

Minutes



To: All Members of the Education, Library and Localism Cabinet Panel, Chief Executive, Chief Officers, All officers named for 'actions'

From: Legal, Democratic & Statutory Services
Ask for: Stephanie Tarrant
Ext: 25481

EDUCATION, LIBRARIES AND LOCALISM CABINET PANEL

20 JUNE 2017

ATTENDANCE

MEMBERS OF THE PANEL

J Billing, A P Brewster, C Clapper, T L F Douris (*Chairman*), M S Hearn, C K Hogg, T R Hutchings (*Vice Chairman*), S K Jarvis, J R Jones, A Plancey, J F Wyllie

Upon consideration of the agenda for the Education, Libraries and Localism Cabinet Panel meeting 20 June 2017 as circulated, copy annexed, conclusions were reached and are recorded below.

Note: No declarations of interest were made at this meeting.

PART I ('OPEN') BUSINESS

1. MEMBERSHIP AND REMIT OF THE PANEL

The membership and remit of the Education, Libraries and Localism Cabinet Panel was noted.

2. MINUTES

2.1 The minutes of the former Enterprise, Education and Skills Cabinet Panel meeting held on 6 April 2017 were noted.

3. PUBLIC PETITIONS

3.1 There were no public petitions.

4. LOCALITY BUDGET SCHEME 2016/17 – OVERALL BREAKDOWN OF SPEND

[Officer Contact: John Birch, Corporate Policy, Tel: 01992 555602]

ACTION

CHAIRMAN'S INITIALS

.....

- 4.1 Members reviewed a report which provided the breakdown of overall spend against the 2016/2017 Locality Budget Scheme and the information collected about the use and effectiveness of the scheme.
- 4.2 It was acknowledged that for 2016/2017, £5,000 of each Member's locality budget was contributed to a central fund for additional 'housekeeping' on the highways and that it was agreed that any unspent money from 2015/2016 would be carried forward to 2016/2017, for one year only.
- 4.3 New Members were given an overview of the locality budget scheme and Members were advised that every penny was allocated in 2016/2017. The breakdown of the spending was available in the report.
- 4.4 In response to a Member question, it was confirmed that some Members had only spent a small proportion of their budget for 2015/2016 before the decision was taken to allow a carry forward to the next year. Members heard that spending patterns varied from Member to Member. It was advised that some Members waited until the end of the year to decide what to spend their locality budget on and when it was advised that funding could be carried over, some Members delayed their spending.
- 4.5 Members were interested to hear the number of new applications that received funding and were advised that around 50% of applications were from new applicants. It was noted that the number of big national organisation applications had dropped whilst local organisation applicants had increased.
- 4.6 A Member requested a list of highways improvements for their area in 2015/2016 to share with their residents, given that locality budgets were used as part of the wider highways improvement scheme. The request was noted and it was advised that their Highways Locality Officer would be best placed to provide the information.
- 4.7 In response to a Member question, Members were advised that they could put their locality budget towards highways issues but this would have to be completed via the highways department rather than alternative contractors. It was confirmed that locality budgets had to be allocated to an appropriate body with an organisation bank account
- 4.8 Members discussed the evaluation data in the appendices and queried if feedback was sent to the Member that had allocated the grant. Members heard that the information was not currently sent on but could be forwarded if required, although it was noted that feedback was not always forthcoming from recipients.

Highways
Locality
Officer

- 4.9 Members were encouraged to review the locality budget process and noted that the process was commendably simple and quick to access.

Conclusion

- 4.10 The Panel noted the report.

5. ‘INSPIRING LIBRARIES’ STRATEGY- IMPLEMENTATION UPDATE

[Officer Contact: Andrew Bignell – Head of Libraries and Heritage Services, Tel: 01707 281559]

- 5.1 Members reviewed a report which updated on the ‘Inspiring Libraries’ strategy.
- 5.2 Members heard that the strategy was adopted in 2014 as a 10 year strategic framework, with the initial programme implementation in 2015.
- 5.3 It was noted that substantial progress had been made, with libraries being re-organised into three tiers, the re-profiling of staff and a review of opening hours. Members heard that to date the Library Service had saved £2 million from its annual revenue budget with a further £500,000 saving expected in 2017/18.
- 5.4 Members heard how Section 106 money was being used to improve buildings and invest in new technology and it was noted that the Libraries E-Newsletter had been revamped and was now reaching 46,000 subscribers each month.
- 5.5 In response to a Member question on borrowing e-books, Members heard that a sophisticated programme allowed users to download an eBook for a set period of time before it was deleted from their device. It was advised that users could download the service online from home and that the service was currently promoted in libraries, through the library newsletter and any local press. The Library Service was keen to hear additional promotional ideas from Members.
- 5.6 Members heard that the service purchased e-books for library use in the same way as physical books. For example, a number of downloads of a book could be purchased, and once they were used up they would have to repurchase the book, i.e. the same principle of replacing a book once it was worn out.
- 5.7 Members discussed the planned refurbishments to Hitchin Library listed at 8.10 of the report. Members heard that there was now a

