

PRESENT: COUNCILLOR S F WILLIAMS (CHAIRMAN)

Councillors P A Carpenter, C J Davie, M J Exton, A G Hagues, J D Hough, B W Keimach, C R Oxby, R A Shore and C N Worth.

Added Members: Mrs E J Olivier-Townrow, Mr C V Miller, Dr B Roberts, Dr E van der Zee and Mrs G Wright.

Also in attendance:- Councillors Mrs P A Bradwell (Executive Councillor for Children's Services and Lifelong Learning), D Brailsford (Executive Support Councillor for Children's Services and Lifelong Learning), C Brewis and K Clarke.

Officers in attendance: Michelle Andrews (Interim Head of Service – Property and Technology Management), Debbie Barnes (Executive Director of Children's Services), Keith Batty (Assistant Director - CfBT Education Services), Andrea Brown (Democratic Services Officer), Tracy Johnson (Scrutiny Officer) and Meredith Teasdale (Assistant Director of Children's Services).

61. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE / REPLACEMENT MEMBERS

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M W Gilbert, J R Hicks, M Smith and C J Underwood-Frost.

Mr S C Rudman (Added Member) also submitted his apologies for absence.

62. DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

In relation to item 5, Community Access to School Facilities – Initial Report, Councillor R A Shore declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest due to his employment as an Inclusion Unit Teacher with Teaching Personnel.

In relation to Item 4, The Lincoln University Technical College, Dr E van der Zee confirmed that he was currently in paid employment with the University of Lincoln.

Mrs E Olivier-Townrow confirmed her position as a School Governor.

63. WELCOME

The Chairman welcomed, to the meeting, Nick Muntz, Managing Director of Siemens UK Lincoln, Professor Mary Stuart, Vice Chancellor of the University of Lincoln and Simon Plummer, Director of Projects and Partnerships at Lincoln College, who were attending in relation to Item 4 – The Lincoln University Technical College.

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64. MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the previous meeting of the Committee held on 30 November 2012 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

65. THE LINCOLN UNIVERSITY TECHNICAL COLLEGE

The Assistant Director – CfBT Education Services, Keith Batty, provided a brief introduction to the item before handing over to Nick Muntz, Managing Director of Siemens and Chair of the Trust. It was explained that colleagues from the University of Lincoln, Siemens and Lincoln College were looking for the opportunity to develop a Technical College to serve the sub-region of Lincoln.

Mr Muntz gave a presentation to the Committee which explained the background to the proposals, recruitment across the region, location of the college and the next steps. The Chairman thanked Mr Muntz for his presentation and invited the Committee to ask questions.

The following information was noted in response to the comments made by the Committee:-

- i. Members were encouraged that this college would complete the current centre of excellence, complementing the current Siemens Training School.
- ii. Siemens UK currently run a training and higher qualification scheme which is designed to produce good engineers with good qualifications but also given them a hands on practical level of training. Following four years of the scheme, apprentices are given employment. Retention of staff has not proved an issue for Siemens, however it was acknowledged that it was difficult to initially encourage people into the county.
- iii. The University Technical College (UTC) was looking to work collaboratively with schools and academies to give all students the opportunity to apply. The highlighted nodal areas would ensure that all students were given an opportunity despite the college being located in Lincoln. It was also hoped that students who remained in their schools could participate in some UTC activities.
- iv. The Admissions Policy for UTC had been developed for approval in accordance with guidance from the Department for Education (DfE) and Lincolnshire County Council. Nodal points specify the number of pupils to be recruited from those areas. Although there is no entrance exam, oversubscription criteria was included within the policy. Management of admissions would be undertaken by Lincolnshire County Council and, in line with DfE guidelines, the oversubscription criteria specifies that those with Special Educational Needs (SEN) would be placed first. (The Admissions Policy Consultation Document can be found on Lincolnshire County Council's

website at <http://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/parents/schools/school-admissions/information-about-schools/admission-arrangements-consultation-2014-2015/consultation-admission-arrangement-for-secondary-schools-2014/114492.article?tab=downloads>).

