

Lancashire County Council

Education Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday, 3rd March, 2020 at 10.30 am in Cabinet Room 'C' - The Duke of Lancaster Room, County Hall, Preston

Present:

County Councillor Munsif Dad BEM (Chair)

County Councillors

J Burrows	E Nash
S Clarke	J Potter
B Dawson	D T Smith
J Eaton	D Stansfield
A Kay	P Steen
J Mein	M Salter

Co-opted members

Mrs Janet Hamid, Representing Parent Governors
(Secondary)
Simon Smith, Representing RC Schools
Dr Sam Johnson, Representing CE Schools
Mr John Withington, Representing Parent Governors
(Primary)

County Councillor Joan Burrows replaced County Councillor Christian Wakeford for this meeting.

County Councillor Munsif Dad as Deputy Chair of the committee, chaired this meeting in the absence of County Councillor Christian Wakeford.

On behalf of the committee, County Councillor Dad thanked County Councillor Wakeford for his chairmanship of the committee and wished him well in his position as a newly elected Member of Parliament. A new Chair for the committee would be appointed at the Full Council's AGM meeting to be held on 21 July 2020.

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from County Councillor Anne Cheetham.

2. Disclosure of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests

County Councillors Peter Steen, Jennifer Mein and Joan Burrows each declared a non-pecuniary interest as they are school governors.

County Councillor Jennifer Mein further declared a non-pecuniary interest as she is a board member at Preston College.

3. Minutes of the meetings held on 30 January 2020 and 5 February 2020

Resolved: The minutes from the meetings held on 30 January 2020 and 5 February 2020 be confirmed and as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

4. Early Years Strategy 2020- 2023

The Chair welcomed Sarah Callaghan, Director of Education and Skills and Sakthi Karunanithi, Director of Public Health to the meeting.

The report presented provided an update on the development of Lancashire's Early Years Strategy. In presenting the report, members were provided with a presentation that covered the key priorities and objectives for the Early Years Strategy, including the outcomes of each of these key priorities. A copy of the presentation can be found at Appendix 'C' of the report.

Responding to the report and presentation, the following concerns and key issues were raised by the committee:

Members' raised concerns regarding the pressures being faced by teachers, in teaching and looking after children with complex medical needs. In response, Members' were informed that by focussing on early years this should help reduce the dependency on teachers. This included additional support for Early Years Providers and around language and speech therapies.

Members' were keen to learn more about the current collaboration arrangements utilised by Lancashire County Council and different community groups. It was noted that the county council is currently in the process of setting up a network of different groups, which included schools, nurseries, community groups, health visitors, etc. to ensure support for a child was being given at a local level and in their own community. Members' requested an update on the progress of setting up the networks to come to a future meeting of the committee.

Resolved: That;

- i. The feedback provided on the report be noted; and
- ii. An update on the progress of the local networks be provided at a future meeting of the Education Scrutiny Committee.

5. Developing the Approach and Provision for Children and Young People with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

Sarah Callaghan, Director of Education and Skills presented information setting out the actions being taken to enable the county council to fulfil its responsibilities for ensuring the sufficiency of provision for children and young people with

special educational needs and disabilities over the next five years. It was reported that the actions detailed in the report was consistent with the principles agreed by Cabinet in August 2019. A copy of the presentation is attached to the minutes.

In relation to the provision of SEND units attached to mainstream schools, Members' raised concerns about the condition of some of the existing school buildings. Members were informed that schools received a set of criteria as part of the expression of interest process which would help to establish whether the school was fit for purpose.

Members' were advised that the submissions deadline for applications was 20 March 2020 and responses back to the schools chosen was 3 April 2020. Information on the schools chosen would be shared with members at a later date.

Members' expressed concerns about the readiness of staff and ensuring that they have the necessary training and qualifications needed. It was noted that the training being provided for staff was constantly under review to establish the impact and the uptake of the training.

Commenting on the report, Members requested further information on the proposed schools locality network which was aiming to bring education and children services teams together. It was noted that to date, there had been 30 proposed locality networks, and aims for these networks to be established by September 2020. In terms of models being used elsewhere, members were informed about a paper produced by the Isos Partnership from the Local Government Association which is looking at other models, including case studies. A copy of this paper would be circulated around members of the committee.

Resolved: That;

- i. The feedback on the information presented in the report be noted;
- ii. Information on the schools chosen for attached units be shared with the committee at a later date; and
- iii. The paper produced by the Isos Partnership from the Local Government Association be circulated around the committee.

6. Schools Causing Concerns Task and Finish Group Final Report

The Chair presented the Schools Causing Concerns Task and Finish Group Final Report to the meeting.

The report summarised the findings from the task group work which has sought to further understand what constitutes a school categorised as 'causing concern', the provision to these schools from the county council and the pressures faced by schools.

In presenting the report, the Chair gave his thanks to all members of the task group and to all the officers involved in producing the report.

Resolved: That;

- i. The report be noted; and
- ii. The recommendations of the task and finish group, as set out at Appendix 'A' of the report be supported.

7. Education Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2019/20

The work plan for the Education Scrutiny Committee for the 2019/20 municipal year was presented to the Committee. The topics included were identified at the work planning workshop held on 22 July 2019.

It was noted that a work programming session would be arranged for members of the committee shortly after the county councils AGM meeting in May 2020, to look at the work programme for the next municipal year.

The committee requested an update on the School Improvement Model and the Early Years Strategy to be presented to the committee before the end of 2020.

Resolved: The report and work plan presented be noted.

8. Urgent Business

There were no items of Urgent Business.

9. Date of the Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Education Scrutiny Committee is due to be held on 7 July 2020 at 10.30am in Cabinet Room C at County Hall, Preston.

L Sales
Director of Corporate Services

County Hall
Preston