

# **CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE**

## **MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD**

8 MARCH 2016

The meeting commenced at 4.00 pm in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool

**Present:**

Councillor Chris Simmons (In the Chair)

Councillors: Ged Hall, John Lauderdale, Trisha Lawton and Brenda Loynes.

Co-opted members:

Mark Tilling (Secondary Head Representative)  
David Turner (Primary Head Representative)

Young people's representatives:

Matthew Childs, Callum Reed and Caitlyn Towers.

Officers:

Sally Robinson, Director of Child and Adult Services  
Mark Patton, Assistant Director, Education, Learning and Skills 0-19  
Helen White, Participation Manager  
David Cosgrove, Democratic Services Officer

### **75. Apologies for Absence**

Councillors Mary Fleet and Sheila Griffin.

Co-opted members: Julie Cordiner (C of E Diocesan Representative)  
and Michael Lee (RC Diocesan Representative).

Councillor Richardson, Chair of Adult Services Committee (Observer).

### **76. Declarations of Interest**

Councillors Simmons, Hall and Loynes declared personal interests in Minute No's 79 and 80 as school governors.

Mark Tilling (Secondary Head Representative) and David Turner (Primary Head Representative) declared personal interests as school heads and governors.

### **77. Minutes of the meeting held on 9 February 2016**

Confirmed.

## **78. School Admission Arrangements – Response to Petition** (*Director of Child and Adult Services*)

### **Type of decision**

Key Decision test (ii) applies. Forward Plan Reference Number: CAS 046/16.

### **Purpose of report**

To update Members on the responses received and to provide recommendations following receipt of a petition which requested a review of admission arrangements for primary school places.

### **Issue(s) for consideration**

The Assistant Director, Education, Learning and Skills 0-19 reported that following the primary National Offer Day (16 April 2015) there were a number of parents dissatisfied that they did not receive one of their school preferences. The Local Authority (LA) subsequently received a petition signed by 367 people seeking a review of the admissions policy on the allocation of primary school places to include attendance at nursery as part of the admissions criteria. The petition was brought to the attention of Children's Services Committee on 16 June 2015. The petition stated:

*"Petition for local schools for local children in Hartlepool*

*Many children have been turned down for school places within their local neighbourhood and have been sent out of their catchment area, we the undersigned request that the school admissions policy is reviewed and amended to give children in the catchment area more of an equally opportunity to attend the school where they have attended the Nursery and gained confidence, trust, made new friends and most of all settled into the school setting."*

Members resolved that headteachers should be made aware of the terms of the petition. Headteachers were informed and governing bodies were also made aware of the petition during their autumn term meetings. Autumn term meetings concluded in December 2015. Headteachers and Governing Bodies were invited to provide responses on whether the LA's admission arrangements should be changed to include attendance at a school nursery within the oversubscription criteria.

Members were advised that any recommendations to change the oversubscription criteria could only apply to schools for which the LA is the admission authority (community and voluntary controlled), would be subject to a formal consultation and any changes would affect the 2018/19 admission arrangements. All other schools and academies are

responsible for their own admission arrangements therefore it would be a decision for them to consider any changes to their oversubscription criteria.

The report outlined the current over subscription criteria and the results of the consultation. It was clear from the consultation that there was little support for any change to the existing criteria by the inclusion of reference to attendance at the school nursery. The Assistant Director highlighted that the Office of the Schools Adjudicator (OSA) that works with the Department for Education and helps to clarify the legal position on admissions policies in schools had issued advice in its 2014/15 annual report which stated –

***Main Finding - The practice of giving priority for admission to the reception year to children who have attended nursery provision has again been found to be unfair to other local children, constrains parents' preferences for child care and pre-school provision and does not comply with the general requirements of the Admissions Code.***

OSA comments made in relation to complaints received in 2013/14 are below:

*Schools that wish to give priority to children attending certain nursery provision still do not consider carefully enough the requirements for admission arrangements to be fair for all children starting compulsory schooling so that they all have a fair chance of securing a place in a reception year class irrespective of decisions made about pre-school provision.*

The Assistant Director advised Members that when parents accept a nursery place they are made aware that attendance at nursery does not guarantee a place at that particular school.

