

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE'S OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

5.00PM 18 NOVEMBER 2009

COUNCIL CHAMBER, HOVE TOWN HALL

MINUTES

Present: Councillors Older (Chairman); McCaffery (Deputy Chairman), Allen, Hyde, Phillips, Smart and Wakefield-Jarrett

Statutory Co-optees: with voting rights:: David Sanders (Diocese of Arundel & Brighton)

Non-Statutory Co-optees: Dr. Carrie Britton (Children's Health) (Non-Voting Co-Optee), Mark Price (Youth Services) (Non-Voting Co-Optee), Rachel Travers (Community Voluntary Sector Forum) (Non-Voting Co-Optee), Kenya Simpson-Martin (Youth Council) (Non-Voting Co-Optee) and Azdean Boulaich (Youth Council) (Non-Voting Co-Optee)

Apologies: Councillor Pat Drake and Mike Wilson

PART ONE

23. PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

23.1 Declaration of Substitutes

There were none. Councillor Pat Drake and Mike Wilson (Diocese of Chichester) sent their apologies.

23.2 Declarations of Interest

There were none.

23.3 Declaration of Party Whip

There were none.

23.4 Exclusion from the Press and Public

In accordance with section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, it was 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 100I (1) of the said Act.

23.5 RESOLVED – That the press and public not be excluded from the meeting.

24. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

- 24.1 The draft minutes of the previous meeting to be amended at item 15.1-15.3 to read:

Following the publication of a press release from the Committee Chairman in the Argus the following letter was received from Cllr Kevin Allen.

Dear Averil

In the Argus of Wednesday 12 August you accused the government of 'playing politics' over FE funding.

Irrespective of whether or not the accusation was well-founded did it not occur to you that by making such a partisan remark you yourself were 'playing politics'?

Do you now accept that this needless intervention was a mistake? And do you also recognise that you need to retain the confidence of all members of your committee, of whatever party?

Regards

Kevin

Cllr Kevin Allen

There was discussion on the importance of scrutiny being a non-political forum that allows for key issues to be raised and debated in an objective manner. It was agreed that the Chairman of the Committee needs to play a role in acting as the mouthpiece of the committee and therefore any comments made to the press need to be supported by the Committee as a whole; this will be particularly important in the coming months.

- 24.2 **RESOLVED** – The minutes of the meeting from the 16 September, 2009 were approved with this amendment.

25. CHAIRMAN'S COMMUNICATIONS

- 25.1 The Chairman asked the Assistant Director – Strategic Commissioning and Governance to update the Committee on the Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP). The Members heard that the CYPP was endorsed by the Children and Young People's Trust (CYPT) Board on the 2 November, 2009. The statutory Plan would go to Full Council on the 10 December, 2009 and that due to a technical error the report could not come to CYPOSC today and had been moved to the 20 January CYPOSC meeting.
- 25.2 The Committee were informed that the School Exclusions Ad-hoc Panel met on the 14 October 2009 & 5 November 2009 and had gathered evidence from Officers, Parents, Councillor Juliet McCaffrey and a Professor from the Self-Managed Learning Centre, within private and public meetings.

Additional to this the Panel went and visited 5 schools on the 2 November, 2009; Cardinal Newman Catholic School, Alternative Centre for Education (ACE), Hove Park

Secondary School, Carlton Hill Primary School and Patcham House Special School. The focus of the Panel's work is around best practice and links with exclusion and Children with Special Educational Needs (SEN).

- 25.3 The Chairman informed the Committee that the Children and Alcohol report was going to the Licensing Committee on Thursday 26 November for their comments.
- 25.4 The Chairman told the Members that there were still vacancies for Parent Governors and a representative from Children's Social Care on the Committee.
- 25.5 The Chairman reminded the Committee that there was an additional meeting on Tuesday 5th January, 2010 to discuss the budget.

26. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

- 26.1 There were none.

27. QUESTIONS AND LETTERS FROM COUNCILLORS

- 27.1 There were none.

28. HEALTHY WEIGHT OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

- 28.1 Lydie Lawrence, Public Health Development Manager presented the report to members and answered questions.
- 28.2 In answer to a question on why health visitors and school nurses were receiving training on promoting health, the Committee heard that it was to ensure that all clinical professionals were aware to identify any risks involving the healthy weight, as early as possible.
- 28.3 In answer to a question on sports activities within schools and whether this was during school hours or in the extended schools programme; as Members had concerns that the activities after schools risked losing children. The Public Health Development Manager would provide further information on this. The Committee requested that they would like to know how other local authorities were performing in this area too.

