

Minutes

FAMILIES, HEALTH AND WELLBEING SELECT COMMITTEE

31 March 2022

Meeting held at Committee Room 6 - Civic Centre,
High Street, Uxbridge



	<p>Committee Members Present: Councillors Philip Corthorne (Chairman), Heena Makwana (Vice-Chairman) Judith Cooper, Kerri Prince (Opposition Lead), Jan Sweeting, Colleen Sullivan and Steve Tuckwell</p> <p>Co - Opted Member: Tony Little, Roman Catholic Representative</p> <p>LBH Officers Present: Anisha Teji (Democratic Services Officer), Dan Kennedy (Central Services), Kelly O'Neill (Director of Public Health), Rani Dady (Education Manager), Tia Sohi (SEND Team Manager), Jayne Mumford (Head of SEND), Kathryn Angelini (Virtual School Head) and Sarah Phillips (School Place and Planning Project Manager)</p>
80.	<p>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND TO REPORT THE PRESENCE OF ANY SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (<i>Agenda Item 1</i>)</p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Becky Haggar with Councillor Colleen Sullivan substituting.</p> <p>Apologies for absence were also received from Councillor Paula Rodrigues with Councillor Steve Tuckwell substituting.</p>
81.	<p>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN MATTERS COMING BEFORE THIS MEETING (<i>Agenda Item 2</i>)</p> <p>None.</p>
82.	<p>TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (<i>Agenda Item 3</i>)</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the minutes from the meeting on 2 February 2022 be approved as an accurate record.</p>
83.	<p>TO CONFIRM THAT THE ITEMS OF BUSINESS MARKED AS PART I WILL BE CONSIDERED IN PUBLIC AND THAT THE ITEMS MARKED AS PART II WILL BE CONSIDERED IN PRIVATE (<i>Agenda Item 4</i>)</p> <p>It was confirmed that there were no Part II items and that all business would therefore be conducted in public.</p>

84. **COVID UPDATE - VERBAL** (*Agenda Item 5*)

The Director of Public Health provided a verbal update on Covid in the Borough covering areas such as the current position, analysis of the impact of Covid on different communities, legacy work undertaken and how learning was used to inform future ways of working with residents.

It was reported that the Borough's Health Protection Board (HPB) was an effective partnership forum that led a multi-agency response to the pandemic. The Council and partners had supported residents in isolation, undertaken contact and trace, supported and managed outbreaks in care and school settings and rolled out the vaccination programme.

It was noted that the London Borough of Hillingdon was a national leader in supporting arrivals to the UK.

The Committee was informed that the current rate of infection was 598 per 100,000 population and in Hillingdon there had been 1047 new confirmed cases of Covid in the last seven days. Hillingdon ranked 25/32 out of London Boroughs with the highest rates of Covid cases. The rates had been impacted by the lifting of restrictions and it was noted that the rates remained high amongst communities where testing was consistent. The Committee also heard about the rates of Covid in care settings and hospitals.

It was highlighted that Covid remained prevalent and transmission rates were still high. The Committee heard about the ways Hillingdon had learnt from the pandemic and how data captured informed future planning. The vaccination programme had delivered its intention of protecting vulnerable people albeit boosters and additional vaccinations were required to maintain antibodies and protection levels. Further information was provided regarding targeting risk groups and deceased rates. Vaccination was the seventh highest in the London Borough of Hillingdon with 75% of residents receiving their first vaccination. There were 74,000 people who were yet to have a first vaccination however work was still ongoing through community engagement.

The HPB had now reset its terms of reference to focus on moving forward and tackling wider health protection areas.

In response to Member questions around vaccination take ups, it was explained that this was an ongoing offer. Motivation was different for different people and this was also dependent on government policies. Tourism and the ability to be able to travel was a key factor for some people receiving vaccinations. Community engagement with faith leaders and practitioners took place to encourage the uptake of vaccinations.

It was acknowledged that schools had experienced a considerable loss of learning. The Department for Education had published competency frameworks with schools and had detailed measures that needed to be put in place to manage outbreaks. Schools contacted Public Health when help was required and increasing the vaccination of adults in schools was a highly effective way in managing outbreaks.

In terms of life post Covid, the national direction of travel was living safely with the virus. There were challenges with testing levels and economic implications. However, there were measures in place through the vaccination programme, regular testing and robust infection control measures and this level of response had to be maintained in specific health care settings. It was suggested that there would be seasonal variations with Covid number varying and new variants that emerged. The HPB was now

beginning to focus on prioritising other health services such as cancer screening, other vaccinations and blood pressure checks that all contributed to long term conditions and created healthier communities. Working together effectively through joint partnership was emphasised.

