

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL
CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & SKILLS COMMITTEE

4.00pm 14 JUNE 2021

COUNCIL CHAMBER, HOVE TOWN HALL

MINUTES

Present: Councillor Clare (Chair); O'Quinn, Brown and Mr Parr Dioscescan representative

PART ONE

1 PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

Arrangements for the Meeting That Afternoon

Before proceeding to the formal business of the meeting and on welcoming all present to this meeting of Children Young People and Skills Committee the Chair explained that in line with current Government guidance this was a hybrid meeting. The debate and decision making rested solely with the four Members including the Diocescan voting co-optee who were in attendance in the Chamber.

1a Declaration 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 consideration of any of the items listed on the agenda.

1.4 **RESOLVED** – That there were no part two items.

2 MINUTES

2.1 **RESOLVED** – That the minutes of the meeting held on 8 March 2021 be agreed as a correct record.

3 CHAIR'S COMMUNICATIONS

3.1 The Chair gave the following communication:

“I want to start by acknowledging this is a stranger committee than usual, as many of our colleagues and co-optees have agreed to limit their attendance at this meeting. You will be missed – and I look forward to a time when it is safe to have us all return to this chamber.

While some members are not attending, I have agreed to reflect some of their comments today, and thus there may be occasions where I am reading statements on behalf of other committee members.

We have had some changes in committee members and I therefore wanted to thank the following former committee members who no longer sit on Children, Young People and Skills,

Cllr Dee Simson

Cllr John Allcock

And my former Deputy Chair, Cllr Elaine Hills who is now Deputy Chair on housing Committee

And with this, also welcome our new committee members

Cllr Anne Meadows

Cllr Jackie O’Quinn

And Cllr Joe John, who now serves as deputy on this committee. As she is not present at today’s committee, Zoe has asked me to say on her behalf:

Thank you Chair for reading my message to the Children’s, Young People and Skills Committee

I am thrilled to be able to join the committee as the Deputy Chair and Chair of Corporate Parenting and I am disappointed not to be able to join my first meeting in person. I want to thank Cllr Hills for all the work she has done, I am aware I have very big shoes to fill! I look forward to supporting The Chair and working with Officers and colleagues across parties to support our services and networks for the people of our city. For the Green Group of Councillors, our roles and responsibilities are as follows:

Cllr John will lead on safeguarding and care.

Cllr Lloyd will lead on health, SEN and disabilities

Cllr Nield will continue to lead on schools and early years

And alongside having an overview of the whole portfolio, I will lead on youth engagement, skills and employment.

I have a few matters to highlight before we move on to today’s agenda:

Firstly, I want to commend our social work team who are doing an incredible amount of work on anti-racist social work practice. The work was recently highlighted in a blog on the Government website, written by our Principal Social Worker Tom Stibbs.

Our Youth Offending Service, who recently had an inspection. The results of this will be published soon, and I want to congratulate you on the results ahead of publication.

On 30 June, there will be an apprenticeship graduation ceremony for apprentices who have completed their apprenticeship in Brighton and Hove between 1 January 2020 and 31 May 2021. If this is you, or you know of a former apprentice who this relates to

please do encourage them to book before 22 June. The Mayor will be speaking at the event on behalf of the city council.

A lot of work has continued on the SEND partnership board and SEND strategy. Thank you to all partners for their work on this and on improving outcomes for our young people with SEND.

On a matter of youth engagement, can I thank the Youth Council for inviting me to their recent meeting to listen to the work they're doing on the environment. I'm also really excited that they've been working with Epping Forest Youth Council recently, which is supported by the youth worker who supported me as a young person. The pandemic has increased youth unemployment so I'm really pleased that our youth employment hub has got a step further to opening. I look forward to visiting it in July.

During this meeting, the Government may well be announcing their plans regarding re-opening next Monday. Since the last Committee, Government have changed their rules regarding the wearing of masks in schools to some criticism. Previously, our local public health teams had more of a role to issue advice on this but now we have to seek permission from the Department for Education if there's an outbreak and we want to advise mask wearing again. While local public health teams, and local authorities like ours, who have challenged the Government previously are getting things right, the Government who are getting things wrong want to hold our hand through it.

