



Rutland County Council

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Minutes of the XXX **MEETING of the PEOPLE (CHILDREN) SCRUTINY PANEL** held in the Council Chamber, Catmose, Oakham, Rutland, LE15 6HP on Thursday, 17th September, 2015 at 7.00 pm

PRESENT: Mr J Dale Mr E Baines
Mr K Bool Miss R Burkitt
Mr G Conde Mrs L Stephenson
Mr A Walters

ABSENT: Mrs D MacDuff Mr D Wilby

**OFFICERS
PRESENT:**

**IN
ATTENDAN
CE:**

237 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were two declarations of interest:

Mrs L Stephenson declared an interest in Report No. 170/2015, Local Authority School Improvement, at item 10 on the agenda, as she was a teacher at Leighfield School.

Mrs L Stephenson declared an interest in Report 172/2015, Ofsted Reports, at item 12 on the agenda, as her children attended Leighfield School.

Mr E Baines, declared an interest in Report 172/2015, Ofsted Reports, at item 12 on the agenda, as his grandchildren attended Leighfield.

238 MINUTES OF MEETING

239 PETITIONS, DEPUTATIONS AND QUESTIONS

No petitions, deputations or questions from members of the public had been received.

240 QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE FROM MEMBERS

The Youth representative, Miss J Bailey, presented the Panel with some questions. It was agreed that Dr T O'Neill would arrange to meet with Miss Bailey and discuss and answer her questions and that she would return to the Panel with her feedback.

241 NOTICES OF MOTION FROM MEMBERS

No Notices of Motion were received from Members.

242 CONSIDERATION OF ANY MATTER REFERRED TO THE PANEL FOR A DECISION IN RELATION TO CALL IN OF A DECISION

No matter was referred to the Panel for a decision in relation to call in of a decision in accordance with Procedure Rule 206.

243 PUBLISHED OFSTED REPORTS IN EDUCATION AND LEARNING SETTINGS

It was agreed that Item 12 on the agenda, Report No. 172/2015 Report on Ofsted Inspection of Uppingham CofE Primary School, would be taken ahead of Item 7, Report No. 161/2015 Local Safeguarding Children's Board Annual Report.

Report No 172/2015 from Mr I Peden & Ms R De Wet was received the purpose of which was to inform the Council of the findings of the OFSTED inspection report for Uppingham Primary School.

During the discussion the following points were noted:

- i. Staff working together was important for a good outcome in an inspection.
- ii. Existing cohort of children to get the best from the teaching staff.
- iii. Forward planning was needed before the inspection took place. The school worked closely with the local authority, with good consistent support from officers.
- iv. The school's leadership team was re structured.
- v. There was a single file to keep all information to hand for the inspection.
- vi. The staff and Governors had to show their confidence in the school's valuation.
- vii. Vital that the parent body kept confidence in the school.
- viii. The school always had an exciting curriculum and treated each child individually.
- ix. The school maintains strong links with Leicestershire schools.
- x. Cornerstone Curriculum was introduced which has had a positive response from the children.
- xi. An Outstanding rating should be a realistic result for the next inspection.
- xii. Good teachers are now developing their skills even more.
- xiii. Re: assessment without levels – it is now unclear what will be expected in an inspection.

AGREED:

The Panel noted the contents of the report.

244 LOCAL SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN'S BOARD: ANNUAL REPORT

Report No. 161/2015 from Mr P Burnett was received the purpose of which was to present the Annual Report of the Leicestershire and Rutland Local

Safeguarding Children Board (LR LSCB) 2014/15 for consideration and comment by the Scrutiny Panel.

