

CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

At a meeting of the **CHILDREN'S SERVICES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** held in Council Chamber, Priory House, Monks Walk, Shefford on Tuesday, 22 May 2018

PRESENT

Cllr K Ferguson (Chairman)

Councillors:	Mrs D B Gurney A Ryan	Councillors:	B Saunders P Smith
Parental Co-optees:	Mr S Court Mrs G Deans Mrs E Rowlands		
Church of England Co-optee:	Mr D Morton Absent		
Roman Catholic Co-optee:	Mrs D Main Absent		
Apologies for Absence:	Cllrs N B Costin P Hollick K Janes Cllr M Liddiard		
Substitutes:	Cllrs R D Berry J Chatterley		
Members in Attendance:	Cllrs Mrs A L Dodwell Mrs C Hegley T Nicols Mrs T Stock T Swain	Deputy Executive Member for Families, Education and Children Executive Member for Adults, Social Care and Housing Operations (HRA) Chairman of Licensing Committee Deputy Executive Member for Health	
Officers in Attendance:	Ms J Brown Mrs S Dakin	Admin Assistant, Governor Training Commissioning and Partnerships Manager / School Improvement Adviser	

Mrs S Harrison	Director of Children's Services
Mr D Islam	Learning Data and Performance Manager
Mr C Kiernan	Interim Head of School Improvement
Mrs R Preen	Scrutiny Policy Advisor
Mr V Wan	Senior Education Officer (Planning)

Others in Attendance: Mr N Martin Principal, Samuel Whitbread Academy

Public: 1

CS/18/1. **Minutes**

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 16 January 2018 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

CS/18/2. **Members' Interests**

None.

CS/18/3. **Chairman's Announcements and Communications**

None.

CS/18/4. **Petitions**

None.

CS/18/5. **Questions, Statements or Deputations**

None.

CS/18/6. **Call-In**

None.

CS/18/7. **Requested Items**

None.

CS/18/8. **Executive Members' Updates**

The Executive Member for Families, Education and Children advised the Committee that a recent Member briefing regarding schools for the future had

been well attended, resulting in an interesting discussion amongst attendees. The new school improvement team was now established with the recruitment process carried out in partnership with local head teachers and the directorate were confident of strong leadership within the new team. Members were informed that the Deputy Executive Member for Families, Education and Children had been appointed as Chair of the Corporate Parenting Panel.

The Director for Children's Services advised the Committee of a reconfiguration of responsibilities within the directorate following the departure of several senior members of staff and highlighted the continual professional development of staff within the directorate as a result. The Director advised that as the Children's Transformation Programme progressed, the Committee would receive regular updates, both verbal and formal reporting as necessary.

The Deputy Executive Member for Health advised the Committee that Mental Health in children and young people was a primary focus for the Health and Wellbeing Board and that formal reports would be delivered to the Committee in due course.

CS/18/9. **Pupil Attainment Task Force Report**

The Chairman introduced the report and reminded Members of due process and that once the Committee had offered their comments and considered the report the Executive would assess how the recommendations would be delivered, providing an update on progress later in the year. On behalf of the Committee the Chairman formally thanked those head teachers, officers, task force Members and professionals who had contributed to the enquiry findings, acknowledging the vast amount of work which had gone into producing the evidence, research and final document.

The Chairman of the task force introduced a summary of the report findings highlighting the enquiry scope requested of Members, acknowledging the wider piece of work which had taken place at the same time as the task force enquiry in relation to schools for the future. Members of the task force had been cognizant of the need not to duplicate efforts and instead await the outcomes of that project which was anticipated in July 2018. There were recognised challenges in relation to pupil cohort, the use of the pupil premium and wider schools funding and the incentives offered to teaching professionals locally and by neighbouring authorities, with a need to ensure that all schools and educational professionals worked together in order that responsibility be taken for the educational journey of the child.

In light of the report Members discussed the following in summary:-

- That Members welcomed the findings of the report and requested that the operational update due to be delivered at a future meeting include KPI's and long term solutions to those issues.
- The importance of ensuring the report findings aligned with the Partnership Vision for Education.
- Despite many of the recommendations being listed as 'cost neutral' there would be a substantial impact on staff resource in the implementation of some recommendations.