This week is refugee week and today Kent County Council have stopped supporting UASCs who arrive at their ports. I wanted to reassure committee members of our commitment to take young people through the national transfer scheme and that we will continue to support them. Sadly, last week the government announced they would not make participation in the NTS mandatory so local councils who do not support refugees will continue to get away without doing so. As a city of sanctuary, we remain open.

I'd like to end by talking about One World Nursery—and the campaign to save it. One World Nursery is well regarded – it is a nursery of sanctuary and in the University of Brighton's Bronze Athena Swan award for equalities, One World is particularly highlighted. So it seems wrong that the University of Brighton is pressing ahead with the closure of this valued provision in the Moulsecoomb community. The One World Nursery campaign has the full support of the Green Group of councillors.

There has always been a need in our city for high quality nursery provision, but this has never been more important coming out of the pandemic. The government themselves have highlighted the need for good early years support. This is in part why we will be discussing our early help review later on the agenda but for One World, it doesn't seem like the decision has been made on the basis of the real quality of the provision.

It's been made due to the financial cost to the university of Brighton of the provision, ignoring the support it provides to staff & students who need care for their children and ignoring the links created to the community through having One World Nursery there. I would like to urge the university to reconsider, and keep One World open.

4 CALL OVER

- 4.1 It was agreed that all items appearing on the agenda be reserved for discussion with the exception of Item 9, - Environmental Education Strategy which was agreed without discussion.

5 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

5a Petitions

School Places for Catchment Children – Item referred from Council Meeting, 25 March 2021

- 5.1 It was noted that the petition referred to above had been considered debated at and referred from the Council meeting held on 25 March 2021 and was set out at pages 29 – 34 of the agenda.

- 5.2 **RESOLVED** – That the contents of the petition be noted and received.

5b Written Questions

- 5.3 There were none.

5c Deputations

- 5.4 It was noted that two deputations had been received.

5c (i) Climate Change and Plant Based Days in Schools – Referred from Council, 25 March 2021

- 5.5 It was noted that the deputation referred to above had been presented and referred from the meeting of Full Council held on 25 March 2021 and was set out at pages 35 – 38 of the agenda. The Chair explained that this item was covered by a report appearing elsewhere on the agenda and it was therefore recommended that the deputation be received and noted.

- 5.6 **RESOLVED** – That the contents of the deputation be noted and received.

5c (ii) Anti – Racism Schools Strategy

- 5.7 A deputation received from Mr Hart had been received and had been circulated as an addendum to the main agenda. Mr Hart was invited to address the Committee for five minutes in support of his deputation.

- 5.8 The Chair responded in the following terms:

“We apologise for our delay in response to your freedom of information request, it must be frustrating, but as it involves external providers we need to liaise with them and we will respond as soon as we are able to.

The council has pledged to be an [anti-racist council](#) with an immediate focus on addressing racial discrimination and disadvantage across all our public services and within our own organisation. The work is central to the council’s legal duties under the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between communities, as well as to encourage civic engagement by under-represented groups.

As a council we believe that racism is not just the product of individual bias or prejudice, but something embedded in our systems which is why the rich, ethnic diversity in our city is not represented in council or teacher employees. Talking about systemic racism is not divisive, but racism is.

Our racial literacy training for schools explains that we are all one human race, and that race is a social construct used for example to justify slavery and the holocaust. By understanding the history of racism, we will equip school staff to take steps to prevent and mitigate the experiences of racism in our communities.

Critical race theory is our lens for developing our understanding of the complexities of racism and not an ideology. There is nothing in our strategy that aims to engender guilt or victimhood and the development of critical thinking skills is one element of our educational input.

Staff training is just one aspect of the anti-racist schools strategy. In the latest version of the strategy it is made clear that the local authority does not plan to make any training offered to schools mandatory, although schools will be encouraged to work in partnership with us under the strategy. Schools are also free to engage any training provider to deliver training to their staff in line with school values and policy. The provider they have chosen has delivered a lot of training for the council and in Brighton & Hove schools and has received positive feedback.

