

MEMORANDUM

Date: 26 January 2004

**To: All Members of the County Council
and of the Children, Schools and
Families Scrutiny Committee
All Chief Officers**

**From: COUNTY SECRETARY'S
DEPARTMENT**

Ask for: Julia Harries

Ext: 25563

Minicom: 6611

My Ref: JH

Your Ref:

cc: CSF officers
All officers named for 'actions'
Committee section

**CHILDREN, SCHOOLS AND FAMILIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY 21 JANUARY 2004**

MINUTES

ATTENDANCE

MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

D E Billing, N K Brook, P T J Channell, A D Dodd, B C Engel, F Guest,
B N W Hammond, D W Hills, T G M Kent (Chairman), B J Lamb, A Lee,
D E Lloyd, M H O'Neill, S Quilty (Vice-Chairman), I Simpson, R H Smith

Parent Representatives:

P Cherry	North area
T Douris	West area

Church Representatives:

J Reynolds	Education Board of the Diocese of St Albans
M Stothard	Archdiocese of Westminster Schools Commission

Teacher Representatives:

P Brooks	National Association of Governors and Managers
I Gibson	National Association of School Master/Union of Women Teachers
G Rowlands	Association of Teachers and Lecturers
S Springett	National Association of Headteachers

Health and Voluntary Sector Representatives:

M Mitchell Chief Executive, Dacorum CVS

Also present:

Executive Members: R J M Ellis, R I N Gordon, J M Pitman

P V Goggins, R Mays

CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Membership changes:

A Lee had replaced **T I Ambrose** on a permanent basis.

B N W Hammond had replaced **J Taunton** for this meeting only.

MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 15 October 2003 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

PUBLIC PETITIONS (Standing Order C11)

None

QUESTIONS (Standing Order C9(4))

- 1 Fiona Guest** asked the Executive Member, **Robert Gordon**, the following question:

'In the joint Adult Care Services and Children, Schools and Families scrutiny item on transition, at the Adult Care and Health Services Scrutiny Committee meeting of 23rd October 2003, the report stated that it was mainly about young people with learning disabilities, but that much of what it said was also true for young people with other needs like physical disabilities or sensory impairment. The report referred to a transition protocol and a transition review for the young person with special needs.

Is the transition protocol also applied to young people with physical disabilities or sensory impairment, and do such young people also have transition reviews?'

Robert Gordon replied:

'The transition protocol referred to was developed by CSF, in consultation with ACS and partner agencies and was formally agreed at the end of September.

The introduction to the Protocol states:

"This protocol is written for professional working with 13-25 year olds, who have a learning disability, physical disability or sensory impairment."

Transition planning and reviews address the special needs of young people with disabilities so that they continue to receive services which support them and their families as they move in to adulthood – including needs for services which arise from any physical or sensory impairment. The document also sets out the key responsibilities and actions for all agencies.'

- 2 Pat Cherry** asked the Executive Member, **Robert Gordon**,

the following question:

- a *'Could the Executive Member inform me with regard to the new initiative of Youth Inclusion & Support Panels: in their work with schools, how do these mainly unqualified workers differ from CSF workers?'*
- b *As a CSF referral form is being used by the workers - simply to be marked YISP meaning that in some instances they will be named on Oracle as the key worker, does this mean that unqualified workers will be at the same level of security as the professionals?'*
- c *Finally, as these panels are to be overseen by a steering group – what will the composition of this steering group be?'*

Robert Gordon replied:

- a *'The YISP is designed to provide (via a multi-agency forum) holistic services for children who are showing early signs of difficulty, which are risk factors in later offending. It is a countywide service funded by the Children's Fund until April 2006.'*

The work of the YISP is based in the District Council areas, whereas CSF workers are allocated to specific schools. To avoid duplication, the referrals to the YISP from schools are through their educational psychologist who decides if this is an appropriate service. Hence the YISP complements the work of the Behavioural Support Teams taking on the less serious issues for children. In their work with children in schools they are likely to provide a service to schools that do not have access to CSF workers. YISP workers will provide some direct services to children and families, providing a welcome additional resource to preventative work. They will also link children to other appropriate provision to reduce the possibility of problems recurring when the intervention ends.'

