

CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE

MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD

18 September 2018

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

Present:

Councillor: Brenda Harrison (In the Chair)

Councillors: Marjorie James, John Lauderdale, Sue Little, Shane Moore, and Katie Trueman

Co-opted members:

Mark Tilling, Secondary Schools Head Representative
David Turner, Primary Schools Head Representative

Healthwatch representatives: Evelyn Leck and Ruby Marshall.

Officers: Sally Robinson, Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services
Mark Patton, Assistant Director, Education
Angela Armstrong, Principal Democratic Services Officer

21. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Stephen Thomas (Chair of Adult Services Committee), Jo Heaton (C of E Diocesan Representative), Zoe Westley (Special School Representative) and Ruby Marshall.

22. Former Councillor Alan Clark

On behalf of the Committee, the Chair formally noted the hard work and commitment that had been given by the former Councillor Alan Clark as Chair of the Committee and Lead Member for Children's Services and requested that a letter of thanks be forwarded to him.

Decision

That a letter be forwarded to former Councillor Alan Clark thanking him for his hard work, commitment and contribution to the provision of services for children and young people as Chair of Children's Services Committee and Lead Member for Children's Services.

23. Declarations of Interest

The Headteachers declared their usual interest.

24. Minutes of the meeting held on 17 July 2018

Received.

25. Reconstitution of Governing Body of Rift House Primary School *(Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services)*

Type of decision

Non key.

Purpose of report

To seek approval of the Committee to the reconstitution of the Governing Body and the Instrument of Government of Rift House Primary School in accordance with the School Governance (Constitution) (England) Regulations 2012 as amended by the School Governance (Constitution and Federation) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014.

Issue(s) for consideration

The background to the reconstitution of the Governing Body was noted in the report. It was highlighted that an ongoing review of the governance arrangements, including the governor skills and capacity. As a result, it was considered that the school would benefit from increasing the number of governors to 12 which would allow the governing body to broaden its skills set, offer greater support and challenge to senior staff. This would enable individual governors greater capacity to carry out their functions as committee members, link governors and so on.

The revised constitution will involve an increase in the number of co-opted governors from five to seven whilst numbers in all other categories will remain the same:

2 Parent Governors;
1 Local Authority Governor;
1 Staff Governor;
1 Headteacher; and
7 Co-opted Governors.

Further details were set out in the revised Instrument of Government attached at Appendix 1 to the report.

In response to a question from a Member, the Headteachers confirmed

that Governing Bodies were constituted to ensure that there was less than 30% of teaching staff within the membership.

Decision

The reconstitution of the Governing Body of Rift House Primary School under the School Governance (Constitution and Federation) (England) (Amendment) Regulations and revised Instruments of Government in accordance with the details set out in Appendix 1 was approved.

26. Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services *(Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services)*

Type of decision

For information.

Purpose of report

To report to the Committee the outcome of the inspection of the Local Authority children's Services which took place in July 2018.

Issue(s) for consideration

The background to Ofsted's inspection framework was outlined in the report. As Hartlepool Borough Council's Children's Services were judged good in terms of overall effectiveness in November 2013, a short ILACS inspection was undertaken in July 2018. The focus of the inspection was to examine the effectiveness of Hartlepool's children's services in terms of the services provided to those in need of help and protection and children in care and care leavers. The inspectors sought to answer three questions arising from previous inspections:

- Has the quality and impact of practice been maintained?
- Are there any areas where the quality and impact of practice have improved?
- Are there any areas where the quality and impact of practice have deteriorated?

The detailed inspection report was attached at Appendix 1 and a summary of the judgements was as follows:

- | | |
|---|--------------------|
| • The impact of leaders on social work practice with children and families. | GOOD |
| • The experience and progress of children who need help and protection | GOOD |
| • The experience and progress of children in care and care leavers | OUTSTANDING |
| • Overall effectiveness | GOOD |

The Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services added that a subsequent letter had been received from the Ofsted Director of Social Care commenting on the positive outcome from the inspection which has been circulated to staff.

The Chair commended everyone involved in the provision of services to the children and young people of Hartlepool on the achievement of an overall Good outcome with outstanding features from the recent Ofsted inspection. In addition to this, the Chair referred to a letter of congratulations received from the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Children and Families and informed the Committee she would write back to the Minister on behalf of the Committee highlighting it would be difficult to maintain this level of service provision in view of the ongoing financial constraints being placed upon the Local Authority by Central Government.

Decision

- (1) That the outcome of the recent inspection of Children's Services be noted and everyone involved be congratulated.
- (2) The Chair to write to the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Children and Families expressing Members' concerns around the continuation of the provision of this level of service to the children and young people of Hartlepool under the financial constraints being placed upon the Local Authority by Central Government.

27. 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.

Minute 27 – Any Other Business - Period Poverty

28. Any Other Business – Period Poverty

The Chair referred to a motion and subsequent resolution from a meeting of Council on 22 February 2018 to support the Tees Valley Free Period campaign. In addition to this, Council resolved to commit to explore how a similar scheme to that currently operating in Scotland would operate and be funded in Hartlepool. It was understood that the Interim Director of Public Health had contacted Emma Chesworth from the Period for Free Campaign and an update on this was sought. The representatives from schools confirmed that a lot of schools had recognised this as an issue and undertaken to discretely provide free sanitary products for anyone who needed them upon request within school as part of poverty proofing within their schools. A Member suggested that all schools be asked what arrangements, if any, they had in place to assist girls with this issue.

A Member highlighted that sanitary products were available at Hartlepool Foodbank and highlighted that donations were always welcomed.

Decision

- (1) That an update on the progress of the resolution from Council with the Tees Valley Free Period Campaign be provided to a future meeting.
- (2) That information be provided on what arrangements were in place within all Hartlepool schools to assist girls with the provision of free sanitary products to avoid period poverty.

The meeting concluded at 4.20 pm

H MARTIN

INTERIM CHIEF SOLICITOR

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