During the discussion the following points were noted:

- i. The Board felt that the Section 11 Audit was positive in its organisation.
- ii. With the LSCB engages with many other panels including the Health & Wellbeing Board, Adult Scrutiny and Children's Trust.
- iii. The Council maintains a high level of communication across the early years. This should reduce the likelihood of children going into future child protection.
- iv. The number of Looked after Children has been reduced.
- v. The Board is impressed by the 100% results in Rutland for Looked after Children. Changes have been challenging, even though there have been staff changes.
- vi. Child Sexual Exploitation has had positive outcomes to the delivery of the service.
- vii. Council Officers have worked closely with Paul Burnett and his team.
- viii. Huge amounts of training have been given to staff.
- ix. Rutland & Leicestershire authorities have a robust quality assurance in place.
- x. There is a need to teach the whole school community to be vigilant.
- xi. 100% of schools have replied to the Section 11 audit process (not independent schools).
- xii. The new People structure will be finalised next week and all staff will be informed at a formal consultation.
- xiii. Dr T O'Neill is on the Emotional Health & Wellbeing Board.
- xiv. There is a emergency funds in case they are required.
- xv. The LSCB does not cover Leicester City, only Leicestershire & Rutland.
- xvi. Child protection cases have slightly increased. Need to be vigilant as Early Help provision was not being effective and possibly being overlooked.
- xvii. Emotional abuse is a key priority. The Child and Adolescents Mental Health Service review would address these issues.
- xviii. Positive reduction in sexual and physical abuse cases of child protection.
- xix. The Performance Conference was not well attended.
- xx. Financial consequences regarding placement budgets. Some children may need to be placed out of the area for their safety. Presently not happening in Rutland, but could do in the future.
- xxi. A designated Child protection lead was appointed.
- xxii. Pupil Premium is important to cover in the report.
- xxiii. Numbers of children on the Protection Plan do fluctuate each month and the number of children on the Protection Plan is low. The numbers are disproportionate as a small change means a 25% increase.

During the discussion the following points were raised:

- i. The Panel agreed that it was unfortunate that the Portfolio Holder was not in attendance.
- ii. The Panel asked that in the future could abbreviations be written out in full. Eg FGM, Female Genital Mutilation.
- iii. The Panel considered that the report was lengthy and a challenge to read in times the timescales given ahead of the meeting.

- iv. Mr P Burnett explained that the Board had reviewed the Daniel Pelker case and put actions into place so there was no reoccurrence.
- v. The Panel asked if the breakdown in the report could be clearer and fewer columns in the tables.
- vi. Priority 5 Local Authority Designated Officer is not showing on the web site.
- vii. The Panel requested that safeguarding updates go straight to councillors.

AGREED:

The Panel noted the contents of the report.

245 BUDGET: QUARTER 1 FINANCE MANAGEMENT REPORT

Report No. 153/2015 from the Director for Resources was received, the purpose of which was to inform the panel of the full year forecast position as at Quarter 1 for 2015/16 and to provide an update on the status of the 2015/16 budget and accompanying recommendations, which will be presented to Cabinet for approval on 14 September 2015.

During the discussion the following points were noted:

- i. Head of Children's' Safeguarding explained that the budget is not intended to provide intervention for children's experiencing mental health issues. The purpose is to fund specific assessments, often regarding the adult's ability to look after their child. The Government is investing in mental health services for the future.
- ii. A new recruitment drive has begun to make Rutland a more attractive place to work.
- iii. The children's centre is now fully staffed.
- iv. The council has become more creative to encourage more families to use the centres.
- v. Head of Families Support-Intervention and early Years confirmed that the child care provisions are being spread over both MOD bases: Kendrew Barracks and St Georges Barracks.
- vi. Looking at setting up a homework provision at the MOD bases.
- vii. Head of Families Support-Intervention and Early Years explained how the youth housing space was being utilised for families with disabled children, creating more benefits for young carers, by offering more services.

During the discussion the following points were raised:

- i. The Panel asked about the overspend shown on page 39 of the Finance Report, and whether it was due to an increase in demand?
- ii. Head of Children's Safeguarding explained the nature and complexity can make the variation, hence the change of overspend.
- iii. Concerned over the absence & sickness time of staff.
- iv. The Director of Services for People explained that long term sick figures relate to a small number of staff.
- v. Members have been working closely to enable housing space to become available to young people and also to support care leavers more.

AGREED:

The Panel noted the contents of the report.

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Ms D Greaves left the meeting at 8.45pm

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246 BUDGET: QUARTER 1 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORT

Report No. 150/2015 from the Chief Executive was received, the purpose of which was to inform the panel on the councils performance for the first quarter of 2015/16.

