

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 7 NOVEMBER 2017

ATTENDANCE

MEMBERS OF THE PANEL

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

Upon consideration of the agenda for the Education, Libraries and Localism Cabinet Panel meeting 7 November 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. MINUTES

- 1.1 The minutes (Part I) of the previous meeting held on 14 September 2017 were agreed.

2. PUBLIC PETITIONS

- 2A The Panel were notified that the petition 'for Council action to reconsider the decision to build a new Harpenden school on the site east of Common Lane' was to be deferred to the December 2017 Panel.

3. PROPOSED CONSULTATION ON HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS FOR 2019/20

[Officer Contact: Jayne Abery, Strategy and Policy Manager,
Admissions & Transport, Tel No: 01992 588785 / Pauline Davis,
School Place Planning Manager]

ACTION

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- 3.1 Members reviewed a report which detailed the proposed consultation on Hertfordshire County Council admission arrangements for 2019/20.
- 3.2 The Panel heard that the reduction in the published admission number at Watton-at-Stone Primary and Nursery School to 30 would enable the school to be more efficient in the management of resources. Members noted that the recommendation was updated from the report to include the school's full name.
- 3.3 A minor amendment was required to the definition of 'nearest school' for the purpose of admission arrangements as detailed at 4.7 of the report. This was to ensure that there was not any unintentional bias going forward.
- 3.4 It was noted that these changes would be consulted on up to 31st January 2018, subject to approval from Cabinet.
- 3.5 In response to a Member question, it was confirmed that Wilshere-Dacre Junior School was now an academy and not a community school as listed. It was also advised that it was still linked to Strathmore Infant and Nursery School.

Conclusion

- 3.6 Panel recommended to Cabinet that:-
 - consultation is undertaken proposing that :
 - the definition of "nearest school" for use in rule 5 of the County Council's primary oversubscription criteria is amended, as detailed at 4.7 of the report;
 - reference to the Shared Anti-Fraud Service is added to the definitions section in the cases of fraudulent address verification;
 - the published admission number at Watton-at-Stone Primary and Nursery School is reduced to 30.
 - the remainder of the County Council's admission arrangements and schemes of coordination are retained for 2019/20.

4. OUTCOME OF THE PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON THE PROPOSAL TO CHANGE THE AGE RANGE OF WIDFORD SCHOOL TO ALLOW NURSERY-AGED CHILDREN TO BE ADMITTED FROM THE AGE OF 2

[Officer Contact: Pablo Benvenuto, Development and Commissioning Officer, Family Services Commissioning, Tel: 01992 555305 / Samantha Young, Planning Officer, School Planning, Tel: 01992 555754]

- 4.1 Members reviewed a report which detailed the outcome of the public consultation on the proposal to change the age range of

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Widford School from 4 to 11 years to 2 to 11 years.

- 4.2 Members heard that the outcome was due to the closure of the local preschool. It was advised that the preschool was located within the schools grounds and was a case of the school taking over the space.

Conclusion

- 4.3 The Panel recommended to Cabinet that it accepts the proposal and authorise the Director of Children's Services to publish a statutory notice.

5. OUTCOME OF THE PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON THE PROPOSAL TO 'AMALGAMATE' REDBOURN JUNIOR SCHOOL AND REDBOURN INFANTS AND NURSERY SCHOOL

[Officer Contact: Phil Brunt, Planning Officer, School Planning Team, Tel: 01992 555811]

- 5.1 Members reviewed a report which detailed the outcome of the public consultation on the proposal to 'amalgamate' Redbourn Junior School and Redbourn Infants and Nursery School.
- 5.2 The Panel heard that the two schools were linked and had requested amalgamation. It was noted that a number of consultation letters had been sent out, with 26 responses received and 89% of respondents agreeing with the proposal.
- 5.3 The Local Member noted that feedback on the proposal had been positive.
- 5.4 In response to a Member question, it was noted that there were still a number of infant and junior schools based on the same sites across the county. It was noted that amalgamation was not imposed on these schools but considered if requested.

Conclusion

- 5.5 The Panel recommended to Cabinet that it accepts the proposals and authorise the Director of Children's Services to publish statutory notices to:
- close Redbourn Junior School on 16 April 2018; and
 - increase the age range of Redbourn Infants and Nursery School to 11 from 17 April 2018.

6. OUTCOME OF THE PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS ON THE PROPOSAL TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF PLACES AT WOODFIELD, BREAKSPEARE SCHOOL ON THE SITE OF MEADOW WOOD AND HAYWOOD GROVE SPECIAL SCHOOLS

[Officer Contact: Debbie Orton, Head of Integrated Services for Learning, Tel – 01992 588556, Phil Brunt, Planning Officer, School Planning Team, Tel – 01992 555811]

- 6.1 Members reviewed a report which detailed the outcome of the public consultation on the proposal to increase the number of places at Woodfield, Breakspeare school on the site of Meadow Wood and Haywood Grove special schools.
- 6.2 It was advised that there had been a low level response to the consultation and that the planned outcome was to increase the number of school places at each school by eight places each.
- 6.3 Members were advised an error at 7.3 of the report and noted that the number of places should be 24 instead of 16. It was advised that the costs entailed should be proportionate to those reported, with all costs met through the Dedicated Schools Grant.
- 6.4 The Panel welcomed these positive changes and it was advised that the service had been working closely with all three schools and that they were keen to progress with the proposals.

