

# Minutes



To: All Members of the Children's Services Cabinet Panel, Chief Executive, Chief Officers, All officers named for 'actions'

From: Legal, Democratic & Statutory Services  
Ask for: Michelle Diprose  
Ext: 25566

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## CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES CABINET PANEL TUESDAY, 4 FEBRUARY 2020

### ATTENDANCE

#### MEMBERS OF THE PANEL

N Bell, L A Chesterman, J M Graham, L J Greensmyth, D Hart, T C Heritage (Chairman), T Howard, G McAndrew (Vice-Chairman), R G Parker, A Plancey, A Rowlands, M A Watkin

#### OTHER MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

Upon consideration of the agenda for the Children, Young People and Families Cabinet Panel meeting on Tuesday, 4 January 2020 as circulated, copy annexed, conclusions were reached and are recorded below:

Note: *A number of conflict of interests were declared in relation to the Scrutiny of the Integrated Plan 2020/21 – 2023/24 and are recorded at 3.1 below.*

### PART I ('OPEN') BUSINESS

#### 1. MINUTES

- 1.1 The Minutes of the Cabinet Panel meeting held on 12 November 2019 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

#### 2. PUBLIC PETITIONS

- 2.1 There were no public petitions.

#### 3. INTEGRATED PLAN 2020/21 - 2023/24 CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES

[Officer Contact Faisal Mir, Assistant Director Finance and Business Support, Children's Services, Tel: 01992 555143]

- 3.1 All Members who have a disclosable pecuniary interest arising

### ACTION

from an allowance from the County Council, another local authority in Hertfordshire, or a body to whom they have been appointed by the County Council, have received a dispensation to allow them to participate in debate and vote on the Integrated Plan.

All Members have been granted a dispensation to participate in debate and vote in any business of the County Council relating to setting the council tax or precept when they would otherwise be prevented from doing so in consequence of having a beneficial interest in land which is within the administrative area of Hertfordshire or a licence (alone or jointly) to occupy such land.

#### Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

M A Watkin – by virtue of his wife being employed as a part-time teacher in the music service in Hertfordshire. He had been granted a dispensation by the Standards Committee to participate, debate and vote in business in which this Disclosable Pecuniary Interest is mentioned provided that the business to be considered did not directly affect his financial position or that of his wife; which he considered it did not.

#### Declarable Interest

N Bell is a on the Chessbrook Education Support Centre Management Committee.

T Howard – as she is a Director of Community Action Dacorum and chairs the Training and Quality Committee which receives funding from HAFL's.

M A Watkin – Chairman of SACRE which receives funding from the Council. He is also Governor of Chessbrook Education Support Centre.

- 3.2 The Panel received a report highlighting the areas of the Integrated Plan which related to Children, Young People & Families order for Panel to consider these and provide comment on.
- 3.3 Members heard there had been an £11m revenue budget rise in 2020/21 in recognition of current demand for vulnerable children, this budget related as £8m for Independent Placements and £3m for Special Education Needs (SEN) home to school transport. It was also noted there had been a significant amount of Capital funding for the Placement Residential Strategy.

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- 3.4 In response to a Member question in relation to the Adoption Support Fund and the uncertainty of the budget continuing in 2019 the Panel were informed this budget had been agreed for a further year. It was also noted the Government were looking to conduct a care review and it was hoped the funding for Adoption Support would continue after 2021.
- 3.5 The Panel were pleased to hear of the positive work which had been carried out in relation to Independent Placement Strategy and were given a brief overview of three strands of work which were taking place to achieve improvements to this service area.

**Conclusions:**

3.6 The Cabinet Panel:

Conclusions:

- 1 The Cabinet Panel were invited to note and comment on the proposals relating to the Integrated Plan in respect of Children, Young People & Families. The Panel made no further comment.
- 2 The Cabinet Panel were invited to identify any issues it felt Cabinet Panel should consider in finalising the Integrated Plan proposals. The Panel raised no issues.

