

AT A MEETING of the Children and Young People Select Committee of
HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL held at the castle, Winchester on Thursday
12th January 2023

Chairman:
p Councillor Neville Penman

p Councillor Juliet Henderson	Councillor Zoe Huggins
p Councillor Prad Bains	p Councillor Gavin James
p Councillor Jackie Branson	p Councillor Melville Kendal
p Councillor Ann Briggs	p Councillor Arun Mummаланeni
a Councillor Steven Broomfield	p Councillor Jackie Porter
p Councillor Tim Davies	p Councillor Jacky Tustain
a Councillor Christopher Donnelly	p Councillor Malcolm Wade
p Councillor David Drew	

Co-opted members

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

77. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllr Broomfield, Donnelly & Huggins. A deputy for the Conservative Group was not available.

Apologies were also received from Gemma Rainger, Parent Governor for Primary Schools.

78. 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.

79. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the meeting held on 22 November 2022 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

80. **DEPUTATIONS**

The Committee did not receive any deputations.

81. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman did not make any announcements to the meeting.

82. **2023/24 REVENUE BUDGET REPORT FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES**

The Committee received a report and presentation from the Director of Children's Services providing an overview of the 2023/24 Revenue Budget Report for Children's Services (see Item 6 in the Minute Book).

Members noted the contextual information provided in relation to the Local Government Finance Statement and the changes to Hampshire County Council's organisational model. The Children's Services revenue budget was presented, separated into a breakdown of the non-school and school related sides of the department.

Officers set out the key challenges and priorities to the Directorate alongside the key challenges facing it, including the complexity of the services provided, the increasing private sector costs, the growing number of EHCPs, social worker recruitment and retention and the pressures associated with Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC).

The Committee received details of the various workstreams being introduced as part of the 'Delivering Better Value' programme, 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 184% increase in child protection investigations, 35% increase in children in care and 150% increase in UASC.

In response to questions members heard that:

- It will be hard to make Home to School Transport more cost effective due to the number of SEN children the service provides for, alongside outside factors such as driver shortages. It is not possible to request contributions from families who qualify for Home to School Transport.
- School capacity assessments are regularly undertaken to ensure schools have a suitable number of pupils.
- Retention of social workers is a key area of focus with exit interviews conducted routinely and measures such as a 9 day fortnight being introduced, however the higher pay from agencies is always a pull factor.

RESOLVED:

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

83. CHILDREN'S SERVICES CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2023/24 - 2025/26

The Committee received a report and presentation from the Director of Children's Services providing an overview of the Children's Services Capital Programme for 2023/24 to 2025/26 (see Item 7 in the Minute Book).

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 2027. 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 2023-26 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:

- School places are carefully planned with consideration for the local demographic to ensure suitable numbers in catchment schools.
- There are seven schools in Hampshire on the Schools Rebuilding Programme and the school maintenance budget is used in a way so as to make the best use of the finance available.
- Schools take on ownership of their buildings when they become an academy and become responsible for the buildings maintenance.
- New schools are being designed with 'Net Zero' targets in mind, which can add in the region of 20-30% to their cost.
- School buildings are carefully monitored and work prioritised and there are no schools currently at risk of imminent failure.

RESOLVED:

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

84. CHILDREN'S SERVICES DIRECTORATE - NEW SERVICES BRIEFING

The Committee received a presentation from the Director of Children's Services providing a briefing of three new services added to the recently formed Children's Services Directorate; Hampshire County Council Catering Services (HC3S), Hampshire Library Services & Supplies (see Item 8 in the Minute Book).

Each new service was introduced and a high level overview of their financial, operational and staffing positions were provided alongside their priorities and the challenges facing them.

In relation to HC3S members noted the challenging market conditions in relation to recruitment and food costs and were provided with details of the Universal Infant Free School Meals government funding.

Regarding the Library Service, the committee received details of the 40 libraries across the county and their performance in comparison to other authorities. Members heard how the Library Service aimed to promote reading, support healthy, creative communities and invest in digital services.

Officers from County Supplies provided an insight into their customers and set out their service's recent achievements, including those linked to climate change and sustainability goals. Details for two major projects in relation to improving e-commerce and providing traded services online were provided.

Officers noted that these new service's joining the directorate provided exciting opportunities for synergies with the rest of Children's Services in relation to lifelong learning and the future of social care.

In response to questions regarding the Library Service members heard that:

- The Library Service had put significant effort into income generation, but it was difficult to achieve.
- Complaints and compliments for the service are logged and regularly reviewed.

In response to questions regarding HCC's Catering Service members heard that:

- Hampshire's Catering Service can only provide a service where it is commercially viable, with limited ability to trade with the private sector.
- Hampshire's Catering Service received data on the take up of menu options for analysis.
- School meals are created in line with the School Food Standards and an NHS dietician reviews all meals.
- Attempts are made to reduce the number of miles food travels and all is sourced from within the United Kingdom.

RESOLVED:

That the Children and Young People Select Committee note the briefing on the new service areas introduced to Children's Services as a result of the recent reorganisation of the County Council.

85. **WORK PROGRAMME**

The Director of People and Organisation presented the Committee's work programme (see Item 9 in the Minute Book).

RESOLVED:

That the work programme, subject to any amendments made during the meeting, is agreed.

Chairman, Children and Young People
Select Committee