- v. Members welcomed the proposed working day at UTC, which would commence at 8.30am and finish at 5.00pm, preparing students for their future employment.
- vi. The college would also be following the national curriculum based on the English Baccalaureate, as in any other school, as it was acknowledged that most young people were not absolutely clear on their career direction and so a full school curriculum was essential. The specialism around engineering and science, working closely with employers in the design of the curriculum and work placements, was a unique feature of the college. However partnership working with schools was being sought to provide some aspects of the curriculum.
- vii. UTC would be funded as an academy school so funding would be ring-fenced, however it may also have the flexibility in the future to offer a service out of school times, using the links with suppliers/employers, to provide refresher courses via a commercial arrangement.
- viii. Funding would be from the DfE and, although not a large school, the exact staffing structure would be worked through in the coming months. It was agreed to provide an update to the Committee once these figures became available.
- ix. LCC are keen to ensure that the college is successful and want the nodal system to give access to all children across Lincolnshire. In partnership, work is continuing with the UTC colleagues regarding a transport offer. It was agreed that consultation would be required but that transport would be key to the success of this process.
- x. In terms of governance, the UTC would be managed by a Trust, which is made up of core partners. Although they were the leads for the project, it was confirmed that a number of other partners were also involved and a Board of Governors would be appointed. The University of Lincoln had also been seeking to support academies in the region by offering senior management input into governing bodies, trying to ensure that they have the correct representation on that body.
- xi. Branding for UTC had been completed and the next step would be to increase the awareness across the county.
- xii. Confirmation was given that the University of Lincoln currently works closely with the Ministry of Defence (MOD), as one of the county's biggest employers, and that discussions are ongoing on how they can provide support to UTC.

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The Chairman thanked Mr Muntz for his presentation and also Professor Stuart and Mr Plummer for providing concise answers for the Committee and confirmed that it was felt to be an exciting opportunity for young people within the County.

RESOLVED

That the report and presentation be noted.

66. COMMUNITY ACCESS TO SCHOOL FACILITIES – INITIAL REPORT

The Assistant Director – CfBT Education Services, Keith Batty, introduced the report which provided the outcome of a survey, previously requested by the Committee, in relation to community access to school facilities. 27% of Lincolnshire maintained schools and academies had responded, 85% of which share their facilities with their communities in some way.

The Chairman invited Councillor K J Clarke, a member of the Communities Scrutiny Committee who was invited to attend for this item, to address the Committee. Councillor Clarke remained concerned about the withdrawal of community access to school facilities, giving examples to the Committee from his particular ward.

In response to Members' questions, the Assistant Director – CfBT Education Services, explained as follows:-

- i. In order to provide the detail requested by Members, a further interim report with a breakdown by areas, access, facilities, etc would be required. This would be a large piece of work and, to assist in gathering the information, Members who were Governors of schools would be approached by CfBT and asked to provide the details.
- ii. Whilst it was stressed that academies were not acting illegally by not giving the community access to their facilities, it was felt that some facilities in these schools had been provided as a result of community fundraising and should therefore remain accessible to the community.
- iii. In regard to swimming, the national curriculum indicates that two hours of sport per week be undertaken in school but there was no statutory requirement to provide swimming lessons during this time. In order to clarify sport and swimming requirements within schools/academies, the Assistant Director – CfBT Education Services agreed to look into this further and report back to the Committee.

RESOLVED

1. That a further interim report, to include a breakdown of schools/academies by area and community access to their facilities, be brought to a future meeting.
2. That the report includes details in regard to sports and swimming provision.

67. CHILDREN'S SERVICES BUDGET 2012/2013 AND 2013/2014

The Assistant Director for Children's Services, Meredith Teasdale, introduced the report which sought to inform the Committee of the potential impact of budget changes as part of the Local Government Finance Settlement. Confirmation could not be given regarding the potential responses to these changes until the settlement figure had been received. It was confirmed that the Authority was in a strong position.

The following responses were received to questions raised by Members:-

- i. The Local Authority would have a transference of funding from the Government in relation to young people on remand, which was based on a three year average. The numbers of young people on remand in Lincolnshire was reportedly low and, as the average was taken over three years, one incident could substantially increase that average. Work was ongoing with Corporate colleagues to manage this over a three year basis with the money being given directly to the Youth Offending Service who would then pay for nights spent on remand. Other costs involved would be the responsibility of Children's Services and so the two services were working in partnership to ensure this was correctly managed.
- ii. The total non schools budget for Children's Services was given at approximately £120m with a potential budget reduction in the region of £10m including the changes to funding due to the academies and the early intervention grant top slice. The Executive were keen to retain stability within Children's Services over the next two years with budget reductions managed corporately with a more modest amount apportioned to Children's Services. It was felt that there would be minimal impact on services over the next two years if the proposals were accepted.
- iii. An update of the figures would be available once all the information needed had been received. It was hoped that a confirmed budget paper would be available for the March meeting.
- iv. There remained a firm commitment to continue to provide preventative services through Children's Centres.
- v. Via Connexions, the responsibility of the Local Authority was to provide careers guidance for vulnerable children. There were no plans to reduce school based arts and sports in the short term. As academies were receiving their budgets directly, they would be expected to use some of their budgets to "buy back" some of the services. Work was also ongoing in communities to provide activities for children and young people.
- vi. Some of the more challenging schools remained with the Local Authority and the focus of the expenditure would be on those schools which were, predominantly, primary schools. The Ofsted framework meant that this was challenging so it was important for school support services to continue to be available.

