

Minutes of a meeting of the Children’s Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on Wednesday 10 February 2016 at St Edmund’s Nursery School/Children’s Centre, Bradford

Commenced 1705

Concluded 1945

PRESENT – Councillors

CONSERVATIVE	LABOUR	LIBERAL DEMOCRAT	BRADFORD INDEPENDENTS
Sykes	Engel	J Sunderland	F Khan
	Peart		
	Shaheen		
	Tait		
	Thirkill		

Voting Co-Opted Members:

Church Representative: Joyce Simpson (CE)

Non-Voting Co-Opted Members:

Health Representative: Tina Wildy
 Teachers Secondary School Representative: Tom Bright
 Teachers Primary School Representative: Stephen Pickles
 Voluntary Sector Representative: Kerr Kennedy

Apologies: Clair Parr, Councillor M Pollard

Observer: Councillor Hinchcliffe

Councillor Sykes in the Chair

98. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

- (1) In the interest of transparency all those who had children attending local schools disclosed an interest.



- (3) Councillor Peart disclosed an interest in Minute 104 as she worked at Tong High School.
- (4) All those who were School Governors disclosed an interest.

ACTION: *Interim City Solicitor*

99. **MINUTES**

Resolved -

That the minutes of the meeting held on 12 January 2016 be signed as a correct record.

100. **INSPECTION OF REPORTS AND BACKGROUND PAPERS**

There were no appeals submitted by the public to review decisions to restrict documents.

101. **REFERRALS TO THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

The Committee received the following referral that had been made after the publication of this agenda.

The Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 3 February 2016 when considering its Work Programme requested that this Committee considers a report on the Bradford Centre of Excellence (new initiative aimed at young people that delivered targeted interventions about the consequences of crime).

The Committee was asked to note the referral and decided how it wished to proceed, for example by incorporating the item into the work programme, requesting that it be subject to more detailed examination, or refer it to an appropriate Working Group/Committee.

Resolved –

That the referral be incorporated into the Committee’s Work Programme.

ACTION: *City Solicitor*

102. **TENDERING OF CONTRACT OVER £2M FOR BRADFORD CONNEXIONS SERVICE**

In line with the requirements of Council’s Contracts Standing Order 4.4.1 to report all proposed procurement exercises with a total estimated contract value of over £2million prior to commencement of the procurement tendering process. The Strategic Director Children’s Services submitted **Document “AZ”** which reported on the planned procurement of the Connexions contract and thereby gave Members the opportunity to engage in the process prior to inviting tenders from the marketplace.



Members commented on a number of issues which included:

- Was the tendering process undertaken through the EU procurement rules?
- Were the tenders assessed on quality rather than price?
- Had the 18 providers committed to joining the new joint commissioning exercise?

In response to Members' questions it was reported that:

- It was a requirement to advertise and re-tender the contracts under the Council's Standing Orders and Procurement Strategy and to ensure compliance with EU legislation.
- Tenders were assessed on quality rather than price.
- The current contract was jointly commissioned with a number of Bradford schools and colleges and as such was funded through a combination of Council money and contributions from education providers, all 18 had committed to joining the new commissioning exercise.

Resolved –

That the report and the option to undertake the tendering exercise for the Connexions contract be noted.

ACTION: Strategic Director, Children's Services

103. **RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION IN TEACHING ACROSS BRADFORD SCHOOLS**

Previous Reference: Minute 60 (2015/16)

Members were asked to consider **Document "AX"** which reported on a piece of research undertaken by Dr George Madine (University of Bradford), on the recruitment and retention of teachers across Bradford Schools.

