



<u>Committee and Date</u>
Council
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<u>Item</u>
9
Public

**Councillors Aggie Caesar-Homden and Simon Jones -
Portfolio Holders for Education and Skills**

EARLY YEARS

1. Achievements

- 1.1 There was a continued improvement in the overall percentage of Ofsted inspections of early years and childcare providers resulting in either good or outstanding judgements.
- 1.2 There were 49 early years practitioners achieving early years professional status, with a further 26 practitioners on a pathway to achieving that status. By enhancing the knowledge and skills of the workforce the overall quality of provision is improved, evidenced by Ofsted outcomes.
- 1.3 The successful spend of 2008-11 Sure Start Children's Centres, Early Years Capital allocation resulted in the relocation of providers from shared use accommodation into new, purpose built accommodation on school sites. This supports the sustainability of these providers and the transition of children from early years into primary phase whilst improving the overall experience that those children receive whilst in early years.
- 1.4 The provision of free early years entitlement to up to 60 of the most deprived and/or most vulnerable two year old children through the implementation of the 24U project. These children would not have been able to access provision without the support of this project.
- 1.5 An increase in the overall number of childcare places available across the county. Particular increase in the number of out of school childcare places to support working parents of school age children.
- 1.6 The implementation of the new early years single funding formulae resulting in a more fair and consistent distribution of overall nursery education funding and the saving of around £300k in overall spend on nursery education.

- 1.7 An improvement to the range and quality of childcare support available to those families with special or additional needs through the establishment of best practice networks.
- 1.8 In 2010/11 5422 families in Shropshire registered as Children's Centre members, with 60% of those registered (2123) accessing services.
- 1.9 Ofsted inspections of three Children's Centres judged overall effectiveness and capacity as good or outstanding.
- 1.10 In 2010/11 Children's Centre services worked with at least 69 private, voluntary and community sector organisations in providing services.

2. Key Issues

- 2.1 Supporting providers in dealing with the impact of the new school admissions code. The code allows children to move into reception class from early years at an earlier stage and, thereby, reduces the funding available to early years providers, resulting in some settings suffering from issues with their on-going sustainability.
- 2.2 Continuing to support provision within the voluntary sector who are finding it more difficult to recruit to committee members due to the increased responsibility involved with the role. We are looking at the opportunities of supporting some of these settings to become social enterprise but we are not fully clear on the implications of this change on the staff and committee of those settings.
- 2.3 The implementation of the Sure Start Children's reform programme, which is expected to be published in September 2011, and in particular the requirement to introduce payment by results funding arrangements.

SCHOOLS

3. Achievements

- 3.1 There has been continued success in meeting parental preferences in application for Shropshire schools – 94% of secondary applicants were offered a place at their first preference school, ranking Shropshire Council second in the West Midlands in the Department for Education's admissions performance table. Primary applications saw similar levels of satisfaction, with 93% of applications being successful for the school of their highest preference.
- 3.2 The successful implementation of a new mid-term application process which became a mandatory requirement for all authorities in 2010. Applications formerly dealt with by schools themselves are now processed by Shropshire's Admissions Team.

- 3.3 The completion of the One School Pathfinder project at William Brookes School in Much Wenlock. The implementation of the dining room improvement works from specific Government grant is on track to delivery by September 2011. The development work on the first phase of seven school amalgamations – with major capital works nearing completion on amalgamated sites.
- 3.4 A re-focus on quality of provision in primary schools and outcomes for pupils at KS1 (Key Stage 1 age 7) and KS2 (Key Stage 2 age 11). There is particular emphasis on underperformance at KS2, particularly in relation to the percentage of pupils attaining level 4+ for combined English and mathematics. The work streams have been concentrating on improving outcomes in mathematics and working with schools judged as satisfactory.
- 3.5 The Vision and Criteria for school organisation was agreed by Cabinet following widespread consultation. Local Area Reviews were undertaken in all School Development Group areas, including school governors and elected members. The school reorganisation is currently in process with pre statutory and statutory consultation undertaken.
- 3.6 A new funding formula has been developed and implemented, following detailed involvement of the Schools Forum and widespread consultation with schools and governing bodies.