Children and Young People’s Committee voted not only in support of the draft strategy but also the Notice of Motion that it was derived from. Last summer nearly 2000 people signed a petition which was debated at council and which specifically highlighted the need for work in schools and it is my understanding that people who engaged with the strategy were overwhelmingly in support of it. Since the engagement activity changes have been made to ensure visibility of communities who are racialised as white but also experience racism (Jewish community, Gypsy Roma Traveller communities). So I do not take your criticism that the public would not support this work.

I’m really proud of the work we are doing in our schools to be anti-racist, and the wider work across the council.

We accept that as a council we have a lot to learn and a lot to do to prevent and mitigate against the racism that pupils, students and their families have told us happens in our schools. We are proud of how Brighton & Hove schools are engaging with us and leading on this complex work and hopeful that our approach will make a difference. We note that your Deputation does not provide us with any idea of how we can respond to racism in Brighton.”

5.10 **RESOLVED** – That the deputation and response given to it be noted and received.

6 MEMBER INVOLVEMENT

6a Petitions

6.1 There were none.

6b Written Questions

6.2 There were none.

6c Letters

6.3 There were none.

6d Notices of Motion

Future Funding to Mitigate the Impact of Covid 19 on Children, Young People and Households.

6.4 It was noted that the above notice of motion had been referred from the meeting of Council held on 25 March 2021 set out on pages 41 – 48 of the agenda. The Chair recommended that this a response to the notice of motion should form the subject of a report to a future meeting of the Committee.

6.5 **RESOLVED** – That the notice of motion be noted and that it form the subject of a report to a future meeting of the Committee.

7 NOTICE OF MOTION - MOULSECOOMB PRIMARY SCHOOL - SURVEY OF PARENTAL VIEWS

7.1 The Committee considered a report of the Executive Director Families, Children and Learning prepared in response to the Notice of Motion put at and referred from Council on 25 March 2021 requesting that a special meeting of the Committee be held in order to consider the need to conduct a further urgent ballot of parents and carers of children at Moulsecoomb Primary School on whether they were in favour or opposed to the forced conversion of the school to an academy trust selected by the Regional Schools Commissioner.

7.2 It had not been possible to hold a special meeting of the Committee during the pre-election period and this matter was therefore being considered at the first Children, Young People and Skills (CYP&S) Committee meeting since the elections held on 6 May 2021. The report recommended that the Committee did not facilitate the holding of a further ballot by the school for the reasons set out in the report.

7.3 Councillor O'Quinn referred to comments conveyed to her by Councillor Grimshaw a fellow Committee member in whose ward the school was situated. Parents of children attending the school and living in the area had made their views very clear, with 93 of them had stated that they would remove children should a forced academisation of the

school take place. On that basis she did not consider a new/further ballot was necessary.

- 7.4 Councillor Brown considered that it would be beneficial to have a period of calm which would enable the school governing body to focus on taking the steps it considered were appropriate to represent the community and the best interests of the school under the Academy Order.
- 7.5 The Chair, Councillor Clare stated that the council would continue to support and provide support and guidance to the school as necessary. However, the appointment of the sponsor by the Department for Education and logistics of holding a further ballot during the pandemic and potential negative impact outweighed any possible benefits of holding a further ballot.
- 7.6 A vote was taken non each of the recommendations in turn.
- 7.7 **RESOLVED** - (1) That the Committee does not pursue a further ballot of parents and carers of children at Moulsecoomb Primary School; and
- (2) That the Committee note that the Department for Education have announced the appointment of Pioneer Academy Trust as the sponsor for the school.

Note: Councillor O'Quinn abstained from voting in respect of (1) above.

