notice of Motion be agreed

**5a. LETTER FROM COUNCILLOR SIMON BURGESS**

5.1 Councillor Forester presented the letter from Councillor Burgess to the Committee

5.2 **RESOLVED** – That the letter be noted.

**5b LETTER FROM COUNCILLORS GILL MITCHELL, WARREN MORGAN AND CRAIG TURTON**

5.3 Councillor Mitchell presented the letter to the Committee

5.4 **RESOLVED** – That the letter be noted.

**6. PETITION – School Admissions**

6.1. The Committee received a Petition presented by Councillor Randall at Council on 28 April 2005. The Petition had 736 signatures

“We the undersigned demand that :

1) The council immediately rectifies this year’s unfair geographical exclusion of children from preferred schools as a consequence of the change in admission criteria. If necessary this will require the opening of additional classes in preferred schools.

2) The council changes the school admission criteria for next year so that future generations of children in East Brighton do not suffer unfairly.”

6.2 **RESOLVED** – That the Petition be noted.

**7. PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

7.1	Questioner	Subject	Reply by
	Mr P Grivell	Review of the school admissions system	Councillor Hawkes

**\*8. FOSTERING SERVICE ANNUAL REPORT**

8.1 The Committee considered a report of the Director of Children, Families & Schools. The report informed the Committee of its annual report, national developments, the development of the Government's Choice Protects programme, service developments, fostering activity during the period April 2004 to March 2005, the Commission for Social Care Inspection's report on Brighton & Hove City Council's fostering services in February 2005 and provided the Fostering Services Statement of Purpose.

8.2 **RESOLVED** – That the report and the progress of the Fostering Service be noted and the Fostering Service Statement of Purpose be endorsed.

**\*9. ADOPTION AGENCY ANNUAL REPORT**

9.1 The Committee considered a report of the Director of Children, Families & Schools. The report informed the Committee of national developments, the Brighton & Hove City Council adoption agency inspection undertaken by the Commission of Social Care Inspection in September 2004 and local service developments during the year April 2004 to March 2005

9.2 **RESOLVED** – (1) That the report and the progress of the agency in relation to adoption and permanence activity be noted.

(2) That the revised Adoption Agency Statement of Purpose and the Permanence Panel Constitution and Terms of Reference be endorsed

**\*10. ADMISSIONS TO SECONDARY SCHOOLS**

10.1 The Committee considered a report of the Director of Children, Families & Schools. The report informed the Committee of the proposal to conduct a review of the admissions criteria and allocation process for secondary school places introduced this academic year.

10.2 **RESOLVED** – (1) That the Committee recommend to Policy & Resources Committee that the establishment of a working group to:

- Study how the process worked in 2005
- Consider, in depth, alternative schemes, to determine whether they would produce a better level of parental satisfaction with admissions to secondary schools

(2) That the Committee approve that the working group should have cross party membership, in appropriate proportions, one

secondary headteacher and one secondary school governor and appropriate officer support, should be chaired independently.

(3) That the Committee agree that when the detailed terms of reference and remit of the working group are established, consideration be given to meeting in public, on those occasions when the law, regulation and guidance on admissions are explained and discussed.

(4) That the working group should take into account in its deliberations the points raised in the amended Notice of Motion, the Deputation which went to Council on 28 April 2005, the Petition which went to Council on 28 April 2005, the letter from Councillor Burgess and the written question presented to this meeting.

#### **\*11. PLAY STRATEGY**

11.1 The Committee considered a report of the Director of Children, Families & Schools. The report outlined the purpose of the city wide play strategy and the relationship of play to the outcomes of Every Child Matters. It also outlined the implications of the Department of Culture Media and Sport's review of play for Local Authorities.

11.2 The report called for a Councillor to be identified as a champion for Children's Play. Councillor Hawkes was nominated and accepted this position

11.3 **RESOLVED** – (1) That the Committee note the recommendations of the DCMS Review and the recognition of the importance of play in Every Child Matters.

(2) That the Committee endorse the Play Strategy to inform the development and delivery of play provision across Brighton & Hove

(3) That the Committee agreed that the play spaces and provision should be viewed as a Children's Trust priority in partnership with all appropriate services and departments and that the Children's Trust Partnership Co-ordination Group (to include a representative from the Environment department) should take the lead on a strategic approach to new funding opportunities through the Big Lottery Fund

(4) That the Committee approve the proposals around the further development of the Inclusive Play & Leisure Forum as a steering group to develop an action plan for play.

(5) That the Committee agreed that Councillor Hawkes should be the lead Councillor acting as a champion for Children's Play

## 12. EXTENDED AND HEALTHY SCHOOLS

12.1 The Committee considered a report of the Director of Children, Families & Schools. The report updated members about the developments in the Extended & Healthy School Strategy.

12.2 **RESOLVED** – (1) That the Committee agree the principles and priorities for the evolving Extended & Healthy School Programme

(2) That the Committee approve the plans to co-ordinate and steer developments through a Joint Partnership Board. This Board will provide strategic direction and co-ordination and will be accountable to the Children's Trust Board. It will monitor progress on the different aspects of both programmes.

