

**BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL
CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE COMMITTEE**

4.00pm 12 NOVEMBER 2012

COUNCIL CHAMBER, HOVE TOWN HALL

MINUTES

Present: Councillors Shanks (Chair) Councillor Buckley (Deputy Chair), Brown, Gilbey, A Kitcat, Lepper, Pissaridou, Powell, Simson and Wealls (Opposition Spokesperson)

Non Voting Co-optees: Andrew Jeffery, Parent Forum; Bethan Prosser, Amaze/ Voluntary Sector Forum; Geraldine Hoban, Clinical and Commissioning Group; Alan Bedford, Chair, Local Safeguarding Children Board; Peter Belluscio, Youth Council and Soad Eboyok, Youth Council

PART ONE

25. PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

25(a) Declaration of Substitutes

25.1 There were none.

25(b) Declarations of Interest

25.2 There were none.

25(c) Exclusion of Press and Public

25.3 In accordance with Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 ('the Act'), the Community Safety Forum considered whether the press and public should be excluded from the meeting during an item of business on the grounds that it was likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the press or public were present during that item, there would be disclosure to them of confidential information (as defined in section 100A(3) of the Act) or exempt information (as defined in section 100I of the Act).

25.4 **RESOLVED** – That the press and public be not excluded during consideration of any item on the agenda.

26. MINUTES

26.1 Councillor Pissaridou stated that she wanted it to be recorded that she had requested (Paragraph 18.3), that the possibility of providing 100% subsidy in some cases. In respect of Paragraph 20.6 she had requested to know whether it would be cheaper to build an all through primary school on the Hove Police Station site.

26.2 **RESOLVED** – That subject to the amendments set out above the Chair be authorised to sign the minutes of the meeting held on 15 October 2012 as a correct record.

27. CALL OVER

27.1 It was agreed that all items would be reserved for discussion.

28. CHAIR'S COMMUNICATIONS

Additional Information & Information to be Provided in the Minutes

28.1 The Chair referred to additional which had been laid around the table in answer to requests for updates/additional information. The Chair went on to state that whilst whenever practicable additional information would be provided, this would usually be addressed in future follow-up reports to Committee. In the case of minutes they were intended primarily as a record of the decisions made by the Committee and were not intended to be a verbatim report of all that had been said.

Family Group Conferencing: Project Review Proposals

28.2 The Chair referred to the above item, the subject of the non-public minutes stating that further consultation had been undertaken and it was anticipated that a follow up report would be brought back to the next scheduled meeting of the Committee in January 2013.

GCSE Examinations: Update

28.3 immediately prior to the close of the meeting the Legal Adviser to the Committee updated the meeting in relation to this matter and it was agreed that further updates would be given as this progressed.

29. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

29a. Petitions

29.1 There were none.

29b. Written Questions

29.2 There were none.

29c. Deputations

29.3 There were none.

30. MEMBER INVOLVEMENT

30a. Petitions

30.1 There were none.

30b. Written Questions

30.2 There were none.

30c. Letters

30.3 There were none.

30d. Notices of Motion

30.4 There were none.

31. SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD - ANNUAL REPORT

31.1 The Committee considered the Annual Report of the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) for 2011/12. The report had been prepared by the LSCB Independent Chair, Alan Bedford, who was a Non Voting Member of the Committee.

31.2 It was explained that the Children Act 2004 required each local authority to establish an LSCB and that it should publish an annual report concerning safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in its local area to the local Children's Trust Board. Under the Council's changed governance arrangements the report would be submitted both to the Children and Young People's Committee, the Shadow Health and Wellbeing Board and all member agencies.

31.3 Mr Bedford presented the report with input from the LSCB Business Manager summarising the Board's key achievements, how the Board had made a difference and its onward priorities over the coming year and into the future. Mr Bedford stressed that the two key issues for the Board over the coming year were to handle the transition period for the new regulations and to work with partner organisations to reduce the number of lower risk referrals to social work when more could be done by those organisations at an early stage. This would free up Council staff to focus more on cases that needed professional social work intervention. The Chair confirmed that she was aware of this on-going work.

