

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Children and Young People Select Committee held at The Council Chamber, County Hall, The Rhadyr, Usk, NP15 1GA on Thursday, 1st February, 2018 at 10.00 am

PRESENT: County Councillor M.Groucutt (Chairman)
County Councillor L.Jones (Vice Chairman)

County Councillors: L. Brown, D. Jones, M. Lane, M. Powell, T. Thomas and S. Woodhouse

Mr. M. Fowler (Parent Governor Representative)

County Councillor V. Smith attended the meeting by invitation of the Chair.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Will McLean	Chief Officer for Children and Young People
Ian Saunders	Head of Tourism, Leisure and Culture
Paul Sullivan	Monmouthshire Sport Development
Nick John	Business Manager
Tyrone Stokes	Finance Manager
Nikki Wellington	Finance Manager
Paula Harris	Democratic Services Officer
Richard Williams	Democratic Services Officer

APOLOGIES:

County Councillor J. Watkins

Dr. A. Daly (Church in Wales) and Mr. K. Plow (Association of School Governors)

1. Declarations of Interest

Mr. M. Fowler declared a personal, non-prejudicial interest pursuant to the Member Code of Conduct in respect of agenda item 7 - Building Maintenance Funding for New Schools, as he is the Chair of Governors of Raglan Church in Wales VC Primary School, which is one of the schools affected.

2. Public Open Forum

There were no members of the public present.

3. Confirmation of Minutes

The minutes of the Children and Young People Select Committee meeting dated 7th December 2017 were confirmed and signed by the Chair.

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4. Presentation regarding the Sports Leaders UK Playmaker Award

Context:

To receive a presentation regarding sports development and some of the leisure outcomes and impacts that the programmes have and how it feeds into the creative and active group within Monmouthshire before being presented to to the Public Service Board (PSB).

Key Issues:

To receive information regarding programmes being delivered and the impact that they are having on young people across Monmouthshire.

Member Scrutiny:

- Sport is vital for tackling childhood obesity and improving behaviour of young people.
- In terms of the Playmaker Programme, a commitment has been made to deliver this programme on an annual basis. The idea being that as the entire cohort has been trained this year, as pupils move into Year 6 next year, and the young ambassadors are identified, Year 5 will continue to be trained next October.
- The Foundation Friends Programme was launched last week encouraging children to be good citizens as they get older.
- Community Chest – 19 clubs have been supported. However, the team is small and support is needed in areas of promotion. Partnership working is undertaken with Education, Health, and Early Years provision, which is working very well.
- Community Chest has £60,000 to help clubs each year. It is quite labour intensive.
- With regard to the variety of the sports being provided from the Playmaker Programme, feedback received from schools indicate that Years 5 are delivering a variety of lunchtime clubs which are engaging the whole of the school. Feedback from teachers indicate that the Programme is having a positive effect on children's education and improvements in their ability to concentrate in class.
- The Playmaker Programme is currently being delivered in six primary schools within Monmouthshire. All of the after school clubs are multi-sport based.
- Nationally, there needs to be a greater emphasis on the need for children to undertake physical activity within primary schools.

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- The Playmaker Programme is a sports UK award which is a six hour qualification. The Team spends a day working with an entire class to provide children with the skills to be able to deliver sporting activity.
- The Daily Mile - Each school delivers this differently. All schools have been mapped in terms of orienteering courses. This course is essentially 15 minutes of physical activity.
- Support for pupils with health issues is also provided.
- Healthy eating and nutrition training is provided.
- An issue was raised with regard to obtaining measurable health outcomes of pupils via the Authority's Public Service Board (PSB), as childhood obesity has been recognised as one of the key themes that the PSB will be investigating.
- More work is being undertaken around the importance of mental wellbeing by showing that sport can improve a person's mental health.
- The 'Girls Can' Programme – data indicates that the biggest drop off is occurring here. Therefore, mass participation days and specific sessions help in trying to combat this issue.
- Next financial year investment is being sought for a data capture system where young people will be able to complete an on-line survey. This will commence at secondary school level to begin with. This will then identify areas where a bespoke sports package might be provided.
- During the summer term the Team will be working with both primary and secondary schools with regard to the schools' sports survey for Sport Wales.
- Sporting facilities within schools differs depending on individual schools. The Team provides support on how to use the space available and how intense the session needs to be depending on the actual time available to pupils to ensure the children are getting the most out of these sessions.
- Schools are able to generate funding tokens to improve facilities.
- Sport Wales does not fund directly to schools. Instead, it funds organisations such as the Playmaker Programme which then works with schools to deliver sport based activities.
- There is a strong working relationship between the schools, the Children and Young People Directorate and the Team and there is a need to ensure that outcomes are achieved and evidence is captured.
- Invitations were extended to the Select Committee to attend the Playmaker conferences.

