

EDUCATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the meeting held on Monday, 12 December 2016 commencing at 10.00 am and finishing at 12.55 pm

Present:

Voting Members: Councillor Mark Gray – in the Chair

Councillor Gill Sanders (Deputy Chairman)
Councillor John Christie
Councillor John Howson
Councillor Sandy Lovatt
Councillor Michael Waine
Richard Brown
Mrs Sue Matthew

Officers:

Whole of meeting Jackie Atkinson; Sue Whitehead (Corporate Services)

Part of meeting

Agenda Item

	Officer Attending
6	Lucy Butler, Director for Children's Services
7	Chris Malone, Strategic Lead for Education Quality, Roy Leach, Strategic Lead, Sufficiency & Access
8	Rachael Etheridge, Senior County Attendance Officer
9	Roy Leach, Strategic Lead, Sufficiency & Access; Barbara Chillman, Pupil Place Planning

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 are attached to the signed Minutes.

39/16 INTRODUCTION AND WELCOME

(Agenda No. 1)

The Chairman welcomed Lucy Butler to her first meeting in her new role as Director for Children's Services and Richard Brown who had joined the Committee as a co-opted member. He also welcomed Councillor Harrod who had taken on responsibility as Cabinet Member for Education, although he was not here today.

40/16 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND TEMPORARY APPOINTMENTS

(Agenda No. 2)

Apologies were received from Councillors Bulmer and Langridge.

41/16 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

(Agenda No. 3)

Councillor Howson declared an interest in item 6 on the recruitment and retention of newly qualified teachers in Oxfordshire schools as he had visiting rights at both of the Universities carrying out the research.

42/16 MINUTES

(Agenda No. 4)

The Minutes of the meeting held on 26 September 2016 were approved and signed as a correct record subject to the following amendments:

Minute 36/16 On page 4 – Third and second paragraphs from the bottom amended to read:

Members expressed concern over the possible further delay in the National Funding Formula and the fact that the Authority continues to maintain responsibility for permanently excluded children.

Members expressed concern that the government continues to reduce resources dramatically, whilst expecting authorities to maintain responsibility for carrying out their statutory duties and that the diminishing funding would have an effect on the discharge of our duties. The Committee also noted that the direction provided by government was inadequate.

In response to a request for an update on Minute 14/16 the Chairman advised that a meeting was being arranged with the Director of Environment & Economy and the Cabinet Member for Property, Cultural & Community Services to which Councillors Howson, Gill Sanders and Waine would be invited.

Minute 33/16 Roy Leach undertook to check if any response had been received from government to the letter agreed by Cabinet.

43/16 PETITIONS AND PUBLIC ADDRESS

(Agenda No. 5)

It was **AGREED** that a future meeting consider the issue of seatbelts on school transport buses.

44/16 RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION OF NEWLY QUALIFIED TEACHERS IN OXFORDSHIRE SCHOOLS

(Agenda No. 6)

Dr Mary Wild, Head of the School of Education, Oxford Brookes University and Dr Katherine Burn, Oxford University Department of Education presented a report of research undertaken by the University of Oxford and Oxford Brookes University for the Strategic Schools Partnership Board on the recruitment and retention of newly qualified teachers in Oxfordshire schools. They detailed a number of issues that

affected recruitment and retention including economic factors, housing costs, promotional opportunities, ongoing support and the importance of feeling valued. They highlighted one of the recommendations which was to improve the marketing of Oxfordshire as a place to live and work. They commented that they had provided a summary sheet which they hoped could be circulated.

During consideration of the report and presentation the Committee explored the issues and in particular discussed the impact of high housing costs, actions being taken to promote the attractions of the area, the particular issues of small primary schools and where teachers leaving mainstream teaching were going. In terms of promoting Oxfordshire the work of the Oxfordshire Teaching Schools Alliance was commended and it was suggested that officers work with them to improve the promotion of Oxfordshire. Anxiety was expressed about whether there were sufficient training places available at secondary school level to cover all subjects. There was concern at the lack of a government supported coherent training service.

Ian Jones, COTO confirmed that the research was in line with their local understanding. People were under pressure with fewer resources and more demand. He noted the need for a pool of experienced staff at senior levels and that this pool was not available. Staff were often young and learning on the job. The risk of burn out at a young age was a new phenomenon. He expressed some surprise that there was a view on page 8 of the need to promote more realistic expectations amongst trainee teachers.