## 13. CHILDREN'S CENTRES : FUNDING ALLOCATION AND TARGETS 2006/08

13.1 The Committee considered a report of the Director of Children, Families & Schools. The report provided a briefing on the funding allocation of Children's Centres 2006/08 with a proposed way forward to determine the deployment of additional Children's Centres across the city, and an update on the first five Children's Centres.

13.2 **RESOLVED** – (1) That the Committee approve the recommended way forward in determining the allocation of additional Children's Centres.

(2) That the Committee agree to consult further on the proposal to transfer Acorn Nursery from Portslade Community College into the North Portslade Children's Centre.

## \*14. RACE EQUALITIES SCHEME

14.1 The Committee considered a report of the Director of Children, Families & Schools. The report informed the Committee of the progress in implementing the Council's Race Equality Scheme (RES) in Children, Families & Schools Directorate

14.2 **RESOLVED** – (1) That the Committee note the progress the Directorate has made in implementing the Council's Race Equality Scheme to meet the requirements of the Race Relations Amendment Act (2000)

(2) That the Committee note that the Race Equality Scheme includes a commitment to ensure that issues of gender, sexual orientation, disability, age and faith have been considered as well as race when carrying out equalities impact assessments (EQIA)

**15. REPORT ON THE EVALUATION OF THE ANNUAL EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT PLAN AND THE NEW ACTION PLAN 2005/06**

15.1 The Committee considered a report of the Director of Children, Families & Schools. The report informed the Committee of the evaluation of the Education Development Plan 2004-05 and to present the Action Plan for 2005-06

15.2 **RESOLVED** – That the Committee note the progress achieved and approve the Education Development Plan 2005-06

**16. REPLACEMENT OF HORSA DINING FACILITIES**

16.1 The Committee considered a report of the Director of Children, Families & Schools. The report sought the Committee's approval to progressing the design and construction of a new dining facility at Downs Junior School.

16.2 **RESOLVED** – That the Committee approve that the design and construction of a new dining facility at Downs Junior School be undertaken by the Strategic Partnership.

**\*17. OFSTED INSPECTION REPORT OF YOUTH SERVICE**

17.1 The Committee considered a report of the Director of Children, Families & Schools. The report informed the committee of the Ofsted Inspection report on Brighton & Hove City Council's Youth Service carried out in January 2005; informed the committee of action planning for the Youth Support Service in response to the Ofsted report; and informed the committee of arrangements to carry out a strategic review of the Youth Service and Connexions as part of the Children's Trust service redesign process.

17.2 **RESOLVED** – (1) That the Committee welcome the Ofsted inspection report on Brighton & Hove City Council's Youth Service

(2) That the Committee noted the arrangements being made to strengthen the Youth Support Service senior management team, in line with the Ofsted recommendations, and of action planning to take account of the Ofsted recommendations

(3) That the Committee noted arrangements to take forward a Strategic Review of the Youth Service, in line with the Children's Trust service redesign process, and in parallel with a review of Connexions in Brighton & Hove.

(4) That the Committee alert Policy & Resources Committee to the Ofsted recommendation to review the budget for the Youth Support

Service

### **18. NEW AGREED SYLLABUS FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN BRIGHTON AND HOVE**

18.1 The Committee considered a report of the Director of Children, Families & Schools. The report provided members with the draft agreed syllabus for Religious Education.

18.2 **RESOLVED** – That the Committee approved the publication and distribution of the Agreed Syllabus

### **\*19. RESPONSE TO THE REPORT OF THE SCRUTINY PANEL ON EAST BRIGHTON COLLEGE OF MEDIA ARTS INCLUSION IN THE PFI SCHEME**

19.1 The Committee considered a report of the Director of Children, Families & Schools. The report informed the Committee of the Education Overview and Scrutiny report and to seek agreement to a proposed Children, Families & Schools Committee response

19.2 **RESOLVED** – (1) That the contents of the Education Overview and Scrutiny report on COMART's inclusion in the PFI scheme be noted, and the Children, Families & Schools Committee's response to this report be agreed.

### **\*20. SHAPING THE FUTURE OF MENTAL HEALTH, LEARNING DISABILITY AND SUBSTANCE MISUSE SERVICES IN SUSSEX**

20.1 The Committee considered a report of the Director of Children, Families & Schools. The report summarised the consultation document on Shaping the Future of Mental Health, Learning Disability and Substance Misuse Services in Sussex; to consider its relevance to the strategy to establish a Children's Trust in Brighton & Hove; and to advise Policy and Resources Committee on the response to the consultation

20.2 The Committee agreed to amend the wording in paragraph 3.10 of the report to read as follows;

“ - the strategic direction set out in the consultation document is in line with the strategy being developed for the Children's Trust;

- the majority of services should be provided in the community by a locally accessible team. We would want to see the best possible access for children and young people of Brighton & Hove to specialist services (i.e. Tier 4 services and possibly Tier 3 depending on the current CAHMS review);
- the strengthening of joint commissioning arrangements based on local authority areas is essential”

20.3 **RESOLVED** – That the Committee recommend to Policy and Resources the proposed advice as set out in the amended paragraph 3.10 of the report (for copy see minute book)

**21. Items to go forward to Council**

21.1 **RESOLVED** – That no items go forward to Council

The meeting concluded at 6.50 pm

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of

2005