**4. THE ANNUAL REPORT OF THE VIRTUAL SCHOOL HEAD**

[Officer Contact: Felicity Evans, Virtual School Head, Tel: 01992 555926]

- 4.1 The Panel received a report in relation to the 2018-29 Annual Report of the Hertfordshire Virtual School Head. The presentation of the report can be found [here](#).
- 4.2 Members were informed the figures in relation to the gap in attainment as detailed in the report were figures from the DfE’s statistical first release in 2018.
- 4.3 Members heard there was 70% of year 11 children who were in receipt of SEN support, this cohort had particularly complex needs. In response to a Member question it was confirmed that the virtual school also worked with Education Support Centres. (ESC).

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4.4 In relation to missing children from school alternative methods of education was provided to them. This was monitored robustly to ensure the child received as much education as possible.

4.5 The Chairman informed the Panel there was some positive work being done with children in need and child protection plans and a report would be presented to a future meeting of the Cabinet Panel

**Conclusion:**

4.6 The Cabinet Panel noted and commented on the summary of performance as detailed in the Annual Report of the Virtual School Head.

**5. TRANSFORMING SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITY (SEND) SERVICES**

[Officer Contact: David Butcher, Head of Transforming SEND Services Tel: 01992 556733]

5.1 The Panel received a report which provided an update on the programme to transform Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Services in Hertfordshire. The presentation of the report can be found [here](#).

5.2 Members were pleased to note the extensive work with parents and professionals to co-produce the new Local Offer website: [www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/localoffer](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/localoffer), but reiterated it was still important for families to have telephone or face to face support.

5.3 Members heard there were Mental Health Support Teams (MHST) working across schools to strengthen support for children and young people with mental health issues, and in response to a member question it was noted that the staff employed in the second wave of trailblazer MHSTs was on target to be fully operation in September 2020.

5.4 A Member stated he was pleased to see the progress which had been made and welcomed the MHST in schools. In response to his question in relation to the special needs funding which had been allocated and the difficulty for new families being able to access it, officers informed the Panel work was being carried out jointly with schools to address make the process easier, it was noted there would be a new system in place from April 2020 which would identify level of need for families and reviewing implementation plans. Members heard inclusion for children with special needs at mainstream schools was a priority.

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- 5.5 In response to a member question officers confirmed the target date of 2020/21 to deliver the additional 71 special school places in existing special schools was on target to be met.
- 5.6 In response to a Member question on how the Behaviour Change Unit (BCU) would assist those children with SEND, it was noted the BCU would bring some efficiencies for families in new approaches to the decision-making process being taken.
- 5.7 Members heard the reasons Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP) were increasing was due to the increase in the complex needs that young people are experiencing, also it was due to the extension of the assessment age from 0-25. Members were informed this was not unique to Hertfordshire but was happening across the country.
- 5.8 In response to a Member question on the new Local Offer website, officers agreed to provide information to Panel Members on how many 'hits' had been received to the website.
- 5.9 Officers confirmed there was no one area in Hertfordshire that was greater than another dealing with children with SEND.
- 5.10 The Chairman informed officers that she attended the recent launch and although feedback was good from parents it was highlighted the public sector organisations were still working in silo's and work was still needed to get everyone working together.

*Action Jo Fisher  
/ David butcher*

**Conclusions:**

- 5.11 The Cabinet Panel is noted and commented upon the progress of the Transforming SEND Services Programme.

**6. RECOMMISSIONING OF OVERNIGHT SHORT BREAKS SERVICES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WITH SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS AND DISABILITY (SEND)**

[Officer Contact: Julie Reddish, Commissioning Manager Tel: 01438 843873]

- 6.1 The Cabinet Panel received a report advising of a consultation that will be taking place regarding Overnight Short Breaks (OSB) for Children and Young People (CYP) with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) in Hertfordshire. Members noted the outcome of the consultation would be used to inform the recommissioning of OSB services in Hertfordshire. The objective was to develop an enhanced, integrated health and social care model which would be delivered in a consistent manner through three services working to the same service specification. Parents

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and carers have been involved in the development of the proposed new model and would continue to be involved.

