

# Decisions of the Children, Education & Safeguarding Committee

22 September 2020

Members Present:-

Councillor David Longstaff (Chairman)

Councillor Felix Byers (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Anne Clarke

Councillor Pauline Coakley Webb

Councillor Val Duschinsky

Councillor Linda Freedman

Councillor Rohit Grover

Councillor Anne Hutton

Councillor Nagus Narenthira

Councillor Reuben Thompstone

Councillor Julian Teare

## 1. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The Chairman of the Committee, Councillor David Longstaff welcomed all attendees to the virtual meeting. He welcomed Councillor Felix Byers as the incoming Vice-Chairman of the Committee and thanked Councillor Rohit Grover as the outgoing Vice-Chairman for his help and support on the Committee.

**It was RESOLVED that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 11 March 2020 be agreed as a correct record.**

## 2. ABSENCE OF MEMBERS

None.

## 3. DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS AND NON-PECUNIARY INTERESTS

Councillor Anne Hutton declared a non-pecuniary interest in Agenda Items 7 and 9 in that she is a Trustee at Barnet Carers Centre.

## 4. REPORT OF THE MONITORING OFFICER (IF ANY)

None.

## 5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS (IF ANY)

None.

## 6. MEMBERS' ITEMS (IF ANY)

Councillor Clarke introduced her Members item in which she asked the Committee to receive a report on the impact of the pandemic on the mental health of children and young people, and how the Council is supporting pupils' mental health as they head back to school following lockdown. The Chairman noted that the suggested items are already covered in other reports and confirmed that the Committee would continue to be updated on children's mental health on a regular basis. He also noted that he was happy to speak to officers to confirm that any issues would be flagged up and shared with Members to ensure the Committee can scrutinise services.

Councillor Hutton introduced her Members item which asked the Committee to put on record its congratulations to all students on their exam results this year, and to all teachers and staff for their work supporting students to achieve their best and also asked for a report on what impact there has been on schools, colleges and students (including vocational) of the exam-results system this summer, and what lessons have been learned. The Service Director for Education and Skills confirmed that in January 2021 there would be a report on results, most of which would be self-assessed school results, and that officers would be heavily reliant on what information the schools are able to provide to the Council.

**It was RESOLVED that the Committee noted that actions in response to the Member's items are already included in various workstreams and reports on the Committee's Forward Work Programme.**

## **7. AUTISM PLAN**

The Executive Director for Children's Services introduced the report which contained the final recommendations and actions relating to the creation of an Autism Plan to improve services and quality of life for children, young people and adults with autism as well as their families and carers. Members then had the opportunity to ask officers questions on the Autism Plan.

Councillor Clarke requested that the plan include reference to encouragement and support for families who suffer from domestic violence as a result of child who has autism, as discussed with the former Director of Resources for Autism. The Executive Director for Children's Services confirmed that Resources for Autism had been involved in the development of the plan and agreed to look into whether there was any additional information in relation to this that needed to be added.

**It was RESOLVED that the Children, Education and Safeguarding Committee agrees the Autism Plan to improve services and quality of life for children, young people and adults with autism as well as their families and carers.**

## **8. LOCAL AUTHORITY SCHOOL GOVERNOR NOMINATIONS - UPDATE**

The Service Director for Education and Skills introduced the report. Members then had an opportunity to ask officers questions. Councillor Hutton referred to a report from the National Governors Association regarding the number of governors from the BAME community across the UK and discussed how the numbers could be increased in Barnet's schools. The Chairman agreed this issue should be raised with the Local Authority Governor nominations panel.

Councillor Linda Freedman noted that she had not taken forward the nomination at St Paul's as shown in page 57 of the agenda pack.

Members made suggestions about the need to highlight the work of school governors through various events and publications to increase recruitment across all of Barnet's schools and within BAME communities.

**It was RESOLVED;**

**1. That the Committee note the information in Appendix A of this report on the nominations of local authority governors to Barnet Schools since September 2019.**

**2. That the Committee agrees that in future all members of the Local Authority Governor nominations panel should be members of the Children, Education and Safeguarding Committee.**

## **9. FAMILY SERVICES QUARTERLY UPDATE**

The Executive Director for Children's Services introduced the report and gave a brief update on each of the appendices. Members then had an opportunity to ask officers questions on the report and appendices.