- Concerns regarding the increased responsibilities placed on school governors, recognising the challenges in relation to the role.
- The need to evidence the benefits of extending the school improvement team from two years to five as recommended within the report.
- The importance of ensuring those items highlighted within the report be added to the Committee work programme as necessary.
- The importance of parental engagement, providing parents with the appropriate tools to be able to support their child's educational journey and the progress of locality working in supporting this in the long term.
- That where additional revenue was required to progress particular recommendations that these be prioritised when considering the annual budget.

RECOMMENDED that the Committee support the recommendations as detailed within the report and refer them to the Executive, with a focus on prioritising those recommendations relating to the work of the new school improvement team.

CS/18/10. **Proposed change of designation of Church End Lower School from a Foundation school to a Church of England Voluntary Controlled School**

The Executive Member for Families, Education and Children introduced the report and highlighted the positive working relationship between the school and the local authority, in particular regard to the school's preference not become an academy.

The Director for Children's Services acknowledged that although it was disappointing to see the comment that the school had stated they did not receive the support they wished for from the local authority, this conflicted with the assertion that the school worked well with the Council. It was determined therefore that it was an indication of preference that the school wished to become a faith school, receiving their preferred form of support from the Diocese.

RECOMMENDED:-

1. **That the Committee support the application from Church End Lower School to the DfE for the consideration of a change of designation from a Foundation school to a Voluntary Controlled school and note the favourable responses to the preliminary consultation carried out by the school.**
2. **Subject to approval by the DfE, the Committee support the statutory process to be carried out by the school, which will require publication of a statutory notice followed by formal consultation of at least four weeks**
3. **Support that determination for the proposed change of designation be made by the Executive Member for Families, Education and Children, if responses to the formal consultation are favourable. If responses to the formal consultation are not favourable determination to be made by the Executive.**

CS/18/11. **Children's Health and Wellbeing Survey 2017**

A presentation was delivered which highlighted the main priorities following a pupil health and wellbeing survey carried out across Central Bedfordshire schools. Professionals were concerned that emotional resilience amongst many children was low and that coping mechanisms within particular pupil cohorts was poor. The amount of physical activity carried out by school age children had declined in recent years and the team were keen that schools were encouraged to ensure pupils were given the opportunity to participate in the requisite amount of recommended activity every day. Next steps had been identified which would improve the support offered to pupils by schools, colleges and commissioned services, building resilience and improving the knowledge and skills of the children's workforce through mental health and wellbeing training. A planned local analysis would inform an evidence based approach to reducing self harm, implementing the local and national anti-stigma campaigns across the system, particularly focusing on boys.

In light of the report and presentation Members discussed the following in summary:-

- That the youth service was working closely with particular pupil cohorts in order to best support them as some would not access youth centres in the first instance when seeking advice and guidance.
- That once a full analysis of the results of the survey had been undertaken there was a need for school and local authority leaders to provide specific measures in relation to the delivery of actions outlined within the report.
- The benefits of sharing this report via the circulation Governors Essentials and the importance of Governors championing recommended processes within their schools.
- The importance of sharing local findings with central government.

RECOMMENDED:-

1. That the Committee support the full implementation of the Central Bedfordshire Children and Young People's Emotional Health, Wellbeing and Resilience Action Plan.
2. That the Committee champion the drive for senior leaders in all schools and colleges to provide appropriate policies, resources and adequate curriculum time for high quality and purposeful Personal, Social, Health Education (PSHE) including Drug and Alcohol and Relationship and Sex Education.
3. That an update on the action plan's implementation process be delivered at a future meeting.

CS/18/12. **Work Programme 2018/19 & Executive Forward Plan**

That the Committee Work Programme be agreed subject to the following amendments: -

- SEND Vision and Strategy – 11 September 2018
- Regional Schools Commissioner to provide an update on action taken to support coasting schools – TBC
- The School Organisational Plan – renamed Schools for the Future – 10 July 2018

- **Children with Disabilities Short Breaks and Efficiencies – renamed Progress Report on the Transformation of Short Break Provision for Disabled Children – 10 July 2018**
- **The Future of Shelton Lower School – Special OSC, 25 July 2018**

(Note: The meeting commenced at 10.00 a.m. and concluded at 12.01 p.m.)

Chairman

Dated