

PORTFOLIO: EDUCATION, LIBRARIES AND LOCALISM**1. Cabinet decisions since the last meeting of County Council**

- 1.1 There will have been 4 Cabinet meetings (18 December 2017, 22 January 2018, 19 February 2018 and 19 March 2018) since the last Executive Report to County Council on 21 November 2017. The following items of business were specifically attributed to this portfolio:-

Cabinet – 18 December 2017

A083/17- School to serve High Leigh housing development and potential relocation of Westfield Community Primary School, Hoddesdon:. Cabinet approved a proposal to pursue an option to deliver a 2 f.e. school to meet demand from the housing development through the relocation of Westfield Primary School. It agreed to the proposal and delegated to appropriate Chief Officers a number of decisions relating to the use of funds; making planning applications, procuring buildings, site disposals, and public consultation on the expansion and relocation of Westfield school.

Cabinet – 19 February 2018

A004/18 - Additional school places - information about the next primary expansion programme; approvals to the next secondary expansion programme (in St. Albans; Stevenage and for Hatfield); additional accommodation schemes; s106 funds; and for projects in Bishops Stortford: Cabinet received information about the next primary expansion programme and approved funding for the next secondary expansion programme, as well as two additional accommodation schemes, the application of S106 funds and projects in Bishops Stortford.

A063/17 - Determination of Hertfordshire County Council Admission Arrangements for 2019/20: Following consultation Cabinet approved the County Council's admission arrangements for 2019/20 with three minor changes. The County Council's admission arrangements for secondary schools and schemes of coordination for 2019/20 for statutory school age pupils were retained without change.

A056/17 - To consider the future of Hertfordshire Music Service: Cabinet confirmed the Council's commitment to supporting the purpose of the Music Service and supported the principle that Hertfordshire Music Service acquires a charitable or other appropriate status to allow it to operate outside the direct control of the Council. The Director of Children's Services will produce a detailed analysis of appropriate business structures, a financial plan and business case in support of the above, together with any appropriate transition plan; these will be presented to Cabinet for consideration in due course.

2. Consequences of Cabinet decisions before the last meeting of the County Council on 21 November 2017

2.1 School Planning

I am pleased to report that the Development Control Committee agreed, on 19 February 2018, that planning permission be granted for the construction of new 6 f.e. secondary school in Harpenden, subject to a number of conditions and the application being referred to the Secretary of State for a decision as to whether to call in the application for his determination. This was a major step towards the establishment of this school.

3. Anticipated/ future decisions to be made by Cabinet

Cabinet – 23 April 2018

A069/17 - Proposal to reconfigure existing services to schools to support the needs of primary aged children with Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD) by 31 August 2018. Cabinet will be asked to consider the proposals for SpLD services.

A011/18 – Decision on whether to adopt an alternative delivery model for Hertfordshire libraries: Cabinet will be invited to reach a decision on an alternative delivery model.

A017/18 - Statutory notice in respect of the proposal to enlarge the premises of Belswains Primary School, Hemel Hempstead and St Peter's School, St Albans taking into consideration the outcome of a public consultation: Cabinet will be asked to decide whether to publish a statutory notice in respect of each of these schools. Approval will also be sought for the consequential budget implications.

A019/18 - To consider proposed financial contributions in relation to Tower Primary School, Ware: Cabinet will be invited to consider proposed financial contributions to address building condition and ICT issues at the school.

Cabinet – 14 May 2018

A020/18 – Children and Young People's Plan: Following a joint meeting of the Children's Services and the Education, Libraries and Localism Cabinet Panels, Cabinet will be invited to recommend to full Council approval of the updated Children and Young People's Plan.

Cabinet – 18 June 2018

A018/18 - Whether to publish a statutory notice in respect of the proposal to enlarge and relocate Westfield Community Primary School to a new school site at High Leigh, Hoddesdon, taking into consideration the outcome of a public consultation: Cabinet will be asked to consider the outcome of public consultation and to decide whether to approve the publication of statutory

notices for the expansion of Westfield Primary School. It will also receive a financial update on the project.

Future Meeting of Cabinet

The Council's admission arrangements for 2020/21 will be considered by Cabinet in autumn 2018 with a request to consult if amendments are proposed.