- b** *'The YISP is bound by the same conventions as other services in relation to Oracle. For practical reasons relating to IT provision, the access to Oracle for the YISP project is only through one central point at County Hall, therefore staff will not have direct access themselves to the database. As the children the YISP is working with will not normally previously have been recorded on Oracle, the Project will, in the main, be registering new work undertaken rather than accessing previous work.'*
- c** *The service works to the Youth Justice Service Assistant Director and is accountable to the Children's Fund Partnership. It is intended to establish local steering groups to sustain and support the project locally. It has already become clear that local differences in structure will mean that there will be some variations between areas for example whether to have quadrant or district based steering groups. Either way Membership should be managers who will have the ability to promote the project with those staff who are likely to be contributing to the panels and helping those young people achieve their agreed action plans.*

Where there are existing structures that are willing to take on the role of the steering group, such as in Dacorum, we do not intend to develop a new group. In Stevenage, however, we have developed a separate group, because existing structures are fully committed. This group will be extended to include North Hertfordshire in due course creating one group for the quadrant. This group includes management representatives from the Borough Council covering community safety and play, the police, school nurses representing health, four representatives from CSF covering links with behaviour support teams and schools, the community teams and the youth teams, the Youth Service and a member from the voluntary sector.

As with Hertfordshire's preventative strategy, some areas are more district based and there will need to be more than one steering group in such quadrants. The exact number of steering groups will be to suit local circumstances.'

PART 1 ('OPEN') BUSINESS

		ACTION
1.	<p>CHILDREN, SCHOOLS AND FAMILIES SERVICE PLAN 2004/05</p> <p>[Officer contact: Andrew Wellington, Senior Development Manager, Young People and Transition Tel: 01992 556980]</p> <p>[Ian Gibson was not present for this item]</p>	
1.1	The Committee considered a report detailing the responses received to the recent consultation on the Children, Schools and Families Service Plan 2004/05.	
1.2	Corrections to figures on pages 32 and 34 had been circulated to Members.	
1.3	The Committee noted that Section 7 of Strategic Area 1 would be revised.	Andrew Wellington
1.4	<u>Conclusions:</u>	
i	The Committee noted the report and raised some concerns about the apparent decline in overall performance shown in some of the indicators for Strategic Area One.	
ii	It was agreed that the Director would be requested to bring a full report to the March meeting of the Committee on performance information and how actions link to addressing the areas of concern, particularly where performance has declined; this report should include a particular focus on Key Stage 2 results which have plateaued in recent years.	Andrew Wellington
iii	The Committee requested a briefing note [to be circulated to all members of the Committee] on the numbers of schools with mobile classrooms, how these are being used and the quality of provision.	Jim Dalton

1.5 **Response to Cabinet on 9 February 2004:**

The Committee:

- i supported the proposals made by the Director for future plans to have a more robust evaluation framework and make clear the link between actions and desired outcomes,
- ii suggested that in future the section on building capacity in schools be reworded to improve clarity, and
- iii suggested that the timing of the presentation of targets should be brought forward to enable better forecasting and hence more accurate target setting.

ACTION

Dave Roberts

Andrew
WellingtonAndrew
Wellington**2 CHILDREN, SCHOOLS AND FAMILIES BUDGET MONITORING AND REPORTING IN 2002/03 AND BUDGET MONITOR**

[Officer contacts: Lesley Brockington, Assistant Director,
Resources
Tel: 01992 555710
Mike Robinson, Head of Central Finance,
Tel: 01992 555737]

- 2.1 The Committee considered a report on the Revenue and Capital Budget Monitor to 31 October 2003.
- 2.2 Further details on the basic need 'slippage' in Appendix D had been circulated to Members and would be incorporated into future monthly capital monitors.

Lesley
Brockington2.3 **Conclusions:**

- i The Committee expressed dissatisfaction with the lack of reply to the Director's letter to the Minister requesting consideration of the financial demands of supporting unaccompanied asylum seekers; it was agreed that this would be pursued and Members kept informed of progress.

Director

- ii The Committee expressed concern about the slippages in basic needs funding and requested regular updates on capital funding for school places [including funding available through Section 106 agreements] and their proposed allocation, to the Schools Resources Panel.