Given the comments obtained from the Office for the Schools Adjudicator and the fact that the majority of schools, who expressed a view, were against the proposal, officers sought Member agreement not to include attendance at nursery within the oversubscription criteria for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools.

The Chair supported the view that inclusion of such a criteria would disadvantage those parents that chose alternative pre-school services. The considerable pressure on school places particularly in the north of the town had led to a re-appraisal of the capacity of some schools and the October meeting of the Committee had approved capital schemes to increase school capacity at two schools (Minute No. 43, 6 October 2015 refers).

The Chair considered that in light of the advice of the Schools Adjudicator it would not be prudent to formally consult on a change to the oversubscription criteria.

### **Decision**

That no formal consultation on a change to the admission arrangements for community and voluntary controlled schools relating to the attendance at a school nursery be undertaken.

## **79. 2016/17 Schools' Capital Works Programme** (*Director of Child and Adult Services*)

### **Type of decision**

Key Decision – test (i) & (ii) applies – Forward Plan Reference No. CAS 045/16.

### **Purpose of report**

The purpose of the report was to seek approval to the 2016/17 Schools' Capital Works Programme, as detailed in confidential Appendix 1 to the report, in order to progress the design and detailed costing exercise in time for the majority of projects to be carried out during the summer holiday period. The confidential appendix to the report contained exempt information under Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972 (as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006) namely, information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) (para. 3).

### **Issue(s) for consideration**

The Assistant Director, Education, Learning and Skills 0-19 reported that each year, during January or early February, the Department for Education (DfE) announces capital funding allocations, these being, School Condition Allocations (SCA) formerly known as Capital Maintenance and Devolved Formula Capital (DFC) for the school estate in Hartlepool both for the Local Authority (LA) and the Voluntary Aided sector (VA).

At the time of writing the report, the Assistant Director indicated that the capital funding allocations had not been communicated to the LA. However, last year the DfE stated that SCA allocations for 2015/16 would be indicative of the funding that responsible bodies would receive in 2016/17 and 2017/18. DfE further stated that SCA will be revised annually to reflect schools moving responsible body e.g. converting to Academy status, opening or closing. During 2015/16, no schools had closed, opened or converted to Academy status, therefore, the schemes detailed in Appendix 1 to the report were considered affordable using the same allocation made in 2015/16, which was £705,409. At the meeting, the Assistant Director stated that the final allocation had been confirmed by the DfE as £702,848. The resultant shortfall between the

allocation and the total of the schemes proposed would be met from the contingency in order to allow the schemes to proceed as planned.

While the financial details and the schemes were set out in the confidential section of the report, the Assistant Director assured Members that the selection of the schemes had been an open and transparent one involving the Schools Forum and the Schools Capital Group.

The schemes proposed in confidential Appendix 1 to the report would be funded from the 2016/17 Schools Capital Allocation now confirmed as £702,848, the unallocated funding of £170,000 and the remaining 2015/16 contingency of £91,230. Schools will also be expected to contribute 10% towards the schemes.

Members welcomed the proposals. The Chair requested that dispensation to the Director of Child and Adult Services to authorise works where there was a significant emergency and/or health and safety risk should be done in consultation with the Chair of the Committee.

### **Decision**

1. That the schedule of 2016/17 capital works programme as summarised in the confidential Appendix 1 to the report be approved, subject to the LA agreeing contributions from schools towards individual schemes in line with the shared funding principles established by the Schools Forum. The confidential appendix contained exempt information under Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972 (as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006) namely, information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) (para. 3).
2. That retrospective approval be given to the three schemes which have been funded from contingency as detailed in the confidential Appendix 1 to the report.
3. That the Director of Child and Adult Services be delegated appropriate dispensation and discretion in consultation with the Chair of the Committee to authorise works where a significant emergency / health and safety risk is exposed.

