



**CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
12 SEPTEMBER 2014**

PRESENT: COUNCILLOR J D HOUGH (CHAIRMAN)

Councillors B Adams (Vice-Chairman), Mrs J Brockway, A G Hagues, J R Hicks, B W Keimach, Ms T Keywood-Wainwright, C R Oxby, Mrs S Ransome, Mrs L A Rollings, Mrs N J Smith, S M Tweedale, L Wootten, Mrs S M Wray, Mrs J M Renshaw and A H Turner MBE JP

Added Members

Church Representatives: Mr P Thompson and Mrs G Wright

Parent Representatives: Mrs E Olivier-Townrow

Councillors: attended the meeting as observers

Officers in attendance:-

Keith Batty (Assistant Director of CfBT Education Services), Matthew Clayton (School Organisation Planning Manager), Maggie Freeman, Jonas Gibson (Commissioning and Development Manager), Tracy Johnson (Scrutiny Officer), Andrew McLean (Service Manager Commissioning), John O'Connor (Service Manager Education Support), Janice Spencer (Assistant Director Safeguarding) and Rachel Wilson (Democratic Services Officer)

27 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE / REPLACEMENT MEMBERS

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J Churchill, S Dodds and R Wootten.

An apology for absence was also received from Mr S Rudman (Church Representative), Debbie Barnes (Executive Director Children's Services), Stuart Carlton (Assistant Director Children's Early Help) and Sally Savage (Chief Commissioning Officer – Children's)

28 DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Mrs E Olivier-Townrow, Added Member, declared that she was employed as a member of staff at Lincoln College.

There were no other declarations of interest at this point in the meeting.

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That the minutes of the meeting held on 25 July 2014 be approved and signed by Chairman as a correct record.

**30 PROPOSAL FOR A NEW PRIMARY ACADEMY IN NORTH HYKEHAM
(SUBMISSION TO SECRETARY OF STATE OF RESULTS AND
EVALUATION OF PROCESS TO IDENTIFY AN OPERATOR)**

The Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee received a report which invited members to consider a report on the Selection of an operator for a new primary academy in North Hykeham (Final Decision) which was due to be considered by the Executive Councillor for Adult Care and Health Services, Children's Services on 26 September 2014.

Marie-Claire Bretherton, the Executive Headteacher of Mount Street Academy was in attendance at the meeting, and gave a short presentation to the Committee in relation to their application to operate the new primary academy in North Hykeham.

It was reported that four operators had put themselves forward for the application process, and the written submissions were assessed against a standard matrix. All four met the minimum standards and went through to phase two of the selection process. Following further evaluation, it was determined that Applicant A met all the required criteria and the evaluation panel wished to recommend them as the preferred operator to the Secretary of State. The Committee was informed that Applicant A was a multi-academy trust and managed a portfolio of 21 Government funded schools in England.

Members were provided with the opportunity to ask questions to the officers present in relation to the information contained within the report, and some of the points raised during discussion included the following:

- Concerns were raised regarding how the new school would impact on pupil numbers at the primary school in South Hykeham. Members were reassured that there would be more than enough new pupils in the area to fill the capacity at both schools;
- The school would open with only 30 reception children, and the school would then grow year on year;
- It was noted that the proposal by the applicant was to name the new academy Manor Farm Academy, and it was queried whether there would be any intention to include farming related subjects in the curriculum. Members were advised that this name was suggested as the land to be used for the development used to belong to the Manor Farm Estate. It was also noted that learning about Lincolnshire and rural issues was also incorporated into the other two academies in Lincoln which were run by this applicant, and it was intended to continue this in the new academy;
- Members were advised that in terms of staff numbers at the new school, there would be about 6/7 members of staff on site to begin with, but these staff

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would be supported by the staff from the other two established academies in Lincoln;

- The capital cost of the new school would be approximately £3.5m, and this would be partly funded by S106 agreement and the Basic Need Grant provided by the Education Funding Agency via the Local Authority. The new school would be built from scratch on land that was currently empty, using a template developed by the Local Authority;
- There was no reason to suspect that the birth rate would decline, and the need for school places in a particular area was based on existing birth rates;
- Concerns were raised regarding whether the Trust was too big to operate this school, and members were advised that the new school would be operated as part of a cluster with the other two schools in Lincoln – Mount Street Academy and the Lincoln Carlton Academy. This cluster would connect back to a larger national body. Hubs were being developed around the country, and in Lincoln the Trust would be operating three schools that would work closely together;
- It was noted that two schools operated by the Trust were in special measures, of these one was the Gleed School in Lincolnshire. However, this school had just received very positive report;
- The new school would be very much associated with both the Mount Street and Lincoln Carlton Academies. One had already received an outstanding Ofsted inspection, and the other was expected to achieve an outstanding inspection;
- The Executive Headteacher informed the Committee that she received a lot of support from the Trust;
- Having a cluster of schools created opportunities for other colleagues to step up and lead which would be beneficial in terms of succession planning for Lincolnshire;
- It was noted that the Education Director for the CfBT Schools Trust was based at the Carlton Academy;
- It was requested whether in future more information could be provided in the report in relation to who the preferred operator was and their background in order to help the Committee make an informed decision. The Committee commented that the presentation it received was very useful;
- Concerns were raised regarding the location for the school on the proposed development, as it was thought important that a school should have a prominent position. The Committee was reassured that the proposed location for the school was a good size and shape of plot of between 8-9 ha and it had a prominent position on the front of the main access road to the development. It was also noted due to the size of the site that there would be room for future-proofing.

