

EDUCATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the meeting held on Wednesday, 19 July 2017 commencing at 2.00 pm and finishing at 4.15 pm

Present:

Voting Members: Councillor Michael Waine – in the Chair

Councillor Sobia Afridi
Councillor S.E. Bartington
Councillor Jeannette Matelot
Councillor Gill Sanders
Councillor Alan Thompson
Councillor Mike Fox-Davies (In place of Councillor Mrs Anda Fitzgerald-O'Connor)
Councillor Dr Kirsten Johnson (In place of Councillor John Howson)

Other Members in Attendance: Councillor Hilary Hibbert-Biles

By Invitation: Mrs Carole Thomson
Mr Ian Jones

Officers:

Whole of meeting Director for Children's Services, Janet Johnson, Chris Malone and Roy Leach; Nina Bhakri and Deborah Miller (Resources Directorate).

Part of meeting Ruth Ashwell (Children's Services) for Agenda Item 7

Agenda Item Officer Attending

The Scrutiny Committee considered the matters, reports and recommendations contained or referred to in the agenda for the meeting and agreed as set out below. Copies of the agenda and reports [agenda, reports and schedule/additional documents] are attached to the signed Minutes.

59/17 INTRODUCTION AND WELCOME

(Agenda No. 1)

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and in particular the new members of the Committee.

60/17 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND TEMPORARY APPOINTMENTS

(Agenda No. 2)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Anda Fitzgerald O'Connor (Councillor Mike Fox-Davies substituting) and Councillor John Howson (Councillor Kirsten Johnson substituting) and from Richard Brown.

61/17 MINUTES

(Agenda No. 4)

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 13 March 2017 were approved and signed subject to the following amendments:

Minute 52/17, 9th paragraph, substitute 'alga rhythm' with 'algorithm';
Minute 53/7 2nd paragraph, substitute 'Learners' with 'Leaners', 16th paragraph substitute '1 language to 3' with '3 languages to 1'.

Matters Arising on the Minutes:

In response to a question from Councillor Gill Sanders regarding the local Authority MAT, the Chairman reported that all schools had been written to over the summer and that the analysis of that work would be coming to members in due course.

62/17 FACING OUR CHALLENGES TOGETHER AND A PROFILE OF OXFORDSHIRE SCHOOLS

(Agenda No. 6)

(In the event Agenda Items 6-9 were all discussed as one item)

It had been recognised that the new Council presented an ideal opportunity for the Education Scrutiny Committee to examine how the role of Education Scrutiny could be enhanced to tackle the changing education landscape and new ways of working to make scrutiny more effective.

Accordingly, the Director for Children's Services and relevant staff had been invited to give a presentation to the Committee examining the current education landscape, the current and future challenges and opportunities and their impact on shaping the Council's role in education and key priorities for the Committee based on actual Responsibilities.

The Director for Children's Services, together with Ruth Ashwell, Education, employment & Training Manager, Roy Leach, Strategic lead, Education Sufficiency & Access, Janet Johnson, Strategic Lead for Vulnerable Learners and Christine Malone, Strategic Lead for Education Quality gave a presentation (a copy of which is attached to the signed copy of the Minutes) detailing the current challenges Education was facing and the Directorate's focus for the future.

During the presentation, officers highlighted the following points:

The current challenges for Education were as follows:

- The rise of child protection issues and increasing concerns for welfare;
- The Gap for vulnerable learners and attainment for all children in Oxfordshire;
- Exclusion and attendance rates;
- Recruitment of head teachers and teachers;
- Academy vs the improvement agenda;
- the uncertain future based on environment and money;
- the narrow curriculum vs what employers want;
- systems with systems MAT's, RSC, Ofsted inspections;
- funding
- testing

The four main areas (obsessions) for children and families were: Increasing school attendance – leading to improved attainment; Helping early – most effective, least intrusive, solutions to problems; Safely reducing the number of looked after children - providing support to enable families to care and Improving the confidence and capability of the whole workforce - to work effectively with families experiencing domestic abuse, parental mental health and drugs and alcohol issues.

The success would be measured by Ofsted confirmation that the Council was providing a good service; by delivering financial sustainability; by reducing family breakdown and improving attainment and aspirations.

Nationally, councils could not keep delivering services in the way that it had been doing or were doing today. The model was breaking and was not sustainable, costs were rising, but budgets continued to fall.

The significant rises in demand locally though were not sustainable in the longer term. There needed to be a re-focus on earlier intervention wherever possible to better manage demand and improve outcomes for children and families. Social Care was rising and some of it was unnecessary and was unsustainable and therefore a systems shift was needed.

Officers then went on to outline issues and challenges faced in Education sufficiency and Access, Education Quality and Vulnerable Learners and the Skills Agenda.

- Role ever changing to adapt to new world
- Still waiting on review by Government
- Autonomous school system
- Self-improving – sector led school system
- LA key role in shaping place – includes big ticket items of Education, Skills, Health & Wellbeing
- Members integral – lobbying, championing
- LA can give 'whole picture' to fragmented system
- Partnership with Oxfordshire schools and settings improving the quality of teaching & learning
- Building capacity for a sector led model of improvement
- Champion the needs of vulnerable children & young people
- Ensure sufficient places for schools, early years, childcare & local SEN provision

- Strategic role with schools and settings to shape the education system for Oxfordshire children
- Complex system – Regional Schools Commissioner, Education & Skills Funding Agency, Ofsted : LA overall relationship with ALL schools for ALL Oxfordshire children
- Partnership with school leaders to work collaboratively on what matters
- Education Scrutiny Committee
- We work in partnership as an Oxfordshire system to meet the many challenges we are facing today.
- We all work together to ensure that our children get the best education possible, that we hold high aspirations for ALL of our children and that we seek solutions together for any blocks to realising that goal.

Following the presentation the Committee was asked by the Chairman to give consideration and propose any immediate areas of scrutiny it would wish to undertake. Following a lengthy debate the Committee identified the following 3 priorities to be scoped by the Chairman and relevant officers:

<p>Exclusions and secondary school attendance and absence rates</p>	<p>in depth analysis of data relating to absence and exclusion rates showing rates of exclusion by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GIS- Geographical profile (which schools and where these schools are located) • Pupil profile (age, gender, ethnicity, where they live) • Reason for exclusion • Trend analysis (how have rates changed over the past five years)
<p>Closing the attainment gap for vulnerable learners</p>	<p>Who do we define as vulnerable learners?</p> <p>What are the pathways to success in raising the attainment of vulnerable pupils (what works / best practice)?</p> <p>What do we provide currently to support vulnerable learners and schools?</p> <p>A profile of vulnerable learners in Oxfordshire: (deprivation and free school meals, communities where there are higher rates of vulnerable learners, NEET groups and vulnerable learners, exclusions and vulnerable learners, children looked after.</p>

	A vulnerable learner's data set to include indicators of impact alongside attainment gap data. This data to be used to review and evaluate the impact of resources that are used to support vulnerable learners in schools.
Elective Home Education	Understanding the local authority legal responsibilities challenges and opportunities
Bullying	To include cyber-bullying
School Funding formula	
LA's New Relationship with Schools	Academies
Sufficiency of School Places	SEN, Forecasts

63/17 THE ROLE AND FUNCTION OF EDUCATION SCRUTINY

(Agenda No. 7)

(Taken under Agenda Item 6)

64/17 TERMS OF REFERENCE

(Agenda No. 8)

(Taken under Agenda Item 6)

65/17 ANNUAL WORK PROGRAMME 2017/18

(Agenda No. 9)

(Taken under Agenda Item 6)

..... in the Chair

Date of signing