## **80. Suitability Projects** (*Director of Child and Adult Services*)

### **Type of decision**

Key Decision (test (i)/(ii) Forward Plan Reference No. CAS 047/16).

### **Purpose of report**

The purpose of the report was to update the Committee regarding the schemes that had been selected by Schools' Forum, following a suitability survey exercise carried out by Schools' Capital Subgroup, and to seek approval for these proposed schemes, as detailed in confidential Appendix 1 to the report, in order to progress a design and detailed costing exercise. The appendix contained exempt information under Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972 (as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006) namely, information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information (para. 3).

### **Issue(s) for consideration**

The Assistant Director, Education, Learning and Skills 0-19 reported that in 2014 it was agreed, by a Schools' Forum Task and Finish Group, that the priorities for suitability projects would be: to ensure that all buildings were wind and water tight; primary cooking and nutrition curriculum provision; secondary science provision; and building issues affecting the delivery of the curriculum. In order to assess fairly the needs of each school it was agreed to carry out suitability surveys, applying Department of Education methodology which assesses whether areas within a school (teaching and non teaching) are fit for purpose.

There was a significantly high number of issues highlighted that far outstretched the budget available. Issues highlighted that fell into category A 'unable to teach curriculum' and category B 'teaching methods inhibited' were progressed forward for feasibility assessment and costing. These schemes alone had an estimated total cost of £4,233,689.

Schools' Capital Subgroup made the decision to prioritise the issues that posed a health and safety risk. In November 2015, Hartlepool Borough Council's Health, Safety and Wellbeing Team reviewed highlighted issues and gave advice on associated risk. A Task and Finish Group convened to take on this advice and prioritise potential schemes.

Issues not deemed to be a health and safety risk were not considered, those that were deemed to be to be a risk were categorised as high, medium or low priority. The Schools' Capital Subgroup agreed that all 'high' and 'medium' priority schemes be selected for progression.

At their meeting on 20th January 2016, Schools' Forum agreed to support the progression of schemes identified as priorities by Schools' Capital Subgroup. They also supported a recommendation for Schools' Capital Subgroup to review and agree curriculum related priorities for

DSG funding. It was also agreed that the subgroup would review funding issues relating to asbestos management in schools to see if DSG funding can be allocated to support this.

The current budgetary position is as detailed in the table below:

<b>Proposed Spend £</b>	<b>School Contribution £</b>	<b>Funding Required £</b>
664,033	66,403	597,630
319,000	31,900	287,100
<b>983,033*</b>	<b>98,303</b>	<b>884,730</b>
	Budget Available £	1,250,400
	<b>Remaining Budget £</b>	<b>365,670</b>

The remaining budget includes funding previously allocated to science laboratories at English Martyrs School and Sixth Form College. The school was benefitting from Priority School Building Programme - Phase 2, therefore the allocation would not be required.

Schools were expected to contribute 10% of the total cost of their schemes from their school budget. Two of the schemes listed were pending bids that have been made by academies to the Education Funding Agency. If these bids are successful the costs for the schemes will not need to be covered by this funding.

The report also set out issues around the contractor the schools may choose to deliver the schemes and the treatment of VAT at Voluntary Aided schools.

The Chair noted that in recommendation 2 the remaining budget referred to amounted to nearly one third of the whole budget sum and considered, therefore, that it would be appropriate for a similar report being submitted to a future meeting to seek approval to the schemes to utilise the remaining budget. The Assistant Director commented that in light of the timescales involved, some of the schemes that may form part of such a report may require retrospective approval if it was necessary to progress works to be undertaken during the summer holidays for example.

## Decision

1. That the schedule of proposed schemes as summarised in confidential Appendix 1 to the report be approved, subject to the LA agreeing contributions from schools towards individual schemes in line with the shared funding principles established by Schools' Forum. The confidential appendix contained exempt information under Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972 (as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006) namely, information relating to the

financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) (para. 3);

2. That the remaining available budget be allocated to priorities affecting the curriculum to be determined by Schools' Capital Subgroup and agreed by Schools Forum and subject to a report being submitted to this Committee whilst accepting that some of the approvals may be retrospective should schemes need to be progressed prior to the next meeting of the Committee;
3. That an appropriate certification process be put in place, as outlined in paragraph 6.5 of the report.

