

Lancashire County Council

Education Scrutiny Committee

**Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday, 26th September, 2017 at 10.30 am
in Cabinet Room 'C' - The Duke of Lancaster Room, County Hall, Preston**

Present:

County Councillor Christian Wakeford (Chair)

County Councillors

M Dad	E Nash
A Cheetham	J Parr
S Clarke	J Potter
A Gardiner	J Rear
N Hennessy	D T Smith
A Kay	P Steen
Ms S Malik	C Towneley

Co-opted members

Mr Ian Beck, Representing RC Schools
Mrs Janet Hamid, Representing Parent Governors
(Secondary)
Mr Kenvyn Wales, Representing Free Church Schools
Mr John Withington, Representing Parent Governors
(Primary)

County Councillor Jean Parr replaced County Councillor Jenny Molineux for this meeting

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Dr Sam Johnson.

2. Constitution: Membership; Chair and Deputy Chair; and Terms of Reference of the Education Scrutiny Committee

The report presented set out the constitution, membership, chair and deputy chair and terms of reference of the Education Scrutiny Committee for the municipal year 2017/18.

Resolved: The Committee note:

- i. The appointment of County Councillors Christian Wakeford and Munsif Dad as Chair and Deputy Chair of the Committee for the remainder of the 2017/18 municipal year;
- ii. The new membership of the Committee following the County Council's Annual Meeting on 25 May 2017; and
- iii. The updated Terms of Reference of the Committee.

3. Disclosure of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

County Councillors Stephen Clarke and Andrew Gardiner disclosed non-pecuniary interests as they both had children in Lancashire schools.

County Councillors Ann Cheetham, Peter Steen, Christian Wakeford and Co-Opted Member Mr Kenvyn Wales disclosed non-pecuniary interests as they were all school governors.

4. Minutes of the meeting held on 28 March 2017

Resolved: The minutes from the meeting held on the 28 March 2017 be confirmed as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

5. Update from the Chair

Members were advised that in relation to the Summer Born Policy, it was felt it was not appropriate to review the policy at this time due to it undergoing a judicial review. It was confirmed that it would remain on the work plan to be looked at in a future meeting.

In addition, members were informed that a review was being undertaken on the SEND Transport Policy and would come back to the committee at a more appropriate future meeting.

It was reported that at the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee meeting on 6 September a request was made to establish a task group to look at policies around supporting pupils at school with medical conditions. The request was agreed at the Internal Scrutiny Committee meeting on 22 September for a joint task group with the Education Scrutiny Committee. It was confirmed that a request for nominations would be circulated to Group Secretaries and co-opted members.

6. School Place Provision Strategy 2017/18- 2019/20

The Chair welcomed Mel Ormesher, Head of Asset Management; and Ben Terry, School Planning Principal, to the meeting.

The report presented explained that the School Place Provision Strategy 2017/18 to 2019/20 replaced the Strategy for the Provision of School Places and Schools' Capital Investment 2015/16 to 2017/18, which was last published in 2015.

Members were advised that the strategy took into account SEND provision within a mainstream school setting and not within SEND Schools as this was subject to a separate strategy.

It was reported that some schools had reclassified rooms used specifically for art or music or ICT rooms for general teaching. This, and other flexible use of space, were options which more schools needed to consider going forward. It was vital to bring spare capacity into schools.

Members were informed that the Education Contribution Methodology had been consulted upon with all the borough councils and local planning authorities. It identified a method which was in line with planning regulations and Department for Education requirements in terms of securing education contributions to provide for the school places. A link to the Education Contribution Methodology is provided below:

<http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/media/324206/education-methodology-may-2016.pdf>

It was confirmed that specific pupil yields varied and were based on research. There was good engagement with local authorities to see where the needs were. It was also highlighted that until a development had planning permission, it did not get accounted for in pupil projections.

The Committee was informed that the SEND service had secured a capital allocation. Some of this would be used to develop a county wide consultation to discover what the mainstream and SEND provisions were throughout Lancashire. In addition the authority was currently undertaking a series of site visits in order to fully understand the capacity issues and develop a more detailed strategy accordingly.

It was reported that there was a definite need for alternative provision and this had been recognised in the current strategy. It was also an area that needed to be looked at in terms of the capital allocation. Local authorities were responsible for arranging suitable education for permanently excluded pupils and for other pupils who, because of illness or other reasons, would not receive suitable education without such arrangements being made.

It was confirmed that the accelerated migration in East Lancashire was over and above what had been forecast and a review of the situation had been brought forward including the review for the distances that pupils had to travel to schools. In terms of migration, the team was working with borough councils and was also engaging with schools and pupil access to obtain figures.

Resolved: That the;

- i. School Place Provision Strategy 2017/18 – 2019/20 be noted.
- ii. Supporting data will be updated within the timescale of the Strategy to reflect changes on an annual basis be noted.
- iii. Challenges to providing school places contained within Section 6 of the Strategy, and offer recommendations to help the County council as Education Authority meet these challenges be considered.
- iv. Education Contribution Methodology be distributed to all members of the Education Scrutiny Committee.

7. Report on School Appeals

The Chair welcomed Angela Esslinger, Complaints and Appeals Manager, to the table. The report presented gave an update on the current position of school appeals activity and issues.

It was reported that the Department of Education had just released school funding guidance which included clarification about the issues of school charging for different categories. Officers were currently assessing the guidance and would brief the relevant cabinet member before consulting the Schools Forum on the preferred way forward.

Members requested that when appeal letters were sent out to appellants it was made very clear that councillors and governors were not involved in the appeal process. They also requested that the team look at the geographical positions of the appointments panel for easy accessibility for parents, especially using public transport. It was felt that LCC buildings should be used more to keep costs down.

Lancashire Association of Local Councils could be a possibility used in obtaining volunteers for the independent panel, by feeding the information out to parish councils.

Resolved: That the;

- i. Report presented be noted.
- ii. Potential recommendations in relation to matters for consideration outlined in the report be noted.

8. Education Scrutiny Committee Work Plan 2017/18

The work plan for the Education Scrutiny Committee for the 2017/18 municipal year was presented to the Committee. The topics included were identified at the work planning workshop held on 21 June 2017.

Regarding Item 6 – Implementation of the School Places Provision Strategy, two topics raised in this report were Alternative Provision, and the School Improvements Programme. It was decided that these could possibly be discussed in greater depth at the March 2018 meeting.

It was felt that the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee work plan should also be included in future reports.

Resolved: That the report presented be noted.

9. Urgent Business

There were no items of Urgent Business.

10. Date of the Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Education Scrutiny Committee is due to be held on Tuesday 28 November 2017 at 10.30am, Cabinet Room C, County Hall, Preston.

I Young
Director of Governance, Finance
and Public Services

County Hall
Preston