Conclusion

- 6.5 Panel recommended to Cabinet that it accepts the proposals and authorise the Director of Children’s Services to publish a statutory notice.

7. ‘INSPIRING LIBRARIES’ – THE NEXT PHASE

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

- 7.1 The Panel reviewed and considered a report which detailed the ambitions and priorities for the next phase of the Inspiring Libraries Strategy from April 2018. Members noted that the ‘Inspiring Libraries’ strategy was adopted by Cabinet in July 2014 to provide vision and direction for the library service within a sustainable budget. Members acknowledged the changes to date across the library service and congratulated the professional staff and volunteers that have helped to deliver the strategy.
- 7.2 Members commented that the source of income from library fines had declined and discussed whether new initiatives to generate funding had been explored e.g. renting meeting rooms. Members heard that revenue streams were being considered and developed for libraries, including room hire, reading group charges and

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donations for early year's activities. It was noted that the efforts to develop new revenue streams were being offset by the decline in traditional sources of income.

- 7.3 The Panel discussed the co-location of libraries and noted that initially 11 libraries were identified as priorities for re-provision, as they were not fit to deliver a modern library service. No solution has yet been identified for 4 of these libraries. It was noted that all proposals for co-location were considered but location was crucial, therefore each proposal was looked at on a case by case basis.
- 7.4 Members commented on the future of e-libraries and it was noted that there had been a surge in virtual library visits, where users were able to renew/reserve books online. The e-library was used to access e-books instead of the paper copy. It was noted that whilst the use of e-books continued to grow, it would increase alongside the use of physical books.
- 7.5 Members discussed the use of CreatorSpaces within libraries and considered their aim. It was advised that the areas were created to provide individuals and groups the opportunity to experiment and experience a range of technology that they may not otherwise have access to. Members heard that the areas had been popular with coding clubs as well as used for research. It was noted that West Herts College volunteers were helping to promote the two CreatorSpace areas currently available.
- 7.6 Members discussed the community libraries and noted that clear guidance was required for the financial support available to volunteer groups. Members advised that locality budgets had been requested to support community libraries, but that this support was not intended to be ongoing and therefore if community volunteer groups were expected to fundraise, then a clear policy was required to support them.
- 7.7 In response to a Member question on 5.1.6 of the report, it was noted that the service were looking for alternative buildings for the libraries listed as the buildings were either unsuitable for a modern library service or in the wrong location.
- 7.8 The Liberal Democrat group noted that clarity on the impact the strategy would have on the budget was needed and therefore abstained from voting on the recommendation.

Conclusion

- 7.9 That Panel recommended to Cabinet that it endorses the ambitions and priorities for the next phase of the 'Inspiring Libraries' Strategy, as set out in the report.

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It was noted that C K Hogg, S K Jarvis and M A Watkin abstained.

8. AN ALTERNATIVE DELIVERY MODEL FOR HERTFORDSHIRE LIBRARIES

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

- 8.1 The Panel considered a report which presented proposals to explore an alternative delivery model for Hertfordshire Libraries as the best means of delivering the ambitions of the Inspiring Libraries Strategy and achieving required budget savings.
- 8.2 Members heard that a mutual model had been identified to be explored further with comparable authorities (Suffolk, Nottinghamshire and Devon) having moved to this model. It was noted that a change in model had the potential to save the County Council an estimated £588,000 each year, in addition to making the library service more flexible and gaining access to different grants and alternative funding. However, Members heard that there were some challenges to introducing a new model, with the county Council still holding the statutory responsibilities for libraries but potentially with less control over what was being delivered.
- 8.3 Members discussed whether the ‘Inspiring Libraries’ strategy was still work in progress and whether it was too early to be looking at another radical change. It was advised that initially this recommendation would be to explore the option further before presenting back to Panel on the findings in Spring 2018. It was noted that the County Council had a good track record of separating out services e.g. Herts for Learning and it was noted that the model had been trialled by other local authorities.
- 8.4 The Panel discussed whether an alternative delivery model would make it difficult to manage how the library service evolved and queried how the service would be accountable and who it would be governed by. Members heard that these issues would need to be considered by the working group; however the commissioning of the service would be very much a partnership with major decisions referred back to the County Council. It was advised that the library service was required to save an additional £500,000 and that this model would enable it to achieve the saving without having to make changes to front line delivery.
- 8.5 Members expressed the need for clarity of governance arrangements to be included in the recommendation. The Chairman proposed an amendment to the first recommendation, as detailed below; this was seconded by the Vice Chairman.
- A multi-disciplinary working group be established to further

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explore the business case and governance arrangements for establishing an alternative delivery model for Hertfordshire Libraries, including representatives from Legal Services, Finance and HR.

- 8.6 The Panel acknowledged that the finding of the working group would be brought back to the Panel whether or not the service was recommending proceeding with this model. It was noted that if the service were to go ahead then it would take around a year to eighteen months to implement from decision.