phased refurbishment proposal, which would include a toilet being installed, and it was hoped that plans would be finalised by Autumn 2017 with the refurbishment complete by March 2018. It was confirmed that if a phased refurbishment was not possible and the library closure was to be more than 2-2.5 weeks, then alternative premises would be required to deliver services during refurbishment.

- 5.8 In response to a Member question on the evaluation of user experience, Members heard that user statistics were regularly collected, comments and complaints were analysed, and the national Public Library Users Survey, which was undertaken annually.
- 5.9 Members discussed libraries moving towards a bespoke model to meet the needs of local communities and discussed if any trends had emerged. Members were informed that the library service engaged with the public to get the views of local residents when making changes and that the ambition was for Hertfordshire libraries was to be located in more attractive central high street locations. It was advised that the service would take advantage of co-location opportunities. The move of services to retained fire stations in three communities was progressing well and in Harpenden the Library had moved into a High Street shop where youth connections were also able to relocate to the first floor.
- 5.10 Members discussed the Home Library Service and the Library Community Book Swap Schemes detailed at 7.2 and 7.3 of the report and it was advised that when the Mobile Library Service was withdrawn in October 2015, these methods gave alternative options to those residents that could not access a library. Members heard that 60 additional volunteers had been recruited for the Home Library Service and that the Community Book Swaps were run by local groups in village halls and other venues. The Library Service had assisted with the establishment of these collections but they now ran independently.
- 5.11 Recognition was expressed for the excellent work that the volunteers within the Library Service provided.

Conclusion

- 5.12 Panel members noted and commented, as above, on the progress made in implementing the ‘Inspiring Libraries’ Strategy.

- 6. FUTURE OF CESHUNT SCHOOL**
[Officer Contact: Simon Newland, Operations Director – Education, Tel: 01992 555738]

- 6.1 The Cabinet Panel considered the Part I report which provided an update to the proposal that Cheshunt School join the Goffs 'Generations' Multi-Academy Trust (MAT).
- 6.2 Members acknowledged that the initial proposal report had already been to the former Education, Enterprise and Skills Cabinet Panel on 10 March 2017 and Cabinet on 13 March 2017, due to Cheshunt School facing many challenges, including financial.
- 6.3 It was noted during further review and final negotiations, Goffs 'Generations' Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) had requested further funding. This had been due to a decrease in pupil numbers, changed assumptions around the impact of the National Funding Formula and expected expenditure.
- 6.4 Members discussed the bullet points listed at 4.5 of the report and heard that it was still the preferred option to move forward with the proposal with the increased funding. It was noted that this option would meet the needs of existing students and also considered the local areas future growth, where pupil numbers were expected to rise over the coming years.
- 6.5 In response to a Member question, it was clarified that the school would still remain open in its current location and would be rebranded and managed by the Goffs 'Generations' Multi-Academy Trust (MAT).
- 6.6 Members were advised that the Local Members had been consulted and were happy with the proposals.
- 6.7 The Panel agreed to move into Part II (confidential session) to consider the Part II report, after which the Panel moved back into Part I (open session) to consider the Part I recommendation.

Conclusion

- 6.8 The Panel recommended to Cabinet that the County Council conclude an agreement with the Goffs 'Generations' Multi-Academy Trust around the sponsorship of Cheshunt School with the final details of the financial contributions required to be agreed by the Director of Resources, in consultation with the Director of Children's Services and the Executive Members for Resources, Property and the Economy and Education, Libraries and Localism, within the parameters set out in the Part II report.

7. OTHER URGENT PART I BUSINESS

- 7.1 There was no other urgent Part I Business.

KATHRYN PETTITT

**CHAIRMAN'S
INITIALS**

CHIEF LEGAL OFFICER

CHAIRMAN _____

**CHAIRMAN'S
INITIALS**

.....