## **81. Better Childhood Programme** (*Director of Child and Adult Services*)

### **Type of decision**

Non-key Decision.

### **Purpose of report**

For members to approve the implementation of the first phase of the transformation programme Better Childhood Programme.

### **Issue(s) for consideration**

The Director of Child and Adult Services reported that the Better Childhood Programme (BCP) is a cross public sector transformation programme supported by Cleveland Police, the CCG and Hartlepool Borough Council. As part of this programme Hartlepool Borough Council and its partners had developed proposals for the redesign and integration of their services in Hartlepool with the aim of:

- Improving outcomes and life chances for children, young people and families
- Improving the resilience of families and communities and reducing family breakdown
- Supporting more families through early intervention and prevention
- Moving from a culture of 'identification and referral' to one where workers 'own and intervene'
- Reducing demand for specialist services, bringing numbers of Looked After Children in line with statistical neighbours.

A report was presented to Children's Services Committee on 1 December 2015 providing an update on the Better Childhood Programme. It set out work that had been undertaken to review demand for children's services and work that was ongoing to redesign services with partners.



The Better Childhood Programme document, attached as an appendix to the report, set out all the work undertaken through the programme and included the case for change, the redesign work carried out with children, families, workers and partners, overall vision, proposed structures, and timelines for implementation.

The Children's Strategic Partnership had developed a vision and priorities for the Better Childhood Programme (page 7 of Appendix A to the report) and the vision states:

"Our ambition as a children's partnership is to enable all children and families in Hartlepool to have opportunities to make the most of their life chances and be supported to be safe in their homes and communities."

The priorities are:

1. Children and young people have opportunities to make the most of their life chances and are safe.
2. Improving family relationships, strengths, skills and ability to cope.
3. Reducing the impact of domestic violence, mental health, drugs and alcohol misuse on children and families.
4. Helping parents, carers and young people to gain skills and get jobs.

Consultation had taken place with children, young people and parents to understand what services could have done differently to make their lives better. This information had been used by the workforce (in both HBC and NHS trust) to redesign services as set out in the document attached to the report.

The proposed changes were within the current budget. One of the key drivers of the project was to realise further efficiencies through more effective integrated early intervention thus reducing the demand for and costs associated with children needing specialist services. Staff had been significantly involved with this transformation programme from the outset and the proposals set out had been developed by staff teams.

There would be a change of management for a number of HBC and NHS Trust staff and work is ongoing to ensure that they are consulted with. HBC staff briefings and communications had taken place throughout the programme.

The Director also highlighted that the future services would be designed on a locality basis and discussions were ongoing on the locations. The Director also stated that the implementation of the new integrated structure had now been scheduled for 1 May.

The Chair commended officers and partners for the excellent work

undertaken in developing the redesigned services which had been a very significant undertaking. The change in service delivery had required not just inter-departmental cooperation but a culture change in the way people worked. The willingness to make those changes showed the commitment to provide the best outcomes for young people in Hartlepool.

### **Decision**

That the implementation of the first phase of the transformation programme Better Childhood Programme be approved.

## **82. Development of Sub Regional Adoption Service** (*Director of Child and Adult Services*)

### **Type of decision**

For information.

### **Purpose of report**

To inform Children's Services Committee of the national policy agenda in relation to adoption and the local response to scope the development of a Tees Valley Adoption Service with the assistance of a grant from the Department for Education.

### **Issue(s) for consideration**

The Director of Child and Adult Services reported that since the election in 2015, the momentum in the reform of adoption services had increased with the Prime Minister announcing in November 2015 that a range of new measures intended to double the number of children placed with adoptive families at the earliest possible point, halving the time they are waiting in care for the full process to be completed, and the intention to change regulations around the assessment of potential special guardians.

