

## Minutes

### EDUCATION & CHILDREN'S SERVICES POLICY OVERVIEW COMMITTEE

21 October 2010

Meeting held at Committee Room 5 - Civic Centre,  
High Street, Uxbridge UB8 1UW



HILLINGDON  
LONDON

	<p><b>Committee Members Present:</b> Councillors Catherine Dann Judith Cooper John Hensley Brian Crowe Peter Curling Kuldip Lakhmana</p> <p><b>Representative Member from Roman Catholic Diocesan:</b> Tony Little.</p> <p><b>Witnesses Present:</b> Tom Murphy – Head of Youth &amp; Connexions, Alison Moore – 14 – 19 Manager</p> <p><b>LBH Officers Present:</b> Anna Crispin – Deputy Director for Learning, Effectiveness and Major Transformation, Venetia Rogers – School Organisations Manager, Gill Brice – Democratic Services</p> <p><b>Also Present:</b> Cllr Ray Graham</p>	
11.	<p><b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b> (<i>Agenda Item 1</i>)</p> <p>There were no apologies for absence.</p>	
12.	<p><b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN MATTERS COMING BEFORE THIS MEETING.</b> (<i>Agenda Item 2</i>)</p> <p>Councillor Judith Cooper declared a Personal Interest in Agenda Item 8 – School Places Update as she was a Governor of Charville Foundation Primary School and St Andrews C of E Primary School. She remained in the room during the item and took part in the discussion.</p> <p>Councillor Peter Curling declared a Personal Interest in Agenda Item 8 – School Places Update as he was a Governor of Mellow Lane School and Harefield Academy. He remained in the room during the item and took part in the discussion.</p> <p>Councillor Catherine Dann declared a Personal Interest in Agenda Item 8 – School Places Update as she was a Governor of Newham Junior School and Bishop Ramsay C of E School. She remained in the room during the item and took part in the discussion.</p>	

	<p>Councillor John Hensley declared a Personal Interest in Agenda Item 8 – School Places Update as he was a Governor at Breakspear Junior School and Abbotsfield School. He remained in the room during the item and took part in the discussion.</p> <p>Councillor Kuldeep Lakhmana declared a Personal Interest in Agenda Item 8 – School Places Update as she was a Governor of Cranford Park Primary School, Wood End Park Primary School and Harlington Community School. She remained in the room during the item and took part in the discussion.</p> <p>Tony Little declared a Personal Interest in Agenda Item 8 – School Places Update as he was a Governor of Pinkwell School. He remained in the room during the item and took part in the discussion.</p>	
13.	<p><b>TO CONFIRM THAT ALL ITEMS MARKED PART 1 WILL BE CONSIDERED IN PUBLIC AND ALL PART 2 ITEMS WILL BE CONSIDERED IN PRIVATE</b> (<i>Agenda Item 3</i>)</p> <p>It was confirmed that all items would be considered in Public.</p>	
14.	<p><b>MATTERS THAT HAVE BEEN NOTIFIED IN ADVANCE OR URGENT</b> (<i>Agenda Item 4</i>)</p> <p>There had been no matters notified as urgent.</p>	
15.	<p><b>TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 8 SEPTEMBER 2010</b> (<i>Agenda Item 5</i>)</p> <p>Members raised a number of issues in relation to the minutes of the last meeting and asked for this to be clarified before they were agreed as a correct record.</p>	
16.	<p><b>MAJOR REVIEW - 14-19 EDUCATION AND TRAINING - WITNESS SESSION 2</b> (<i>Agenda Item 6</i>)</p>	<b>Action by</b>
	<p>There had been two witnesses invited to this meeting, Tom Murphy from connexions and Alison Moore 14 – 19 Manager. The witnesses provided the committee with the following information on the review.</p> <p><b>Tom Murphy – Connexions</b></p> <p>A brief summary of the service provided by Connexions was provided to members. The committee was informed that connexions provided a strategic approach to information, advice, guidance and support to all 13-19 year olds. It also provided a One Stop Shop designed to offer young people in the borough a single point where they could access a wide range of services.</p> <p>To ensure quality information was provided there were two key areas, this was to provide careers advice and information and guidance. Careers education in schools gave young people the knowledge to understand what was available and provided support to help them make the choices most suitable for the career they wanted to follow.</p>	<p>Anna Crispin Alison Moore Tom Murphy Gill Brice</p>

