

PORTFOLIO: EDUCATION LIBRARIES AND LOCALISM

1. Cabinet decisions since the last meeting of County Council

- 1.1 There will have been 5 Cabinet meetings (23 April 2018, 14 May 2018, 25 May 2018, 18 June 2018 and 9 July 2018) since the last Executive Report to County Council on 27 March 2018. The following items of business were specifically attributed to this portfolio:-

Cabinet – 23 April 2018

A011/18 - 'Inspiring Libraries' – Delivering the next phase - An Outline Business Case concluded that a Public Service Mutual is the model offering the greatest scope to continue to deliver an affordable, sustainable and responsive public library service to Hertfordshire residents now and in the future. Cabinet endorsed the Outline Business and delegated to the Director of Resources authority to proceed to developing the Full Business Case and detailed Business Plan to support the setting up of a Public Service Mutual for approval by Cabinet in the autumn of 2018.

Cabinet – 18 June 2018

A034/18 – Whether or not to agree to the proposal to relocate the Primary Support Base (PSB) at Springmead Primary School to Swallow Dell Primary and Nursery School taking into consideration the outcome of a public consultation. Cabinet agreed to the proposal to relocate the PSB

A031/18 - A change in approach to developer sought contributions to school buildings. Cabinet agreed to the proposed change.

2. Consequences of Cabinet decisions before the last meeting of the County Council on 22 May 2018

A019/18 – Cabinet on 23 April 2018 - Following the decision of Cabinet, the proposal for the Ivy Learning Trust to sponsor Tower Primary School was discussed at the Regional Schools Commissioner's Headteacher Board in May and it has been confirmed that the Ivy Learning Trust has been approved as the Sponsor MAT for Tower Primary. The Ivy Learning Trust will therefore become Tower's sponsor from 1 September 2018.

Tower recently had an Ofsted monitoring visit and as a result the school will be removed from Special Measures. The official report has not yet been published on the Ofsted website but the Trust has written to the parents to inform them and told the staff.

From 1 September 2018, Tower Primary School will become known as Larkspur Academy. The Trust has a marketing strategy in place and has a number of events planned to introduce Larkspur to the community and to share their vision for the school. The Trust is confident that it will grow pupil

numbers and their financial plan is based on 22 pupils for the reception year 2019-20 rising to 30 for 2020-21 so they have taken the decision not to reduce their Published Admission Numbers.

3. Anticipated/ future decisions to be made by Cabinet

Cabinet – 9 July 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 whether to publish a statutory notice.

A041/18 - Whether to agree to the governing body's proposal to change the category of Barley (VC) C of E School, Royston from Voluntary Controlled (VC) to Voluntary Aided (VA) - Cabinet will be asked whether to agree to the governing body's proposal.

4. Key Partnerships

4.1 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 continues to grow and we have our first 'Friend of Compact', a Community Interest Company, as a signatory. The partnership group decided in March to move to a 'Forum' approach and Connect Hertfordshire has been tasked with organising these events involving a much wider set of people from both the voluntary and statutory sectors. These events, to be held twice a year, will be a place for everyone to discuss ideas, seek advice and share good practice and stories of success relating to their experiences of the Compact way of working. They will be open to anyone to attend with a focus on presentations and facilitated discussion.

4.2 Armed Forces Covenant

The Covenant Board met on 6 March 2018 and was commended by Royal British Legion (RBL) representatives on the fact that we had written to Hertfordshire schools inviting them to consider the RBL Supporting Service Children in School Best Practice Guide. A number of schools responded providing examples of their current practice that were considered to be outstanding; subsequently a recommendation has been made to the RBL Director General to cite Hertfordshire as an example of an Authority demonstrating good practice.

On 24 May, I attended an Employer Engagement Business Breakfast hosted by the Ministry of Defence (MOD) at Knebworth Barns. The aim of the event was to brief Hertfordshire employers on the value serving personnel, both

regular and reservists, and veterans bring to business, encouraging employers to join the Employer Recognition Scheme.

The Council will have raised the Armed Forces Flag at County Hall on Monday 2 July in support of Armed Forces Day. The event hosted by the Chairman, is due to be supported by the High Sheriff, the Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire Army Cadet Force, Hertfordshire Aldermen, a Group of Pupil Parliament Children and members of the Covenant Board.

4.3 Hertfordshire Lifestyle and Legacy Partnership

The Lifestyle and Legacy Partnership met on 16 April 2018. The Partnership heard about the continued success of Hertfordshire's Year of Physical Activity (YOPA) and projects associated with YOPA, such as the 'Never too Late' campaign. We also heard that Hertfordshire Association of Cultural Officers (HACO) had endorsed a Hertfordshire's Year of Culture 2020 proposal, which will bring cultural providers from across the county together to promote participation in the arts as a way of raising wellbeing.

5. Other comments

5.1 Libraries

- On 11 May, I travelled to Chester to visit Storyhouse - a new library and arts centre, which co-locates the City's Central Library with a theatre and cinema to create a hub for cultural activities.
- On 15 May, I was delighted to officially open the newly refurbished Hitchin Library. 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. Since the completion of the refurbishment, more than 500 new members have joined the library – a 32% increase on the same period last year. The library has hosted a series of popular events, from Harry Potter Book Night, to the launch of a coding club, and a programme of talks from local authors.
- On 24 May, I attended an event to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the opening of Rickmansworth Library on its High Street site.

5.2 Education

5.2.1 Under 11s Allocations

Almost 97% of Hertfordshire children were allocated a place at one of their preferred primary schools on National Allocation Day (16 April 2018).

Of the 14,389 applications for reception places received for Hertfordshire children, 13,938 were allocated a ranked primary school. Of these over

86%(12,416) were allocated their first ranked school – compared to under 85% last year.

Following the second run of the Continuing Interest List the total number of Hertfordshire applications rose to 14,641.

The remaining number of applicants without a school of preference is 277 (105 of whom did not list their nearest school) this represents 1.8%.

5.2.2 Secondary Transfer Allocations

At National Allocation Day (1 March) nearly 95%of Hertfordshire children were allocated a place at one of their preferred secondary or upper schools. Despite an increase of 500 applications (3.7%) compared to last year, more children were allocated a place at one of their ranked schools.

Of the 14,175 Hertfordshire children who applied this year, 13,384 have a place at a preferred school (94.4%) and 11,018 children (78.1%) gained a place at their first ranked school.

388 (2.78%) remain non ranked allocations following the second run of continuing interest is (222 of which did not rank their nearest school).

6. Cabinet Panels

- 6.1 Since the last Executive Report to Council, the Education, Libraries and Localism Cabinet Panel will have met on 17 April 2018 and 5 June 2018. The matters discussed can be found at the following locations:

[Education, Libraries and Localism Cabinet Panel - 17 April 2018](#)

[Education, Libraries and Localism Cabinet Panel - 5 June 2018](#)

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July 2018