

# Children & Young People Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday, 14 July 2020

## Minutes

### Attendance

#### Committee Members

Councillor Yousef Dahmash (Chair)  
Councillor Pam Williams (Vice-Chair)  
Councillor Margaret Bell  
Councillor Jonathan Chilvers  
Councillor Corinne Davies  
Councillor Peter Gilbert  
Councillor Howard Roberts  
Councillor Dominic Skinner  
Councillor Chris Williams

#### Officers

Nigel Minns, Strategic Director for People  
Ian Budd, Assistant Director - Education Services  
Ross Caws, Warwickshire SEND Board Development Manager  
Duane Chappell, Strategy and Commissioning Manager (SEND & Inclusion)

#### Others Present

### 1. General

#### (1) Apologies

None.

#### (2) Members' Disclosures of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

None.

#### (3) Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 23 June 2020 were agreed as a true and accurate record.

There were no matters arising.

## **2. Public Speaking**

There was no public speaking.

## **3. Question Time**

### **(1) Question to Cabinet Portfolio Holders**

There were no questions to the Portfolio Holders.

### **(2) Updates from Cabinet Portfolio Holders and Assistant**

Ian Budd, Assistant Director - Education Services confirmed the following –

- The Socialisation Offer is ready to go live.
- The Family Information Service (FIS) has produced a programme of “safe” activities for the summer holidays ahead of schools starting in September 2020.
- Amended guidance has been produced for schools to make the necessary adjustments for activities during the school holidays.

In relation to school transport, officers are working on the assumption that services will be provided as normal in September 2020. There is no information as to what parents are planning to do with regards to school transport at this point. It was noted that many parents may not have yet decided. There are weekly meetings with school leaders to discuss arrangements for school transport.

It was confirmed that levels of usage on school transport will be monitored on a week by week basis. It was also confirmed that there will be a review into alternative routes to school as there is an expectation that the first week back in September will see an increase in cars on the road.

Following a question from Councillor Jonathan Chilvers, it was confirmed that some schools have requested zones to be put in place around school entrances and exits to allow for wider start/finish times and to ensure physical measures are in place to support social distancing.

### **Actions**

It was agreed that the details of the FIS safe activities programme will be shared with all elected members.

It was agreed that the new cleaning protocols will be shared with members of the Committee.

## **4. Warwickshire Education Strategy Annual Review 2019**

Ian Budd, Assistant Director - Education Services confirmed that Covid-19 has had an impact on many council meetings, including the planned review of the Education Strategy; which had already faced a delay as a result of the General Election in December 2019.

The refreshed strategy is due to be published in September 2020 and will include new insights added as a result of the pandemic. It was confirmed that there had been lots of learning in terms of e-learning, blended learning and distance learning following the closure of schools and all can be added to strengthen the offer made in the strategy and support for learning moving forward.

Following a question from Councillor Margaret Bell in relation to the placement of LAC and SEND children it was confirmed that school readiness is a key part of the Early Years strategy which is currently in progress. The strategy will include the early identification of SEND children. It was confirmed that there are regular reviews of the admissions policy to ensure that national framework and guidance is met.

The Committee noted that the aim for September 2020 was that all children will be back in school. Backup plans have been shared with schools should there be an outbreak of coronavirus within a class/year bubble. Schools will be issued with a number of tests for Covid-19. Contingency plans are expected to be in place to avoid a repeat of the disruption seen in the early weeks of the pandemic.

Following a question from Councillor Jonathan Chilvers and reintegration to a parent school following alternative provision (AP) placement, it was confirmed that every AP package is bespoke to the young person. In majority of cases, links are maintained with the parent school, so the young person does not lose the link. Duane Chappell, Strategy and Commissioning Manager (SEND & Inclusion) stated that it is essential that accountability is maintained throughout the AP process and that Warwickshire County Council must ensure that educational standards are maintained.

### Actions

It was agreed that a briefing note will be circulated to members of the Committee in relation to the Alternative Provision programme and package.

It was agreed that a summary note in relation to the Admissions and Appeals policy which is currently being worked on, will be circulated to members of the Committee.

It was noted that their report on the availability of school places across the county is scheduled to be presented at the Committee meeting in September 2020.

