

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL
CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE & SKILLS COMMITTEE

4.00pm 18 SEPTEMBER 2017

COUNCIL CHAMBER, HOVE TOWN HALL, NORTON ROAD, HOVE, BN3 4AH

MINUTES

Present:

Councillors

Councillor Chapman (Chair), Councillor Penn (Deputy Chair), Brown (Opposition Spokesperson), Phillips (Group Spokesperson), Hamilton, Knight, O'Quinn, Taylor, Wealls and Horan

Co-optees

Mr J Cliff, Ms B Connor, Mr B Glazebrook, Ms L Hurst, Mr M Jones and Ms A Mortensen

PART ONE

19 PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

19 (a) Declarations of substitutes

- 19.1 Councillor Horan was present as a substitute for Councillor Russell-Moyle
Ms L Hurst was present as a substitute for Ms A Holt
Ms B Connor was present as a substitute for Ms M Ryan

19 (b) Declarations of Interest

- 19.2 Martin Jones declared a non-pecuniary interest in Item 26 as his wife worked at Hillside School.
- 19.3 Amanda Mortensen declared a non-pecuniary interest in Item 26 as she was a governor at Downs View Special School.
- 19.4 Ms L Hurst declared a non-pecuniary interest in Item 26 as she was a governor at Hillside School.
- 19.5 Councillor O'Quinn declared a non-pecuniary interest in Item 26 as she was a governor at the Connected Hub.

19 (c) Exclusion of press and public

- 19.6 In accordance with section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 ("the Act"), the Committee 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 business to be transacted or the nature of proceedings, that if members of the press and 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 100(I) of the Act).

19.7 **RESOLVED-** That the press and public not be excluded

20 MINUTES

- 20.1 Mr M Jones was concerned that not all the points he raised and questions he asked were included in the Minutes. The Chair said that the Minutes were not a verbatim record of all that was said, but were there to formally record the decisions made by the Committee.
- 20.2 Councillor Brown referred to paragraph 9.6 and said 'the day provision' should read 'the *extended day provision*'.
- 20.3 Councillor Knight noted that she had commented on Item 13 but there was no reference to that in the Minutes.
- 20.4 Ms A Mortensen referred to paragraph 9.7, and said that 'Anne Mortensen' should read '*Amanda Mortensen*'.
- 20.5 The Chair noted the comments and indicated that the clerk's notes of the meeting would be reviewed.
- 20.6 **RESOLVED:** That subject to the above amendments, the Minutes of the meeting held on 19 June 2017 be approved and signed as the correct record.

21 CHAIR'S COMMUNICATIONS

21.1 The Chair stated:

In the meeting today the committee will receive an update on the summer examination results. These once again demonstrate the excellent work taking place in our schools. Across the different key stages and against most measures Brighton & Hove perform above national averages. We are now at the start of a new academic year and I would like to thank all staff, across our schools and within the Council for the work they have done last year and of course for their continued hard work this year.

At a committee we often receive reports related to the education of our children and young people. However, equality important, and in some ways more important is the work that we do to protect our children and young people and keep them safe. It is a very difficult task and I'm pleased that in the last few years our performance has significantly improved. A major reason for this is the vision and dedication that has been shown by Helen Gulvin, who as Assistant Director has led this area of service since November 2014. Prior to this she worked in an interim capacity from October 2013, initially helping to establish our multi agency safeguarding hub and then as the interim Assistant Director. Helen has now decided to retire and will be leaving at the end of the

month. I would like to personally thank Helen for everything that she has done and wish her the very best for the future

22 CALL OVER

22.1 All items on the agenda were reserved for discussion.

23 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

23 (a) Petitions

23.1 There were none

23 (b) Written Questions

23.2 Mr Boyle asked the following question:

Under the proposed changes to the catchment areas, children in the area north of Elm Grove with no sibling link will be offered the choice of Longhill and the new school. Can the council confirm that the new school will actually be an available option for those children in 2019?

23.3 The Chair gave the following response:

Thank you for your question.