As part of the reform of adoption services, the Department for Education (DfE) has committed £4.5m to stimulate change in the sector supporting early adopters of regional adoption agencies to accelerate their development and early implementation. In October 2015 the Tees Valley local authorities submitted an expression of interest to the Department for Education for an adoption reform grant to scope the development of a Tees Valley Adoption Service. Initially this project was being led by Middlesbrough Borough Council, however, due to unforeseen circumstances Hartlepool Borough Council had now taken on the lead authority role.

In February 2016, the signed Grant Agreement was received from the DfE for the phase one, 2015/16 allocation. Phase one of the

programme involved the development of a transition plan which would enable the partner authorities to strategically plan the future delivery model for a regional adoption agency and develop an option appraisal which would enable informed decisions to be made. A range of activities would be undertaken over the coming two months to put the local partners in a strong position to draw down funding for 2016/17 to implement the transition plan. Further reports would be submitted to the Committee in the coming months once the design and detail of the proposed new Tees Valley Adoption Service was developed.

A Member questioned if the introduction of the Tees Valley adoption agency would lead to reduced staffing locally. The Director commented that each area currently had relatively small teams so bringing them together would create some resilience. The Director believed that were there to be any staffing savings these could come through early retirement and/or voluntary redundancies if necessary. One of the criteria that any new adoption agency had to meet was that it had to be financially viable and sufficiently resilient to comply with government requirements.

The Chair commented that he was pleased that the work on the new agency was being led by Hartlepool. The Chair commented that he was assured that if the new agency came into being there would still be the same local focus for Hartlepool children being cared for in Hartlepool and receiving the same consideration they did now.

### **Decision**

That the report be noted.

## **83. Dedicated Schools Grant 2016/17** (*Director of Child and Adult Services*)

### **Type of decision**

For information.

### **Purpose of report**

The purpose of the report was to provide an update on the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG)

### **Issue(s) for consideration**

The Assistant Director, Education, Learning and Skills 0-19 reported that the local authority (LA) received funding for education via the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). This was split in to three areas: the Schools Block, the Early Years Block and the High Needs Block. The report set out for Members information an update on the funding allocation for 2016/17 for each of the blocks.

The table below summarised the DSG allocation for 2016/17 –

<b>DSG Funding Allocation 2016/17</b>			
<b>Block</b>	<b>2015/16</b>	<b>2016/17</b>	<b>Increase/ (reduction)</b>
	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>
<b>Early Years*</b>	4.489	4.489	(0)
<b>Schools</b>	60.748	61.449	0.701
<b>High Needs</b>	10.489	10.622	0.133
<b>Total</b>	<b>75.726</b>	<b>76.560</b>	<b>0.834</b>
<b>Academy Recoupment</b>	(26.404)	(26.718)	(0.314)
<b>Grant Received HBC</b>	<b>49.322</b>	<b>49.842</b>	<b>0.520</b>

\* subject to actual participation

Hartlepool has been allocated a total of £49.842m after academy recoupment. The report went onto to explain in detail how the funding for each of the three blocks would be utilised and the main issues affecting each sector.

In relation to the Early Years Block, the Assistant Director highlighted that from September 2017 legislation would be in place to allow eligible 3 and 4 year old children in families that work access up to 30 hours per week early years provision. It was uncertain at this stage what level of funding would be offered, however, there was a commitment from government to increase the amount of funding paid to providers. Work was underway to determine how this new commitment would be delivered in Hartlepool. The Assistant Director also highlighted that Hartlepool had responded well to the offer of free early years entitlement for two year olds and had the best take up across the country with participation currently at 88%. Three and four year old participation levels continue to be good with take up steady at a rate of 90%.

In relation to the Schools Block, the authority was awaiting the consultation from the DfE regarding the national funding formula for 2017/18 and future years. There was a great deal of uncertainty of the impact to the authority and schools. The publication was imminent and further information would be reported to Children's Services Committee when it becomes available.