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- vii. Until more information had been received from the Select Committee with regard to provision for pupils with additional needs and or a disability, quantification of the pressures was difficult to confirm.
- viii. Although the submission regarding volumes of young people in each category in relation to higher needs for post 16 years, the amount of funding had not been received from the Education Funding Agency (EFA). Elements would change from 1st April 2013 and the EFA was currently establishing a baseline of young people in that category. Officers would be systematically working with providers to ensure sufficiency of provision which will be achievable.

RESOLVED

1. That the Committee support, with some concerns, the content of the report and acknowledge the pressures faced by Officers.
2. That a confirmed budget paper be brought to the March meeting if the information was available.

68. THE EXPANSION OF SUTTON BRIDGE WESTMERE COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

The Interim Head of Service – Property and Technology Management, Michelle Andrews, introduced the report which invited the Committee to consider the proposal to expand Sutton Bridge Westmere Community Primary School prior to its consideration by the Executive Councillor for Children’s Services and Lifelong Learning on 25th January 2013. It was confirmed that a petition had been presented through the consultation process from local residents which was in relation to Highways issues. Members were asked to note that this was a planning consideration which would be addressed through the Planning Application and therefore was not relevant to the process which the Committee was being asked to consider.

As Ward Member for Sutton Elloe, the Chairman invited Councillor C J T H Brewis to address the Committee. Councillor Brewis observed that the success of the Children’s Centre had made this school desirable and therefore he gave full support to the principle of the proposed expansion. The main concern was the access to the school, which was currently via a residential cul-de-sac, but it was felt that this expansion was an opportunity to resolve the access problems whilst improving the school. It was suggested that Councillor Brewis should also raise his concerns about access with the Chairman of the Planning Committee.

Councillor C N Worth, Chair of Governors at Sutton Bridge Westmere Community Primary School, commented that he was pleased to see the application.

The following responses were received to questions raised by Members:-

- i. There was no mention that the school was part of a Hard Federation, although there was not felt to be any negative impact due to this status. The Federation had provided an opportunity to increase the success of the schools which have helped to retain, or improve, attainment levels.

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- ii. As part of the capital development, an assessment of the area would be undertaken, including infrastructure, parking and access issues. The information would be collated and analysed in order to find a way of mitigating any impact on residents.

RESOLVED

1. That the Committee support the proposed expansion of Sutton Bridge Westmere Community Primary School subject to planning permission.
2. That the concerns of the Committee, in relation to access to the school, be forwarded to the Executive Councillor Children's Services and Lifelong Learning but that it be noted that these issues would be addressed through the planning process.

69. SCHOOL ADMISSIONS AND EXCLUSIONS IN LINCOLNSHIRE SCRUTINY REVIEW – DRAFT FINAL REPORT

The Scrutiny Officer, Tracy Johnson, introduced the report which invited the Committee to consider the draft final report arising from the scrutiny review into School Admissions and Exclusions within Lincolnshire.

The Chairman took the opportunity to thank members of the Task and Finish Group for their work and commitment throughout the process.

Feedback in regard to the report was positive and included the following comments:-

- i. It had been a useful process to enable the Task & Finish Group to gain a greater understanding of exclusion activities within schools. In talking to parents, circumstantial evidence had been received that, in some cases, the law had been broken. This, however, could not be proved but it was hoped that this exercise would alert schools to the Council's view that this is a serious matter which will continue to be monitored.
- ii. The exclusions listed within the report were not proven to be illegal. Each case had been well documented with each child being excluded for reasons listed within the legislation. This made the increase in the number of exclusions difficult to explain.
- iii. In relation to exclusions within Primary Schools, there had been no alternative educational provision in Lincoln itself, with alternatives provided in Grantham, Boston and by Solutions 4. To address this issue, the Mary Knox Centre had been renovated in 2012 to be able to provide education for primary age students.
- iv. The Chairman confirmed that parents had suggested that some schools were not fully compliant with the legislation, for example, dissuading them from choosing that schools if their child had special needs. Additionally, it was suggested that some schools were giving children days off as a "cooling down period" or face the threat of exclusion.

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- v. Members were advised of a report published in January 2013 by the Academies Commission, entitled "Unleashing Greatness – Getting the best from an Academised System", which recognised the issues raised by the Task & Finish Group. The report would be circulated via email to Members following the meeting.

RESOLVED

1. That the draft final report into Schools Admissions and Exclusions in Lincolnshire be approved.
2. That the final report should be submitted to the Executive on 5th February 2013, for its consideration and response.

70. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2013

The Scrutiny Officer, Tracy Johnson, presented the Committee's work programme for 2013 where no amendments were made. Further to discussion during the meeting it was agreed to add the following:-

Items to be scheduled

- Community Access to School Facilities – Interim Report
- Budget Update 2013/2014

RESOLVED

1. That the Work Programme be noted and updated as appropriate.
2. That the meeting of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee, scheduled for 19th April 2013, be cancelled due to the close proximity to the County Council elections on 2nd May 2013.

The meeting closed at 12.16pm