On the 29 June the Council released a joint statement with the University of Brighton Academies Trust confirming that the Brighton General Hospital site is the preferred site for The Brighton and Hove Academy. The council continues to be in dialogue with the Sussex Community NHS Foundation Trust about how their plans for the site can include the new secondary school building. The Brighton and Hove Academy is in the pre-opening stage and it is a decision for the Education Skills Funding Agency and not the Council about when their conditions for opening have been satisfied. We continue to make every effort to ensure that we provide whatever assistance is needed to ensure those conditions are met.

23.4 Mr Boyle asked the following supplementary:

Can the Council guarantee that the new secondary school would be included in any admission arrangements for September 2019.

23.5 The Chair gave the following response:

The Council will know in the summer of 2018 whether the new school will be able to open in 2019. The Authority has done all it can to push for the opening of a new secondary school but it has no control over the process. The Council would keep everyone informed of developments.

23 (c) Written Questions

23.6 There were none.

23 (d) Deputations

23.7 There were none.

24 MEMBER INVOLVEMENT

24a Petitions

24.1 There were none.

24b Written Questions

24.2 There were none.

24c Letters

24.3 There were none.

24d Notices of Motion

24.4 There were none

25 SCHOOL OFSTED PRESENTATION

25.1 The Head of Education, Standards and Achievements provided an update on schools which had recently been inspected by Ofsted.

25.2 The Head of Education, Standards and Achievements was pleased to advise that Varndean Secondary School had retained its 'Good' rating, and Coombe Road Primary School had moved from 'Requires Improvement' to 'Good'. Elm Grove Primary had recently been inspected but the results were not yet available.

25.3 Councillor Brown congratulated Varndean and Coombe Road on their Ofsted rating, but was disappointed that no secondary school in the city had been assessed as being 'Outstanding'. The Assistant Director, Education & Skills said that Varndean had been given a 'Good' rating with 'Outstanding' features, but under the current assessment framework it was difficult for any school to receive an overall rating of 'Outstanding'. The Assistant Director, Education & Skills said that the Council held workshops, led by Head Teachers from 'Outstanding' schools, to assist all schools to continue to drive through improvements to achieve the highest Ofsted rating.

25.4 Councillor Phillips suggested it would be useful to see the Ofsted report on Varndean to understand why it had been rated 'Good' rather than 'Outstanding'. The Assistant

Director, Education & Skills suggested that that could be provided at one of the workshops.

- 25.5 Councillor Hamilton was pleased to note that the Primary and Secondary Schools and the Pupil Referral Units in the city all exceeded the national average. Councillor O'Quinn said that the Pupil Referral Units had done incredibly well, and it was expected that they would be rated as 'Outstanding' in due course.
- 25.6 **Resolved:** That the report be noted.

26 SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITY - REORGANISATION OF SPECIAL SCHOOLS AND PUPIL REFERRAL UNITS

- 26.1 The Committee considered a report of the Executive Director, Families, Children & Learning regarding the reorganisation of the Special Schools and Pupil Referral Units in the city. The report was introduced by the Assistant Director, Health, SEN and Disabilities and the SEND Review Project Officer.
- 26.2 Ms A Mortensen referred to the provision of home to school transport and suggested that it be considered by the Committee, as currently there was no requirement for the Council to provide transport for those over 16 years of age. The Assistant Director, Health, SEN and Disabilities advised that the issue was being reviewed and further information would be provided in due course.
- 26.3 Councillor Brown said that the Conservatives supported the changes, but were concerned with the proposal to expand the age range of Homewood College from 11-16 to 5-19, which would have children as young as five on the same site as nineteen year olds, and would therefore abstain from voting on Recommendation 2.3. The Assistant Director, Health, SEN and Disabilities said that whilst having a child as young as five at Homewood College would be exceptional, it would give the Council an option if a placement were needed in the future.
- 26.4 Councillor Phillips noted Ms Mortensen's comments on transport and said that she also had concerns on provision. The Assistant Director, Health, SEN and Disabilities said that the issue would be carefully considered and all options reviewed.
- 26.5 Councillor Phillips asked if children would be expected to move to the school closest to their home address, and was advised that there was no intention to disrupt any pupil.
- 26.6 Councillor Phillips noted that an outside consultant had been employed, and asked what the budget implications of that would be. The Assistant Director, Health, SEN and Disabilities said that the Department for Education would fund the post for one year, so there would be no impact on the Local Authority budget.
- 26.7 Councillor O'Quinn asked about the role of School Governors for the merged PRU and Homewood College. The Assistant Director, Health, SEN and Disabilities said that there would need to be one management committee which would link with the governors at Homewood College to work with the integrated hub, but the governance arrangements were still being considered.