**It was RESOLVED;**

**1. That the Children, Education and Safeguarding Committee is asked to note and provide comments on the COVID-19 Family Services All about Me/Family Friendly Recovery Strategy.**

**2. That the Children, Education and Safeguarding Committee is asked to note the updates against each strategic recovery priority.**

**3. That the Children, Education and Safeguarding Committee is asked to note our preliminary assessment of practice ahead of our annually refreshed self-assessment in preparedness for an Ofsted focused visit.**

**4. That the committee notes and scrutinise progress of performance against our corporate parenting responsibilities provided in Appendices 2-2.4.**

**5. That the Committee note and scrutinise the Children's Social Care performance information provided in Appendix 3.**

## **10. BARNET YOUNG PEOPLE'S SURVEY NOVEMBER 2019 & YOUNG PEOPLE ONLINE SURVEY JULY 2020**

The Consultation and Research Manager introduced the report and highlighted the results of the Young Persons Survey and the Post Covid-19 Online Survey. Members then had an opportunity to ask officers questions on the survey results.

**It was RESOLVED;**

**1. That the Children, Education and Safeguarding Committee consider and comment on the Young People's Perception Survey results set out in Appendix 1.**

**2. That the Children, Education and Safeguarding Committee consider and comment on the Post Covid-19 Online Survey results set out in Appendix 2.**

## **11. THE FUTURE DELIVERY OF THE EDUCATION AND SKILLS SERVICE**

The Executive Director for Children's Services introduced the report which detailed the future delivery of the Education and Skills Service. Members then had an opportunity to ask officers questions on the report and appendices. The Chairman, Opposition Spokesperson and the whole Committee thanked the officers and members of staff for all their hard work in the successful transference from Cambridge Education to Barnet Education and Learning Service.

Councillor Coakley-Webb moved a motion to exclude the press and public in order that the exempt Appendix C could be discussed in private session. This was seconded by Councillor Felix Byers. Committee Members and officers then temporarily left the virtual meeting to join the private session.

Following the discussion, the Committee returned to the virtual meeting.

**It was RESOLVED;**

- 1. That the Children, Education and Safeguarding Committee note the content of the report.**
- 2. That the Children, Education and Safeguarding Committee note the decision to terminate the current contract with Mott MacDonald.**
- 3. That the Children, Education and Safeguarding Committee note the decision to novate the current contract with Mott MacDonald to the newly created Barnet Education and Learning Service Ltd and for the option to extend the contract to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026 to be exercised.**
- 4. That the Children, Education and Safeguarding Committee note the decision to novate the current contract which Mott MacDonald holds with ISS to provide catering services to the council and to commission Barnet Education and Learning Service Ltd to manage the contract on behalf of the council.**
- 5. That the Children, Education and Safeguarding Committee note the Shareholder Agreement in relation to Barnet Education and Learning Service and the annual Barnet Education and Learning Service Business Plan.**

## **12. MOTION TO EXCLUDE THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

**RESOLVED** that under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the meeting for discussion on Appendix C for Agenda Item 11 on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act (as amended).

## **13. ANY OTHER EXEMPT ITEM(S) THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT**

None.

## **14. COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME**

The Committee considered the Forward Work Programme as set out in the agenda.

**RESOLVED that the Committee note the Forward Work Programme.**

**15. ANY OTHER ITEM(S) THAT THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT (IF ANY)**

The Executive Director of Children's Services gave a brief update on the SEND Assurance visit being undertaken in Barnet by OFSTED and the CQC in October. He confirmed that Members will be kept informed of the report.

The Chairman then expressed the following message of thanks on behalf of the Committee;

The Front Line

The Children, Education and Safeguarding Committee recognises and expresses its gratitude for the enormous contribution of our Foster Carers, Children's Residential Care Home Staff and the staff at Onwards and Upwards for their dedication in selflessly looking after our children and young people, who we are the corporate parents of, from the beginning of this ongoing Covid-19 pandemic.

The committee would also like to thank the social workers, children's services professionals and teachers who have been on the front line, day-after-day, working face-to-face with Barnet families and keeping the schools open and running for children of key-workers and those who were vulnerable.

The committee also recognises and appreciates the work and dedication of Barnet Schools to re-open as quickly and safely as possible for all pupils and students in the new academic year.

The outgoing Vice-Chairman also expressed his thanks to the Chairman for his leadership of the Committee and as Lead Member for Children.

The meeting finished at 19.57