During the discussion the following point was noted:

- i. There has been a higher amount of sickness absence, which is to be looked at in the future.
- ii. To ask Mike Sandys, Director of Public Health, to bring an update on children's health to a future meeting.
- iii. Early intervention to educate parents & carers is a key element of work at the Children's Centres which promotes a number of initiatives and health visitors deliver sessions to new parents.
- iv. The Director of Services for People explained that the Local Authority can only encourage schools and are not able to enforce healthy eating.

AGREED:

The Panel noted the contents of the report.

247 LOCAL AUTHORITY SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

Report no 170/2015 from the Director for People was received

During the discussion the following points were noted:

- i. A strategic event has been organised for head teachers once a term, which also covers early years provision.
- ii. The Director for People advised the Panel that in seeing where we were a year ago, noted that we had progressed well and improvements were now being realised.
- iii. The Head of Education told the Panel that all multi-academy trusts are increasingly being encouraged by the Department of Education to take in schools that are struggling.
- iv. The Government is clear that if a school is struggling it will be required to become an academy.
- v. A Multi Academy Trust is two or more schools. Research is emerging which show that if small the Trust gains no significant benefits. If there are twenty or more schools they will also be less effective. A medium size of, say, eight to twenty appears to be the right number.
- vi. Communication does already go on between the schools and the LA.

- vii. The LA works with all schools and not just ones that are struggling, though their resources are targeted at the latter.
- viii. The LA does not leave a school that is in need of help without support.
- ix. It was felt by some Head Teachers that they feel isolated and having to manage on their own.

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Mr S Tanner left the meeting at 8.55

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During the discussion the following points were raised:

- i. The panel suggested that some children are not necessarily overweight, but simply naturally different sizes.
- ii. The Panel felt that the report was both encouraging and concerning.
- iii. A view was expressed that Harington School may be misleading students wishing to gain a Russell Group university qualification. This is not achievable for all students as only A* students would be able to gain this qualification.

A view was expressed that the order of Strategic Priorities listed on page 273, paragraph 4.2 of the report should be changed. In fact, the priorities are equal and are not placed in rank order.

The Panel asked for further explanation of B1, the 5th bullet point. On page 259 The Head of Education MF will look at this and come back to the Panel.

AGREED:

The Panel noted the contents of the report.

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Ms J Thomas & Miss J Bailey left the meeting at 9.45pm

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248 REVIEW OF RCC LEARNING AND SKILLS STRATEGY

Report no 171/2015 was received from the Head of Education.

During the discussion the following points were noted:

- i. Head of Education advised the Panel that he would welcome any feedback and comments from them.
- ii. The Director for People advised the Panel that Ofsted is currently very pleased with what the Council is currently doing and is confident that the Council's strategy is designed to support all learners.
- iii. As a Strategic Officer, the Director for People gave three points to consider:
 - Clear position of where the council has been and where it is going.
 - Evidence of our strategies working.
 - Balance of challenge and support.

During the discussion the following point was raised:

- i. The Panel asked for statistical neighbours as a comparison and not the national average.
- ii. A large number of detailed comments and questions were posed in quick succession. A request was made by officers to receive these in written form so that answers could be prepared

AGREED:

The Panel noted the contents of the report.

249 CHANGES TO POST 16 LEARNING

The Panel received an oral update on Changes to Post 16 Learning from the Director for People.

During the discussion the following points were noted:

- i. The Council is working closely with Casterton College to move Rutland College to Great Casterton and will work to assist the move.
- ii. The strategic plan will be presented at the January 2016 Scrutiny meeting.
- iii. The Director for People retaining post 16 provisions in the County was a priority for officers and more opportunities to help re shape the provision moving forward was being offered.

During the discussion the following point was raised:

- i. Concerns were raised over the provision for the middle ability group of students, not SEN or The Russel Group.
- ii. Rutland County College had provided a fantastic service for older students and if this is lost it would be detrimental to the county.

AGREED:

The Panel noted the contents of the oral update.

250 SCRUTINY PROGRAMME 2015-15 & REVIEW OF FORWARD PLAN 2014/15

Members noted the forward plan.

251 ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

There was no other urgent business.

252 DATE AND PREVIEW OF NEXT MEETING

Thursday 19 November at 7pm.

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The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 10.00pm.

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