

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

5.00PM – 27 MARCH 2007

BRIGHTON TOWN HALL

DRAFT MINUTES

Present: Councillor Battle (Chair); Allen, Cobb, Giebeler, Lepper, Peltzer Dunn, Simson and Wrighton.

Statutory Co-optees with Voting Rights: Nigel Sarjudeen – Diocese of Chichester; Frank Myers – Diocese of Arundel and Brighton; Sophie Ricca-McCarthy – Parent Governor Representative.

Others invited by the Chair to contribute: Ann Antonio – National Union of Teachers; Jaqueline Sell – NASUWT.

PART ONE

ACTION

44. PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

44A. Declarations of Substitutes

44.1 Substitute Councillor For Councillor

There were no substitutes. Councillors Young and Morgan sent their apologies as did Clare Jackson.

44B. Declarations of Interest

44.2 There were none.

44C. Exclusion of Press and Public

44.3 The Committee 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 100A(3) or 100 1 of the Local Government Act 1972.

- 44.4 **RESOLVED** - That the press and public be not excluded from the meeting during consideration of any of the items on the agenda.

45. MINUTES

45(a) Minutes of the meeting held on 30 January 2007

- 45.1 **RESOLVED** – That the minutes of the meeting held on 30 January 2007 be approved and signed by the Chair.

45(b) Minutes of the meeting held on 19 February 2007

- 45.2 **RESOLVED** – That the minutes of the meeting held on 19 February 2007 be approved and signed by the Chair.

46. CHAIR'S COMMUNICATIONS

- 46.1 There were none.

47. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

- 47.1 There were none.

48. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S PLAN 'ENJOY AND ACHIEVE'

- 48.1 The Committee considered a report of the Director of Children's Services providing an update on the strengths and areas for development in relation to the 'Enjoy and Achieve' theme within the Children and Young People's Plan. Mandy Miller and Linda Ellis of the Children and Young People's Trust introduced the report and answered members' questions.
- 48.2 In response to a query as to whether the parents of children who regularly missed school were being penalised, the Committee was told that penalty notices may be served in such situations, although these represent a last resort to be considered only after a wide range of support has been offered.
- 48.3 In answer to a question as to whether the report had been compiled using value-added contextual data, the Committee was informed that many factors which might affect the ability of children to learn were taken into account when compiling the report. More detailed statistical material is included in the Annual Report.
- 48.4 In response to a query about keeping records of children who are regularly taken out of school during term time, the Committee was told that records are kept so that persistent non-attenders can be identified and appropriate action taken. This action may ultimately include taking the parents of persistent

non-attenders to court.

48.5 In answer to a question concerning the difference between an "alternative curriculum" and vocational teaching, the Committee was informed that the alternative curriculum was part of a project aimed at teaching employment skills to a core group of pupils who had been identified as being in particular need of extra help and who were not expected to derive any more benefit from the normal academic curriculum. Vocational teaching, on the other hand, was not specifically targeted at pupils who lacked employment skills, or indeed at pupils who were academically unsuccessful, but sought to impart vocational skills to a wide range of pupils.

48.6 In response to a query about ways in which pupils "enjoyment" of their time at school could be measured, the Committee was told that schools went to some length to try and quantify enjoyment, by, for instance, presenting their pupils with questionnaires asking if they found their school experience to be enjoyable.

48.7 In answer to a question regarding possible decreases of funding targeted at early-years education, the Committee was told that there was a good deal of ongoing work analysing what the future funding situation was likely to be. However, there may be some room within formula funding to redress any decreases in early-years funding should this prove necessary.

48.8 The Chair noted that Councillor Young had suggested that a future Committee might be interested in hearing an overview report from the "Connexions" service.

48.9 **RESOLVED** – That the report be noted and that the current Committee recommends that a future Committee might wish to consider requesting more information on: a) the role of the "Connexions" service; b) school attendance; c) the role contextual value-added performance information.

JA/JR

49. SUMMARY OF OFSTED REPORTS

49.1 The Committee considered a report of the Director of Children's Services concerning the outcome of the Ofsted Inspections which took place in the Autumn Term 2006 and Spring Term 2007. The Committee then examined a number of individual Ofsted reports.

49.2 **Tarnerland Nursery School** – Committee members commended the outstanding achievement of this school and resolved to write a letter of congratulations.

