



Record of a Meeting of the **PEOPLE (CHILDREN) SCRUTINY PANEL** held in the Council Chamber, Catmose, Oakham at 7.00pm on **Monday 31 March 2014**

PRESENT: Miss G Waller (Chairman, in the Chair)
Mr M E Baines
Mrs C J Cartwright
Mr J M Lammie
Mr J Munton
Mr M A Oxley
Mr C A Parsons
Mr N M Wainwright
Mr A S Walters
Ms P Rubenstein

OFFICERS PRESENT: Mr K Garcia Head of Service - Life Long Learning

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs H Briggs Chief Executive
Mr R Begy Portfolio Holder for Community Safety, Adult Social Care, Libraries, Museums and Culture (non-sport)
Mr D L Richardson
Mr J Dale
Mr R Gale
Mrs J Turner Principal – Uppingham Community College
Mr S Williams Principal – Catmose College
Mr Peter Lawson Chairman of Oakham School Trustees
Mrs V Crosher Principal – Casterton Business and Enterprise College
Mr C Smith Deputy Head – Casterton Business and Enterprise College

YOUTH COUNCIL: Miss A Loomes
Miss R Conway

APOLOGIES: Mr K Bool, Mrs J K Figgis and

905 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Mr Wainwright declared an interest in the Free School proposal as a governor at one of the schools presenting and would therefore leave the meeting when this was being discussed.

Ms P Rubenstein declared an interest in the Free School proposal as a governor at Uppingham Community College and would therefore leave the meeting when this was being discussed.

906 PETITIONS, DEPUTATIONS AND QUESTIONS

A question was submitted at short notice by Mr Andrew Wright:

In the last three years, how many pupils at Rutland County College have achieved 3 or more A levels at A grade, and how many have gone onto Oxford or Cambridge University?

The Chairman advised that this question would be put to the representatives of Rutland County College later in the meeting.

907 QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE FROM MEMBERS

No Questions with Notice were received from Members.

SCRUTINY

908 INFORMATION REPORT – ESTABLISHING A FREE SCHOOL

Report No. 81/2014 from the Director for People was received

The Leader, Mr Begy, introduced the report the purpose of which was to provide background information and outline the process for establishing a Free School. It also detailed the application method, assessment criteria and related contextual information.

909 FREE SCHOOL PROPOSALS – PRESENTATIONS ON THE HARINGTON SCHOOL

A presentation was received from Catmose College, Uppingham Community College and Oakham School supporting the Harington School.

Key points covered in the presentation included:

- Many post 16 students left the County in order to access suitable provision and that the most academic achieved weak results in local state provision.
- Harington school was proposed as an academically selective provision offering A Levels in predominantly the facilitating subjects sought by the Russell Group of Universities.
- The desired outcome was that 75% of students were to attend higher education with 25% of students attending the top third of providers of Russell Group University and 5% attending Oxford and Cambridge.
- Entry requirements were 5 G.C.S.Es at grade A*-B for 4 A Levels.
- The proposal would be submitted to the DfE in early May for a planned opening in September 2015.

The Chair thanked the presenters and invited members of the panel and non-panel members to ask questions.

Responses to questions included:

- In supporting pupils with high IQs but who had special needs and difficulties in transition Harington had a Special Education Needs Coordinator and whole system support in place.
- Harington would help reduce the issue of lost funding with post 16 students leaving the County.
- Harington was not competing with local provision but complementing current provisions.
- The laws around admissions would be looked at if the school becomes oversubscribed threatening availability for Rutland students.
- 600 parents have responded positively to the school.
- Current sports sites were identified for use for Harington.

- Financial forecasting was done to enable a long term and robust plan and to share resources for economies of scale.
- In attracting Governors it is not anticipated that Harington would have a problem. It inherited a strong governing body and the sponsor schools often had to turn volunteers down.

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Mrs J Turner, Mr S Williams and Mr P Lawson Left the meeting and did not return.

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Mrs V Crosher and Mr C Smith entered the meeting.

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A presentation was received from Rutland College / Casterton Business and Enterprise College (CBEC):

Key points covered in the presentation included:

- There was only sufficient capacity for one viable sixth form and that smaller sixth forms get poorer results. Smaller sixth forms were educationally undesirable and financially unviable.
- CBEC and Rutland College offered A levels and vocational courses investing in all young people.
- Entry requirements were 5 G.C.S.E's at grade A*-B for the option of taking 4 'A' Levels.
- CBEC and Rutland College have already 25% progression to Russell Group Universities.

The Chair thanked the presenters and invited members of the panel and non-panel members to ask questions.

Responses to questions included:

- In response to Mr Wright's question it was stated that there wasn't a measure in place for this information and there were no immediate figures available. It was stated that the cohort number was a high proportion especially when taken into account the starting ability being lower than average.
- Rutland County College didn't get invited to some schools assemblies which may have been a reason as to why students from Catmose College were not inclined to go to Rutland County College.
- A wide range of sporting activities were on offer which included team sports for the more popular sports.
- In this larger college teachers specialised in areas like coaching for Russell Group potential entries.
- Collaboration plans are decreasing as the school was big enough not to have to collaborate. An exception was German classes with Oakham School.
- CBEC and Rutland County College were running separate financial budgets. The intention was to bring them together in the future.
- Both the proposed Stamford free school and Oakham free school (Harington) proposals could affect pupil numbers and remaining viable would be challenging. This had a negative impact on Rutland County College students who needed to stay in the County.

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Mrs V Crosher and Mr C Smith left the meeting.

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The Chair reminded the panel that a Free School was completely independent to the council but that the panel was entitled to make comments to the Department for Education. Miss Waller stated that if the Panel wanted to make comments she would pass them to Cllr Bool, Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People.

Following a brief discussion, the Panel agreed the following comments to pass forward to the Portfolio Holder:

1. Young people should have choice in their school and learning environment and the panel welcomed choice for young people.
2. The panel had not been convinced that there was enough supporting data to show that there were enough students in Rutland to make a further school viable; and any decision maker must be confident that the cohort of students exists before approving any further post 16 education provision in Rutland.

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The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 9.41pm.

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