



Minutes

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| Name of meeting | POLICY AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES, EDUCATION AND SKILLS |
| Date and Time | THURSDAY 1 DECEMBER 2022 COMMENCING AT 5.00 PM |
| Venue | COUNCIL CHAMBER, COUNTY HALL, NEWPORT, ISLE OF WIGHT |
| Present | Cllrs R Quigley (Chairman) J Lever (Vice Chairman) D Andre, C Critchison, R Downer, W Drew, S Ellis and M Oliver |
| Also Present | Stuart Ashley, Kim Goode, Sarah Philipsborn, Paul Thistlewood and Melanie White |
| Also Present (Virtual) | Derek Benson |
| Apologies | Cllrs D Adams, S Hendry and T Outlaw |

22. **Apologies and Changes in Membership (If Any)**

Apologies given by Cllr Adams to be substituted by Cllr Critchison, Cllr Hendry to be substituted by Cllr Drew and Cllr Outlaw to be substituted by Cllr Oliver.

23. **Minutes**

RESOLVED:

THAT the minutes of the meeting held on 1 September 2022 be approved.

24. **Declarations of Interest**

Cllr Oliver declared he was a School Governor at St Georges.

25. **Public Question Time - 15 Minutes Maximum**

Questions were raised over the on-going situation at Chillerton and Rookley Primary School and the fact that the last teacher was leaving at the end of the end of term. A question was asked why the school wasn't closing given the situation and that the remaining 10 children had all been offered a place at Godshill Primary. The Cabinet Member for Children's services stated in response, that it was important to put into context that the school was not closing but that it could no longer continue in its current state and the first and foremost duty was to the children.

A further question was asked why enough hadn't be done to keep the school operational and that the demise of the children was due to a management decision. The Cabinet Member for Children's Services explained that they were looking at flexible education solutions for the school, but this was part of an on-going discussion looking into strategic place planning for the Island. The Director of Children's Services stated that there had been local advertising after the school achieved a 'good' Ofsted Report, but this had not had any effect in attracting more children to the school. He also stated that they had received no applications to fill the teacher's post.

26. Progress on Outcomes and Recommendations from Previous Meetings

The update on the progress on actions and outcomes from previous meetings was shared with the committee.

The Chairman asked the Cabinet Member for Children's Services for an update regarding the circulation of the Headteachers and Governor Association statements from the previous meeting, and whether the issue of Chillerton and Rookley Primary School and place planning had been brought to back to Cabinet.

The Cabinet Member for Children's Services replied that the statements had been circulated and there had been on-going discussions with a further meeting with officers due to take place on the 2 December 2022. The issue was also to be raised at an informal meeting of Cabinet on 6 December 2022.

Further discussion ensued over place planning and why was there oversubscription in the secondary sector. It was stated that there were no places for children in any Island Secondary School across several year groups. This was described by the Director of Children's Services as a bulge in the system which would be resolved soon.

The question of school governor recruitment was raised in context of the dwindling numbers and it was explained a written report would be given at the next committee meeting.

27. Performance and Budget

The Area Director of Children's Services delivered a presentation on Children's Services Performance for Quarter Two 2022/2023
The report highlighted how demand continued to rise across social care and early help, but good performance remained consistent.

It was stated that the team was developing a senior social worker role for career progression and retention. A care review was being implemented regarding the development of family help and the recruitment of family practitioners.

Statistics were shown to the committee regarding Isle of Wight referrals over the past quarters and the timely responses over the same period.

The number of children subject to child protection planning was illustrated as was the number of children in need. The numbers of looked after children was highlighted along with the average number of caseloads undertaken in the timeframe.

The challenges that the team were facing were explained in the presentation and included increased demand for placements and supported accommodation. The lack of available and affordable accommodation was also brought to the attention of the committee.

The report concluded illustrating the Modernising Placements Programme where the Isle of Wight benefited from the experience of Hampshire. The objectives of the programme looked to more children being able to safely stay at home, with children only coming into care when appropriate and with the most suitable placements having been found. The programme also stressed as an objective that children in care should have the same life chances as every other child.

Further discussion took place about the shortage of skilled foster carers and affordable accommodation of decent quality for young people transitioning from care.

RESOLVED:

THAT the Performance Quarter Two 2022/2023 Report be noted.

28. **Child Protection**

28a **IW Safeguarding Children's Board Annual Report**

The Independent Chair of the Isle of Wight Safeguarding Children Partnership presented the IOWSCP Annual Report 2021/22 for signing off.

It was highlighted that it was the statutory responsibility for all partners to fulfil their safeguarding obligations.

The Report constituted a detailed account of the commitment to safeguarding children throughout the partnership and the challenges faced, particularly, as the year was still being shaped by the consequences of the pandemic.

The Report described the on-going actions concerning the safeguarding of children, and the business plan priorities for 2021/22. It also explored Learning and Improvement, as well as the Business Plan Priorities for 2022/23.

The Independent Chair was thanked for all his hard work at the IWSCP, given his forth coming retirement.

RESOLVED:

THAT the IOWSCP Yearly Report be noted

28b **Role of the Police in Child Protection**

Detective Superintendent, Head of Public Protection and Safeguarding for Hampshire and Isle of Wight Police outlined the role of the police in child protection, the processes in place for partnership working, and how local authority councillors could assist.

The child protection strategy was explained to the committee. This involved 3 important pillars, treating children as children, the voice of the child, and treating every interaction as an opportunity. This was backed up with 3 follow-on actions, acting in a timely manner, assessing and recording risk, and sharing information.

The police's delivery plan on prevention, vulnerability and partnerships was illustrated where fighting crime, learning and improving, looking after the workforce, protecting those in need, ethical inclusivity of all, and working with others, were seen as the major priorities.

Future predicted challenges for the police and partners were highlighted along with risks and evaluation.

RESOLVED:

THAT the role of the police in child protection be noted.

29. **Youth Offending**

The Head of Service of the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Youth Offending Team presented a report on the work of the Youth Offending Team for consideration.

The report described the compilation of the youth offending teams which was effectively a partnership between the local authority, the police and the probation and health services, and how the work of all youth justice services was overseen by the Youth Justice Board for England and Wales.

The partnerships and accountability of the Youth Offending Team was explained to the committee, and how the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Youth Offending Teams had merged and that the Head of Service also working closely with the Portsmouth YOT and the Southampton Youth Justice Service.

The work and priorities of the Youth Offending Team were described to the committee and how the staffing structure was compiled

The finance and budget figures were shown to the committee along with how performance was measured.

The report concluded outlining the priorities for 2022/23 and how keeping children in education was a priority for the youth offending Team. The need to improve how the views of children and their career was deemed a priority along with further

development in the way children are assessed in relation to the potential to cause harm to others, and assessments in relation to health outcomes

RESOLVED:

THAT the report on the work of the Isle of Wight Youth Offending Team be noted

30. **Committee's Work Plan**

The workplan was shared amongst the committee.

31. **Members' Question Time**

Further questions were asked over the situation at Chillerton and Rookley Primary school and how much longer the impasse of not closing the school was going to continue. The Cabinet Member for Children's Services reiterated that the school was not closed and was part of a larger strategic plan that was in discussion.

CHAIRMAN