

Minutes of a meeting of the Children’s Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on Wednesday 30 March 2016 at City Hall, Bradford

Commenced 1630
 Adjourned 1725
 Reconvened 1730
 Concluded 1815

PRESENT – Councillors

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

Voting Co-opted Member:

Church Representative: Joyce Simpson (CE)

Non Voting Co-opted Member:

Health Representative: Tina Wildy

Apologies: Claire Parr, Sidiq Ali and Gull Hussain

Councillor Sykes in the Chair

113 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

- (1) Councillor Sykes disclosed an interest in Minute 118 as his son was a peripatetic music teacher in Bradford schools.
- (2) In the interest of transparency all Members who were school governors disclosed an interest.
- (3) Councillor Pollard disclosed an interest in Minute 117 as his son was at Leeds Beckett University.

ACTION: *Interim City Solicitor*



114 MINUTES

Resolved -

That the minutes of the meeting held on 27 January and 10 February 2016 be signed as a correct record.

115 INSPECTION OF REPORTS AND BACKGROUND PAPERS

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

116 REFERRALS TO THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

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

Council 22 March 2016

Resolved –

The Council notes the comments of the Ofsted Chief Inspector about the “serious and growing threat to the safety and well-being of hundreds of children in several English Regions”.

This Council takes seriously its responsibility to protect children from harm regardless of education setting and notes that:

- (1) The Children’s Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee has already been advised on 8 March 2016 that a “deep dive” review of elective home education should be undertaken which will address issues including the Council’s approach to identifying children not registered at school, minimising the risk of children missing education and achieving a better understanding of why some parents or carers choose home education.**
- (2) The Council’s current approach to elective home education goes beyond statutory requirements.
- (3) That the Council has no legal powers to obtain access to home educated children where there are no known welfare concerns.
- (4) Of 333 home educated children 94% have been seen by the Council. Access to the remaining 6% has been refused however the Council is actively pursuing ways to ensure that visits to these children can be made.
- (5) The Council is engaged in on-going discussions with Ofsted about its approach.



The Council resolves to:

- (1) Continue to make safeguarding of every child in the District a priority.
- (2) **Ask that the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee to ensure that a comprehensive and robust review of the Council's approach to elective home education is carried out over the next six months in which the safeguarding of children is central.**
- (3) Request the Chief Executive to write to the Secretary of State for Education expressing support for a review of national policy on elective home education which should include support for local authorities and partner agencies in cases where access to children is refused so that they can satisfy themselves that all children's education and welfare needs are being met.

Resolved –

That recommendations (1 and 2) highlighted above from Council on 22 March 2016 be included on the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's work programme.

ACTION: *Chief Executive/Strategic Director Children's Services/Overview and Scrutiny Lead (referral to Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee)*

117 OUTDOOR EDUCATION CENTRES

The Assistant Director, Access and Inclusion submitted **Document "BF"** which provided the committee with an update on developments for the District's three Outdoor Education Centres (Ingleborough Hall, Buckden House and Nell Bank) and plans for their future sustainability and independence from the Local Authority by April 2017.

Members were informed that refurbishment works at both Ingleborough Hall and Buckden House had been completed. The new build at Nell Bank started in December 2015 and would be complete by the end of May 2016.

It was reported that:

- At the end of the financial year 2014/15 Ingleborough Hall was operating at a deficit but from the beginning of April 2015 to date the financial turnaround had been significant; a great deal of progress had been made since the completion of the refurbishment such as an increase in the number of users; greater promotion of activity through a refreshed website; promotion through clusters of schools and establishing a three year relationship for school holiday activities to deliver the National Citizenship Service.



- The building work at Nell Bank would be completed by the end of May 2016; given that the Centre could not start to generate operational income levels it needed before the end of May 2016, it was predicted that it would operate with an overspend for 2016/17 and the following full year operating with the new facility would return the budget above a break even position. Members could have confidence that Nell Bank would with the completion of a major new residential block and attendant increase in visitor numbers, alongside the strong management redevelopment being undertaken by the trustees had a bright future and the investment by the Schools Forum would be realised in the long term.
- The refurbishment at Buckden House was completed in February 2015; the revenue situation for the Centre on 31 March 2015 showed an overspend; the predictions for the year 2016/17 were that Buckden House would reduce the current overspend further whilst still operating at a deficit based on the current usage and the positive impact of a National Citizenship Scheme Summer Programme.