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- The Playmaker Programme is delivered to all pupils providing confidence, motivation and leadership qualities.
- Funding has been received to provide some Looked After Children in Monmouthshire with 10 days free access into this provision. This will be delivered in February half term, Easter Term and May half term.

Committee's Conclusion:

- The Select Committee will be kept informed and involved in the Playmaker Programme.
- Representations to be made to the Public Service Board (PSB) with regard to the issue raised that measurable health outcomes of pupils should be obtained, as childhood obesity has been recognised as one of the key themes that the PSB will be investigating.

5. Revenue and Capital Monitoring 2017/18 Outturn Statement - Period 2

Context:

To scrutinise the revenue and capital outturn positions based on activity data at month 7.

Key Issues:

Recommendations proposed to Cabinet

- Members consider the forecast net revenue outturn overspend of £62,000.
- That Cabinet requires Chief Officers to continue to work to reduce the £1.333 million over spend on services, using measures such as a moratorium on non-essential spend and the freezing of vacant posts other than where recruitment is considered essential.
- Members consider the forecast capital outturn spend, the levels of capital slippage proposed and the levels of capital receipts to assist with capital programme funding, primarily the Future Schools Tranche A considerations.
- Members note that the low level of earmarked reserves, which will severely reduce the flexibility the Council has in meeting the financial challenges of reducing settlements and consequent need to re-design services.
- Members note the significant and continued forecast reduction in the overall school balance at the end of 2017/18 and supports the continuing work with schools to ensure that the Council's Fairer Funding scheme requirements are

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met and that the overall schools balance reverts to a positive position at the earliest opportunity.

- Members note the significant over spend on services and consider recurrent and new pressures that need to feature in the draft revenue budget proposals currently out on consultation.

Member Scrutiny:

- Concern was expressed that the quality of education being provided to pupils in schools that are experiencing a deficit budget might be adversely affected.
- In response to a question raised regarding the Authority's accounts in recording budgets that are in credit / debit, it was noted that local authorities account for over / underspends in this way (underspends in red. Overspends in black). This process has been undertaken for many years. However, for future reports, officers will make the process clear at the beginning of the report. The Finance Manager will refer to CIPFA guidance to see if there could be changes to the way in which this information is presented to the Select Committee, going forward.
- With regard to some schools holding high surpluses within their budgets, a three year plan is built into the schools' budgets, with a view to reducing the surplus over this period of time.
- Some of Monmouthshire's schools with surplus balances have budgeted for long term projects.
- There is a significant difference in the primary sector compared with the secondary sector with regard to surplus school budgets.

Committee's Conclusion:

- There are key areas of priority. In particular, Monmouthshire's secondary schools, with three of the schools in a deficit budget and one coming out of a deficit budget. This puts considerable strain on the leadership teams in these schools.
- The cost of out of County placements for a small number of children and the rising number of Looked After Children are placing a strain on the County Council's budget.

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6. Building Maintenance Funding for New Schools

Context:

To scrutinise a change in the funding of building maintenance for new schools through an amendment to the funding formula.

Key Issues:

- The current formula distributes funding for building maintenance via two methods:
 - Floor area of the school – with an uplift for the condition of the school. This is between 1.0 and 1.4. This accounts for 50% of the funding.
 - Pupil numbers at the school from the prior January the Pupil Level Annual School Census (PLASC) count. This is the official census from Welsh Government. For the financial year 2018-19 the pupil count is at January 2018. This accounts for 50% of the funding.
- Apart from the condition weighting there is no allowance made for new schools, where the building maintenance costs will be lower.
- A consultation document was distributed on the 21st September 2017 with a closing date of 9th November 2017 to consult on the following proposal:

The proposal is to change the formula so that all new schools are not distributed funding for building maintenance for the first 5 years following the opening of the new school.

Years 6 – 10 would be funded at 50% of the funding, this is to recognise that some costs could be incurred at this stage.

The 50% funding would still be distributed via the same method, but the condition weighting would be reset to 1.0.

The reduction of the funding would be used towards the borrowing required to fund new schools, over the lifetime of the loan. This was agreed by Council in October 2016.