Dr Madine gave a presentation and reported that he had surveyed 600 local teachers and interviewed 250 and found that:

- More than half of Bradford teachers say they were likely to leave their school in the next year.
- Over half said were considering leaving the profession entirely.
- Teachers were unhappy in their jobs which made it difficult for schools to retain the staff.
- Whilst teacher dissatisfaction and retention was a national problem, Bradford's position in the league tables meant local teachers were put under even more pressure.
- Factors that caused teachers distress at work included constant monitoring, excessive workload, behaviour, lack of support and unfair expectations of improving pupils' grades, especially for pupils that were new to English.
- Addressing the factors that caused distress at work included tackling the source such as excessive monitoring, letting teachers control how they teach etc.



- When a teacher was being observed it was important to point out positives and not just negatives.
- Teachers were going to schools that had better league tables.
- Schools felt they were blamed if their schools failed; undertaking assessments was one way that they felt would help make improvements.
- Support plans did not support individuals but instead caused fear amongst teachers.
- Good schools needed to work with poor performing schools to compare what good schools were undertaking in making them successful.
- Teacher assessments needed to be more positive ie needed improvements in certain areas rather than saying they had failed in Section 1 and 2 etc.
- To improve the situation and retain teachers the authority needed to improve the way teacher assessments were undertaken; better support be provided to teachers; reducing the workload; development opportunities for teachers and making the job rewarding again.

Members commented on the following issues:

- The Government had its own strategy for Education; Schools/Authority was restricted on what could be changed due to Government legislation and Ofsted rules and regulations.
- Did teachers understand Ofsted rules?
- Out of 600 teachers surveyed how many were from a primary school and how many were from a secondary school?
- Private schools also faced similar issues such as extra workload.
- There was stress, peaks and troughs in other professions too; was there a potential risk that teachers that completed the survey were unhappy in their careers?
- Recruitment of teachers was a national problem and did not just apply to Bradford.
- Which area were the schools surveyed from?
- Lots of professions included being observed, was it peculiar for teachers? lessons should be learnt from well managed schools.
- Was there any correlation between this study and Ofsted inspections?
- Senior Managers in schools needed to recognise and develop teachers appropriately which had to be directed at schools.
- Was there a correlation between teachers stress levels and the effects on grades?
- Was there an unfair expectation of grades for children new to English?

In response to Members' questions Dr Madine reported that the study did not interpret Ofsted rules; changing support plans did not involve a huge financial burden; half of the schools surveyed were primary and half were secondary; the survey included teachers from all sectors, the last school surveyed included all the staff; the study was anonymous; there had been no correlation with Ofsted reports; teachers became tired when overworked and therefore could not perform to their best ability; issues relating to children new to English should be revisited.

The Education, Skills and Culture Portfolio reported that:

- Recruitment and retention of teachers was a national issue and not just local.
- Good management applied in all professions; good managers made great people.



- School Improvement Plan says we need outstanding teachers; we know where outstanding teachers were and who can show others on making improvements.
- Bradford had a school led improvement system with hubs around the district who were good at supporting new to English.
- It was vital that every child reached their full potential.
- St Edmund's Teaching School was excellent in recruiting new teachers.

A member of the public attended the meeting and spoke of the issues parents had at his local school and questioned Members as to what would be undertaken to improve the problems highlighted in Dr Madine's report.

A Member of the Committee explained that she agreed with the findings but felt that Ofsted pressures did not help schools and that the Authority had put initiatives in place to address the recruitment and retention concerns.

Resolved –

- (1) **That Dr Madine be thanked for his detailed presentation and his findings be welcomed.**
- (2) **That a Multi Academy Trust be invited to attend a future meeting of the Committee to share best practice on recruitment and retention and to discuss the findings of Dr Madine's research.**
- (3) **That officers from Children's Services disseminate Dr Madine's research to as many education bodies as possible, including the School Governor Service.**

ACTION: *Strategic Director, Children's Services*

104. TEACHING SCHOOLS AND HOW THEY ARE OPERATING IN BRADFORD

Teaching schools were outstanding schools that worked with others to provide high-quality training and development to new and experienced school staff. They were part of the government's plan to give schools a central role in raising standards by developing a self-improving and sustainable school-led system.

Bradford currently had five Teaching Schools that operated as Alliances with other schools across the area.