31.4 Councillor Brown stated that she was pleased to note the Board's role in monitoring sexual exploitation. Whilst noting the decrease in the number of child protection cases she was concerned to note that there had been an increase in the number of referrals

made. The Legal Adviser to the Committee explained that this issue was complex. One element was to seek to prevent the number of cases going up by putting multi-agency early intervention measures into place. Effective information sharing was key. Another key element was to ensure that once in the system proactive measures were in place to ensure that children were not signed off from it too soon. Measures were being put into place thereto address this, with improved quality assurance checks to ensure that processes were followed through as part of a staged approach.

- 31.5 The Legal Adviser to the Committee further explained that a series of recent meetings had taken place via the Early Care Planning Forum to discuss measures to avoid these problems. The Family Justice System was in the process of review and reform, in particular the role of the Claremont Specialist Assessment Unit in picking up cases from January 2013 prior to care proceedings being issued. The Board was also keen to encourage greater use of common assessment processes.
- 31.6 Councillor Pissaridou enquired regarding the level of involvement by other agencies e.g., nurseries. It was explained that referrals came from a number of sources and that the Council was encouraging early intervention/prevention. The Lead Commissioner, Schools, Skills and Learning stated that work had been undertaken to support schools in engaging in this process more fully and to improve the CAF system in this respect. The Chair referred to the fact that this had been drawn out in the report on this subject considered by the Committee at its previous meeting.
- 31.7 Councillor Powell welcomed the report and stated that she was aware of the CAF process by virtue of her work in the third sector across the city.
- 31.8 Mr Jeffery, Parent Forum referred to the direction of travel set out in the key points summarised in the report, stressing that it was very important to encourage members of the public to voice their concerns.
- 31.9 The Chair, Councillor Shanks thanked Mr Bedford for the Board's report which was detailed and informative. In answer to Mr Bedford's query regarding whether there were any other Council Committees to which the report should be forwarded in addition to the Health and Well Being Board, the response was given that this would be the most appropriate (besides this one) to which this document should be sent.
- 31.10 **RESOLVED** –That the Committee receives the report, notes its contents and recommends that it also goes forward to the Health and Wellbeing Board.;

32. BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL: ANNUAL STANDARDS AND SCHOOL PERFORMANCE REPORT 2011/12

- 32.1 The Committee Considered a report of the Interim Director of Children's Services which provided details of the Annual Standards and Performance within Brighton & Hove schools during 2011/12.
- 32.2 It was noted that improvements had been seen in all areas and the gaps between vulnerable groups of pupils to be in line with or above national averages had continued to close in some areas.

