



PEOPLE OVERVIEW COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 14 March 2018

10.00 - 11.35 am in the Shrewsbury Room, Shirehall, Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury, Shropshire, SY2 6ND

Responsible Officer: Tim Ward

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Present

Shropshire Councillors

Councillor Peggy Mullock (Chairman)

Councillors Ed Potter (Vice-Chair), Nigel Hartin, Christian Lea, Elliott Lynch, Kevin Parady, John Price and Kevin Turley

Co-Opted Members (Voting)

Sian Lines

30 Apologies and Substitutions

30.1 There were no apologies for absence

31 Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

31.1 There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests.

32 Minutes

32.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 1 March had been circulated.

32.2 RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting of the People Overview Committee held on 1 March 2018 be approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

33 Public Question Time

33.1 There were no questions from members of the public.

34 Members' Question Time

34.1 There were no questions from Members.

35 Proposals for the Future of Education Support for Schools

35.1 Members received the report of the Director of Children's Services which set out proposed changes to the Education Improvement Service (EIS)

- 35.2 The Chairman informed Members that she had asked for this item to be on the agenda as she had real concerns about the effect of the proposed changes on schools
- 35.3 The Commissioner for Education Improvement and Efficiency reminded the meeting that the core purpose of the EIS was to ensure that every pupil had access to a good education and that the service had been very effective in contributing to an increased proportion of good and outstanding schools and improved outcomes for pupils from Early Years to key stage 4. He advised Members that funding from the DfE for local authority school improvement services had reduced substantially and was no longer sufficient to meet the costs of the EIS
- 35.4 The Commissioner for Education Improvement and Efficiency advised the meeting that the proposed new structure would reduce the EIS to 9.1 fte posts from the current 17 fte posts and that it was proposed that associate head teachers would support Education Improvement Advisers in the monitoring of school performance.
- 35.6 In response to a query the Commissioner for Education Improvement and Efficiency confirmed that the Council would need to allocate £276,000 per annum for the core budget to maintain the service as it is currently structured.
- 35.7 A Member asked what work had been carried out at the impact of the changes and to mitigate their effect. The Commissioner for Education Improvement and Efficiency commented that a lot of work had been done to look at the impact of the changes but that it was impossible to measure at this stage. He stated that there was a role for Governors in monitoring performance and holding head teachers to account where performance was not as good.
- 35.8 A Member asked whether there was any other solution to the problem. The Commissioner for Education Improvement and Efficiency advised that a number of options had been considered.
- 35.9 It was proposed and seconded that the Cabinet be asked to find the additional funding of £276,000 in order to maintain the current structure to allow additional time to look at other sources of funding. On being put to a vote the proposal was lost 3 votes for and 4 votes against
- 35.10 After further discussion it was RESOLVED:
- That the People Overview Committee
- a. support sustaining the Education Improvement Service solely through grant funding from central government and de-delegated funds from Shropshire Council maintained schools and
 - b. as a result of above, to maintain a traded Education Improvement Service professional training development programme through to April 2019, at which point the Council will cease to deliver this traded service to Shropshire schools.

36 The increasing numbers of pupil exclusions from maintained schools and academies and the LAs response to this issue

- 36.1 The meeting considered the report of the Education Access Service Manager which provided details of the current position with regard to the level of fixed term and permanent exclusions in Shropshire and how this compared with national rates.
- 36.2 The Education Access Service Manager advised that nationally the rate of permanent exclusions had increased slightly and that this was mirrored in Shropshire. She advised Members that in 2016 -17 persistent disruptive behaviour was the top reason for a permanent exclusion followed by physical assault against a pupil and that so far in 2017 -18 the top reason was physical assault against an adult followed by drug and alcohol related causes and persistent disruptive behaviour.
- 36.3 A Member expressed concern that there seemed to be a priority placed on placing pupils in a mainstream educational setting when this was not always the best solution both for the pupil and other pupils in the school. The Commissioner for Educational Improvement and Efficiency commented that the decision around the placement of pupil was always made in the best interests of the child concerned.
- 36.4 A Member expressed concern regarding the number of younger children being permanently excluded. The Education Access Service Manager agreed that the increase was worrying especially at Key Stage 1
- 36.5 The Chair thanked Officers for the report and for the work that they were doing in support of excluded pupils.

37 Terms of Reference for the inquiry into placements for looked about children

- 37.1 The draft terms of reference for the inquiry into placements for looked after children had been circulated.
- 37.2 The Overview and Scrutiny Officer reminded Members that it had been agreed at the last meeting that a Task and Finish Group should be set up to look at placements for looked after children.
- 37.3 In response to a query the Overview and Scrutiny Officer advised the meeting that it was thought that the group would meet three or four times and would report back to the Committee in the autumn.
- 37.4 RESOLVED:
- That the terms of reference for the inquiry into placements for looked after children be approved.

38 Date of Next Meeting

38.1 Members were reminded that the next meeting of the People Overview Committee would be held on 9 May 2018 at 10.00am

Signed (Chairman)

Date: