

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Children and Young People Select Committee
held at County Hall, Usk on Thursday 21st May 2015 at 2.00 p.m.**

PRESENT: County Councillor P. Jones (Chairman)

County Councillors: P.S. Farley, L. Guppy, R.G. Harris, D.W.H. Jones and M. Powell.

County Councillors M. Hickman and S.G.M. Howarth attended the meeting by invitation of the Chairman.

CO-OPTED MEMBERS:

Mr. M. Fowler - Parent Governor Representative
Mr. C. Robertshaw - Parent Governor Representative
Mr K. Plow - Monmouthshire Association of School Governors

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Ms. C. Sheen - 21st Century Schools Client Liaison Officer
Mrs. N. Wellington - Finance Manager
Ms. T. Thomas - Youth Service Manager
Ms. R. Kent - Monmouthshire Youth Service
Ms. H. Jones - Monmouthshire Youth Service
Mr. J. Kline - Monmouthshire Youth Service
Ms. E. Archer - Gwent Music
Ms. H. Ilett - Scrutiny Manager
Mr. R. Williams - Democratic Services Officer

1. ELECTION OF CHAIR

We noted the appointment of County Councillor P. Jones as Chair.

2. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR

We appointed County Councillor P. Farley as Vice Chair.

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from County Councillors D. Blakebrough and P.R. Clarke and from Canon Dr S. James and Tracey Jelfs.

The Chair welcomed Mr. Fowler and Mr. Robertshaw to their first meeting of the Select Committee as parent governor representatives. The Chair also welcomed County Councillors M. Hickman and S.G.M. Howarth to the meeting as they would be officially joining the Children and Young People Select Committee at the next meeting.

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Children and Young People Select Committee
held at County Hall, Usk on Thursday 21st May 2015 at 2.00 p.m.**

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

County Councillor L. Guppy declared a personal, non-prejudicial interest, pursuant to the Members' Code of Conduct in respect of:

- a) Monmouthshire Youth Services, as she is an LEA member of Zone Youth Centre.
- b) She has family members accessing Gwent Music Service.

5. MINUTES

The Committee confirmed and signed the minutes of the Children and Young People Select Committee meeting held on 16th April 2015.

6. PUBLIC OPEN FORUM

There were no Members of the public present.

7. MONMOUTHSHIRE YOUTH SERVICE MANDATE UPDATE

Context:

To provide the Select Committee with a performance report on progress made in regard to budget Mandate 42 (brought to the Children and Young People's Select Committee in December 2014), which outlined proposals to generate income within Monmouthshire's Youth Service.

To inform the Select Committee of ongoing pressures faced by the Youth Service in the delivery of new income generation projects to further support services to young people in Monmouthshire.

Key issues:

Monmouthshire wants to see innovative and enterprising opportunities that will benefit and make a difference to the lives of young people, whilst attracting income from a wider range of sources so that the service is less dependent on Local Authority funding. The current financial climate requires all to undertake a wider service review to look at a more cost effective model and delivery within the Youth Service. The Youth Service has been asked to explore new ways of working that will contribute to the budget savings of the Local Authority, whilst realising consistent and retained service delivery to young people in Monmouthshire.

To date, income generation projects have been initiated under the umbrella headings of:

- I. Propel - Training opportunities for both internal and external business and professionals.

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Children and Young People Select Committee
held at County Hall, Usk on Thursday 21st May 2015 at 2.00 p.m.**

- II. Wellbeing - To provide activities and opportunities to the most vulnerable young people in Monmouthshire, and to offer training and awareness raising workshops to workers and professionals within the Therapeutic field.
- III. Community Kitchen - Abergavenny Youth and Community Centre has a fully equipped and functional kitchen that will be available for catering purposes for users of the centre; training courses; volunteering opportunities and community groups.
- IV. Skate shop in Abergavenny Youth and Community Centre (The Youth Service is working with a local business regarding hosting a skate shop for young people in the centre) which will be supported by a designated member of the Youth Service.
- V. European Social Fund – a funding application for pre and post 16 engagement to reduce NEET figures and give young people the best opportunity during their educational years.

Member scrutiny:

- Members questioned the impact on service delivery of the income generation initiative and were advised the Youth Service will limit the impact on service delivery where possible. The Youth Service has a skilled team that can undertake dual roles when required.
- Members asked why schools had not bought into the schools youth work programme from September 2015 and questioned what effect this will have on young people in relation to NEETS and on the Youth Access Programme itself. Members felt there could be implications for the youth workers in schools and queried how this could be sustained financially. They were advised that to mitigate any loss of support for these young people, the Youth Service has sourced ESF monies and if successful, will supplement the pre and post 16 work of the service.
- Members queried progress relating to the Youth Access Programme and were advised that for 14 years the Youth Access Programme has been run with each of the four comprehensive schools within Monmouthshire. Until recently, during the last three years, this service had also been run with Mounton House School but the school has now bought into the system itself and employs its own youth workers. There is one worker in each of the schools that works with young people who are at risk and who are not engaging in the mainstream curriculum. For the last three years this has been funded via the Youth Service Budget. Initial discussions have been held with the schools regarding the Pupil Deprivation Grant. Further discussions will continue after Whitsun.
- Members asked how schools could be persuaded to use the programme and heard that in order for schools to make the programme work effectively, schools

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Children and Young People Select Committee
held at County Hall, Usk on Thursday 21st May 2015 at 2.00 p.m.**

should be investing around £28,000 per school to cover the costs of salary for the year.

- Members were advised that schools are aware of the proposals and are pleased with the service provided by the Youth Service. However, the support of the schools was required in order to maintain the youth workers within the schools.
- Members heard that the ESF Programme is currently £1.5M overspent. If successful ESF monies would equate to £151,000 per annum for three years for pre and post 16 work, collectively.
- ESF Funding is outcome driven so there has to be stringent and robust systems in place to achieve the funding. Funding is based on demographics so Monmouthshire receives a smaller portion of the funding compared to other authorities.
- Abergavenny Centre was at capacity but this was due to the way the centre was operated with Adult Education. The Pupil Referral Service also operates from the Centre. The Youth Service works in collaboration with all users of the Centre.
- Additional staff have been put into the Youth Centre to ensure it works correctly.
- The Youth Service is currently in the process of submitting a bid to provide a training centre in Gilwern.
- Courses for young people are free of charge.
- Members questioned how the budget costs of running the Abergavenny Centre are apportioned and were advised that the costs are split equally between Adult Education and Monmouthshire Youth Service. The Pupil Referral Unit pays rent to help alleviate costs. Any other users will have a rental charge applied.
- Members suggested that the EQIA section of the report should have identified the concerns raised by the Youth Service at this meeting and felt that in future, EQIA's should be highlighting implications in a clear manner.
- Members heard that the Youth Service is currently looking at operating joint programmes regarding Park Street and the Enterprise Programme.
- Currently, Monmouthshire Youth Service has not been required to spend any money apart from spending on staff time. Support is being received from the Enterprise Directorate.

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**Minutes of the Children and Young People Select Committee
held at County Hall, Usk on Thursday 21st May 2015 at 2.00 p.m.**

- The Committee was reassured that the ESF match funding has been identified and secured for the next three years.

Committee's Conclusion and report recommendation:

Refer to the Committee's conclusion and report recommendation in Minute 9.

8. MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL YOUTH SERVICE – EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND (ESF) PROJECTS – Inspire2Achieve and Inspire2Work**Context:**

To provide Select Committee Members with a performance report on the Inspire2Achieve and Inspire2Work projects led by Monmouthshire County Council's Youth Service utilising European Social Fund monies to deliver pre and post 16 support, intervention and employment opportunities. The delivery of these projects is in line with Priority 3 'Youth Employment and Attainment' Specific Objective 2 – the Inspire2Achieve project aiming to reduce the number of those at risk of becoming NEET (not in Employment, Education or Training) amongst 11-24 year olds and the Inspire2Work project aiming to reduce the number of 16 -24 year olds who become NEET.

Key issues:

- ESF funding will support pre 16 work in four Secondary Schools, Mounton House Special School and the Pupil Referral Service preventing young people from becoming NEET. The Youth Access Programme (Youth Workers in School) which is currently funded by the Youth Service, can't be sustained due to financial pressures. However, secondary schools have not bought into the programme for the next academic year.
- If the Youth Service is successful in securing ESF monies, this will supplement the pre and post 16 work of the service.
- If unsuccessful, provision will be substantially reduced across the authority.
- The Youth Service needs to commit match funding of 50% of the total project costs.
- Anticipated start date for Inspire2Achieve and Inspire2Work is 1st September 2015. The duration of the project is initially 3 years.

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Children and Young People Select Committee
held at County Hall, Usk on Thursday 21st May 2015 at 2.00 p.m.**

Member scrutiny:

- Members questioned whether all staff are registered within their field and regulated by Health Care professionals and were advised this was the case.

Committee's Conclusion and report recommendation:

Refer to the Committee's conclusion and report recommendation in Minute 9.

9. MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL YOUTH SERVICE – MONMOUTHSHIRE NEET REDUCTION STRATEGY

Context:

To consult the Children and Young People's Select Committee on the draft Monmouthshire NEET Reduction Strategy (Not in Employment, Education or Training) and action plan.