RESOLVED

1. That the Committee supported the recommendations to the Executive Councillor as set out in the report;
2. That the following comment be passed to the Executive Councillor:
 - The concerns regarding potential impact on pupil numbers at the primary school in South Hykeham.

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- The need for clarity in future reports regarding the proposed operator of new academies.

31 PERFORMANCE - QUARTER 1 2014/15

Consideration was given to a report which provided the Committee with key performance information for Quarter 1 2014/15 which was relevant to the work of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee.

It was noted that the summary and detailed reports of the performance indicators were being presented in a new format. Members were advised that the changes had been made to show data more clearly for each performance indicator.

Members were guided through the report, with attention specifically drawn to the indicators within the Healthy and Safe commissioning strategy, where six of the indicators were showing as worse than tolerance.

The Committee was provided with the opportunity to ask questions to the officers present in relation to the information contained within the report, and some of the points raised included the following:

- The use of acronyms was highlighted, and it was requested that explanations be included in future;
- Clarity regarding use of the term 'Plan is best' was requested;
- It was commented that it would be useful to see tracking movement on the comparative performance, in the same way as the Lincolnshire Performance;
- It was noted that the rate of complaints in relation to schools had gone up. It was queried whether this was partly due to parents finding it easier to complain. Members were advised that there were now more avenues for parents to complain;
- The methods of capturing and recording complaints had become much more robust. Every complaint now came through the Customer Service Centre (CSC) and was then sent out to the relevant department. Staff were now more pro-active in advising parents and children about their rights to complain;
- The Children and Families Principal Social Worker facilitated a Champion group for social workers and the issue of staff conduct would be highlighted there;
- Concerns were raised regarding the ongoing occurrence of bullying in schools;
- It was commented that it would be useful to see some context in relation to the comparative performance for the indicators;
- In relation to the summary of the most recent Mainstream Ofsted Inspections, concerns were raised regarding the number of schools which were currently judged to be inadequate.

RESOLVED

That the performance information presented be noted.

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UPDATE**

Consideration was given to a report which provided the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee with an overview of the activities of the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Boards Scrutiny Sub-Group, in particular the Sub-Group's consideration of children's safeguarding matters.

The Committee received an update from the Chairman of the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Boards Scrutiny Sub-Group, Councillor C R Oxby, and the following was reported:

- The Lincolnshire Safeguarding Boards Scrutiny Sub-Group last met on 16 July 2014;
- The Scrutiny Sub-Group received an update from the Independent Chair, Chris Cook, on the work of the LSCB and its sub-groups. It was noted that two serious case reviews had been commissioned by the LSCB and would begin shortly;
- The Sub-Group also considered a confidential report from Caroline Mogg, the LSCB's Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Officer, which provided a picture of the current situation in Lincolnshire in relation to child sexual exploitation. This was particularly pertinent given the recent events in Rotherham. It was highlighted that there were no CSE gangs working within Lincolnshire. The Sub-Group would continue to monitor the LSCB's work on CSE and an update would be due in early 2015;
- The next meeting of the Scrutiny Sub-Group was scheduled for 15 October 2014, and would be considering the LSCB's Neglect Policy, and its audits of the Pre-Birth Protocol and Child Protection Conferences.

Members of the Committee were provided with the opportunity to ask questions to the officers present in relation to the information contained within the report and some of the points raised during discussion included the following:

- A lot of work had been undertaken in Lincolnshire around combatting child sexual exploitation. A multi-agency hub (SAFE) had been created, which included representatives from local authority, health, police and education;
- Pro-active work around missing children was also being carried out;
- The police problem profile did not indicate that there were any gangs operating in Lincolnshire;
- The Assistant Director for Children's Safeguarding would look into whether the LSCB's e-learning course on safeguarding could be made available to Members;
- There was a 'hotline' number that children could use to contact the local authority, which was actively promoted;
- The Committee was reassured that Lincolnshire had robust processes in place for placing children in other local authorities, but notification remained the statutory duty of the placing authority;
- There were concerns that there were children being placed in Lincolnshire that the local authority was not informed about. It was important to raise

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awareness of this issue particularly with schools, so that if they became aware of new pupils they could alert the local authority;

- There were 430 children from out of county which were registered with the local authority, and they were all monitored by the placing authority;
- One area of concern was Looked after Children who were placed back within the home environment, and then moved from county to county, as they were more difficult to monitor;
- It was requested that the Committee received an update in relation to Child Sexual Exploitation at its next meeting.

RESOLVED

1. That the draft minutes of the meeting of the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Boards Scrutiny Sub-Group, held on 16 July 2014, be noted;
2. That the Committee receive an update on Child Sexual Exploitation at its next meeting.