Conclusion

- 8.7 That Panel recommended to Cabinet that:

- A multi-disciplinary working group be established to further explore the business case and governance arrangements for establishing an alternative delivery model for Hertfordshire Libraries, including representatives from Legal Services, Finance and HR.
- An application should be made to the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (“DCMS”) Mutuels Team for free professional support and advice to inform this work.
- A consultation document should be published on the principle of creating an alternative delivery model for Hertfordshire Libraries in order to seek feedback on the idea from customers, partners, stakeholders, library staff and volunteers.
- This work should inform a further paper to be presented to Panel and to Cabinet in the spring of 2018, when a decision will be taken on whether to adopt an alternative delivery model.

It was noted that J Billing abstained.

9. FUTURE MANAGEMENT OF HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL’S ART COLLECTION

[Officer Contact: Taryn Pearson-Rose – Assistant Director Customer Engagement & Libraries, Tel: 01992 556651]

- 9.1 Members received a report which detailed the proposals to reduce the County Council’s Art Collection to a smaller portfolio of 167 works that were relevant to Hertfordshire. The County Council Art Collection currently held 1826 works which had been valued at £26.2 million for insurance purposes and with no resource to manage the collection since 2012, the works were at the risk of deteriorating. It was noted that the estimated net income from the sale of works with no connection to Hertfordshire would be

between £196,000 and £300,000. It was noted that the County Council did not have a statutory duty to manager the collection.

- 9.2 Members were advised that professional art consultants were commissioned and carried out a review of the collection with the proposals from the findings detailed at 5.1 of the report.
- 9.3 The proposal to close the schools loan collection was noted. The collection was a 1950s initiative and was frozen in 2012 due to the decline in use by schools.
- 9.4 Members discussed the absence of a clear policy for the County Council's Art Collection and noted a concern around the transfer of work to private owners, with no access to the public.
- 9.5 In response to a Members question on why only £50,000 of the sales income would be used to conserve other significant works in future years, it was advised that it had been requested that £50,000 be ring-fenced for the ongoing conservation of works kept. Members heard that all of the income would normally go back into a central pot and then the service could bid for funding as and when required. It was noted that the service did not currently have any budget and was able to move forward with this project due to a successful Invest to Transform bid. Members commented on the ongoing budget required to maintain the collection kept and it was advised that following the consultation process it would be clearer to understand the budget implications.
- 9.6 Members noted that those pieces of works with local historical value are conserved and kept in Hertfordshire where they can be cherished.
- 9.7 It was advised that there was a new museum and art gallery, displaying pop up exhibitions in St Albans from May 2018 and noted that this could be considered for suitable works.
- 9.8 In response to a Member question on the consultation process and the categories the works were split into, it was advised that the process was due to commence in January 2018. Members heard that there would be a lot of work with museums and galleries to engage them in the process, as well as press releases. It was advised that the categories had been spilt up based on the recommendation of the consultants and that they would be consulted on over a period of time in order to allow the analysis of the consultation to commence sooner. There would be an image and short description place online for each item.
- 9.9 It was noted that this item would not be presented back to the Cabinet Panel following consultation as subject to Cabinet agreement and the consultation process, the school arts collection

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would be closed and the works not relevant to Hertfordshire disposed of. Members were assured that the Executive Member for Education, Libraries and Localism and the Director of Resources would take responsibility of authorising the disposal of works following full consultation. Any items of uncertainty following consultation would be reflected on further.

Conclusion

9.10 The Panel recommended to Cabinet:

- a. That the Schools Loan Collection is closed.
- b. That consultation with the public and interested organisations on art works that are currently identified for sale takes place, so that all views can be taken into account prior to their final disposal.
- c. Subsequent to the consideration of views expressed through the consultation process with the Executive Member for Education, Libraries and Localism, that the Director of Resources be provided with the authority to dispose of 500 medium value works from the Schools Loan Collection that have little or no relevance to Hertfordshire. It is proposed that these works should be sold to achieve best value for the council.
- d. The Director of Resources be provided with the authority to dispose of 46 high value, nationally significant works from the Schools Loan Collection that have little or no significance to Hertfordshire, after full consideration of the views expressed through the consultation process with the Executive Member for Education, Libraries and Localism. It is proposed that these works should be sold to achieve best value for the council.
- e. To offer 700 low value works from the Schools Loan Collection to local interest groups and the general public in Hertfordshire.
- f. To develop options for the conservation and potential relocation of four sculptures within Hertfordshire, which are insured for a total of £21.85 million. These sculptures have particular conservation and security requirements and will need some significant investment.
- g. To offer 53 lower value works, that have a distinct connection to local towns/villages, to relevant Hertfordshire museums and galleries, by sale or gifting.

- h. To use a proportion of the income from the sale of works to invest in the remaining collection, in particular the conservation and potential move of the sculptures.

It was noted that C K Hogg, S K Jarvis and M A Watkin voted against the recommendation and J Billing abstained.

10. OTHER URGENT PART I BUSINESS

- 10.1 There was no other urgent Part I Business.

**KATHRYN PETTITT
CHIEF LEGAL OFFICER**

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