Key issues:

- The Monmouthshire NEET Reduction Strategy sets out its commitment to creating better outcomes for young people aged 11-25 through increasing engagement and progression of existing and future provision, with the aspiration of creating a NEET free county.
- Schools, Education Welfare Service, Pupil Referral Service, Youth Service and Careers Wales with the Local Authority will work together with a single goal, to support and improve outcomes for young people at risk of becoming NEET or who are NEET. This model has reduced Monmouthshire NEET figures to 1.7% in 2014 (2nd lowest in Wales).
- This strategy will build on schools' contribution and will work towards an early identification system, a suitable curriculum and learning pathway to support skills development and qualifications.
- Primary Schools have a key role to play in the early identification of children at risk of becoming NEET.

Member scrutiny:

- Members questioned the feedback that had been received through the consultation undertaken and were advised that a number of responses had been received and that the information received had been captured and would be incorporated into the final draft of the Strategy.

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Children and Young People Select Committee
held at County Hall, Usk on Thursday 21st May 2015 at 2.00 p.m.**

- Members expressed concern relating to the Common Pupil Tracking System and were advised that there had been limited progress regarding this. Members were advised that originally, a system was being developed through the Education Achievement Service (EAS) but that the system was now to be developed 'in house'. The system is anticipated to be in place by June 2015. Members agreed this area would require further scrutiny to ensure there is an effective pupil tracking system in place. Members heard that support was being received via the Children and Young People Directorate to ensure that the system will be in place as soon as possible.

Committee's Conclusion:

The Chair summed up as follows:

The Select Committee recognises the excellent work being undertaken via by the Monmouthshire Youth Service but advised that it had been difficult to scrutinise the three reports in advance of the meeting due to the lack of detail provided within the body of the reports, particularly in relation to the viability of the projects. Whilst the Committee are reassured from the presentation and scrutiny undertaken at the meeting that the Youth Service is performing satisfactorily, the Committee is uncertain regarding the following:

- 1) Can the youth service achieve its overall objectives?
- 2) Are the projects financially viable?
- 3) What are the outcomes and how sure can we be that these will be achieved?

The Committee advised that their primary concern is that the Youth Service delivers outcomes to young people in Monmouthshire, in particular, those who are at risk of becoming NEET. The Committee considers it needs substantive financial detail to be provided in order to form a view as to the cost effectiveness and viability of the projects discussed at the meeting. The Chair requested the service returns to the committee with this information.

The Committee also remains concerned about the progress of implementing a Common Pupil Tracking System irrespective of who devises such a system, given that the need for a system has been highlighted by both the Select Committee and Estyn.

Committee's Recommendation:

The Committee agreed that the Youth Service Manager would be invited to attend the September 2015 Select Committee Meeting to provide:

- A detailed report on progress of these projects
- A financial breakdown of each project
- An assessment of the implications for the Youth Service (financial and other) should the projects not deliver in line with the figures projected.

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Children and Young People Select Committee
held at County Hall, Usk on Thursday 21st May 2015 at 2.00 p.m.**

The Committee agreed to convey their concerns around the Common Pupil Tracking System to the Cabinet Member and to prioritise this for discussion during the next scrutiny of the Children and Young People's directorate performance reporting.

The Committee agreed to discuss the quality of information being reported to the Select Committee with the Chief Officer.

10. GWENT MUSIC SERVICEContext:

The Select Committee received a verbal update on progress / achievements of the Gwent Music Service.

Key issues:

The following issues were noted:

- Music and creative arts should be more integrated into the schools' curriculum.
- The Gwent Music Service is being used as a good practice toolkit. An open learning plan would be available later in the year.
- The Gwent Music Service held a music festival in March 2015 that was held in Newport.
- Areas to develop next year – delivering impact in schools on music therapy, working with Looked After Children, NEET children and children on the verge of exclusion.
- The Service has been working to ensure mechanisms were in place for children who fall between the two categories, i.e., parents of children who can afford for their children to play an instrument and those that have free school meals. There are some children who fall between the two in which there are families with two or three children who play an instrument that find it difficult to continue to afford to allow their children to play. There is a proposal to put music access funding in place for the new academic year, the criteria for this is yet to be fine-tuned.
- Gwent Music Financial detail – Current funding this year is £162,000. Of this, £110,000 goes towards school tuition, £44,000 is directly put into schools budgets, the subsidy for individual tuition is £7,000, £15,000 comes off Music Centre Provision, £30,000 goes towards subsidising the Service's Greater Gwent Structure.
- With regard to the proposed £50,000 saving, Gwent Music Service has been charging for Music Centres for a year at £15.50 per term.