JA/JR

- 49.3 **St John the Baptist RC School** – the Committee noted that the school was judged to be a good school by Ofsted. It was also noted that denominational inspections of Voluntary Aided schools were undertaken and that the Committee would be interested in viewing all denominational schools reports. **JA/JR**
- 49.4 **Hangleton Infant School** – the Committee noted that this school had generally been judged as good, and that it had made strong improvements over the past five years.
- 49.5 **St Paul's C of E Primary School and Nursery** – Committee members noted that this school had a particularly high ratio of pupils for whom English was not the first language, but was nonetheless a generally successful school. The school was particularly to be commended for its innovative and enthusiastic teaching of foreign languages.
- 49.6 **Downs Infant School** - Committee members commended the outstanding achievement of this school and resolved to write a letter of congratulations. **JA/JR**
- 49.7 **Coombe Road Primary School** – Committee members noted that this school was performing well, particularly since it took a number of children with below average language skills and generally succeeded in greatly improving these skills.
- 49.8 **Woodingdean Primary School** - Committee members commended the outstanding achievement of this school and resolved to write a letter of congratulations. **JA/JR**
- 49.9 **Our Lady of Lourdes RC Primary School** – Committee members noted that this school had been judged good by Ofsted.
- 49.10 **Whitehawk Primary School** – this school has been issued with a notice to improve, although it was noted that the school has made recent improvements and that a great deal of work is being done to maintain and hasten this improvement, although high staff turnover and a high incidence of staff-sickness have added to the school's problems. EB4U and other local partners are involved in helping this school improve.
- 49.11 **Mile Oak Primary School** – Committee members noted that this school had received a good report.
- 49.12 **Saltdean Primary School** – Committee members noted that this school had received a satisfactory report and was moving in the right direction.
- 49.13 **Balfour Junior School** - Committee members commended the outstanding achievement of this school and resolved to write a **JA/JR**

letter of congratulations.

- 49.14 **Patcham High School** – this school has been issued with a notice to improve, although long-standing staffing issues are beginning to be resolved and it is believed that the school does have the capacity to improve. Following negotiations with the PFI contractors, essential repairs are now being undertaken.
- 49.15 **Falmer High School** – Committee members noted that this school had received a satisfactory report, but that when the high incidences of deprivation and of children with special needs within its intake were taken into account, it should be recognised that the school was in fact performing outstandingly, providing an excellent service to its pupils and adding value. It was noted that a member had recently encountered some Falmer High School pupils in the city centre and had been most impressed with their impeccable behaviour which reflected well both on the pupils and on their teachers.
- 49.16 **Hillside Special School** - Committee members commended the outstanding achievement of this school and resolved to write a letter of congratulations. Members also noted that some of the Ofsted scoring of this school seemed inappropriate and did not properly reflect the nature of the school and its excellent work. **JA/JR**
- 49.17 **RESOLVED – a)** That the Ofsted reports be noted and letters of congratulation sent to those schools that achieved an outstanding Ofsted score. **JA/JR**
- b)** That the Committee's comments on the Ofsted reports be referred to the next meeting of the Children and Young People's Trust board.
- 50. DRAFT SEN AND DISABILITY STRATEGY: INCLUSION FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES**
- DRAFT BEHAVIOUR STRATEGY: INCLUSION OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WITH BEHAVIOURAL, EMOTIONAL AND SOCIAL DIFFICULTIES**
- 50.1 The Committee considered a report of the Director of Children's Services detailing the content of the two draft strategies developed by Members of the CYPT, schools and partners which are currently being consulted on. Officers of the Children and Young People's Trust introduced the report and answered questions from the Committee.
- 50.2 In response to a query as to the nature of the two strategies discussed in the report, the Committee was told that the

strategies were currently in draft form and were being circulated to interested parties for comment. A final version of the strategies is due to go to the Children and Young People's Trust board on June 4 2007.

50.3 Committee members noted that they supported the decision to keep these two strategies as separate documents, particularly given the ongoing problems involved in persuading people to consider behavioural difficulties with the same degree of sympathy typically given to physical disabilities or learning difficulties.

50.4 **RESOLVED** - That the report be noted and the above comment on the importance of having separate strategies be taken into account..

51. CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE'S TRUST – OVERVIEW OF PROGRESS IN FIRST YEAR

51.1 The Committee considered a report of the Director of Children's Services detailing the progress made to date in establishing the Children and Young People's Trust. David Hawker introduced the report and answered questions from the Committee.

51.2 In answer to a question regarding continuing ICT problems, the Committee was told that this was a complex issue and one that was unlikely to be resolved soon as there are major incompatibilities between the ICT systems used in the NHS and in Brighton & Hove City Council, and indeed, incompatibilities between ICT systems used in different ministries. However, a great deal of work is being done on a local level to ensure that the Trust's ICT systems function as well as possible.

51.3 In response to a query as to whether the merging of Brighton & Hove City Council services with South Downs NHS Health Trust services would result in job losses, the Committee was told that there would be a reduction of management posts as a result of the merger. These economies are a necessary response to the need to make yearly efficiency savings.

51.4 In answer to a question about how genuine the NHS commitment to the Trust was, the Chair noted that the Committee was not well placed to make judgements on the health aspects of the Trust's remit, as most Committee members possessed expertise in education rather than health matters. The Chair hoped that co-optees with expertise in children's health issues would shortly be in place.

JA/JR

51.5 **RESOLVED** – That the report be noted.

52. CYPOSC WORK PLAN

52.1 **RESOLVED** – That the work plan be noted.

53. ITEMS TO GO FORWARD TO COUNCIL

53.1 **RESOLVED** – There was nothing to go forward to council

54. OTHER ITEMS

54.1 Councillor Peltzer Dunn wished to express his thanks to the Chair for the hard work he had put into the Committee and for his constructive approach to chairing it. The other Committee members present also expressed their appreciation (Cllr Young had also asked that her thanks be passed on to the Chair).

The meeting concluded at 7.10 pm

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of

2007