The Committee was informed that additional information would be circulated to Members containing accurate up to date data. Members were encouraged by the work undertaken so far and thanked the Director of Public Health for the update.

RESOLVED: That the Committee noted the verbal update on Covid.

85. **STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN HILLINGDON 2020/2021** (*Agenda Item 6*)

The Corporate Director of Central Services, Virtual School Head, Education Manager, Head of SEND and SEND Team Manager presented the annual report on Standards and Quality of Education in Hillingdon 2020/21. The report provided an overview on the standards and quality of education across Hillingdon schools and settings for Hillingdon's children, young people and adults.

It was noted that the report usually focused primarily on attainment, progress and achievement for the preceding academic year along with references to wider measures of educational success. However, due to the changes of statutory school tests and examinations during Covid-19, there was limited new data available in this report. Officers had therefore used the last published data from 2018/19 and provided updated contextual information. The report would be considered by Cabinet at its meeting on 21 April 2022.

The Committee was informed that the local education partnership would provide the platform to further improve education outcomes.

Key points across education services were highlighted to the Committee.

It was reported that schools had been using internal data to measure education outcomes. The Committee heard that the Covid recovery had been supported with closing the gap, 14 schools had been placed on the schools at risk register and Ofsted inspections had remained stable and in line with England. The education improvement four tier support and challenge model had a great impact on maintained schools and schools that were under performing had termly challenged task meetings and visits from Education Advisors, resulting in impact reports and support plans. There was a strong focus on collaboration and regular termly meetings took place to ensure a 'One Council' approach. Members also heard about the mental health support programmes and Post-16 digital brochure. There was a focus on the Black Caribbean and White British underachieving cohorts for the next few years, along with cross working with the Youth Justice Service.

In terms of virtual school achievements, it was highlighted that children at KS4 attained average levels of 28, which was five grades higher than the national average. KS2 pupils also met expected levels of progress. There had been a reduction in NEET figures, attendance was higher than national averages for Looked After Children, and there was a higher level of KS3 pupils moving onto university. Fixed term exclusion rate had continued a four year downward trend. Children Missing Education figures had decreased, exclusions were down 7% and attendance of all children was in line with statistics.

The SEND updates were outlined, and it was highlighted that the statutory compliance of 20 week plans had increased from 22% in late 2022 to 87%, 99% in phase transfer in pre 16 had been met, Published Admission Numbers had been adjusted across schools to avoid pressured or SEND magnet schools. It was noted that 592 EHC needs assessments had been received and annual reviews had increased. A free training programme had been developed for all stakeholders and integrated half termly meetings took place where data sharing was used in early years to adopt a One Council approach. The draft SEND strategy and SEND sufficiency strategies were due to be launched for consultation and the team were preparing for an impending Ofsted inspection.

In response to Member questions around data, it was noted that the London Exclusion Network group was working well and the number of exclusions compared to neighbours was high. It was accepted figures were high and as a result, the PAN London group was initiated by Hillingdon to explore and investigate why figures differed. Investigations were ongoing into managed move processes to identify if insight could be provided. Additional funding was in the process of being sought to target intervention.

Although the report made reference to National, London and Statistical Neighbours' data, it was confirmed that some data is only available for National. Where London or Statistical Neighbours' data is unavailable, the Data team have referenced this. Soft intelligent and local data had been used to receive data about the 14 schools that were on the risk register. The four-tier model, was used to make improvements and take action for maintained schools. Where there was continued underperformance, the Council used its local powers of intervention to issue warning notices.

During Member discussions it was noted that a recent Ofsted inspection about a special school had not been included in the report as the report only contained information from the academic year of 2020 – 21. The Committee was assured that officers were working closely with the school in question and this would feature in the 2021/22 report.

Questions were asked around partnership arrangements and it was explained that the new partnership arrangements involved a working party consisting of Headteachers, Council Officers, and an independent provider commissioned jointly by schools and the Council. This has enabled equal voices and collaboration from all partners.

A working model has been developed for the Primary phase. The Secondary model stage is currently being designed with Secondary Headteachers from the Hillingdon Association of Secondary Heads(HASH).

It was emphasised that there was a real commitment from schools to improve education outcomes for children in the Borough allowing school to school led support to share resources as and when required.

Although there had been good achievements, there had been many challenges as a result of the pandemic, such as an increase in electively home educated pupils.