The Assistant Director indicated that in relation to the High Needs Block longer-term options to manage the pressures would be considered as part of a review. A further detailed report would be submitted to Children's Services Committee in due course. There was insufficient funding to support the existing level of support paid to providers, within the High Needs block. This was a concern as early indications were

showing that there were more children and young people presenting with more complex needs. In order to understand the current picture in relation to demand and supply a sufficiency assessment would be completed with proposed options to meet the increase in demand.

The Chair referred to the consultation exercise announced by the Secretary of State for Education on the future of the Dedicated Schools Grant. The Chair assured Members that officers were already working with schools through the Schools Forum on the potential changes a reviewed DSG could bring. The Assistant Director commented that it was hoped that all Hartlepool schools would be united in their response to the consultation through the Schools Forum. A Headteacher representative stated that the Schools Forum was meeting in the very near future to discuss the consultation document, which did contain some very radical suggestions. There was also a proposal that a response would be submitted through Schools North East.

### **Decision**

1. That the report be noted and that further updates be submitted to Committee when the DfEs consultation relating to a national funding formula had been received.
2. That further updates in relation to the implementation of the extended hours for three and four year olds be provided in due course.
3. That an update report be submitted to Committee when the high needs block had been reviewed and funding options had been identified.

## **84. Free Breakfast Provision for Primary School Children** *(Director of Child and Adult Services)*

### **Type of decision**

For information.

### **Purpose of report**

To provide Committee with an update on the pilot schemes for the provision of free breakfast to primary school children.

To provide feedback on the current schemes in place at Grange Primary and West View Primary.

### **Issue(s) for consideration**

The Chair initially commented that this issue had been raised by Council where he had made his view clear that providing children with an

adequate breakfast was the responsibility of parents/carers. While the authority would do everything to assist a school provide breakfasts for children it was not well placed to provide any additional funding.

The Assistant Director, Education, Learning and Skills 0-19 reported that at the full Council meeting on 7 August 2014 the proposal of providing all primary school children with free healthy breakfasts was raised. Consequently in September 2014 a questionnaire was issued to all primary schools requesting feedback on the current breakfast provision available to pupils and inviting headteachers interested in exploring the proposal in further detail to attend a meeting to consider any implications.

Five schools expressed an interest in investigating how the scheme would work and subsequently, West View Primary school began a pilot scheme in June 2014 involving two classes rolling out the provision to the full school in the following September; and Grange Primary introduced their free breakfast provision, across the whole school in the Spring Term of 2015. St Bega's introduced a scheme in the 2014/15 Summer Term however; their scheme was not financially viable and ended in at the end of the 2014/15 academic year.

The Assistant Director commented that it was difficult to isolate a specific improvement in children's performance and correlate that to the provision of breakfast at school. The two schools at the forefront of the breakfast provision in Hartlepool did, however, believe there was an improvement.

The meeting discussed the issues around the provision of breakfast at school for pupils and the benefits in performance and behaviour, provable or not. There were potential issues around some children having two breakfasts on a morning; one at home and then one at school, and in some other local authority areas there had been some concern around the potential of this adding to the childhood obesity problem. Some concerns were noted around the Kellogg's provision and their dietary suitability. The Chair added that there were a number of voluntary organisations also providing breakfasts.

In concluding the debate, the Chair indicated that there were some obvious concerns around the provision of breakfasts in schools, some insurmountable, some not. The evidence of improvements in behaviour or performance were inconclusive, though anecdotally there was support from the two schools providing the free breakfast in Hartlepool. Funding would remain an issue with schools either meeting the costs directly or utilising free schemes such as the Kellogg's scheme. The Chair had indicated to Council that an annual report would be provided and requested that an appropriate report be forwarded to Council taking on board the comments of the Committee.

### **Decision**

1. That the feedback from the two pilot schemes for the provision of free breakfasts to primary school children be noted and that in light of the operation of the scheme and the facilitation of breakfast provision by the Council, no further action by this Committee was required.
2. That an appropriate annual update report be submitted to Council.