- 32.3 The report provided on information on the standards achieved in 2011/2 from early years to Key Stage 5. Some of the information in the report, in particular relating to Key Stages 4 and 5 was based on provisional data, as examination results were still being validated. At Key Stage 4, there was a particular issue around the setting of grade boundaries for GCSE English. The City Council was participating with other local authorities, schools and teacher unions in a legal challenge to Ofqual and the awarding bodies. The report would be updated and brought again to the Committee in Spring 2013, once all examination results had been validated and performance tables published by the DfE in January 2013.
- 32.4 Councillor Wealls referred to the gap in provision between eligibility for free school meals and take up and measures being put into place to address this. The Lead Commissioner, Schools, Skills and Learning explained that schools undertook measures to ensure that eligibility for take up was well publicised and that children who were in receipt of free school meals could not be identified by their peers.
- 32.5 The Chair stated that this was a national problem and that the authority was continuing to work with schools to address this.
- 32.6 In answer to questions regarding measures being taken by BACA and PACA, the Lead Commissioner, Schools, Skills and Learning stated that good working relations were in place with the city's academies. It was suggested that appropriate protocols were put into place and it was explained that a good relationship existed and information was shared and that the LEA wished to support and encourage this.
- 32.7 The Lead Commissioner, Schools, Skills and Learning stated that an item relating to the manner in which the data collected was processed could be included on Forward Plans to encourage head teachers to utilise the available data as effectively as possible.
- 32.8 It was agreed that in the follow up report submitted in Spring 2014 would include more detailed information indicating how Brighton & Hove compared nationally. The Strategic Commissioner Standards and Achievements explained that as a large city with which comprised a number of smaller discrete groups within it was sometimes harder to find comparators.
- 32.9 Councillor Brown considered that it was important to draw out the value added elements too and to extrapolate data in relation to any apparent disparities as well as details of marked improvements for instance in relation to maths. It was noted that there had been strong improvements in the number of pupils making two levels of progress from KS1, although these figures still remained below the national average. Strategies were in place to address this and to seek to continue the year on year improvements that had been seen to date.
- 32.10 The Strategic Commissioner, Standards and Achievement explained that visits were being made to each of the city's secondary schools and work was being carried out to encourage sharing of good practice.
- 32.11 Andrew Jeffery, Parent Forum referred to the training received by teachers working with children at Key Stage 1. He also enquired regarding the number of children who did not

sit exams at all and the effect, if any this had on the overall percentage data. It was agreed that it would be possible to extract this information.

- 32.12 Councillor Wealles referred to work being undertaken with children who were underperforming and were not anticipated to pass their GCSE's and it was explained that there was a range of strategies in place to assist such children including those who were disaffected in the two year period leading up to their examinations. Pupils who were being educated via the DFE referral unit; or were pupils at special schools were not included in those figures.
- 32.13 Councillor Gilbey commented on the relatively low take up of free school meals and it was confirmed that discrete campaigns were mounted throughout the school year to encourage a greater level of take up. Councillor Pissaridou expressed concern that this needed to be done in such a way as to ensure that those who had an entitlement were not deterred from taking it up. It was explained that recipients could not be identified.
- 32.14 In answer to questions by Councillor A Kitcat regarding the apparent disparity between early years performance and that at KS1 (in line with the national average) it was explained that this could be due in part to the manner in which the two different sets of data were collected.
- 32.15 Councillor Simson stated that whilst the improvements in results were encouraging there was still some way to go in some areas, especially in achieving full participation of 16 year olds in learning, training or employment. It was explained that a number of measures had been put into place to address this by working in partnership with other agencies and schools, colleges and training providers. Key in part to addressing this was addressing issues, particularly with disaffected pupils which led to absenteeism.
- 32.16 It was also noted that although absence figures had improved over recent years, the figures the figures for secondary schools were still higher than those for England overall and statistical neighbour averages. Each secondary school now had a dedicated member of staff addressing attendance and absenteeism and it was hoped would effect further improvements.
- 32.17 Councillor Powell stated that she had attended a recent careers day event, which had been attended by only 120 young people from across the city and considered that more focused career work needed to be carried out in schools.
- 32.18 Councillor A Kitcat referred to the issues which had arisen in relation to the current examination grading issues especially in relation to the GCSE grades awarded for English. There were two elements to this, papers which sat in parallel with the current re-sits which were taking place. The issue of the re-sits was complicated as it was not clear on what basis they were being re-marked. The Chair confirmed that Members would be updated as soon as more information was available.
- 32.19 **RESOLVED** – That the Committee receives and notes comments on the standards achieved in Brighton & Hove schools, colleges and settings in 2011/12.

