

AT A MEETING of the Children and Young People Select Committee of  
HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL held at the castle, Winchester on Friday 19th  
January 2024

Chairman:  
p Councillor Neville Penman

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

**Co-opted members**

p Robert Sanders, Church of England Schools Representative  
p Gemma Rainger, Parent Governor for Primary Schools

**126. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillor Broomfield. Councillor North was in attendance as the Conservative Group Deputy Member.

**127. 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.

**128. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 14 November 2013 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman, subject to the following amendments:

- The attendance of the Select Committees co-opted members be recorded as follows:
  - p Robert Sanders, Church of England Schools Representative

- p Gemma Rainger, Parent Governor for Primary Schools
- In relation to the Autism Assessment Services item, the initial bullet point to be extended to state, 'while the average waiting time was 13 months, the actual waiting time could vary between 12 and 29 months, *which the Select Committee noted was an unsatisfactorily long delay.*'

**129. DEPUTATIONS**

The Committee did not receive any deputations.

**130. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman did not make any announcements to the meeting.

**131. TASK AND FINISH WORKING GROUP - PROPOSAL TO AMEND MEMBERSHIP**

The Children and Young People Select Committee received a report from the Director of Children's Services proposing an amendment to the Task and Finish Working Group established by the Select Committee on the 14 November 2023 to add an additional member. It was noted that the addition of this member would expand the membership to the degree that a place would be available for a member of the Labour Group whilst retaining proportionality with the Council's overall composition.

RESOLVED:

That the Children and Young People's Select Committee:

- Continue with the Task and Finish Working Group to oversee and scrutinise the approach and outcomes of the County Council's stage 2 consultation relating to annual expenditure on library stock.
- Agreed an amendment to paragraph 6.1 in the Terms of Reference for the Working Group as set out in Appendix 1 to increase membership from 8 members to 9 (5 Conservative, 2 Liberal Democrat, 1 Labour and 1 Independent member).

**132. 2024-25 REVENUE BUDGET REPORT FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES**

The Children and Young People Select Committee received a report from the Director of Children's Services providing an overview of the 2024/25 Revenue Budget Report for Children's Services.

Members noted the contextual information provided in relation to the Local Government Finance Statement and the provisional cash limits assumptions. The Children's Services revenue budget was presented, separated into a breakdown for non-schools and schools.

Officers set out the key challenges and priorities to the Directorate, including the complexity of the services provided, the increasing private sector costs, the growing number of Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP), social worker

recruitment and retention and the pressures associated with Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC). Officers drew particular attention to the rising costs associated with the School Transport Service.

The Committee received details of various workstreams which aimed to relieve the pressures in relation to Special Educational Needs. Additionally, a high level overview of the activity in relation to social care was provided highlighting the Modernising Placements Programme and the transformation work being undertaken.

In response to questions members heard that:

- The number of EHCPs maintained by the Local Authority have increased as a result of changes to the legislation which lowered the bar for assessment. Hampshire is not an outlier in this area compared to other Local Authorities.
- Higher transport costs are associated with Special schools as there are less of them in the County and so journeys are often longer.
- In house provision for school transport has been assessed but would not be viable as it is not possible to provide the service at a competitive cost. Legislation prevents means testing for the service and so it is difficult to find ways to bring in further revenue to meet these costs.
- Placement distances for Looked After Children are as small as possible, even if that leads to them being out of County. Figures in this area are distorted by UASC who are often placed out of County in order to ensure their needs are met.

RESOLVED:

That, in regard to the revenue budget for Children's Services, the Select Committee supported the recommendations being proposed to the Executive Lead Member for Children's Services.

### 133. **CHILDREN'S SERVICES CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2024-25 – 2026-27**

The Children and Young People Select Committee received a report from the Director of Children's Services providing an overview of the Children's Services Capital Programme for 2024-25 to 2026/27.

Officers set out how the capital programme continued with significant schools' construction activity to provide the required primary and secondary places, providing details of the new and proposed schools through to September 2028. Members also noted the details of the major SEND expansion schemes in development to meet the increasing need in this area alongside other potential capital projects for 2024-27 with indicative costs.

The committee heard details of pressures on the capital programme including the effect of inflation in the construction industry, the need to secure developer contributions and the overall size of the programme.

In response to questions members heard that:

- The Local Authority works closely with Academy Trusts to ensure that resourced provision is supplied where needed.

- The five year birth forecast is carefully considered to ensure that there is an appropriate number of schools places across the County and in the right places. It was noted that ‘all-through’ schools are less vulnerable to population shifts and that a number of measures such as reorganisation, PAN adjustments and closures can be used when necessary.
- Developer contributions are very carefully considered to prevent the need to return any unspent funds.

RESOLVED:

That, in regard to the capital programme for Children's Services, the Select Committee supported the recommendations being proposed to the Executive Lead Member for Children's Services.

134. **SCHOOL TRANSPORT: SUMMER 2023 LESSONS LEARNED AND POLICY CONSULTATIONS**

The Children and Young People Select Committee received a report from the Director of Children’s Services informing them of the ‘lessons learned’ exercise conducted by the School Transport Service and the resulting Service Improvement Plan. The report also provided an overview of the recent public consultations on proposed changes to the School Transport Policy and the Post 16 Transport Policy.

Officers explained that workshops were held across the Service throughout October and the issues identified have been categorised into five themes – data, process, tooling, resources and communications. These issues have been assessed for severity used to identify improvement workstreams to prioritise between November 2023 and June 2024, the details of which were shared with Members.

Officers went onto provide details of the School Transport Policy Consultations, which ran from the 30 October to 6 December and received 262 responses.

Members noted the introduction of Personal Transport Budgets and the development of Independent Travel Training to allow more choice and support to families using the service.

In response to questions members heard that:

- The Directorate considers all options to provide a better service including minibus partnerships between schools and looking to other Local Authorities.
- The service is obliged to take the lowest price provided when tendering but that there are actions that can be taken when the price is not genuine.
- The Directorate feel that they have put dates back as far as they can to get everything in place before the summer, but after children have been given their schools places.

RESOLVED:

- That the Children and Young People Select Committee noted the lessons learned by the School Transport Service and the contents of the Service Improvement Plan.
- That the Children and Young People Select Committee noted the feedback received during the public consultation on proposed changes to the School Transport Policy and the Post 16 Transport Policy, and the actions and mitigations proposed to respond to that feedback.

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

The committee received 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 Group.

RESOLVED:

That the Children and Young People Select Committee note the progress made and the ongoing issues outlined in the update report.

**136. WORK PROGRAMME**

The Director of People and Organisation presented the Committee's work programme.

RESOLVED:

That the Children and Young People Select Committee discussed and agreed potential items for the work programme that can be prioritised and allocated by the Chairman of the Children and Young People Select Committee in consultation with the Director of Children's Services.

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Chairman, 26 June 2024