## **85. Key Stage 4 Pupil Achievement Summary 2015 (Provisional)** *(Director of Child and Adult Services)*

### **Type of decision**

For information.

### **Purpose of report**

To provide a summary of Key Stage 4 pupil achievement outcomes from public examinations 2014-15, and to indicate any significant trends.

### **Issue(s) for consideration**

The Assistant Director, Education, Learning and Skills 0-19 reported that there are nationally benchmarked outcomes for young people at the end of Key Stage (KS) 4. Young people are expected to make three levels of progress from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 4. The key measure of attainment for young people at the end of Key Stage 4 continued to be 5+ GCSE passes at grades A\*-C, including English and mathematics (5A\*CEM). There were national floor standards of attainment and progress for maintained schools to reach at the end of Key Stage 4.

The data presented in the report was un-validated. Validated data was due to be released in March 2016. The Assistant Director corrected one of the outcomes detailed in the report –

“4.3 Attainment in mathematics rose to 36.8 in 2015 compared to 36.0 in 2014, against a national rise from 38.0 to 38.3.”

The Assistant Director stated that it was difficult this year to compare the improvements from KS2 to KS4 for this year's cohort of pupils as due to a teaching boycott of the KS2 tests in 2010 that data didn't exist. Hartlepool was the only area where the boycott had been 100% across all schools. Professor David Jesson from York University had undertaken some research into the cohort of children that had did not sit the 2010 tests and the correlation between that and their GCSE performance in 2015. A large proportion of the progress in the

performance measures was not refined as the initial measures were too crude.

A headteacher representative commented that from the work undertaken by Prof. Jesson it appeared that the 'high attainers' may have fallen short of their expected improvement at KS4. There were questions as to how that would affect schools inspections and it was understood that inspectors had been advised to treat the data with some caution. The wider concern was that the next time KS4 results could be performance checked against KS2 would be in 2022 due to the changes being made in GCSEs. GCSE testing had been 'toughened' in 2011 and the new changes coming forward next year would also include a further 'toughening' of the exams. Schools would be left doing the best they could to assess pupil performance with some very crude data measures.

The Chair questioned if the research was suggesting that progression was impaired by not having the 2010 SATs. The action taken by teachers at that time had been supported by the local authority and there was obviously no expectation that the action would have an impact five years later. The headteacher representative commented that it appeared that the reported performance of more able students may not be as high as schools would have liked or expected. The work undertaken by Prof Jesson could be utilised to provide some sort of benchmark for the future.

The Assistant Director commented that it had to be noted that for the sixth consecutive year all Hartlepool mainstream secondary schools were above the current government floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress. There were still some concerns around boys' performance when compared with girls, though some good work was being undertaken in schools to address this. Science was also an area of concern; there was improvement in attainment but there was a wish to see that improvement accelerating. The work being undertaken by the Education Commission would have significant benefits in these areas and there would be regular update reports to Committee on that work.

Members also queried the reduced risk that two secondary schools in Hartlepool will not achieve a 'Good' grading at their next Ofsted inspection. The Assistant Director indicated that because the leadership and management of these two schools was graded 'Good' at their last inspection and current evidence in these schools now suggests that students are making good and better progress, the next inspection would look at this area for a greater level of improvement to justify a repeat grading of 'Good'.

## **Decision**

That the report be noted and Hartlepool Secondary Schools be



congratulated on their continued improvement in educational standards.

**86. HealthWatch Hartlepool Asylum Seeker and Refugee Health Consultation Report** (*Director of Child and Adult Services*)

**Type of decision**

For information.

**Purpose of report**

To inform the Children's Services Committee of the outcomes of the recent Health focused consultation events undertaken by HealthWatch Hartlepool with the town's asylum seeker and refugee community as referred to committee by the Health and Wellbeing Board.

**Issue(s) for consideration**

The Chair commented that he had been present at the meeting of the Health and Wellbeing Board when the HealthWatch report had been considered. There had been a debate around the provision of mental health services to children with refugee status. Members had suggested the reference to this Committee so that it could be assured that there were appropriate services in place.