The Assistant Director, Education and School Improvement submitted **Document "AY"** which provided some background about Teaching Schools and the Alliances they formed, the current position in Bradford, the work the Alliances had undertaken and the impact of this work.

It was reported that the Bradford teaching schools programme had proved to be so successful in recruiting new teachers that it had to expand its operation to take on even more.



Members were informed that teaching schools worked as part of an alliance of primary schools, nurseries, special schools, secondary schools, academies, free schools and Sheffield Hallam University.

It was reported that since the initiative started training teachers in 2014, it had recruited a total of 105 new teachers.

To become a teaching school, an education facility had to have an outstanding Ofsted rating. St Edmund's Nursery and Children's Centre was the lead Bradford teaching school and was given its third consecutive outstanding rating last year.

It was reported that teaching schools helped improve other schools by recruiting and training new entrants to teaching, providing training courses, supporting school leadership and recruiting and training outstanding headteachers and subject leaders.

The Head of St Edmund's Teaching School reported that the decline in applications for people wanting to become a teacher was not the case at the teaching school and was in fact the reverse, the teaching school received so many good applications for people wanting to train to teach that the school was over recruiting and had to increase the allocation. The success of the teaching schools was a strong rejection to the claim that this City finds it difficult to recruit teachers.

The Chair reported that there were challenges at a national scale in the difficulty in recruiting in certain areas such as Maths and Physics, how were the teaching schools dealing with this?

The Head of St Edmund's Teaching School reported that:

- Bradford teaching schools did not find that there was a problem in recruitment and retention of teachers.
- The teaching schools were a school led teacher training organisation.
- The Teaching School had more people wanting to train as teachers than its allocation number.
- What was being achieved by teaching schools was extremely positive.
- The teacher training provided involved working with the best teachers in good and outstanding schools and to work with children in schools.
- The teaching schools worked with schools across the district in preparing people to be trained as good teachers.
- Last year all trained teachers went to schools locally and only 3 went out of the district.
- There was a difficulty in recruiting for Maths and Physics but other areas were recruiting well.

Members commented on the following issues:

- Did the teaching schools monitor the progress of a trained teacher?
- What was the diversity of applicants?
- It would be valuable to take steps to re-engage teachers who had left the profession; offering courses for returners; could more be undertaken in this area.
- Further work be explored on the support provided to retraining ex-teachers.



- How could the authority have more teaching schools?
- Continuing Professional Development needed to be right and needed to engage teachers.
- Would have been good to see the effect on educational attainment from the work being undertaken by teaching schools.
- It would be useful to consider teachers having the option of a sabbatical to gain experience in other areas to support their careers and relieve stress.

In response to Members' questions it was reported that:

- The first three years of starting the teaching profession was important especially in ensuring that enthusiasm was not lost; training courses were provided to cope with various skills new teachers needed.
- There was Talent Management and succession planning available to develop teachers of the future; teaching schools worked with Sheffield Hallam University for teachers who wished to undertake Masters degree etc.
- The candidates that applied to become teachers were from a similar number of men to women; and more women were from South Asian heritage than the national average representation; applications were also received from older people wanting to change careers.
- Other joint teaching schools were undertaking a programme for retiring teachers.

Members congratulated the positive work being undertaken by the teaching schools.

Resolved –

- (1) **That the report be welcomed and the Teaching Schools be congratulated for the work being undertaken.**
- (2) **That the Strategic Director, Children's Services considers how the Council can promote an increase in the number and subject matter of courses provided for returning teachers.**

ACTION: *Strategic Director, Children's Services*

105. **CHILDREN'S SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2015-16**

The report of the Chair of Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee (**Document "BA"**) presented the Committee's Work Programme 2015-16.

Resolved –

That the Work Programme 2015-16 continues to be reviewed during the year.

ACTION: *Overview and Scrutiny Lead*

Chair

Note: These minutes are subject to approval as a correct record at the next meeting of the Committee.