In term so monitoring mental health in schools, it was noted that the mental health initiative started in 2020 with national training, feedback was sought from schools and there had been a second year of national funding used to provide accredited mental health first aid training. The funding was also used to recruit a mental health lead

expert for this academic year to provide individual schools / Trusts with customised support.

In terms of school exclusions, it was explained that 65% of pupils that had special education needs had predominantly been excluded due to social, mental and health reasons. To manage this, schools were asked to look at behaviour management plans and local strategies to assess pupils that seemed withdrawn. Schools were also asked to provide reasonable adjustments and there had been a lot of engagement from schools for outreach and help.

During Member questions, it was noted that an offensive weapons protocol was being developed and was due to be launched in Summer 2022. A task and finish group was being established to manage the protocol. It was also confirmed that the partnership modal and internal data was used to support more able individuals.

Further information would be provided on the number of children that went to early years settings and the number of children referred to the fair access panel.

Although a form of words was suggested for Cabinet, it was agreed that this would be finalised in consultation with the Labour Lead.

Officers were thanked for the preparing the report and having regard to previous feedback provided.

RESOLVED:

- 1. That the report be noted.**
- 2. That the final wording of the Committee's comments be delegated to the clerk, in consultation with the Chairman and Opposition lead.**

86. **QUARTERLY SCHOOL PLACES PLANNING UPDATE** (*Agenda Item 7*)

The Corporate Director for Central Services and the School Place Planning Project Manager introduced the report and provided an overview of the latest quarterly update on school places.

It was reported that primary rolls were still experiencing some movement. The January 2022 census analysis had not been not yet completed. All resident pupils including 105 with Education Health Care Plans had been offered a place. Around half of primary schools continued to be full and many of the others had empty places in classes, but a few faced a greater decline in rolls and in the September 2022 intake.

Demand was still rising for specialist places for pupils with Education Health Care Plans. It was reported that plans and delivery were underway to expand special schools and now a further programme of new places had been prepared as a key part of the Council's DSG Recovery Programme, and a bid for further capital had been submitted to the Department for Education.

During Member discussions, it was noted the number of unprecedented in year applications occurred during August 2021 until October 2021, and then slowed down. Although the Council received the highest number yet of Year 7 secondary schools applications for September 2022, all pupils were made an offer on National Offer Day. The 120 pupils that applied after the October 2021 deadline were sent offers more recently.

In terms of the DSG safety valve process, it was clarified that the LA had made a capital bid for around 22 million pounds and a new special free school, this was in addition to the revenue element of the safety valve agreement.

It was noted that the Department for Education was involved in the process of identifying suitable locations for free schools and these needed to be delivered by academy trusts. The costs in the rise of construction delivery were also noted. It was clarified that 'alignment' was related to new staff posts being created and a dedicated board to deliver the programme and govern the process. Support was also being offered around early intervention in school place planning.

Concerns were raised regarding pressures of school places in the south of the Borough with many pupils choosing to travel to the north of the Borough. Concerns were also noted in relation to 230 pupils not receiving one of their preferences, noting often this was to schools in other LAs. It was questioned why the new school was being developed in the north of the Borough and it was explained that many factors needed to be taken into account such as parental preference. When it was bid for, the greatest demand was in the north of the Borough but there had been difficulties in identifying a suitable location in the north and so also the south had been searched for a site large enough, with no success.

Officers agreed to provide the January 2022 census data by school when it was ready and a breakdown of where the pupils lived who did not receive an offer of one of their preferences.

The Committee commended officers for their work in this challenging area.

The Schools Place Planning Project Manager was thanked for their work and wished well for the future.

RESOLVED: That the Committee noted the update and actions underway to support parents and schools and questioned officers about the update.

87. **CABINET FORWARD PLAN** (*Agenda Item 8*)

RESOLVED: That the forward plan be noted.

88. **WORK PROGRAMME** (*Agenda Item 9*)

The Committee was keen to receive further updates on youth services and early years and children's centres. Members requested that an update on youth services was provided at the meeting on 20 April 2022. It was confirmed that Democratic Services were liaising with officers to arrange a suitable time for updates to the Committee.

RESOLVED: That the update and work programme be noted.

The meeting, which commenced at 7.00 pm, closed at 8.54 pm.

These are the minutes of the above meeting. For more information on any of the resolutions please contact Anisha Teji on 01895 277655. Circulation of these minutes is to Councillors, Officers, the Press and Members of the Public.