In regard to Information, advice and guidance this was provided by a specialist provider CfBT Education Trust, who provided a range of Education Services. CfBT have 36 full time advisers that work with teenagers through the schools to provide bespoke information. This service was delivered via a formula providing different levels of service to different schools.

Personal Advisers and Link Advisers worked with the young people and their parents to support the choices they make. The advisers were fully up to speed on the current trends and changes providing up to date impartial information as to what was available.

When Diplomas were first rolled out connexions worked with all its partners to develop how the information on Diplomas would be communicated to young people. The work provided by Connexions was to national standards, which were clear and measured.

Benchmarking was also carried out to ensure that what was being provided was both accurate and impartial. This enabled young people to make informed choices and reduced the number of young people outside of education/training.

The current number of NEETs (Neither in Education/Employment or Training) was low in Hillingdon and it was hoped these levels would be sustained. If it was identified that young people had made the wrong choices they would be monitored and support provided to help them back onto the right track.

Following the introduction members then asked a number of questions as follows:-

Do all young people get balanced information on the opportunities available to them? As some schools may try and retain the young people in their own 6th Form thereby not giving impartial advice. Members were informed that it was the ambition of connexions to make sure that all young people did receive impartial advice. Connexions ensured as far as possible that the advisers in schools were given access to young people to provide them with impartial guidance. If advisers became aware of any issues in regards to impartiality of information they would alert connexions to the potential problems. In answer to an issue raised in relation to whether the department monitored the information being provided, officers advised that the service provided by CFBT was monitored and was linked to the quality standards. When the tender process was undertaken there were 30 expressions of interest, out of those 4 submitted bids.

A member asked that in the brief introduction reference was made to the number of NEETS in the borough being relatively low. What was the absolute figure and how did this compare with those of neighbouring authorities?

Members were informed that of the total number of 16-18 year olds it equated to 4 – 5 % but this was not a stable picture. This was better than most authorities but not as good as the best. It was suggested that the figures be provided for the reviews final report.

A member asked that as there were a number of places where young people could obtain information on careers. What proportion of young people received this advice in schools?

Officers advised that they did not have that information to hand but from year 10 careers information was provided through schools. Concerns were raised as to whether there was a tendency for schools and colleges to provide an unbalanced view to young people to keep them within the school and not move elsewhere?

Officers advised that they were not aware that this was a problem within schools and colleges but if members were aware that it had happened, members should advise officers so that it could be looked into. If it was happening it would be dealt with under the challenge process.

From the intelligence fed back by service providers, were the career interests of young people being identified?

Officers reported that information on the choices made and where the young people had ended up was provided to the 14 – 19 group. Where providers felt that this was not right or not balanced this was being built into the process.

In the follow up work undertaken was data collected on how well the process had worked?

The committee was informed that the choices made by young people was monitored, which included information on how they had participated and how the courses had worked for them.

Students benefited in making choices if good quality advice and guidance was provided to them. In relation to Foundation Academie's there was no direct relationship to the authority, so how did the council ensure that the contract met the needs of these young people? What controls were there and how was this managed especially where the school Governors are not supportive of the ethos of the Council. The committee was advised that schools were actively encouraged to provide information and in conjunction with its partners, connexions worked with every school to influence the nature of the information provided. Schools were also advised what was expected from them.

If a school did not meet the requirements, what controls could be put on if this was outside the contract of the service provider. How was it ensured that this information was provided?

Within the constraints of the current legislation schools were required when inspected by Ofsted to show that impartial careers education was provided in partnership with connexions. Connexions does not presently have input to Ofsted.

How many young people had not completed the courses they had undertaken? Of those how many struggled with the course and how much was travelling to the placement affecting this.

It was reported that the career destination that young people took and where they ended up overtime for 16 – 18 year olds was tracked.

There were a number of individual underlying issues that could indicate that wrong career choices had been made by the young people. When tracked by the personal advisers information was obtained and any issues the young people faced was resolved within resources. This enabled the Council to learn from the barriers that might face young people in following their choices.

Information was to be provided to the committee on the numbers and percentage of young people who had failed to complete courses and whether there were any underlying issues to why they were unable to complete the course.

A member asked whether the information given in relation to NEETS was relatively low and what had the success rate been with getting these young people back into learning. If re-engaged what route had they taken.

Officers reported that they would need to check the details but it tended to be that disengagement increased with the age of a young person or the period of time that they had been out of Employment, Education or Training.

Members welcomed the information provided in relation to NEETS but asked for information on the transition in the area and compared to Ealing, Hounslow and Harrow. In regards to course providers information was to be provided on how many young people stay in the borough, how many go out of borough, and how many do we attract into the borough.

#### **Alison Moore – 14 – 19**

Alison Moore had produced a brief summary of the recently commissioned review of vocational and educational training which was to report back in 2011. The purpose of this review was to consider how to improve progression, participation and skills. This review had a wide scope and included the following:

- Funding for vocational education Institutional suitability
- Role of the third sector
- Who should bear the cost of developing qualifications
- How to benchmark vocational education
- Deciding who would be the target audience for vocational education and the suitable age for young people to take this up
- What should underpin the content structure and teaching methods
- The report would not look at individual qualifications

The review would be an overarching review with the final report being received in March 2011. There would be tensions in Post 16 as provision would need to be made to ensure that leavers had the knowledge they needed.

Funding would be tight and would not take into account inflation. There would be a high national increase and an increase in pupil numbers. Raising the participation age was to be agreed but funding per pupil was likely to go down. The cut to the Education Maintenance Allowance would affect pupils staying on.

It was asked if the Local Authority was linking in closely with employers and Further Education Providers

The committee was advised that Adult Education Service was being cut and that young people would need to be in education before the age of 18. Once they reached 19 they would not be funded.

A member asked if apprenticeships would help in developing a link in providing a route back into education in providing training and how would this impact on the raising of the school leaving age to 18.

Officers advised that young people would not necessarily have to be in school for some sort of training to be provided. It was unclear how funding would work in relation to foundation. A programme would be drawn up, which would draw on the experience of different providers. The Foundation learning group currently consisted of 8 schools, Uxbridge College and Hillingdon Training Ltd.

A member suggested that as there would be a lot of changes over the next three months, whether the final report should be delayed.

Reference was made to functional skills and if schools would be able to deal with effectively.

Officers advised that Maths had been a long standing area where some schools had expert staff, ICT as indicated had not been fully timetabled. Provision of Maths and English was easier than that of ICT and from September 2010 Functional Skills (FS) would be embedded in English, Maths and IT. The borough Advisers in English, Maths and IT had been working with schools and they are aware that they need to address FS within the delivery of the GCSE.

Diploma students may not get the support they need on FS within their home school and additional support was being provided for them. Better communication was developing between schools due to the protocol agreements. These protocols drawn up by the Diploma Support Group made sure that students had a learning plan that made it clear which learning institution and teacher was responsible for FS delivery.

Of the ICT courses offered in schools at KS4 and KS5, no school is offering GCSE, but all are opting for the vocational option, which assumed that FS was embedded within the qualification. There had been little discrete timetabling of lessons being offered to pupils doing Functional Skills in ICT. However, in some schools Functional Skills in this subject was being taught via project work.

Within Uxbridge College, Engineering Diploma students had been given additional support with their key skills. This had been successful and all students entered for their Diploma had achieved the full qualification.