ACTION

Lesley
Brockington

**3 CHILDREN, SCHOOLS AND FAMILIES PROPOSED
RESOURCE BUDGET 2004/05 - 2007/08**

[Officer contact: Lesley Brockington, Deputy Director,
Planning, Commissioning and
Resources
Tel: 01992 555710]

- 3.1 The Committee considered a report detailing the proposals made by Cabinet on 15 December 2003 for the revenue budget and capital programme for the Children, Schools and Families Service.

3.2 **Response to Cabinet on 26 January 2004**

The Committee:

- i noted the Children, Schools and Families Proposed Resource Budget 2004/05 – 2007/08 and welcomed the efficiencies that had been achieved,
- ii expressed concern at the transitional funding arrangements for school budgets, the perverse incentives in the way it is distributed and the uncertainty about the future, and urged the Executive Member to lobby the Government on this issue, and
- iii welcomed the proposals outlined by the Director to shift the focus of work with looked after children into support and preventative work wherever possible.

Director

4 MONITORING OF SCHOOLS**ACTION**

[Officer contact: Gill Jones, (Acting) Assistant Director,
School Standards and Curriculum
Tel: 01582 830364]

- 4.1 The Committee noted the interim report of the Monitoring of Schools Topic Group setting out work so far and an outline of the future programme of scrutiny work.

5 PROVISION FOR 14-19 YEAR OLDS AND RECREATIONAL COURSES IN DACORUM

[Officer contacts: Mike Griffin, Co-Assistant Director,
Development and Diversity Pathfinder
Project Director
Tel: 01992 555927
Marianne Stevenson, Acting Head of
LINC Unit, Development
Tel: 01992 555915]

- 5.1 The Committee considered a report giving an update on the progress of the Topic Group and detailing recent events at West Herts College.

- 5.2 An update report on the meeting of 7 January 2004 had been circulated to Members.

5.3 Conclusions:

The Committee:

- i welcomed the transformation in the proposals for provision for 14-19 year olds and recreational courses in Dacorum, noting that this had come about, in part, because of the work of the Topic Group,
- ii welcomed the introduction of consortium arrangements and the proposals for future collaboration which had emerged,
- iii expressed concern that any provision had been withdrawn from Dacorum, and welcomed the commitment to develop a plan which will meet the curriculum needs of learners at a local level,
- v recommended that the Topic Group continue its work to ensure

Mike Griffin
Marianne
Stevenson

ACTION
Mike Griffin

	that the positive proposals made are progressed, and	Marianne Stevenson
vi	noted that this piece of scrutiny had been effective in 'kick-starting' collaborative arrangements and felt this could be used as an example of best practice in the future.	All to note
6	SCRUTINY UPDATE AND WORK PROGRAMME REPORT	
	[Officer contact: Julia Harries, Committee Administrator Tel: 01992 555563]	
6.1	The Committee noted a report setting out the progress on scrutiny items and outlining a work programme for future meetings of the Committee.	
6.2	<u>Conclusions:</u>	
i	The Committee agreed to add the following item to the Work Programme:	Julia Harries
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> child protection issues arising from Operation Coachman, in particular enhanced checks on taxi drivers and escorts on County Council contracts, timing of report to be agreed at the agenda setting meeting. 	Rob Smith Alan Sapsford Cheryl Hopkins Clare Kaye Dharini Chandarana Janice Mottram
ii	The Committee agreed that the following items in the Scrutiny Update report needed more detail for the next report to the March meeting:	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Item 5, Provision for Excluded Pupils in Welwyn Hatfield and Hertsmere Education Support Centres. Item 21, Dyslexia – report back from the Special Needs Panel discussion. The Committee also agreed that the report on Dyslexia for the Special Needs Panel on 28 January 2004 should be circulated to all Members of the Committee, including all co-opted, added and parent representative Members. 	Lindsay Martin Alan Sapsford Sue Westgate

- iii David Billing raised the issue of the processes and member involvement in school reorganisations, and it was agreed that this would be added to the Scrutiny Update report so that the work of the Schools Resources Panel in this area could be reported to Members.

Julia Harries
Lindsay
Martin

ITEMS REFERRED TO THE COUNTY COUNCIL
(Standing Order SC.7(2))

None

Andrew Laycock
County Secretary