4. Key Issues

- 4.1 Responding to likely new Government guidance in respect to admissions.
- 4.2 Responding to the outcomes of the James Review into education capital funding and the future allocations of capital resources to local authorities.
- 4.3 Continuing to address the recommendations of the Independent Policy Commission (IPC) report.
- 4.4 Continued implementation of school organisation proposals, including supporting schools identified for closure and those developing formal collaborations or federations.
- 4.5 Responding to the changing pattern of education provision across Shropshire as academies and possibly free schools emerge.
- 4.6 Improving the quality of education provision, including the numbers of schools being judged good or better by Ofsted and the levels of attainment, particularly at primary level.

PREPARATION FOR WORK (post 14 and FE)

5. Key Issues

- 5.1 How to increase the number of apprenticeships available across the county, including advanced level apprenticeships. Demand for post-16 vocational courses appears to have risen this year with colleges reporting anecdotal evidence of students being wary of progressing to Higher Education and looking for alternative routes.
- 5.2 As Government policy unfolds the local authority will need to consider its role in aspects of policy such as Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG), access to work-based learning and the developmental work required as a consequence of the Woolf review of vocational provision.
- 5.3 There will be particularly acute funding issues facing schools and all post-16 providers over the next few years.
- 5.4 The Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) has been replaced by 16-19 bursaries which are targeted at the most vulnerable learners. However, the total amount of funding available is considerably less than the EMA budget. Schools and colleges are to administer the bursary scheme – something schools have not done before. This may have a particular impact on those likely to become NEET (Not in Education or Training).

PLAY AND YOUTH PROVISION

6. Achievements

- 6.1 Over the last two years Shropshire Council has provided 31 new play areas around Shropshire using Playbuilder and Big Lottery funding. The play areas cater for all ages of children and young people and are bespoke to their communities. They all have a wide range of dynamic and fun equipment as well as natural elements for play.
- 6.2 Two BMX tracks have been created which are particularly welcomed by the 10-16 year olds using the play areas.
- 6.3 The Shropshire Play Partnership has been leading on play initiatives across the county and is currently developing a new play strategy for Shropshire.
- 6.4 MyPlace funding and Co-location was secured. The building work at MyPlace Oswestry is now underway.
- 6.5 A new strategy to develop a range of positive activities was agreed by Cabinet.

- 6.6 There has been ongoing consultation with Members of Youth Parliament and also SpeakOut group covering issues such as school organisation and also the use of the budget. This year has been the biggest ever vote for the Youth Parliament.

7. Key Issues

- 7.1 Implementing a commissioning strategy for positive activities which involves local members and also young people.
- 7.2 Developing the provider base for positive activities.
- 7.3 Ensuring the positive activities strategy is owned locally and based on local need.

ADULT TRAINING AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

8. Achievements

- 8.1 In August 2010 the delivery of provision for unemployed adults was OFSTED inspected and graded as 2, (Good) and was the highest graded provider in the country for the Routeways (European Social Fund) employability programme.
- 8.2 In February 2011 Work based Learning and Adult and Community Learning was inspected and graded as 2 for all aspects, a result which the lead inspector ranked County Training in the top 15% of providers nationally.
- 8.3 In the year April 2010 to March 2011 County Training:
- Supported 10,000 people.
 - 2,466 people secured sustained employment.
 - Over 5,300 other achievements including training and qualifications which moved people closer to the labour market.

9. Key Issues

- 9.1 The Employment & Skills Strategy Group will be identifying key priorities and action to support an increase in skill levels across Shropshire and increase the numbers of people gaining sustained employment.
- 9.2 Agree a proposed externalisation plan and timetable for LETS.