Some Foundation Learning programmes are incorporating Functional Skills at Entry or Level 1. Other learners, e.g. Key Stage 4 Engagement may take Functional Skills as part of their programme or through school-based delivery. The Foundation Learning Implementation Group is reviewing the provision of Functional Skills delivery across the borough.

A member asked for reassurance that the consortia was working effectively

The committee was informed that success sharing was taking place across different sites, sharing experiences of A level subjects, which was standard across all schools. Routes taken by students would affect funding but this was not led by the Local Authority.

Are we justified in being optimistic in regard to the low level of micro migration and would a young person benefit equally by changing schools for one exam rather than covering all four in one school?

Officers referred to comments made earlier that Further Education was to be stopped in certain subjects and Higher Education to be cut back. The E-Tech move would produce different complexities and would need to be given further thought. There was likely to be an opportunity for the provision of additional funding to enable authorities to commission what they needed. Hillingdon had very good providers in the way of Uxbridge College and Hillingdon Training Ltd.

What was the biggest challenge in introducing providers for young people with difficulties and disabilities?

Officers advised that the biggest challenge was to make sure that the places needed were available. At post 16 providers would work with connexions to present the advisors with an assessment of the needs required. The Authority would then be able to commission in the needs of young people and provide a bespoke service.

If students needed to attend another school for one day a week for the particular course they were taking what happened with the payment that needed to be made to that school?

Officers advised that Vyners and Douay Martyrs currently did swap students, the charge made was up to an individual school and was carried out through inter school arrangements.

Following the witness session members asked that for the next meeting 2 or 3 young people that had undertaken the Diploma courses be invited to attend. The young people would need to be fully briefed on why they were being invited to attend the and fully supported by officers throughout the process.

	<p>The following issues were identified by Members as being relevant to issues to be put to the young people:-</p> <p>What information did they receive on career choices?  How was this information presented to them, was it impartial?  What information did they receive and how valuable was it?  Did the course meet the advice and expectations they were given?  Was it effective in terms of curriculum delivery and co-ordination?  How effective was the delivery or in retrospect would they have chosen something different?</p> <p><b>Resolved –</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. That the information received from the witnesses be used as evidence and be incorporated into the draft final report.</b></li> <li><b>2. That any possible recommendations arising from the session be included in the report to the next meeting.</b></li> <li><b>3. That two or three young people be invited to attend the next meeting to give their experience of the Diplomas.</b></li> <li><b>4. That officers provide the information requested at the meeting to Members.</b></li> </ol>	
17.	<p><b>ELECTRONIC SOCIAL CARE RECORD SYSTEM</b> (<i>Agenda Item 7</i>)</p> <p>Members received a short update on the position in relation to the Electronic Social Care Record System.</p> <p>Members asked to be advised of the timescale for the scanning of the paper files to be undertaken in Children &amp; Families.</p> <p>It was also suggested that rather than go to the expense of scanning the files that a speedier system would be for the electronic file to have a tag flagging up that a paper file existed and providing the file reference number.</p> <p><b>Resolved – That the Members be advised of the timescale for the scanning of Children &amp; Families Files and consideration be given to the suggestion of having a tag on the electronic file.</b></p>	<p><b>Action by</b></p> <p>Merlin  Joseph  Gill Brice</p>
18.	<p><b>SCHOOL PLACES - UPDATE</b> (<i>Agenda Item 8</i>)</p>	<p><b>Action by</b></p>
	<p>Officers gave a brief introduction to the report advising that this was the latest position as the figures changed on a weekly basis.</p> <p>Members thanked the officer for the report and suggested that it would be useful to receive a periodic update. This would be useful for both officers and members to be kept up to date.</p> <p>The officer introduced the report and advised the committee that there were currently 75 available primary school places in Hillingdon.</p> <p>The committee thanked officers for the report and suggested that it would be useful for a quarterly report to be produced to enable members to be kept up to date with the current data.</p>	<p>Venetia  Rogers  Gill Brice</p>



Members also asked for school places information at first year secondary school to see whether the pressures in primary schools were being carried through to Secondary Schools.