The Members were informed that the Schools Sports Partnership, Active4Life and the Brighton & Hove Healthy Schools Strategy were involved in improving the take up of school sports.

- 28.4 In response to a question on why there were new interventions to original initiatives such as food growing, dietary advice, cookery training, play and physical activity initiatives, the Committee heard how there were a wider range of initiatives and partnerships working together to promote physical activities.
- 28.5 In response to a question on further evidence to show what other groups were involved other than schools, who were working on these initiatives, Members heard there were Children Centres around the city that took this initiative forward too.

- 28.6 In response to a question on Parks and Leisure facilities and what initiatives encouraged children to be active, other than free swimming, the Members heard that there was good coordination between facilities and they worked closely with Sussex Partnership Trust, Active4Life and extended schools to promote physical activities amongst children.
- 28.7 In response to a question on how children with disabilities faced barriers to accessing some physical activities e.g. expenses, not made to feel welcome, staff not understanding their needs, the Committee were informed that a piece of work to assess their needs and appropriate interventions in terms of diet/nutrition and promoting physical activity will be underway shortly working closely with voluntary sector
- 28.8 Kenya Simpson-Martin, Youth Council Representative asked whether parents were invited to the cookery training classes as it would be helpful for them too, the Committee heard that parents were invited and the classes consisted of food labelling (what is in food) and food growing. Parents would like to cook nutritiously, but do not have the time and money to; work with the Food Partnership is being carried out to give parents support about food growing: community gardens, allotments, food markets, what is affordable and what health effects convenience food can cause.
- 28.9 In response to a question on promoting physical activities in colleges, it was noted that specific information on discount cards would be useful.

28.10 RESOLVED –

- (1) The Committee noted the report and the progress made in the Healthy Weight of Children and Young People Delivery Plan.
- (2) The Committee agreed to have clarification as to which activities were happening after schools as part of the extended school offer and comparisons with other Local Authorities.

29. TEENAGE PREGNANCY INCLUDING TEENAGE CONCEPTION ACTION PLANS

- 29.1 Kerry Clarke, Commissioner for Teenage Pregnancy and Substance Misuse presented the report to Members and answered questions.
- 29.2 Azdean Boulaich, Youth Council Representative questioned whether the reduction target of 45% in conception rate within the next year was realistic, the Committee heard how this was a very high target, how adolescent behaviour had changed over the years, and how on a national level - the length of time of the target may be extended. Quarterly statistics showed that there was a reduction in teenage pregnancy locally and this reduction was moving in the right direction.
- 29.3 In answer to a question on whether there were sufficient resources, in terms of funding for Community and Youth Workers at weekends, Members were told that existing Youth Workers were equipped and that they have transferable skills. They are now being trained to ask proactive questions around sexual health. Services were moving away from concentrating on referrals and moving towards developing the skills of their frontline staff. These initiatives were being worked on in all areas of the City from the

Crew club in East Brighton to areas in Hove, incorporating partnership working with the health service.

- 29.4 In answer to a question on what preventative support there was in relation to second pregnancies, the Committee were informed that an additional 2 full time and 3 part-time Health Visitors to focus their support on mothers with 8-15 month old babies, to promote effective contraception use and identify any siblings in the family that may also be vulnerable to early conception and refer to prevention post. There are also Personal Advisors work to work with the 16-18 age group and a Re-integration Officer for school aged parents.

There were more specialised teams in place than previously, which included the anti-poverty pilot for 10 units of accommodation with support services; life coaches are attached to hostels and other young parents can access these services too; Contraception is provided via a domiciliary services as young parents are less likely to come into town.

Services are looking to change the culture of some young parents who think it is acceptable not to work for a year and end up Not in Education Employment or Training (NEET), by providing education at the anti-natal and postnatal stages of pregnancies, bonding and relationship building and how to move these young people into Accredited learning programmes which include low-level NVQ qualifications.