In response to Members questions it was reported that each centre to be viable would need to generate surplus income in the region of £30-£50,000 annually.

Members were informed that a Business Plan was being produced to address the rate of progress so that use of the Centres increases in an attempt to establish a surplus budget at each site in 2017/18.

The Centre Heads of Ingleborough Hall, Buckden House and Nell Bank attended the meeting and spoke on the positive impact the refurbishment work had made to the Centres. Photographs of the progress with the building work at Nell Bank was shown to the Committee, the new dormitory building would include 64 full size beds and 6 en-suite rooms for staff; work was ongoing to increase the usage of the Centres such as day visits and residentials during school holidays and other activities schools wanted.

It was reported that residential visits generated the most income.

The Outdoor Learning Project Board and Nell Bank Trustees had met in the autumn term to determine the future shape of any Trust. The Jubilee Trust at Nell Bank had decided that in order for it to be successful and sustaining growth it would not be part of trust arrangements for Ingleborough Hall and Buckden House. Further details were outlined in 3.1.26 of the report.

It was reported that positive work was taking place to improve visitor attendance at the Centres which included support from schools across the district; looking at other options available to the Centres; the three Centres were working closely together; the National Citizenship Scheme operated through Leeds Beckett University had been a great benefit to Ingleborough Hall and Buckden House.

In response to a Member's question it was reported that Ingleborough Hall had better transport links but Buckden House was in a remote location which was useful for revise study weekends, both Centres were different but had various advantages that attracted different people.



It was reported that the Centres were significantly used by Bradford Schools as well as a number of Leeds Schools but the Centres did take bookings from outside the district; Leeds Beckett University was using the services; the Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra would be using Ingleborough Hall for rehearsal purposes; families used the Centres; both Buckden House and Ingleborough Hall were set in beautiful locations and were ideal settings for getting married in; the Centres were used as widely as possible.

Visitors to Nell Bank were mainly from Bradford Schools who were from the most disadvantaged wards; 60 international young people would be using Nell Bank for 4 weeks; Arthritis Association and Wharfedale Cross County Championship was just some of the organisations that used Nell Bank. The Centres would also be used during evenings and school holidays.

Members were informed that Nell Bank had exceptional facilities for people with disabilities.

In response to Members' questions it was reported that the intention was that after refurbishment the Centres would be self sustaining businesses.

Members of the Committee emphasised the importance of continuing to market the Centres.

Members also stressed the importance of the Centres having their uniqueness in terms of what they offered and what else could be offered.

It was reported that opportunities relating to curriculum such as humanities would be explored by the Outdoor Learning Project Board.

In response to Members' questions it was reported that the Centres had good contact with the Duke of Edinburgh Awards Scheme, Training Assessment Days were taking place at Nell Bank.

It was reported that the new dormitory at Nell Bank would open up a host of opportunities such as activities for degree students.

Resolved -

- (1) That the positive progress of Ingleborough Hall and Buckden House following the refurbishment at the centres be welcomed.**
- (2) That the progress of building works at Nell Bank be welcomed and the Committee looks forward to its completion.**
- (3) That a report be taken to the Schools Forum on the Outdoor Education Centres containing overall details of the capital expenditure programme and that Officers are requested to liaise with the Schools Forum to jointly determine the scope of that document.**



- (4) **That the Outdoor Project Board be urged to maintain the differentiation between the Outdoor Centre offers to ensure the widest possible educational opportunities be given to the young people of the district.**

ACTION: *Strategic Director Children's Services*

118 CULTURAL EDUCATION

Cultural and creativity within the school curriculum had long been seen as a way to enhance the development of children and young people. Within recent years revisions to Ofsted's inspection framework had led to substantial changes to the curriculum for cultural education. There was universal recognition that cultural education was a vital part of a child's schooling and this had now to be captured under the terms of a broad and balanced curriculum.