8 THE FUTURE OF SECONDARY SCHOOLS PLACES IN BRIGHTON AND HOVE

- 8.1 The Committee considered a report of the Executive Director Families, Children and Learning which considered the future projection of secondary aged pupils needing places in the city's schools and compared this to the number of places currently available.
- 8.2 The report proposed that a pre-consultation engagement exercise was undertaken to consider what proposal should be put forward in a future formal public consultation regarding the admission arrangements for the city's secondary schools. The council was actively seeking to develop a strong consensus across the city about what action should be taken.
- 8.3 Councillor Brown stated that she supported the report recommendations considering that it was timely for the current problems to be addressed. It was explained in answer to further questions that the Executive Director explained that the Assistant Director, Education and Skills and herself had met with all secondary school heads, there had been no consensus and a variety of views had been expressed .
- 8.4 Councillor O'Quinn asked how many students who had been unsuccessful in obtaining places at Varndean had subsequently accepted places at other schools. The Executive Director explained that she did not have that information immediately available but would be able to provide that outside the meeting.
- 8.5 It was confirmed that based on existing predictions it was not envisaged that additional accommodation would be required, although the situation would continue to be

reviewed. It was very important to support the city's family of schools as whole and to seek to avoid actions which would have a detrimental impact on other schools. If non-L A schools altered their existing arrangements that could have a detrimental impact and the Executive Director confirmed that conversations were taking place with local academies and free schools.

- 8.6 In answer to further questions it was explained that the consultation timeframe which had been set was considered to be adequate and that feedback would be gathered on-line and from public meetings.
- 8.7 Councillor O'Quinn stated that new housing developments were planned across the city which included family units, it was important that this was taken account of when making future projections. It was confirmed that demographic projections were being made over a ten year period.
- 8.8 Mr Parr stated that projections for primary schools were lagging behind currently and The Executive Director explained that the Assistant Director, education and Skills and herself had met with all secondary school heads, a variety of views that needed to be addressed.
- 8.9 The Chair, Councillor Clare stated that the feedback collected would be used in order to inform the process with predictions made being kept under review. It was very important for people to feel that they had been consulted and had had the opportunity to have their say.
- 8.10 **RESOLVED** – (1) That the committee note the secondary school pupil forecasts from September 2022 – September 2031 detailed in Appendix 1 and recognise that from September 2028 – September 2031 these are illustrative and not calculated using a recognised methodology as detailed in a [previous committee report](#);
- (2) That the committee approve the recommendation to undertake a pre-consultation engagement between 21 June 2021 and 18 July 2021 including 8 public events held remotely in order to ensure early community involvement and a survey hosted on the council's [Have Your Say](#) portal; and
- (3) That the committee note that the responses will be used to inform future discussions about the admission arrangements for secondary schools which will be subject to public consultation.

9 ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION STRATEGY

- 9.1 This item was agreed without discussion.
- 9.2 **RESOLVED** – (1) That the committee notes the outline of the environmental education strategy funded by assigned £96,000 in 2021/22;
- (2) That the committee note the indicative allocation of funding to each area of the strategy as outlined in the report (Appendix 1); and

- (3) That the committee agree to receive a report at the CYP&S committee on the work undertaken as part of the Environmental Education Strategy no sooner than June 2022.

10 TRANS INCLUSION SCHOOLS TOOLKIT VERSION 4

- 10.1 The Committee considered a report of the Executive Director, Families, Children and Learning the purpose of which was to obtain approval to the final version (4) of the Trans Inclusion Schools Toolkit. It was noted that this had been informed by the consultation process and accompanying equalities impact assessment.
- 10.2 The Partnership Adviser, Health and Wellbeing, Sam Beal was in attendance accompanied by Ryan Gyngell, Project Manager of Allsorts. The toolkit had first been disseminated to schools in 2013 and had been developed in partnership with Allsorts Youth Project and schools for support with a small number of children and young people who were saying that their gender identity did not align with their agenda assigned at birth. At a similar time the City's Trans Needs Assessment had also identified a further need for improving school practice in this area. The toolkit had been written to provide guidance to schools on how to support trans, non-binary and gender exploring children and young people.
- 10.3 The process by which had informed this version of the toolkit was set out in the report. Consultation on successive versions of the toolkit had led to significant changes. Version 4 provided helpful advice to meet the needs of this vulnerable group and would need to be supported by staff training and communications to parents and carers from September 2021. The toolkit would be subjected to a process of regular review and updates.
- 10.4 Councillor O'Quinn was pleased to note that wide ranging views and input had been sought and that there was an emphasis on acceptance and anti-bullying. It was hoped that this document would provide a beacon which could be utilised by other authorities.
- 10.5 Councillor Brown also welcomed the document acknowledging the hard work which had taken place to identify gaps and to engage with a diverse range of consultees.
- 10.6 It was noted that there had been challenges in carrying out the consultation process during the current pandemic but that notwithstanding that Teams consultations had taken place with 12 young people in addition to the other consultees.
- 10.7 In response to questions, the Legal Adviser to the Committee explained that the draft toolkit had been the subject of legal advice and review in relation to the legal framework referred to therein. It had carefully measured against Statutory, Government and other guidance and would be updated in the light of any changes to that. It was a large document which it was intended would be used sensitively on a case by case basis.
- 10.8 Louise Brown was in attendance representing the Youth Council, stating that the document had been welcomed by young people particularly as the consultation had sought to identify where there were gaps and to seek to ensure that appropriate support was in place. The approaches suggested to address micro aggression as well as direct bullying would be beneficial to all students.

