Minutes

Name of meeting	**POLICY AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES SELECT COMMITTEE**
Date and time	**THURSDAY, 15 MARCH 2018**
Venue	**COUNCIL CHAMBER, COUNTY HALL, NEWPORT, ISLE OF WIGHT**
Present	Cllrs Vanessa Churchman (Chairman), Debbie Andre, George Cameron, John Howe, Karl Love, Tig Outlaw, Chris Whitehouse
Cabinet Members Present	Cllr Paul Brading
Diocesan Representatives	Mr Rob Sanders
Parent Governor Representative	Mr Shaun Arnold
Officers Present	Jennifer Beresford, David Hardcastle, Brian Pope, Phillip Walker.

24. **Minutes**

RESOLVED :

THAT the Minutes of the meeting held on 25 January 2018 and 20 February 2018 be confirmed subject to the inclusion of the word "councillors" before the list of apologies.

25. **Declarations of Interest**

No declarations were received at this time.

26. **To consider the report of the Assistant Director, Education and Inclusion**

(a) The Attainment of Pupils In Isle of Wight Secondary Schools 2017

The committee considered a report and presentation on secondary attainment on the Isle of Wight in 2017.

To provide context for the attainment figures, Ofsted ratings for all Island schools for Spring 2015 and Spring 2018 were compared. There had been a 14 per cent decrease in the number of schools rated as

"inadequate" with only two percent of schools remaining in that category. The number of good schools had increased from 64% to 82% showing significant improvement. Overall GCSE trend data from 2013 through 2016, while showing performance remained below national levels, demonstrated results had increased steadily and the gap was closing. This was also demonstrated by the English GCSE figures.

The overall GCSE performance graph stops in 2016 as this was the last year that schools were measured against this performance metric. However, five good GCSE passes (including English and mathematics) still remains the key requirement for pupils to progress on to the next step of their formal education.

The graph for English stops in 2016 because in 2017, new harder courses were examined in English and mathematics for the first time. They are graded on a 1 to 9 point scale. There is little correlation between these new grades and the old letter grades.

Four secondary school performances were introduced: The Basics, the English Baccalaureate, attainment 8 and progress 8.

Performance in the basics had improved from 2016 when compared to national performance. Training was run by the local authority which specifically focussed on improving performance in GCSE mathematics. Since mathematics results improved in 2017 consequently so did performance in the basics.

The English Baccalaureate (EBacc) replaced the five GCSE A* to C measurement. It was very strict regarding which combinations of subjects were included: English, Maths, Science, Language, History and Geography. Performance at this measure was improving against the national figures. However, a smaller proportion of pupils were entered for this qualification in Isle of Wight schools than nationally and which in part explained why the performance was below the national figure.

Attainment 8 measured the average grade across 8 subjects: English and Maths, which were double weighted, three Ebacc subjects and three other subjects. Unfortunately, if less than three Ebacc subjects were taken a zero score was included for the third "slot", as was the case with a number of pupils in Isle of Wight schools. These schools must give further consideration to the design of their curricula.

Progress 8 scored the progress of pupils using the same subjects as the Attainment 8 measure. Results showed there was a significant variance between the performance of Island schools and standard nationally.

Both Attainment 8 and Progress 8 are based on the results of all children. In the past, schools have been driven by "threshold thinking" – trying to ensure as many pupils achieve a C grade or better as

possible. However, these new measures meant that every grade counted.

These measurements were welcomed as it encouraged focus on improving the results of all children rather than those on the threshold of meeting the desired standard.

Performance on the Isle of Wight remained below the national average across all measures. Members questioned why this was the case, if the quality of the schools on the Island was improving. Reassurance was provided that results generally reflect the change on standards until a couple of years after the Ofsted had found teaching had improved due to the way in which they carried out assessments. Other factors influencing performance included:

- Low numbers of children being entered for EBacc subjects.
- Changes in the measurements
- "Threshold Thinking" and;
- Static performance in English.

Discussion took place regarding how these barriers to good performance were being addressed. This included

- Addressing "threshold thinking" and ensuring schools did not focus on pupils on the threshold of the desired grade at the detriment of low and high achievers, as part of the annual visits.

- The curricula offered by schools were being reviewed to ensure more children were put forward for Ebacc qualifying subjects though it was recognised Ebacc subjects may not be suitable for all children.

- Providing support to refocus Key Stage 3 teaching to reflect the improved standard of Key Stage 2 leavers when entering secondary school. Reassurance was provided that education services were working with all schools on the Island, including academies and foundation schools.

Concerns were raised regarding the performance of Looked After Children (LAC). There were small numbers of LAC children in each cohort and therefore outcomes needed to be analysed at an individual student level. Members could be reassured, as corporate parents, that joint working between Children's Services and Education focused on ensuring LAC achieved highly and could continue to education, employment or training.

RESOLVED:

THAT the report on secondary attainment in 2017 be noted.

(b)   16-18 Results/ Post 16 Outcomes

The Head of Service, Island Futures, presented a report and presentation outlining the following areas in relation to Post 16 attainment and participation on the Isle of Wight in 2016/17:

The Statutory Position
Post 16 Funding
Post 16 Participation
Post 16 Attainment

Participation on the Island, in terms of the September Guarantee (the statutory right to a suitable place of learning), those in Employment, Education and Training (EET) and those Not in Education, Employment and Training (NEET) continued to outperform its statistical neighbours and the national averages.

Performance from Tech-Level qualification as very strong and above national average. Results from applied General courses, were in line with national results. However, the proportion of A-level students with good results was poor and the number of students obtaining AAB or better in facilitating (Russell group preferred) subjects was nearly half of the national average.

Discussion took place regarding the work needed to improve A-level provision on the Island. It was generally felt that the number of small sixth forms on the Island was negatively impacting on results.

The Cabinet Member for Children's Services advised members that following meetings with two of the trusts on the Island, it was hoped there would be a proposal brought forward regarding collaboration between sixth forms on the Island. Members indicated they would support a proposal of that nature.

RESOLVED:

THAT the report on Post 16 Participation and Attainment 2016/7 be noted.

27.   **Council's forward plan and the committee's work plan**

It was suggested that further work was needed regarding the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service. Following discussion, it was agreed this would be would be added to the work plan and a further report requested for the June 2018 meeting.

RESOLVED:

THAT Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services be added to the work plan and a further report requested for the June 2018 meeting.

CHAIRMAN