Officers suggested that it would be more pertinent to receive reports on in year and causal admissions to monitor how this progressed through the academic year.

In response to an issue raised in relation to the small number of children not yet offered places and the number of net migrators into the borough, officers advised that letters were currently being sent to parents offering places over the half term to 8 children in south of the borough. Officers did not have the information of the breakdown of families moving into the borough. The admissions Team had received information on children not previously known to the Council, so this suggested that a majority of families were moving into the borough. The figures on required places varied from week to week with a natural tail off at the beginning of the school year. Next year would be difficult to estimate the number of primary places required as there had not been many families moving out of the borough.

A member referred to the school expansion programme and asked whether the resentment of some schools had been overcome.

Officers advised the committee that consultations on expansion had now closed, officers had visited Whitehall School where concerns had been expressed. It was unlikely that objections would be received from other schools. Consideration was currently being given to whether to move forward with all the school expansions together or whether to take those forward where no objections had been received.

It was asked whether officers were confident that the expansion programme would meet the needs for 2011 or whether further expansion would be required. There would be pressures on school places from housing developments within the borough and adjoining authorities.

Members were informed that 8 additional forms of entry would be required for September 2011. Discussions were currently being undertaken with those school being considered for expansion for 2011. That information was not available to enable an additional form of entry on top of those required to be considered. Officers through the Admissions Forum received information on the needs of the service from families in the borough.

**Resolved – That officers report back at an appropriate time throughout the year on the school places.**

- 1. That members note the report and at the appropriate time receive an update on the admissions for the next academic year.**
- 2. That a quarterly report on the in year school places be provided to the committee.**

19.	<p><b>DEVELOPING SHORT BREAKS</b> (<i>Agenda Item 9</i>)</p> <p>Officers gave a brief introduction to the report and advised the committee that the recommendations from the review in 2008 had been taken forward. There was an issue in relation to the parents/carers website, which was not being used as much as officers would like. Ways of promoting the website were currently being looked at. The work undertaken in providing the short breaks had been monitored 'Together for Disabled Children', although it was expected that this group would be deleted by the new Government.</p> <p>The monitoring of the spending had been demanding at the beginning but was now being used as a model for others. Members were taken through the appendix to the report, which set out the short breaks programme for 2010/2011. The funding for the scheme ended in March and the same level of delivery would not be able to be achieved after that. Schools will have expectations to deliver and currently alternative means of funding are being sought.</p> <p>The recommendations which had been agreed by this Policy Overview Committee had so far been very positive but there were still things to do.</p> <p>Members thanked the officer for the update report and suggested that this was a good news story that should be considered as an article in Hillingdon People to raise awareness of the scheme.</p> <p><b>Resolved – That consideration be given to an article being included in Hillingdon People to raise awareness of the Short Breaks Scheme.</b></p>	<p><b>Action by</b></p> <p>Pauline Nixon Gill Brice</p>
20.	<p><b>FORWARD PLAN 2010/2011</b> (<i>Agenda Item 10</i>)</p> <p><b>FORWARD PLAN</b></p> <p>Members noted the item on the Forward Plan in relation to the expansion of primary schools for admissions for the next academic year and asked to see the report when available.</p> <p><b>Resolved – That the information contained on the Forward Plan be noted.</b></p>	<p><b>Action by</b></p> <p>Gill Brice</p>
21.	<p><b>WORK PROGRAMME 2010/2011</b> (<i>Agenda Item 11</i>)</p> <p><b>Resolved – That the work programme be updated to reflect the items added.</b></p>	<p><b>Action by</b></p> <p>Gill Brice</p>
<p>The meeting, which commenced at 7.00 pm, closed at 9.30 pm.</p>		

These are the minutes of the above meeting. For more information on any of the resolutions please contact Gill Brice on 01895 250693. Circulation of these minutes is to Councillors, Officers, the Press and Members of the Public.