26.8 Councillor Wealls did not feel that all the concerns highlighted in the consultation had been fully addressed in the report, and that members did not have all the information needed to make decisions particularly on the practical side of the reorganisation. The Assistant Director, Health, SEN and Disabilities said the report being considered was in response to the Statutory Notices, and once the agreement to make the changes had been made the practical side could be considered. If members wanted another paper it could be considered by the cross party working group. Councillor Wealls suggested that the Committee could vote on principles, but would not have control on how the actual reorganisation would work. The Executive Director, Children Families & Learning said that the reorganisation had been a long process, and it would soon be in the hands of the Governing Bodies to look more at the practical side of running the schools. The Executive Director suggested that it may be helpful for the Committee if an update report came to the committee in 6-9 months.

26.9 Mr M Jones referred to the Equalities Implications in the report and noted that a commitment had been given to retain the overall number of places, and suggested that there be provision to increase the numbers if required. The Assistant Director, Health, SEN and Disabilities confirmed that there was no intention to cap the number of places.

26.10 RESOLVED: That the Committee –

1. Confirmed the proposals contained in the statutory notices and agreed to:

(a) Expand re-designate and extend the age range up to the age of 19 years of Hillside Community Special School.

(b) Close Downs Park Community Special School

so as to form the integrated hub for severe and complex learning difficulties in the west of the city with effect from September 2018.

2. Confirmed the proposals contained in the statutory notices and agreed to:

(a) Expand and re-designate Downs View Community Special School

(b) Close the Cedar Centre Community Special School

so as to form the integrated hub for severe and complex learning difficulties in the east of the city with effect from September 2018.

3. Confirmed the proposals contained in the statutory notice and agreed to expand and extend the age range of Homewood College from 11-16 and 5-19 with effect from September 2018.

4. Noted the outcome of the recent consultation, and approved the merger of the existing Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) and the Connected Hub, and the arrangements to bring the merged PRU together with Homewood College to form the integrated hub for social, emotional and mental health with effect from September 2018.

27 CHILDREN'S SERVICES PARTNERSHIP FORUM

- 27.1 The Committee considered a report of the Executive Director, Families, Children & Learning which updated the Committee on the function and work of the Children's Services Partnership Forum. The report was introduced by the Service Manager, Directorate Policy and Business Support.
- 27.2 Councillor Wealls was pleased to note the impact of the Forum, and suggested it would be useful to have sight of the Minutes of the meetings. The Service Manager, Directorate Policy and Business Support, said that a summary would be prepared and circulated to members of the Committee.
- 27.3 Councillor Wealls said that it would be useful to have an update on the Youth Service, and was advised that a report would be provided at the next meeting of the Committee.
- 27.4 Councillor Phillips asked if members could be advised of when meetings were being held. It was agreed that a forward plan of future meetings would be provided.
- 27.5 **RESOLVED:** That the Committee noted and supported the work of the Children Services Partnership Forum.

28 SCHOOL ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS 2019/20

- 28.1 The Committee considered a report of the Executive Director, Families, Children & Learning which outlined the proposed changes to the secondary catchment areas and some primary school Published Admission Numbers (PAN), and sought permission to make a temporary light touch change to the secondary school admission arrangements. The report was introduced by the Head of School Organisation.
- 28.2 The Chair thanked officers and members of the Cross Party School Organisation Working Group for their involvement to date in the process. He advised that members had already been contacted by those commenting on the proposed changes to the secondary school catchment areas and primary schools admission numbers, and confirmed that all comments would be included in the consultation.
- 28.3 Councillor Brown said it was unfortunate that the reviews had to be undertaken but understood why it was necessary, and encouraged all parents and carers to attend the public consultation events to give their views.
- 28.4 Councillor Brown was concerned over the proposal to reduce the PAN for Benfield Primary School, which was a Teaching School, had been rated 'Good' by Ofsted and had an increasing number of first preference applications to the school.
- 28.5 Councillor Phillips said parents were paying the price for a lack of leadership and any changes to the catchment areas would be upsetting for parents and therefore the Green

Group would be abstaining from voting on Recommendations 2.1 and 2.2. The Chair reminded the Committee that the Council's power over the new school was very limited, and the Authority had done all it could to push for the opening of a new secondary school.