The Director of Child and Adult Services stated that there were a range of mental health services available to refugee families and in this instance to the children of those families and specialist services would be available to them. It was anticipated that five families would be arriving in May with a further five families at a later date. There were officers working towards assuring there were robust services ready to deliver the right package of support to the families when they arrived.

**Decision**

That the report and the recommendations within the HealthWatch Hartlepool Asylum Seeker and Refugee Consultation Report be noted.

**87. Any Other Items which the Chairman Considers are Urgent**

The Chairman ruled that the following items of business should be considered by the Committee as a matter of urgency in accordance with the provisions of Section 100(B) (4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972 in order that the matter could be dealt with without delay.

Council Motion – 21 January 2016

The Chair referred to the following motion made at Council on

21 January 2016 (minute no. 118 (11) refers) –

“Sir Michael Wilshaw’s fourth annual Ofsted report will have made unpleasant reading for us all. In it he names 16 local authority areas in England where fewer than 60% of children attend good or outstanding secondary schools, have lower than national GCSE attainment and make less than national levels of expected progress. Hartlepool is one of them.

Although it is hard to argue about the statistics, there can be much debate about the responsibility for and causes of the difficulties faced by our schools.

This Council believes that our dedicated teachers and school staff do an amazing job, in trying circumstances, and national leaders would be better employed putting forward solutions, rather than pointing fingers.

Nevertheless inaction is not an option and council therefore resolves to invite Mr Wilshaw’s to Hartlepool to discuss with councillors, officers and education leaders in the town about how he believes we can address these shortfalls and continue our pursuit of academic excellence in all our educational establishments.”

The Chair indicated he had responded to the motion in debate stating that he was concerned that he did not want to undermine progress made by Officers who were working already with the Regional Inspector, OFSTED. The Chair suggested, therefore, that this issue be referred to the Children’s Services Committee and that the Schools Forum also consider this issue.

The Chair believed that officers in partnership with schools were doing everything possible to give the young people of Hartlepool the best start in life that they could. With Members support, the Chair indicated that he believed it would be sufficient for the compliance with the motion at Council for the Committee to continue to monitor the performance of Hartlepool’s schools at all key stages as at present through the receipt of regular monitoring reports. The Committee indicated its support.

#### Retirement of Chair of Committee

The Chair indicated that as this was the last meeting of the Committee in the municipal year, this would be his last meeting as Chair as he was standing down from the Council in May. The Chair extended his thanks to Members, officers and all those that had been involved in the Committee during his time as chair for their support and contribution to some excellent meetings. The Chair commented that the local authority had very committed and experienced officers who were a credit to the authority and the town, and he would retire from Council safe in the knowledge that they would continue the excellent work in delivering first class education services in Hartlepool.

The Vice-Chair, Councillor Hall, proposed a vote of thanks to the Chair and commended him on his commitment to the education of young people in Hartlepool through his years as a teacher and latterly as an elected councillor. The volume of work undertaken by a Chair of a Policy Committee was significant and not reflected in the meetings the public attended. Members supported the vote of thanks and commented in similar terms.

## **88. Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation Order) 2006**

Under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public were excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the paragraphs referred to below of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.

Minute 89 – (Exmoor Grove Satellite Provision) – This item contains exempt information under Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006 namely, information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual (para. 2).

## **89. Exmoor Grove Satellite Provision** (*Director of Child and Adult Services*) This item contains exempt information under Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006 namely, information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual (para. 2).

### **Type of decision**

Non- key decision.

### **Purpose of report**

For members to approve the development of a satellite provision to Exmoor Grove Children's Home.

### **Issue(s) for consideration**

The Director of Child and Adult Services reported on a proposal to develop a satellite unit to the Exmoor Grove children's residential and short break unit.

**Decision**

That the development of a satellite provision to Exmoor Grove Children's Home as reported be approved.

The meeting concluded at 5.55 pm.

**P J DEVLIN**

**CHIEF SOLICITOR**

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