33. EQUALITY AND ANTI-BULLYING WORK IN SCHOOLS

- 33.1 The Committee considered a report of the Interim Director of Children's Services providing a summary of bullying data (Safe and Well School Survey) for 2011 and racist and religiously motivated incident data 2010-11.
- 33.2 The report also set out information including bullying and prejudice incident data as it related to children and young people in Brighton and Hove schools and outlined support for schools provided to schools to enable them to fulfill their Public Sector Equality Duty under the 2010 Equality Act.
- 33.3 Councillor Lepper commended the work that had taken place, It was clear that a number of children still did not feel safe in school. The further steps in working with schools to combat this problem were also welcomed.
- 33.4 Councillor Wealls stated that he had attended a carers meeting recently and those present had commented that bullying was treated seriously. He also referred to the scrutiny work that had taken place and to the work that had been undertaken with the young carers project.
- 33.5 Councillor Powell referred to a session which she had attended at Longhill School recently which had facilitated discussion on this issue. In answer to questions it was explained that it was not possible to break the data down any further, however, it was considered very important to encourage schools, especially those where problems had been identified to dig deeper into the available data to seek to highlight issues within their own schools. It and was more effective to encourage engagement to such schools and to encourage them to liaise with schools who had been successful in addressing such problems.
- 33.6 Soad Eboyok, Youth Council enquired whether teachers received training to deal with bullying and it was confirmed that they did, from the LEA and via projects such as "Allsorts" and "Kidscape".
- 33.7 Bethan Prosser Amaze stated that the Voluntary Sector welcomed break downs of the available data and any pressure which could be placed upon schools to improve as appropriate.
- 33.8 Councillor Gilbey stated that referred to the training available for school governors stressing that the importance including cyber bullying.
- 33.9 **RESOLVED** – That the contents of the report be received and noted.

34. THE NEW SEN PARTNERSHIP STRATEGY 2012 - 2017

- 34.1 The Committee considered a report of the Interim Director of Children's Services setting out (as an appendix to the report), Brighton and Hove's new Special Educational Needs (SEN) Partnership Strategy (draft) for 2012/17.
- 34.2 It was noted that the SEN Partnership Board had led and overseen the development of the strategy. Following completion of the consultation and launch, detailed action plans would be written in order to implement the strategy and to monitor progress. The new strategy had been developed in the context of a changing national landscape with

regard to SEN. The government had published draft proposals for new legislation to be introduced in the spring of 2014 which would have a significant impact on all areas of work.

- 34.3 Councillor Lepper welcomed the report, looked forward to the final report and was pleased to note that measures were to be put into place to ensure that the new SEN strategy would link closely to the proposed changes and that the LEA would engage with stakeholders to ensure that the available funding supported the objectives of the SEN strategy.
- 34.4 Councillor Brown noted the improvements that had been achieved locally and hoped that the collaborative work that had taken place to date including involvement of head teachers could continue to be built upon. The Commissioner Lead Commissioner, Schools, skills and Learning stated that a lot of work had taken place to close gaps in SEN provision. A joined up strategy was in place as a result of collaborative work with other partners including Amaze and on going support would be available to head teachers.
- 34.5 Bethan Prosser, Amaze referred to the work that had been undertaken and the role of the SEN Partnership Board in overseeing the strategy.
- 34.6 Councillor Wealles welcomed the measures which were being put into place to effectively manage available funding, noting the successes that had been effected to date to narrow the gap in attainment between pupils with and without SEN.
- 34.7 Councillor Gilbey referred to the length of time that was taken to collate SEN information and it was explained that requirements were placed upon schools in respect of how they collected information. This process could be lengthy as it could involve medical appointments and input from other professionals. In answer to further questions it was explained that the processes for academies were exactly the same as those for other schools.
- 34.8 **RESOLVED** - That the Committee agrees to the publication of the final draft of the new SEN Strategy 2012-17