- 10.9 The Chair, Councillor Clare stated that the council was seeking to promote sensitivity and understanding via a number of means for example by providing gender neutral toilets and wide-ranging advice.
- 10.10 **RESOLVED** – (1) That committee agree the guidance for dissemination to Brighton & Hove schools in September 2021: and
- (2) That the Trans Inclusion Schools Toolkit should be reviewed on an annual basis or as necessary to consider feedback from school communities, and any updates required arising from changes to the law or relevant guidance.
- 11 EARLY HELP REVIEW AND DEVELOPMENT OF A CITY-WIDE STRATEGY TO SUPPORT CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE, AND FAMILIES AT RISK OF DISADVANTAGE**
- 11.1 The Committee considered a report of the Executive Director of Families, Children and Learning which outlined the plans in place to develop a strategy to support children, young people and families at risk of disadvantage.
- 11.2 It was recognised that there were multiple factors creating and compounding issues of disadvantage for children, young people and families across the city, these often resulted in poorer educational, health and skills outcomes. Additionally, there were some of the city where levels of deprivation were significantly higher than others. The longer term impact of Covid for these families and communities was likely to be significant, particularly in relation to factors known to increase disadvantage, such as poverty, living conditions, unemployment, relationships, mental health and wellbeing.
- 11.3 Locally the council planned to lead multi a-agency review of early help with the aim of improving the coordination of services to improve the outcomes of disadvantaged families. This would include transforming the way data was shared across different services and organisations.
- 11.4 In answer to questions it was explained that the funding provided was not top-up funding and the sum of £25,000 referred to was as set out in the agreed budget. Councillor O’Quinn asked whether the company contracted was known to the Council. The Executive Director, Deb Austin confirmed that they had been used for the Adult Learning Disability Review. It was also confirmed that applications for national funding had been made, a response regarding whether that had been successful.
- 11.5 Councillor Brown stated that she was very pleased that the Government were supporting this initiative and sought further clarification regarding how the available funds would be allocated in order to avoid unnecessary duplication and overlap. It was explained that co-production lay at the heart of this including active engagement with families and stakeholders as was digital transformation which was intended to improve data sharing across organisations. It was recognised that the pandemic had created additional challenges and that families in these vulnerable groups were disproportionately affected.

- 11.6 The Chair, Councillor Clare commended the work carried out to date and the progress which had been made. It was important that an umbrella approach was used to tackle disadvantage and that a process taking on board many views was to be adopted.
- 11.7 **RESOLVED** - (1) That That the Committee notes the national requirements of the Supporting Families Programme;
- (2) That the Committee notes the proposal for a multi-agency programme to review and develop early help services to improve the outcomes of disadvantaged families. This will include reviewing children's centres and considering the option of children's centres delivering services for a wider range of children and families including developing a Family Hub model of support. Consultants will be used to support the review;
- (3) That the Committee notes plans to develop a strategy to support children, young people, and families at risk of disadvantage; and
- (4) That the Committee agrees to create a new task and finish cross-party Member working group to support and inform the Early Help review and strategy development.

12 ITEMS REFERRED FOR COUNCIL

- 12.1 There were none.

The meeting concluded at 5.27pm

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of