- The consultation paper includes details of the reduction in funding per school.
- The consultation responses were presented to the School Budget Forum on the 23rd November 2017. There were 19 responses and the summary is detailed below:

19 Responses:

- 10 agreed
- 4 disagreed

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- 2 Responses said statutory maintenance should still be funded. This would be the case; this part of the formula remains unchanged.
- 3 agreed, but said the funding should be redistributed to schools and not used to fund the borrowing.
- The School Budget Forum raised concerns that not all maintenance costs will be reduced in a new build. There are routine maintenance costs that will remain, such as PAT testing and routine cyclical maintenance. The forum asked that this funding remains in place to allow these works to be funded.
- As a result, the proposal is to fund the schools indicated below, to cover these costs:

School	Opening	Funding for Cyclical Maintenance
Caldicot	Sep-17	£26,046
Monmouth	Sep-18	£11,462
Raglan	Sep-15	£6,366
Thornwell	Apr-14	£4,809
Rogiet	Nov-09	£5,499
Dewstow	Sep-12	£5,503
Total		£59,685

- Therefore the total savings would reduce for the original proposed £176,255 to £116,570. The funding will be based on the previous year's costs from property services as the actual costs are not known until the start of the year.

Member Scrutiny:

- Service contracts figures have been provided via the Property Services Department, as this department provides service level agreements to schools and detail every element of cost.
- In terms of the maintenance, after the five year period, there will be an element of maintenance being provided. It is the responsibility of the Governing bodies to maintain their schools and it would be anticipated that the maintenance would be used in the proper way.
- Cyclical maintenance figures are reviewed and updated annually via the property services Department.

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- Chepstow Comprehensive School is expected to be a key part of the Band B proposals. If there were to be flexibility in the programme then the Authority would look to fund additional pieces of work that is required in Chepstow Comprehensive School.
- Welsh Government releases programme funding in tranches A-D. The Authority wants to make sure that Chepstow Comprehensive School plans are ready so that it can start as soon as Band C becomes available. Development work will be ongoing alongside Band B but the funding will be available in Band C.

Committee's Conclusion:

On behalf of the Select Committee, the Chair thanked officers for presenting the report and responding to Member's questions.

7. Urgent Item of Business

The Chair agreed to take the following urgent item of business in order to allow the Chief Officer for Children and Young People to provide the Select Committee with a verbal update in respect of the Welsh Government School categorisations, which had been announced today.

8. Welsh Government School Categorisations

The Chief Officer for Children and Young People provided the Select Committee with a verbal update regarding the Welsh Government's School's categorisations in respect of Monmouthshire's schools. In doing so, the following points were noted:

- A full report regarding this matter will be presented to the Select Committee in due course.
- Across Wales, more schools are in the good categories of green and yellow.
- Primary schools in Monmouthshire – since categorisation was introduced there has been an increase in the percentage of schools which are green, from 10% in 2014/15 to 43% in the latest announcement. This is equivalent to fewer than five schools in 2014/15 and 13 schools in the primary setting now being rated as green schools. A significant achievement in the primary settings. There are two red schools in Monmouthshire's primary setting.
- Secondary schools in Monmouthshire – 75% of schools are in the yellow category. There are no green schools in Monmouthshire. Work is being undertaken to improve on this. In the yellow category, there has been some

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volatility with movement of schools between the yellow and amber categories. There are no secondary schools in the red category.

- Overall, this is a positive position for Monmouthshire. Monmouthshire is equal to the Welsh position in terms of the percentage of primary schools which are in the green or yellow categories. However, across the Greater Gwent area, Newport City Council has a higher percentage of primary schools which are in the green category, so there is further work to be undertaken in Monmouthshire.

9. Children and Young People Select Committee Work Programme

We received the Select Committee's forward work plan. In doing so, the following items were added:

Special meeting – 13th February 2018:

- Update regarding the Additional Learning Needs Review.
- Key Stages 4 and 5 update report.
- Education Achievement Services (EAS) Business Plan.

We noted the Children and Young People Select Committee Work Plan.

10. Cabinet and Council Forward Planner

We received the Cabinet and Council Forward Planner.

In doing so, the Committee agreed that an update report regarding Foster Care Provision be added to the Children and Young People Select Committee Work Plan.

11. Next meeting

Tuesday 13th February 2018 at 10.00am – Special Meeting.

Thursday 22nd March 2018 at 10.00am – Ordinary Meeting.

The meeting ended at 11.35 am.