35. SURE START AND CHILDREN'S CENTRES BUDGET STRATEGY

- 35.1 The Committee considered a report of the Interim Director of Children's Services outlining an alternative strategy to meet the proposed budget reductions of £640,000 in Sure Start for 2013/14, which would reduce the impact on Children's Centres.
- 35.2 The Head of Sure Start explained that initially the proposal had been to reduce funding for Children's Centres by £500,000 and to consult on significant changes to Children's Centres in the city. There was a statutory duty for local authorities to make arrangements for the sufficient provision of children's centres to meet local need.
- 35.3 Children's Centres had been established in three phases starting with the most disadvantaged areas, the resources for these centres being based on the local level of need. The two Phase 3 centres in Westdene and Preston Park offered a limited range of services and in reality they acted as additional venues for the Hollingbury and Patcham

and Hollingdean centres. It was therefore proposed that consultation take place on changing their status from that of a designated to a linked site. This would mean that they would be inspected by Ofsted together with their linked Children's Centre, this would not change the level of existing services.

- 35.4 There were five existing linked sites to main designated Children's Centres : Coldean and Bevendean (linked to Moulsecomb), Saltdean (linked to the Deans), Goldstone (linked to Hangleton) and Fairlight (linked to City View). The linked sites established in Phase 2 had included part-time receptionist posts but had not been the case for those provided in Phase 3: Fairlight, Westdene and Preston Park. It was therefore proposed to consult on no longer funding receptionist posts in Coldean, Saltdean and Goldstone.
- 35.5 The main change to the budget proposal was to reduce the Children's Centre saving from £500,000 to £323,000. This proposal represented 11% of the total cost of £2,881,000. Part of the saving would be achieved by the Value for Money programme contributing £50,000 towards the Early Parenting Assessment Programme. There were also plans to charge services for their use of Children's Centres. The actual reduction in Children's Centre funding would be £239,000. The Children's Centre had underspent the previous year due to a combination of factors including alternative funding for childcare places for two year olds, more accurate information on premises costs and running cost savings. Based on analysis of this year's budgets £160,000 could be found without any reduction in services. The proposal to reduce receptionist posts would save a further £34,000. It was proposed to find the remaining saving of £45,000 by not filling vacant posts.
- 35.6 This paper was intended to inform the Committees budget proposals 2013/14 which would be consulted on as part of the budget consultation. Local consultations would be organised on the changes to Children's Centres.
- 35.7 The Chair commended the report and the efforts which officers had made to mitigate against savings which could potentially reduce outcomes for children by reducing the savings required of children's centres and focussing services on disadvantaged children.
- 35.8 Councillor Pissaridou stated that whilst the savings needed to be made she was concerned that in her view those who were most disadvantaged would suffer most due to the proposed reductions which would lead to 20% fewer subsidised out of school childcare places and the impact this would have on low income families. Early support for such families was very important
- 35.9 Councillor Simson enquired regarding the level of grant/subsidy available for provision in/to the voluntary sector. It was explained that as the Government had moved funding for supporting extended schools, the Council no longer provided funding for childcare run by schools. Schools had not used their budgets to fund private and voluntary childcare providers who cared for their children. The Council had therefore continued to support private and voluntary sector providers with sustainability funding.
- 35.10 In answer to further questions it was explained that as part of the strategy to reduce the impact on Children's Centres, officers had tried to spread the savings across all budgets

including the extended schools budget. Funding reductions for individual providers would be small but it was recognised that this might effect their financial sustainability.

- 35.11 **RESOLVED** – (1) That the Committee notes the revised budget savings proposals for Sure Start going to full Council to maintain the city’s network of Children’s Centres; and
- (2) That the Committee agrees to local consultations to change the status of Westdene and Preston Park Children’s Centres from designated to link sites and to no longer employ receptionists in linked sites (Saltdean, Coldean, Goldstone).

Note: Councillors Gilbey, Lepper and Pissaridou abstained from voting in respect of the resolution(2)above.