The Deputy Director for Education, Employment and Skills submitted **Document "BG"** which reported on how cultural and creative education could lead to improved outcomes for young people by ensuring all children received a broad and balanced education.

It was reported that in response to Arts Council England's Cultural Education Challenge, the Authority was working with Arts Council England through a bridging organisation, Cape UK, to ensure children and young people across the district received a cultural creative offer as part of their time in school through a number of ways:

- A Local Cultural Education Partnership was in the process of being set up; a steering group had been established to support the roll-out of the District's offer; the Membership of the Partnership included representation from Bradford Council, Bradford University and College, arts organisations (including National Media Museum, City of Film etc) headteachers and school leaders.
- With support from Cape UK a Creative Consultation with children, young people and families in Bradford South would take place over the next few months. The consultation would explore ways of enabling families, parents and carers to find out about local cultural and arts offers across the City and to see what they perceive to be missing and highlight any potential barriers to accessing these activities. The findings of the consultation would inform the future development and focus of work carried out by the Local Cultural Education Partnership.
- The local authority's Music and Arts Service was working alongside the National Literacy Trust on a number of projects including working with boys aged 10-13 to support writing; a programme to support pupils at risk of exclusion – pupils would be supported one-to-one to write lyrics and music; targeting primary school classes to deliver a rhyming session based on rhymes from different cultures.
- Further activities being offered were outlined in Section 3 of the report.

A representative of Cape attended the meeting and spoke on the work being undertaken to provide cultural and creative education.

It was reported that there had been a number of studies on the impact on outcomes from young people of cultural initiatives across the district and the positive impact it had.



In response to a Member's question on whether a resource was available such as a database for schools to look at what was available (story tellers, poets, authors etc) and at what price. It was reported that there was information available through the Breeze Culture Network which allowed artists, teachers and people who offered arts, drama etc to make their details available.

Members felt it would be valuable to get authors and story tellers into Bradford Schools.

It was reported that the literature festivals involved bringing authors and writers into schools and accepted that some sort of cultural website needed looking at.

In response to Members' questions it was reported that the results of the Creative Consultation being undertaken would be known by the end of April 2016.

A Member felt because of the capacity of some schools and the school curriculum being focussed on grammar, maths etc cultural education could be offered in school and at after school clubs.

A Member commented that the Local Cultural Education Partnership needed to include a representative from the Youth Service.

In response to Members' questions it was reported that it was up to individual schools on how they provided cultural education.

It was reported that cultural education was available to all schools including special schools.

Members felt it would be useful to know what work was being undertaken for people with different disabilities and how they and their families were being engaged.

Members stressed the importance of providing cultural education and the positive impact it had on improved outcomes for young people as described by Professor Hallam MBE at paragraph 2.3 of the report.

Members reiterated that a website/one stop shop was needed that gave details on the cultural education that was available and the importance of engaging parents and carers.

The importance of ensuring schools engaged with what was being offered in terms of cultural education and its benefits were reiterated.

Members also stressed the importance of schools being supported so they have access to cultural activity and were able to tap into the resources that were available.

Members felt school governors needed to be made aware of cultural education on offer and its positive impact on young people.

It was reported that information packs on cultural education were being produced for school governors.



Resolved -

- (1) That the report on the cultural and creative education of Bradford's pupils as part of their broad and balanced curriculum (Document "BG") be received.**
- (2) That the continued work of the Music and Arts Service, its partners and Bradford schools to ensure that every child receives a meaningful cultural and creative curriculum offer be supported.**
- (3) That the Governors Service writes to all schools explaining the value of cultural education which can lead to improved outcomes for young people.**
- (4) That a report be submitted to the Schools Forum which informs the Forum on the value of cultural education and a creative curriculum and its positive impact on improved outcomes for young people.**

ACTION: Strategic Director, Children's Services

Chair

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

THESE MINUTES HAVE BEEN PRODUCED, WHEREVER POSSIBLE, ON RECYCLED PAPER