### Resolved

That the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee note and comment on the progress and impact made with the Warwickshire Education (WE) Strategy to date in the 2019/20 school year, as summarised in this Mid-Year Review

## **5. Warwickshire Education Strategy Update and Refresh**

The Committee noted that many of the points included in this report had been highlighted and discussed under Item 4 (Warwickshire Education Strategy Annual Review 2019).

It was confirmed that all points raised by the Committee would be used and reflected on by officers.

### **Resolved**

That the Committee note the updates on the Warwickshire Education (WE) Strategy and endorse the recommendations to refresh it based on feedback received from stakeholders setting a refined course for the remaining three years of the five-year strategy.

## **6. Educational Attainment and School Performance**

Ian Budd, Assistant Director - Education Services confirmed to the Committee that due to Covid-19, Summer 2020 assessments and exams have been cancelled for all pupils. Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5 exams will be graded through teacher assessments.

The report presented to the Committee included the full data set for 2019 learner outcomes including examination outcomes. Results from Summer 2020 will be shared at the end of the year, but traditional learner outcomes will not be available as normal. Discussions are under way with senior leaders about how best to identify those with additional needs to the year ahead.

Following a question from Councillor Margaret Bell in relation to the attainment gap between learner years across the county it was confirmed that variations between year cohorts is not unusual. Officers and school leaders review trends over longer periods than just a year. The Nuneaton Education Strategy is targeting this area of concern.

Following a discussion about the Multi Academy Trust (MAT) in Nuneaton, the Committee agreed that there were areas for concern. Members requested information in relation to the destination, post-education, of MAT students.

### **Actions**

It was agreed that a briefing note in relation to the Multi Academy Trust in Nuneaton will be shared before the exam results are shared in the Autumn.

### **Resolved**

That the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee note the performance of children and young people in Warwickshire schools in statutory national tests. Members are asked to note the disparity in performance across the districts and boroughs and provide support to the Nuneaton Education strategy.

## **7. DSG Recovery Plan**

Duane Chappell, Strategy and Commissioning Manager (SEND & Inclusion) presented the report to the Committee which was a follow up from the report presented at the last Committee meeting and at the Cabinet meeting in June.

It was noted that 31 projects had been identified for change work from the SEND & Inclusion Change programme; work is underway on the first group of projects, including savings projections. The Committee thanked officers for clearly identifying the 'invest to change' options for each project. It was noted that savings won't be made against every project as they identify a better way of working and that some savings may have to be quantified later following pilots.

Following a question from Councillor Jonathan Chilvers, it was confirmed that information relation to the confidence in each proposal will be included in future reports to the Committee.

Following a question from Councillor Margaret Bell in relation to EHCP's, it was confirmed that not every child with identified needs will require an EHCP. For example, medical needs and other health care needs do not always require an EHCP. Each decision is thoroughly thought through and planned because they could be subject to a tribunal if it is applied in error. Once an EHC plan is committed to it is unlikely to change or be removed.

The Chair confirmed that many points from the report had been covered at the previous meeting, but it was agreed that the Committee would write to MP's in relation to their concerns about funding. It was agreed that this action would be added to the recommendation.

## **Resolved**

That the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee considers the report presented to Cabinet on the DSG Recovery Plan (Appendix A) and makes appropriate recommendations. The Committee will write to the MP's in relation to their concerns about funding.

## **8. Work Programme**

The Committee noted the work programme as submitted with the following additions –

Following a request from Councillor Margaret Bell it was agreed that a report on school placements would be presented to the Committee. Details will be discussed and confirmed at the next Chair and Spokes Meeting (15 September 2020).

It was confirmed that a briefing note in relation to Interim Executive Boards would be circulated to all elected members.

In relation to the Nuneaton Housing Project, it was agreed that an update will be presented at the meeting on 17 November 2020. The Committee requested that young people attend the meeting to give their thoughts on the project. It was confirmed that extended the project to other locations was the intention and that work was underway with district and borough colleagues.

The Committee requested an update in relation to the RISE service. It was agreed that it would be best to hold a special meeting with the Adult Social Care and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee and that Helen Barnsley would investigate suitable dates, ideally in the autumn to coincide with the Autism Strategy update planned for the September meeting.

## **9. Date of Next Meeting**

It was confirmed that the next meeting will be held on 29 September 2020 at 10am.

The meeting will be held virtually via [Microsoft Teams](#).

The meeting rose at xxx

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Chair