36. TWO YEAR OLD FREE EARLY LEARNING ENTITLEMENT

- 36.1 The Committee considered a report of the Interim Director of Children’s Services updating on the position set out in an earlier report which had been considered at the Children and Young People’s Cabinet Member meeting on 5 March 2012.
- 36.2 Disadvantaged two year olds had received free early learning since September 2009. Currently this applied to around seven per cent of two year olds in Brighton & Hove (200 children). The government was extending this entitlement as a statutory duty to 20 per cent of two year olds from September 2013 (600 children in Brighton & Hove) and 40 per cent from September 2014 (1,300 children). Besides providing an update the report was intended to draw the committee’s attention to significant risks associated with the statutory duty, both financial and in relation to the provision of places and to draw its attention to the findings of the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment, completed in May 2012 which detailed current childcare supply in Brighton & Hove.
- 36.3 From September 2013 provision of free early learning for eligible two year olds would become a statutory duty. From that date eligible families would be those in receipt of out of work benefits, and the entitlement would cover an estimated 600 children in Brighton & Hove. From September 2014 eligibility would be extended to include low income working families and would cover 1,300 children in the city. The government was currently consulting on also including more disabled children and those who leaving care through adoption.
- 36.4 The council had a statutory duty to complete a Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (CSA) and the main findings of the latest assessment were set out in Appendix 1 to the report, the full CSA had been placed in the members’ rooms. The CSA showed the number of childcare places available in the different areas of the city, and data from this had been used, along with child poverty data, to show where place expansion will be needed.
- 36.5 In order to provide places for children in their local communities, some expansion would be needed for September 2013, and then significant extra places will be required to provide for all eligible children from September 2014. Most additional places would be needed in Moulsecoomb, Whitehawk and the city centre. Although the government had announced that £100m of capital funding would be provided to expand childcare provision information had not yet been received regarding when this would be made available and how it would be allocated. The level of funding envisaged would not be

sufficient to provide the number of additional places needed and there was no immediately identifiable site to provide more places in Whitehawk where the greatest increase in provision was needed.

- 36.7 Councillor Wealles stated expressed the view that he hoped that private sector providers would be encouraged to create additional places. The Head of Service, Sure Start, stated that this was being supported and encouraged, however, although, the private sector tended to operate in the more advantaged areas of the city and were therefore unlikely to provide places in significant numbers. The voluntary sector might be able to respond if capital funding was provided.
- 36.8 In answer to questions by Councillor Pissaridou it was explained that although places were provided by childminders and whilst work was continuing to support and encourage expansion of this sector, parents tended to prefer nurseries or playgroups, currently there were fewer childminders operating in those areas of the city where places were most needed.
- 36.9 Councillor Pissaridou stated that whilst she supported the concept of free childcare provision to this group she was gravely concerned, regarding the consequences for other areas of service provision in the absence of adequate provision from central government.
- 36.10 Councillor Lepper stated that voluntary sector was currently operating under severe financial pressures similar to those being experienced by local authorities. She was appalled that the authority was being required to make provision without the necessary levels of funding having been made available to it, this would raise parents expectations without there being sufficient places.
- 36.11 **RESOLVED** – (1) That the Committee notes the revenue funding required to meet the duty to provide free childcare places for up to 1,300 two year olds, and that revenue will come from the Dedicated Schools Grant, the amount of which is not yet known; and that this move to the DSG is likely to mean a significant reduction in the Early Intervention Grant for 2013-14; and
- (2) That the Committee notes the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment. Data from this indicates that across the city there are enough places for two year olds in September 2013, but that there are insufficient places in the areas where they are needed. The city does not have enough places for the expanded offer in September 2014. There is not sufficient capital funding available for the local authority to expand places, and it is unlikely that private, voluntary and independent providers will respond by increasing places where needed.

37. ITEMS REFERRED FOR COUNCIL

- 37.1 There were none although it was agreed subsequently that Item 36 “Two Year Free Early Learning Entitlement” would go forward to Council for information .

38. PART TWO MINUTES

- 38.1 **RESOLVED** – That the Chair be authorised to sign the Non-Public Minutes of the meeting held on 15 October 2012 as a correct record.

The meeting concluded at 6.40pm

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of