FRONTLINE STAFF DEVELOPMENT IN SPECIALIST SKILLS

10. Achievements by the Social Care and Health Training Professional Development Unit

- 10.1 A range of post qualifying training has been offered to Social Workers and Occupational Therapists employed within the Council. This training includes specialist award in Audlts (generic); Mental Health Aware, and Leadership and Management. All training is provided by Universities and academically assessed at either Graduate or Masters level. In addition extra support and guidance to Newly Qualified Social Workers has also been developed within their first year of practice.
- 10.2 Over the last year a new hybrid module 'Supervision; Enabling Professional Development' for staff within the Council, has been developed with the option of academic assessment through Wolverhampton University. The Supervision module will now be rolled out to all Seniors and Team Managers.
- 10.3 Sponsorship available for two employees per year to study the social work degree with the Open University.
- 10.4 The county has also offered practice learning opportunities (up to 50 places) to social work students from regional HEIs at varying levels of the degree. Placements have been supported in both independent and statutory sector. This has proved an excellent route for recruiting new staff in a competitive market.
- 10.5 Through Keele University there has been the opportunity for staff to have access to the latest research in terms of what works.

11. Key Issues

- 11.1 Ensuring that the professional development unit and Shropshire Council develop training and processes in line with the recommendations of the Social Work Taskforce.
- 11.2 Assessing the impact of the rise in University fees on qualifying and post qualifying training.
- 11.3 Devising new models to ensure staff receive high quality training at a reduced cost.
- 11.4 Recruitment and retention of staff.

12. Joint Training for Adult Community & Health Services

There is considerable joint training with Health and the voluntary and community sector and there are a number of examples of this:

- 12.1 Older People / People with Physical Disability. A Dementia Care training programme for Family Carers who are supporting a family member diagnosed with Young Onset Dementia, in partnership with Shropshire & SouthStaffs NHS Foundation Trust (5 sessions over 5 weeks).
- 12.2 Adult Mental Health. Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training – commissioned from MIND, Wales to train multi-agency audiences in suicide prevention skills. This was funded by the Deanery and was oversubscribed with an initial 100+ applications for 28 places.
- 12.3 Adult Learning Disability. A new Learning Disability awareness course was developed this year which was co facilitated by an adult with a learning disability. This has been a very positive response and demand for this. Many of these courses are now designed to meet both support worker and service user at the same time. Adults with a learning disability have been developed to co facilitate training on several of these courses.
- 12.4 Management of Actual and Potential Aggression. Approved Assessment Centre Status with Positive Options and British Association of Learning Disabilities has been retained. An Excellent inspection report in September 2010 highlighted several areas as excellent practice e.g. “The development of a progressive policy with high levels of involvement from people who use services, and a high quality accessible version.”
- 12.5 Generic Training. The course “Medication in Care”, delivered by a lead nurse, Shropshire Partners in Care and the Medication Management Team, now has Royal College of Nursing Accreditation.
- 12.6 Mental Capacity Act and Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards. In response to new Government legislation a new programme has been developed. There have been 2214 attendances on this training programme.
- 12.7 My Life My Choice. Staff have been given training across all agencies to support the move towards greater personalisation.
- 12.8 Performance Management, Effective Supervision and Conflict Management training has been provided, funded by the Care Workforce Development Partnership and delivered for the Independent Sector providers.
- 12.9 Conclusion.

Total attendances at Joint Training events was 9082, an increase of 1230 on 2009 -10. There has been an increased uptake from the voluntary sector and an increased involvement of service users in both accessing and delivering training

13. Key Issues

- 13.1 Retention of Partnership funding from Shropshire Primary Care Trust, now joined with Telford & Wrekin Primary care Trust.
- 13.2 Retention of Partnership funding from SSSNHSFT (Adult Mental Health).
- 13.3 Continued financial support via Care Workforce Development Partnership.
- 13.4 Retention of joint funding arrangements with Telford and Wrekin Council.
- 13.5 Identification and access to additional funding streams e.g. Skills for Care