

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the **Corporate Scrutiny Committee**
held on Tuesday, 9th July, 2013 at Committee Suite 1,2 & 3, Westfields,
Middlewich Road, Sandbach CW11 1HZ

PRESENT

Councillor S Wilkinson (Chairman)

Councillors S Corcoran, D Newton, R West, J Wray and R Menlove
(substitute)

Apologies

Councillors P Edwards and W Fitzgerald

19 ALSO PRESENT

Councillor Rachel Bailey – Children and Families Portfolio Holder
Councillor Rhoda Bailey – Cabinet Support Member

20 OFFICERS PRESENT

Tony Crane - Director of Children's Services
Finatn Bradley- Head of Service: Strategy, Planning & Performance
Mark Bayley- Principal Manager, Quality Assurance
Mark Nedderman- Senior Scrutiny Officer

21 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 24 June
be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

22 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

23 DECLARATION OF PARTY WHIP

There were no declarations of the existence of a party whip.

24 PUBLIC SPEAKING TIME/OPEN SESSION

There were no members of the public present who wished to speak.

25 SCHOOLS AND THE NEW OFSTED FRAMEWORK

Fintan Bradley and Mark Bayley attended the meeting and gave a presentation on the Ofsted inspection framework and its impact on the school improvement agenda locally.

Cheshire East currently had 150 schools of which 124 were primary, 21 secondary, 4 special and 1 pupil referral unit. Of those, 9 primaries (7%) and 12 secondaries (57%) were academies.

Currently, 86% of all schools were good or outstanding, 12% were satisfactory or required improvement and 1% considered inadequate.

The Committee was informed that the new Ofsted inspection framework would judge the quality of education provided in the school and its overall effectiveness, taking account of four other key judgements:

- The achievement of pupils at the school;
- The quality of teaching in the school;
- The behaviours and safety of pupils at the school;
- The quality of the leadership in, and management of, the school.

Ofsted would continue to inspect good schools less frequently than weaker schools.

Ofsted would also judge schools based upon progress from starting points, not just attainment alone, as starting points were different for each school.

Ofsted had also amended some of its terminology. For instance, 'satisfactory' had been replaced with 'requires improvement' and the 'notice to improve' category had been replaced with 'serious weakness'

In response to a question about where the responsibility for Special Education Needs (SEN) would sit in the context of increasing numbers of academies at primary and secondary level, Fintan Bradley informed the Committee that the responsibility for SEN, exclusions and attendance remained the responsibility of the local authority.

RESOLVED – That at the same time the Committee scrutinises the 2013 examination results (expected to be November) the Head of Service: Strategy, Planning & Performance be requested to report back to the committee on the experiences of the Council and the effect on provision of services arising from the new Ofsted Framework.

26 CHILDREN'S IMPROVEMENT BOARD

Tony Crane updated the committee on the setting up of the Children's Improvement Board which had arisen from the Ofsted inspection of the Council's safeguarding arrangements, in March 2013.

The Improvement Board had met once and was being chaired independently by Helen Denton from Lancashire County Council. The board was due to meet again next week.

Although confirmation had not been received from the Department of Education regarding the issuing of an improvement notice, work in response to the Ofsted inspection would continue. In response to the Committee's previous request for Members to be further involved in this work, volunteers were sought to 'shadow'

front line staff in Children's Services, to allow Members to gain a better understanding of the day to day activities of staff within the directorate.

Separately, Tony reminded the Committee that the Corporate and Performance Policy Development Group was due to undertake a piece of work to review the Council's recruitment and retention policies in respect of Children's' Social workers.

RESOLVED – That the report be received and that any Members of the Committee wishing to 'shadow' staff within the Children's and Family safeguarding team be requested to contact the Senior Scrutiny Officer.

27 ACADEMIES AND PRIMARY SCHOOLS

Fintan Bradley reported upon the current situation in Cheshire East regarding primary schools and academies. A consequence of the high number of secondary schools which had become academies, was that the number of staff employed in the schools improvement team had reduced. The numbers of primary schools changing to academies was still relatively low, but it was expected that the number would increase significantly.

RESOLVED – That Fintan Bradley be requested to circulate an update on the latest position regarding academies outside of the meeting.

28 WORK PROGRAMME PROGRESS REPORT

The Committee reviewed its work programme.

RESOLVED-

- (a) That an additional meeting of the Committee be held on 12 August at 2.00pm to review the quarter 1 Budget and performance report;
- (b) That a the annual Safeguarding report be submitted to the 10 September meeting
- (c) That a formal consultation by Cabinet on the revised Licensing policy be dealt with at the 10 September meeting

The meeting commenced at 2.00 pm and concluded at 3.07 pm

Councillor S Wilkinson (Chairman)