Following discussion the Education Scrutiny Committee **AGREED** that:

- the summary be circulated to all schools;
- The research be referred to Steve Munn, Chief Human Resources Officer;
- Schools to be encouraged to hold exit interviews
- Officers give further consideration to the issue of the cost of housing with the County Council and District Councils to be asked to do what they could
- Councillor Harrod, Cabinet member for Education to be invited to attend future meetings and in particular to be invited to attend the March meeting to consider how the recruitment for September 2017 is going and any further steps that can be taken.

45/16 EDUCATION ATTAINMENT REPORT (SECONDARY) 2016 - PROVISIONAL RESULTS

(Agenda No. 7)

Education Scrutiny Committee considered a report that presented an overview of the provisional educational outcomes of children and young people in Oxfordshire secondary schools for the academic year 2015-16.

During discussion:

- Members considered the impact of the new secondary school accountability system on school curriculum and whether there was any evidence of a change to curriculums and a connection to the rise in exclusions. Roy Leach advised that

they no longer carried out the detailed curriculum analysis that had been possible previously.

- In response to a query as to why Bucks as a statistical neighbour had such a high attainment level and whether it was connected to their selective system the Committee was advised that the two counties were different. Bucks for example did not include Milton Keynes.
- In considering why there was relatively low attainment at KS2 a member highlighted the need to commission research to try to understand what was a crucial problem for Oxfordshire.
- Committee was advised that the Equity & Excellence document was being rewritten and would be submitted to the next meeting alongside the attainment report for vulnerable learners.
- Committee **AGREED** a suggestion from Chris Malone about inviting the Head Teacher of The Oxford Academy to a future meeting to focus on progress and attainment of disadvantaged pupils.

The Education Scrutiny Committee noted the 2015/16 provisional Education Attainment Outcomes as detailed in the report.

46/16 ELECTIVE HOME EDUCATION ANNUAL REPORT

(Agenda No. 8)

Rachael Etheridge, Senior County Attendance Officer presented the Annual Report on Elective Home Education in Oxfordshire.

During discussion:

- The Committee expressed strong concerns at the lack of powers to regulate home learning and felt that it placed them and the authority in a difficult position.
- The Committee agreed that it would be interesting to have the GCSE outcomes circulated to members of the committee
- Concerns were expressed around the increase in elective home education in Year 10 and the reasons for this. Rachael Etheridge agreed that a further piece of work was needed to unpick the figures around the spike in Year 10

The Education Scrutiny Committee considered the report and **AGREED** to ask the Cabinet Member for Education to write to Government to express concern that elective home education is being allowed to continue in its current unregulated form.

47/16 EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PUPIL PLACE PLANNING PROCESS

(Agenda No. 9)

Oxfordshire is experiencing rapid growth and this is having a significant impact on the demand for, and supply of, school places. Effective pupil place planning is essential to ensure the needs of Oxfordshire families are met, and a crucial component of strategic planning for growth across the county.

..... The Education Scrutiny Committee considered a report that set out the pupil place planning process in Oxfordshire, summarised current pupil planning data, and commented on specific issues relating to pupil place planning. The Committee questioned how the process planned for new schools in the face of uncertain timescales for housing developments. It was explained that officers planned for the worst case and then pulled back if the new housing did not materialize. The Committee highlighted that the ability for bids to go in for free schools whether needed in terms of places or not made the process more difficult. A member highlighted the danger that small schools could become financially unviable quite quickly if the funding formula was weighted to pupil numbers.

Education Scrutiny Committee considered the report, acknowledging the good work and noting in particular the table on page 114.

48/16 FORWARD PLAN AND COMMITTEE BUSINESS

(Agenda No. 10)

The Education Scrutiny Committee noted the Forward Plan. The next meeting agenda to be confirmed at the agenda planning meeting taking into account the items added at the meeting:

- Seatbelts on school transport
- Councillor Harrod invited to attend re recruitment round 2018/19
- Equity & Excellence document
- Elective Home Education – work on Year 10 figures

..... in the Chair

Date of signing

2017