- 28.6 Councillor Hamilton referred to the possible reduction of PAN for Benfield Primary School, and said that other primary schools in Portslade were already operating a one form entry and so to reduce the PAN in those schools would result in them closing. He noted that Benfield currently only had 27 children in two Reception Classes and so, with regret, he felt it would be the correct decision to reduce the PAN for Benfield Primary School.
- 28.7 Ms A Mortensen asked whether officers had considered reducing the PAN of other schools across the city such as Westdene Primary. The Head of School Organisation said they had looked across the city, and would provide information at the public meetings.
- 28.8 Councillor Penn said she understood parent's frustration with places in secondary schools, and she hoped that the Department for Education and the University of Brighton Academy Trust would work together to ensure the new secondary school did open in 2019.
- 28.9 Councillor Taylor asked for reassurance that if there were changes to catchment areas that the sibling connection would remain. The Head of School Organisation said that a sibling connection would remain.
- 28.10 Mr Jones noted that if PAN were reduced at schools it would impact on their finances. The Head of School Organisation agreed and said that officers had looked at the practicalities of any reduction, but said that population numbers were constantly changing and the Council wanted to avoid closing any schools and thereby removing any future provision of places.
- 28.11 **RESOLVED:** That the Committee –
1. Agreed to consult upon the light touch temporary review of the secondary school catchment areas to take effect from 2019.
 2. Agreed to recommend to Full Council that any change to secondary school catchment areas remain in effect for two years and that there should be a further review in 2019 to look at admission arrangements from 2012 onwards.
 3. Agreed to the proposed schedule of public consultation events as detailed in the report.
 4. Noted the forecast of pupil numbers in each catchment area as noted in the report.
 5. Agreed to consult upon the proposed revised primary school Published Admission Numbers (PAN) to take effect from September 2019.

29 EARLY HEADLINE: STANDARDS AND ACHIEVEMENT BRIGHTON AND HOVE SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES 2016-17

- 29.1 The Committee considered a report of the Executive Director, Families, Children & Learning which outlined the early headline results of the national tests in summer 2017. The report was introduced by Head of Education Standards and Achievements
- 29.2 Councillor Phillips referred to paragraph 3.6.3 which stated that 67% of pupils had achieved Grade 4 in English and Maths, and asked if that was a combined percentage. The Head of Education Standards and Achievements said it was.
- 29.3 Councillor Phillips referred to paragraph 3.7.1, and asked why there was a 42% drop in AS Level entries. The Head of Education Standards and Achievements said that was a result of AS Levels being phased out.
- 29.4 Councillor Brown congratulated the schools on their results, and commended the Standards and Achievements for their work in supporting the schools. Councillor Brown noted the reduction in levels for Year 1 phonics, and said that the Authority used to have an emphasis on supporting younger pupils and asked if that could be a priority again. The Executive Director, Families, Children and Learning said that it was a priority but previously it was high for younger pupils and worse for older pupils.
- 29.5 Councillor Penn asked how many children had started an A Level course but did not take the final exam, as she understood that some schools encouraged pupils to drop subjects if they didn't achieve a high enough result in their mock exams. The Head of Education Standards and Achievements said he did not have those figures.
- 29.6 Mr M Jones noted that this was an interim report, and asked if the final report could show the statistics between pupils within the city, not just against national statistics. The Head of Education Standards and Achievements said the report last year reflected the statistics which Ofsted would consider.
- 29.7 Councillor Taylor was pleased with how well the schools had coped with the changes to the GCSE exams, and agreed that it would be useful for the Committee to have information on results for different cohorts.
- 29.8 Councillor O'Quinn felt that AS Levels were stressful for both pupils and teachers and was pleased that they were being phased out, and said that she was delighted that students had done so well in their exams this year.
- 29.9 **RESOLVED:** That the Committee noted the report.

30 ITEMS REFERRED FOR COUNCIL

- 30.1 No items were referred to Full Council for information.

The meeting concluded at 6.30pm

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of