33 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES FOR 16 - 19 (25) EDUCATION AND TRAINING FOR 2015/16

Consideration was given to a report which invited the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee to consider a report on the Strategic Priorities for 16 – 19 (25) Education and Training for 2015/16 which was due to be considered by the Executive on 7 October 2014.

The Committee was guided through the report by the Head of Service 14-19, and the following was highlighted:

- Members had previously been concerned regarding the drop in the participation rate at 17 years of age. It was reported that from 2015, young people would be required to remain in education or training until their 18th birthday, but they would be encouraged to stay until they completed their learning;
- The local authority would continue to support young people who were NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training);
- It was thought that young people were choosing courses for the wrong reasons, and schools would continue to be encouraged to develop careers guidance;
- Members were reassured that colleges worked hard to re-engage with young people who had dropped out of their courses early. There was a bigger issue when young people dropped out further into a course as it was too late for them to start a new course. Officers were trying to persuade colleges to have more flexible start dates;
- A survey would be carried out to examine how public transport and timetables impacted on a young person and their participation;
- There was a duty to encourage young people to participate, but the local authority could not take any action if the young person chose not to participate;

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- Even though young people were staying in a learning environment for longer, at 19, they were not always going into employment;
- The Employment and Skills Board (ESB) was working hard to encourage providers to offer courses which were beneficial to the economic growth of the county;

Members were provided with the opportunity to ask questions to the officers present in relation to the information contained within the report, and some of the points raised during discussion included the following:

- The end of statutory education was still 16 years of age;
- One of the barriers to participation was that young people would arrive to start a course, and be told that it was no longer running;
- It was noted that Lincoln College had been shocked by the number of applications it had received from 16 year olds at the end of August;
- A survey was conducted every summer with schools around what careers guidance was being provided to pupils. Most schools in Lincolnshire were purchasing some careers provision from the local authority;
- Equestrian courses would continue to run at Bishop Burton College at their new location on the Riseholme campus. It was believed that the needs of students would continue to be met at all campuses;
- A lot of funding for further education would come through the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and so it would be important to have good links;
- It was noted that in terms of a young person's progression from further education a lot depended on A level results achieved;
- The majority of secondary schools were now academies and so the County Council had a limited amount of influence regarding the offer to pupils;
- More would be done to influence the colleges in terms of visibility and advertising of the courses offered;
- Officers would start working on an action plan immediately after the strategic priorities report had been considered by the Executive;
- It was commented that Connexions had been a very good service, but it was noted that it was a government decision to remove the Connexions service;
- Work was ongoing with the Employment and Skills Board to identify what the future skills needs for Lincolnshire would be;

It was suggested that the recommendations be agreed and the Committee looked forward to receiving the completed action plan. It was hoped that there would be improved outcomes in 2015.

RESOLVED

1. That the Committee support the recommendations to the Executive set out in the report;
2. That the following comment be passed to the Executive:
 - The Committee looked forward to seeing the action plan and hoped that the new approach would lead to better outcomes for next year.

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Consideration was given to a report which provided the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee with an overview of commissioning in Lincolnshire, specifically focussed on the role of the Children's Services Commissioning Team and the governance arrangements for joint commissioning.

Members were advised that commissioning was outcome focussed rather than being service focussed. By specifying the outcomes to be achieved and the improvements required in those outcomes, providers would be encouraged to innovate to achieve this. The Children's Services Commissioning Team would oversee all phases of the commissioning cycle.

It was reported that there were currently 228 contracts with 177 external providers, which were overseen by Children's Services. A number of service reviews were planned for the future to ensure that the best value and outcomes were being achieved.

RESOLVED

1. That the content of the report be noted;
2. That members of the Committee would attend the workshop to be held following the Committee meeting.

**35 CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK
PROGRAMME 2014/15**

The Committee received a report which provided the opportunity for Members to consider the work programme for the coming year.

Further to earlier discussions, an update on Child Sexual Exploitation was added to the agenda for the meeting on 24 October 2014.

Members were informed that the report on Child Poverty had not been allocated as the Child Poverty Strategy needed to be revised following newly published guidance on Child Poverty from the Government. Officers requested member involvement in drafting the new strategy through an informal working group. Councillors B Adams, Mrs J Brockway, J D Hough and Mrs N J Smith agreed to be on the informal working group. There was also a workshop event taking place on 22 September 2014 between 9.30 am and 12 noon at Bishop Grosseteste University on the Child Poverty Strategy, and the volunteers were invited to attend. Councillors J D Hough and B Adams expressed an interest in receiving an invite for this event.

RESOLVED

1. That the content of the work programme be agreed;
2. That the content of the Children's Services Forward Plan be noted.

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36 CONSIDERATION OF EXEMPT INFORMATION

RESOLVED

That in accordance with Section 100 (A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting on the grounds that the following item of business contained exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12 A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended.

37 GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT SERVICE

Consideration was given to a report which set out the governance arrangements for the School Improvement Service.

Officers responded to a number of questions and concerns raised by the Committee.

RESOLVED

That the content of the exempt report be noted.

The meeting closed at 12.50 pm