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Children and Young People Select Committee
held at County Hall, Usk on Thursday 21st May 2015 at 2.00 p.m.**

- Last year only 60% of pupils paid for the services received via Gwent Music, bringing in £11,000, a vacant post has not been filled providing a saving of £13,000 over the two terms, the hourly rate to schools has been increased from 30 to 31 over the last financial year providing a saving of £4,000. Additional savings include not replacing instruments in certain projects and Music Centres providing a saving of £22,000. This was how the £50,000 saving was achieved last year.
- Music Centre Charges this term - continued with the £15.50 providing £5,000. From September the charge will increase to £32.00 per term for pupils. It was hoped that a further saving could be achieved by improving the collection of these monies.
- The Greater Gwent Membership Charge will be a new charge from September 2015 in the sum of £47.00 per term.
- 2016/17 – Remove PLASC based school subsidy providing a saving of £44,000. Other savings to be identified in the sum of £6,000.

Member scrutiny:

- In response to a Select Committee Member's question, it was noted that creative arts had been put back onto the school curriculum and the Gwent Music Service was in a strong position to ensure that it had a part to play in school life.
- Private lessons would not be cheaper than that provided via the Gwent Music Service.
- Sponsorship was available via Greater Gwent Activities in which bids for funding could be made.
- The Greater Gwent Patronage Scheme had been established to identify sponsorship but the entire structure required support.
- The Music Access Fund report would be presented to Cabinet in June 2015. If approved, funding would be available from September 2015. Members requested that a position update be emailed to the Committee in the autumn to ensure funding was available. **Action: Emma Archer/Hazel Ilett.**
- Members expressed significant concern that the payment collection system was not robust enough and that an increase in fees might lead to a reduction in pupils accessing the service. Gwent Music Service advised that they are attempting to improve the payment collection service and could only hope that these attempts would lead to greater success in collecting fees.

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Children and Young People Select Committee
held at County Hall, Usk on Thursday 21st May 2015 at 2.00 p.m.**

Committee's Conclusion:

The Chair summed up as follows:

The Select Committee appreciate the attendance of Emma Archer at the meeting and for the level of useful financial detail provided which assisted their understanding of the complexities of achieving the necessary savings. The Chair requested that any future information brought to the Committee be tabled in advance so that Members can frame their questions accordingly.

Committee's Recommendation:

The Committee agreed that Gwent Music Service would be invited to provide a progress update in the Spring of 2016.

The Committee requested that a position statement on future funding be emailed to the Committee following Cabinet's consideration of the Music Access Fund report in June 2015 to ensure funding is available from September 2015 onwards. **Action: Emma Archer / Hazel Ilett.**

11. WORK PROGRAMMING**i) SELECT COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2015-2016**

We scrutinised the Select Committee Work Programme. In doing so, the following points were noted:

- The report by the Education Achievement Service (EAS) regarding outcomes for Quarters 3 and 4 – Foundation Phase Key Stages 4 and 5 had been deferred to the next meeting of the Select Committee, which would be a special meeting of the Children and Young People Select Committee to be held on 23rd June 2015 at 2.00pm. At this meeting, Members would also scrutinise reports on ICT Provision in Schools and on Safeguarding.

ii) CABINET FORWARD WORK PLANNER

Select Committee Members noted the Council and Cabinet Forward work planner.

12. FOR INFORMATION – SOCIAL CARE AND HEALTH IT SYSTEMS

The Select Committee was provided with two reports, for information purposes, regarding future of Monmouthshire's Social Care and Health IT systems. The reports had been presented to the Departmental Management Team for discussion.

Members resolved that officers from the Social Care and Health Directorate would be invited to attend a future meeting of the Select Committee to provide an update on

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Children and Young People Select Committee
held at County Hall, Usk on Thursday 21st May 2015 at 2.00 p.m.**

progress regarding the first phase of this matter. Select Committee Members agreed to forward any questions that they might have in respect of this matter directly to the Chief Officer for Social Care and Health.

The Independent Member for Llanelly Hill informed the Select Committee that at a school governors meeting recently, children in Key Stages 1 and 2 had been sitting exams which were currently being marked. However, the results of these exams would not be available until the start of the summer recess. Therefore, consultation with the parents and children will not take place until the new school term in September / October. The Member considered that this was illegal as the Welsh Government had said that the consultation of the results had to take place as soon as possible. The Member asked whether this matter should be raised with the Education Achievement Service (EAS).

Members agreed to raise this matter be raised with Sharon Randall-Smith (Children and Young People Directorate) and the Select Committee will be able to discuss this matter with the EAS at a future meeting of the Select Committee.

13. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Members noted that the next Children and Young People Select Committee Meeting would be held on Thursday 9th July 2015 at 4pm.

The meeting ended at 4.00 pm.

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Children and Young People Select Committee
held at County Hall, Usk on Thursday 21st May 2015 at 2.00 p.m.**