- 29.5 Azdean Boulaich, Youth Council Representative questioned how sex education within schools would help reduce the target, Members heard how within the Personal Social Health Education (PSHE), sex education would be a statutory subject and how all schools have signed up to the Teenage Pregnancy Action Plan, that the universal curriculum is part of a prevention programme and is linked into the health project.
- 29.6 Kenya Simpson-Martin, Youth Council Representative asked whether there was too much offered to teenagers who were pregnant in the way of benefits and housing and it's considered to be an acceptable culture to be pregnant as a teenager, the Committee were told how this was not the majority of young people, how there was a 63% termination rate in Brighton and Hove (which was considered high) and there was a 29% reduction in births, and the strategy was looking into which people were getting pregnant and how front line staff could promote preventative measures. The realistic picture is that young people do not want to have sex until they are in a relationship. Programs are also being developed that provide a realistic picture of early parenthood that can be provided to those young people where this is seen as their only option. A project called Teens and Toddlers was discussed.
- 29.7 In answer to a question on 50% of teenage mothers were victims of domestic abuse and how the Plan was targeting these young people, Members were told how these services were addressing this in a different way by identifying earlier victims of domestic violence and teenagers with mental health issues.
- 29.8 The Co-optee for Youth Services commented that he felt the target reduction of 45% from the 1998 baseline rate, was unrealistic as a radical change was required; from adults in the community, how services needed to be more joined up and an increase in funding for youth services was required to achieve this.

It was noted that the majority of young people would like sex within a relationship and the majority would like not to have sex until after 16.

29.9 RESOLVED-

(1) The Committee noted the report and the Teenage Pregnancy Action Plan and that no further action would be taken by CYPOSC.

30. BUILDING SCHOOLS FOR THE FUTURE

30.1 Gil Sweetenham, Schools Futures Project Director presented the report and answered questions.

30.2 In response to a question on why Longhill School was not included in the first Building Schools for the Future (BSF) phase, the Committee heard that although Longhill School fitted the criteria of 'deprivation and standards' £5 million is already being spent at the school to increase its capacity by one form of entry. Longhill School will be included in the second phase of the Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme.

30.3 In answer to a question on what the evidence was to suggest that Private Finance Initiatives (PFI) for a new build school brings with it fewer issues than existing refurbishments, Members were informed that other authorities in the south east had experienced far less PFI problems with newly built schools.

30.4 In answer to whether you have to have a PFI for a new build or replacement school, Members were told that the regulations may change as the treasury is considering alternative funding methods.

30.5 It was confirmed that Voluntary Aided schools were part of the programme.

30.6 It was confirmed that special schools were included in the programme, but there was an expectation that some specialist provision will be placed within mainstream schools in the future.

A Member made reference to the Special Educational Needs (SEN) strategy and raising the issues regarding access, acoustics, and smaller classes that would be required if more SEN children were to attend mainstream schools. The Schools Futures Project Director informed Members that new provision will be governed by the SEN Strategy and will cater appropriately for the needs of students attending each school.

30.7 In response to a question as to what a National Challenge School was, Members were informed that Schools with GCSE results below the floor target of 30% 5 A*-C including Maths and English were considered to be National Challenge schools and received additional funding/support. A National Challenge Trust School is created when a National Challenge School changes its governance structure to be organised and run through an educational trust, often including trustees from higher education and local businesses.

30.8 RESOLVED –

(1) The Committee noted the progress made towards the submission of our Readiness to Deliver BSF Document and entry into the programme.

31. CYPOSC WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2009-10

31.1 The Head of Scrutiny informed the Committee about the first CYPOSC “Tri-partite” meeting, with the Director of Children’s Services, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People, the Assistant Director - Strategic Commissioning and Governance, the Chairman of CYPOSC and the Head of Scrutiny, the whole point of these 4 monthly meetings were to improve communication and engagement with the Directorate and to focus on the future challenges. The following items were discussed:

- timetable reports accordingly to feed into policy development of the CYPT
- reduce the items on the Agenda by having reports that need considering, or commenting, or decide what action needs to be taken, rather than having reports that need “noting”

31.2 Members heard that at the 5 January, 2010 Budget meeting that the Director of Children’s Services would present to CYPOSC the 3 challenges of the budget proposals:

- Interventions with complex family situations
- In-house provision of foster care
- Potential for an Ad-hoc Panel: families affected by the recession

31.3 Members agreed not to have the Children and Young People’s Plan at the 20 January, 2010 meeting as the Committee had been involved in the consultation process and now that the planned had been endorsed by the trust Board, the Plan have come to CYPOSC just for noting.

31.4 Members agreed to have the following reports at the 20 January, 2010 meeting:

- Child Development & Disability: changes and improvements
- Equalities- Charter on the Rights of Child ; involvement and impact on council services
- Child Poverty – comparisons to national bodies, what are the improvements and challenges

31.5 A Member requested that Attainment of Children In Care is accordingly planned into the work programme, to have as a future Ad-hoc Panel.

31.6 RESOLVED –

(1) The Work Programme to incorporate the changes above.

32. ITEMS TO REFER TO CABINET MEMBER, CABINET AND COUNCIL

32.1 There were no items referred to the Cabinet Member, Cabinet or Full Council.

The meeting concluded at 7.10pm

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of