4. Key Partnerships

4.1 Armed Forces Covenant

The Covenant Board met on 6 March and continues its work in embedding the Covenant in the community. I was proud to attend the prize giving assembly at Wheatcroft School in January; the winning school in the annual Christmas Schools Art Competition. This year's theme, celebrating the RAF centenary, attracted over 1,000 entries; the top 20 of which were sent to aircrew overseas for judging.

As we approach the last year of events marking the centenary of World War One, the Board is preparing for the final commemorative stone-layings to honour Victoria Cross recipients Frank Young and John Collings-Wells in Hitchin and Markyate respectively. The County Council will also be participating in the 'Battle's Over – A Nation's Tribute' beacon lighting event. This will take place on Sunday, 11 November at Hertford Castle. Many other beacons will also be lit across various locations in the County to mark the end of World War One.

4.2 Hertfordshire Lifestyle and Legacy Partnership

The Lifestyle and Legacy Partnership met on 19 January 2018. The partnership celebrated the successful launch of Hertfordshire's Year Of Physical Activity (YOPA) that month. Bob Lisney, the Chief Executive of Public Monuments and Sculpture Association (PMSA), also came to speak to the partnership about their project to catalogue the public sculptures of Hertfordshire, as part of 'The Public Sculpture of Britain' series. The partnership will work closely with PMSA to support them find useful contacts in the County to deliver their exciting project.

4.3 Hertfordshire Compact

The Hertfordshire Compact Partnership continues to build on the positive relationship between Hertfordshire statutory organisations and the voluntary and community sector. The number of signatories to the Hertfordshire Compact is now at 40 with West Hertfordshire Hospitals NHS Trust being the latest to join.

4.4 Hertfordshire Community Foundation

As part of my role as a County Councillor appointed trustee I participated in the allocation of small grants to voluntary sector organisations. These grants of up to £10,000 are administered on behalf of the Hertfordshire Community Grants Scheme and are designed to develop or start a new project or service

to those who will benefit most. The range was wide both in terms of beneficiaries and projects.

5. Other comments

5.1 Admissions and Transport

National allocation day for secondary transfer places is 1 March. This year the number of Hertfordshire applicants has risen to 14,175 from 13,654, an increase of 3.68%, as anticipated as the previous increase in primary numbers start to move into the secondary sector. Out county applications have also increased to 4010, bringing the total cohort size to 18,185.

Across Hertfordshire satisfaction rates have remained broadly the same as last year with 78.17 % of Hertfordshire pupils allocated their first preference school and 94.42% one of their preferences, compared to 78.64% and 94.42% respectively in 2017.

National allocation day for primary places is 16 April and the allocation process is still underway. The 2018 cohort is slightly smaller than last year, with 14,223 Hertfordshire pupils applying for Reception place compared to 14,494 in 2017 – a decrease of 1.87%.

5.2 Libraries

On 12 December 2017, I attended an Alternative Delivery Models Masterclass at Beeston Library in Nottinghamshire. This event was organised by the national Libraries Taskforce for local authorities considering adopting alternative delivery models for the delivery of library services. It featured presentations from those library services already operating as Public Service Mutuals (Devon, Suffolk, Nottinghamshire and York), as well as contributions from the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and Mutual Ventures.

In February, I visited the Hitchin Library to see the results of the extensive refurbishment completed in two phases in December and January. New features include a much improved children's library complete with a Harry Potter wall, improved reference and study facilities with powered wi-fi benching, a disabled toilet, and a bookable community meeting room. I am pleased to report that customer reaction to the refurbishment has been overwhelmingly enthusiastic.

On 4 February, I attended a performance of 'Alice in the Cuckoo's Nest' at Watford Central Library, by Librarian Theatre – a theatre company formed specifically to perform in library spaces.

6. Cabinet Panels

- 6.1 Since the last Executive Report to Council, the Education, Libraries and Localism Cabinet Panel has met on 14 December 2017 and 6 February 2018. The matters discussed can be found at the following locations:

[Education, Libraries and Localism Cabinet Panel - 14 December 2017](#)

[Education, Libraries and Localism Cabinet Panel - 6 February 2018](#)

Terry Douris
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