- 6.2 Members were informed parents valued the OSB service as a whole and there had been positive feedback and some of the flexibility they would like to see was around the age range which was currently from aged eight but would like a younger child inclusion, they would also like more involvement on booking OSB stays and when they can attend. It was noted that to address the flexibility on booking OSB the rotas would be compiled further in advance. Members were informed that both positive and negative feedback would be considered in any decision to improve the OSB.
- 6.3 In response to several Member questions it was noted that in relation to the review of re-commissioning the three OSB provisions, the three units would be broken into 'lots', two would be recommissioned with the current buildings and social care, the third would need to be recommissioned with a building provided. It was noted the tenders for the recommissioning would need to include economy of scale. The Panel were informed there would be several provider events following the consultation to ensure the correct providers were awarded the contracts.
- 6.4 In response to a Member query it was noted an exercise had been carried out to review the staffing ratio's, within the review it highlighted the 69% of children received 1:1 support, 11% had one member of staff to two children, 17% had two staff to one child which it highlighted this ratio was not need constantly throughout the day, just at several points through the day such as administration of medication.
- 6.5 In response to a further Member question regarding the locations of provision, the Panel heard there were already buildings that could provide provision throughout the county and the resource had to be within the current needs and affordability.
- 6.6 Officers reiterated there was constant monitoring of children's needs; there were good relationships with current providers, and it was essential to help families build their life within the community
- 6.7 The Panel were also informed the twelve-week consultation would take place from 12 February until 30 April 2020 and an update report would be presented to panel in May 2020.

**Conclusions:**

- 6.8 The Cabinet Panel noted and commented upon the content of the report and the Director of Children's Services' intention to consult on the service model.

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**7. UPDATE ON HERTS YOUTH JUSTICE INSPECTION ACTION PLAN AND OFSTED INSPECTION CHILDREN SOCIAL CARE PLAN**

[Officer Contact: Matt Ansell, Operations Director, Children and Families; Tel: 01992 556435, Jo Fisher- Operations Director, Services for Children and Young People; Tel: 01992 588604]

- 7.1 The Cabinet Panel received a report which provided the details of the recommendations made by HM Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP) [report](#) 'Inspection of youth offending services in Hertfordshire' which was published in September 2018 *and the HMI Ofsted Inspection of Local Authority Children Services (ILACS)*. The Panel also received the [report](#) which contained the inspection findings and recommendations which was published on 19 November 2018.
- 7.2 In response to a question in relation to who the peers were who the County Council measured themselves against officers agreed to circulate a list to Members. It was also suggested the list of peers needed to be reviewed to ensure the sizing was consistent to that of Hertfordshire so that comparisons could be better made to ensure the Council was performing well.
- 7.3 The Panel heard in relation to placement stability the target figure had improved and would continue to improve, this was a priority for Children's Services.
- 7.4 Members were informed there were sixty-seven children who were living in care outside of the county and once the strategy was in place thirty-one more places would be available in Hertfordshire which would reduce the number of children living in care outside of the county. It was noted there would be a further campaign to recruit more foster carers in Hertfordshire and therefore once more foster carers had been recruited there would be more provision available to place other Hertfordshire children who were currently placed outside of the county. This would mean long term savings and a better outcome for children in care.

**Conclusions:**

- 7.5 The Cabinet Panel noted and commented on the content of the Report and supported the action taken by Officers in response to the HMIP's Report of September 2018 and the Ofsted ILAC Report November 2018.

**OTHER PART 1 BUSINESS**

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8.1 There was no other Part I business

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**QUENTIN BAKER  
CHIEF LEGAL OFFICER**

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