



PEOPLE OVERVIEW COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 17 November 2021

10.00 - 11.45 am in the Shrewsbury/Oswestry Room, Shirehall, Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury, Shropshire, SY2 6ND

Responsible Officer: Ashley Kendrick

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Present

Shropshire Councillors

Councillor Peggy Mullock (Chairman)

Councillors Claire Wild (Vice Chairman), Nat Green, Ruth Houghton, Hilary Luff and Kevin Pardy

Co-Opted Members (Voting)

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21 **Apologies and Substitutions**

Apologies had been received from Sian Lines, Diocese of Hereford and Councillor David Evans (who then joined remotely).

22 **Disclosable Pecuniary Interests**

There were no declarations of pecuniary interest.

23 **Minutes**

RESOLVED:

That subject to a vote of thanks to Karen Bradshaw for her service being added, the minutes of the meetings held on 29 September 2021 be approved as a true record and signed by the Chair.

24 **Public Question Time**

There were no questions from members of the public.

25 **Members' Question Time**

There were no questions received from members.

26 **Schools Rebuilding Programme**

Phil Wilson, Service Manager – Business Support – Learning and Skills, provided Members with an update on the Schools Rebuilding Programme; a ten year capital programme announced in June 2020 by the Prime Minister.

Two local schools had been identified for either significant refurbishment or replacement as part of the programme which will see 500 schools being invested in; Belvidere School in Shrewsbury and St. Andrew's CE Primary in Shifnal. Members were advised that a planning application for Belvidere was approved on 31st March and it was hoped the works would be completed within 24 months. It was hoped St. Andrew's would be completed by March 2024.

There was much to be celebrated due to the investment in local schools, including a project at Meole Brace, Featherbed Lane, Bowbrook and Sundorne.

27 School Exclusions

Nathan Jones, Service Manager SEND, provided members with a report on the levels of permanent exclusions in Shropshire and how this compares to the national rates of exclusions, which has been increasing steadily since 2012.

He advised members that the number of children being excluded who had special educational needs was above the national average; in 2020/2021, there were 75 permanent exclusions

Members noted:

- Exclusions are used as a last resort
- They have an impact on life chances and opportunities for gaining qualifications.
- Costs per pupil range from £2,200 - £39,200 in addition to standard educational costs
- There was now a focus on including and a review of processes to ensure access to full time education.
- A new draft exclusions policy was at consultation stage
- Collaborative working with different agencies is assisting in the understanding of factors driving behaviour in schools, providing resources to meet the needs of our children and enabling investment in their future.
- Covid has had an impact on children's social opportunities
- There was a gap in support for teachers to develop a strategy to deal with behaviours in the classroom.
- The School Improvement Team meet with schools to identify strengths and weaknesses in schools, pick up patterns and trends and look at alternatives to exclusion.
- Schools would be held to account if it is felt exclusions were not being managed properly.
- The vast majority of children who are excluded are already recipients of other services, such as social services.

Members requested that exclusion training opportunities were made available for School Governors.

Concern was raised regarding investment in the Tuition, Medical and Behaviour Support Service (TMBSS) and capacity. Members were advised that a new SEND free school in Bowbrook would alleviate pressures on organisations such as TMBSS. A defined integration plan would also allow spaces to be made available once placements had been found.

Members further requested that a progress update was brought back to a future meeting with regards to investment and capacity at TMBSS.

28 Corporate Parenting Panel

Sonya Miller, Assistant Director of Children's Social Care and Safeguarding gave a presentation on the role of the Council as a Corporate Parent and highlighted the Corporate Parenting principles, including acting in the best interests of children, promoting the physical and mental health and wellbeing of those children and young people and making sure they have access to services.

Members noted:

- As corporate parents, all councillors should seek to stay informed about children in the council's care, and care leavers. However, the establishment of a corporate parenting panel can provide a useful forum for regular, detailed discussion of issues, and a positive link with children in care councils and other forums.
- Members of the corporate parenting panel can also use their position to raise awareness of the role amongst colleagues, and provide support to the lead member for children's services

Members were encouraged to sign the pledge which would be coming to a future full council meeting and support the Panel as their work was hugely important and extremely rewarding. It was also suggested that the Corporate Parenting principles are circulated to members in the new year. It was felt that members should be reminded of their responsibility as a Corporate Parent and that they continue to have responsibility to care leavers.

Officers and Councillors were thanked for their support and the huge amount of work which had already taken place.

It was agreed that:

- The Corporate Parenting Board returns to Scrutiny in 6 months – May 2022
- The Chair presents a report of the performance progress and any areas of concern.
- The Corporate Parenting Board presents a report that evidences the Virtual School and Sub Group progress against Priorities

- The voice of young people is heard and demonstrate their influence on Service Development.
- The Corporate Parenting Board will provide updates in relation to the areas for development.
- The Corporate Parenting Board demonstrates activity and challenge of where the Board has held the partnership to account.
- The Corporate Parenting Board reports of the achievements of children and young people.
- The “Mind of My Own” app is shared with Members.

29 Work Programme

RESOLVED:

To agree the proposed committee work programme attached as appendix 1.

It was suggested that children as young carers be added to the work programme to see what support is available to them.

30 Date of Next Meeting

Members were reminded that the next meeting of the People Overview Committee will be held on Wednesday 19th January 2022 at 2.00pm.

Signed (Chairman)

Date: