



Minutes of the meeting of the CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE COMMITTEE held on WEDNESDAY 08 FEBRUARY 2017 at 7.00 PM in the COUNCIL CHAMBER, Civic Offices

**Present:** Councillor Crooks (Chair),  
Councillors M Bradburn, Betteley, Buckley, Dransfield, Ferrans, Small, Miles, Wales, Webb, and Mrs A Marlow (Parent Governor Representative)

**Officers:** M Bracey (Corporate Director - People), N Rayner (Service Director, Children and Families), G Snelson (Director of Strategy and Futures), F Robinson (MK Futures Programme Manager), R Mascarenhas (Youth Participation Worker) and E Richardson (Overview and Scrutiny Officer)

**Apologies:** Councillor V Hopkins and Mrs R Collins (Parent Governor Representative)

**Also Present:** Councillor Nolan (Cabinet Member for Children and Families), J Mills (Principal, Milton Keynes College), J Wilsdon (Milton Keynes College), Dr G Mellor (Director, UCMK), N Gough (Cranfield University), 4 Members of the Milton Keynes Youth Cabinet and 2 members of the public

**CYP11 MINUTES**

RESOLVED -

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 23 November 2016 be approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

**CYP12 THE DEVELOPMENT OF FURTHER AND HIGHER EDUCATION IN MILTON KEYNES**

Witnesses: J Mills and J Wilsdon (Milton Keynes College), Dr G Mellor UCMK) G Snelson (Milton Keynes Council) and N Gough (Cranfield University)

The Committee received several short presentations from the witnesses representing Milton Keynes College, UCMK, Cranfield University and Milton Keynes Council (MK:IT) on their vision for the future of further and higher education in Milton Keynes, their plans for cooperation to deliver this vision, the benefits for Milton Keynes as a whole and how it would be achieved.

A full record of the presentations, ensuing discussion and agreed recommendations is contained in the report attached to these minutes.

RESOLVED -

1. That the representatives from Milton Keynes College, UCMK, Cranfield University (MK:IT) and Milton Keynes Council be thanked for their attendance at the meeting, their presentations and contribution to the debate.
2. That a report summarising the presentations, the Committee's discussions and setting out the options for the future of Further and Higher Education in Milton Keynes be prepared for presentation to Cabinet.

**CYP13**

### **OFSTED REPORT ON MILTON KEYNES CHILDREN'S SERVICES**

Witnesses: M Bracey (Corporate Director People) and N Rayner (Service Director Children and Families)

The Corporate Director (People) introduced the report in the context of the current inspection regime, which had been in place for 3 years but which would be changing at the end of 2017. The general feeling amongst local authorities was that the current process was over-sensitive and that the bench-marking criteria were not necessarily set correctly. Councils were different from schools and it was not realistic to 'test' them in the same way. These problems had been acknowledged by OFSTED but the framework had been insisted upon by the Department for Education. This had led to a quarter of councils being judged as "inadequate".

The Council had developed a post-inspection Action Plan which had been submitted to, and approved by, OFSTED. This was a live document to which the Children and Families Service Group would be working in the coming months.

The Council's Special Education Needs / Disability Services were subject to a separate inspection which was probably due sometime during 2017.

The Committee then discussed the report in detail and noted that:

- Female Genital Mutilation was not a huge problem in Milton Keynes. Any identified cases were referred to the Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) and the Council worked closely with them to resolve cases;
- The Council had not convinced the inspectors that it had a complete grip on information on adoptions. The courts decided whether adoption was appropriate following a referral from the Council, which worked hard to keep children in their families of origin. However, the adoption process involved dealing with more agencies than just the courts and the Council was,

therefore, in the process of improving its data and how this was managed;

- In the past the Safeguarding Board had not operated as well as it might have done. Although a new Chair was now in place, the rate of progress was still not fast enough;
- The report was complimentary about the Council's work to develop a 'Life Story' for each adopted child. There were also plans to do this for each Looked After Child as well, but the process was time consuming, so the Children and Families Service Group was looking at how this could be streamlined and speeded up;
- Each adopted and Looked After Child was also entitled to a 'Pathway Plan'. Although these were in hand, more work still needed to be done to speed up the process and complete the plans for all those who required them.

During the discussion, concern was expressed by a member of the Committee at what he considered to be a fall in standards over recent years and that the merger of children and adult social services meant that both teams had lost focus and neither was performing particularly well. He felt that there was air of misplaced complacency.

The Cabinet Member disagreed and commented that the Council's rating had remained the same. Although it had not improved, it was not worse than previous ratings and the Service now had to deal with more children but with fewer resources. OFSTED had made no criticism of the combined social care service in Milton Keynes and overall had made some very positive remarks. The phrase "staff morale high" did not often appear in OFSTED reports.

Other members of the Committee commented that they thought the report had been harsher than it needed to be, and that the Council was at the top of a very wide band. There was a lot of good work, such as the progress being made with Looked After Children, which had been highlighted in the report and that individual criticism was unfair to both the Cabinet Member and staff.

The Committee then reviewed the Action Plan which had been developed to address the issues raised by the inspection and endorsed the proposed measures which were being put in place to address these. The Committee was pleased to note that action was already being taken against many of the proposals. However, the Committee did feel that marking some of the actions just as "in progress" was too vague as it lacked the detail necessary for proper scrutiny. The Committee agreed that it would monitor progress against the Action Plan and would like to receive an update report later in 2017.

The Committee agreed with the proposal in the Action Plan to get councillors more involved with the Council's role as Corporate Parent, which applied to all councillors, not just those on the Corporate Parenting Panel. It was suggested that a session on the Council as

Corporate Parent should be included as a regular item in the annual induction and training programme for councillors.

**RESOLVED**

1. That the Corporate Director (People) and the Service Director (Children's Services) be thanked for their attendance at the meeting and contribution to the Committee's discussions.
2. That the Committee welcomes the Action Plan that is in place to address the concerns of OFSTED raised in the report and notes the positive response from OFSTED to the Action Plan.
3. That the update on progress against the Action Plan which will be presented to the Council's Corporate Leadership Team in July also be circulated to the Committee.
4. That an induction session for members of the Committee on the Council's role and responsibilities as a Corporate Parent and how councillors can actively be involved with and scrutinise this process, be developed.

**CYP14**

**TOPICAL ITEM: PLAN:MK**

The Chair advised the Committee that details of the proposals for Plan:MK were due to be published and would be considered at a special meeting of the Cabinet on 21 February 2017. These proposals would then be subject to a 12 week period of public consultation and he encouraged the Committee to read and consider the proposals.

It was agreed that, as part of the public consultation, the Committee should comment specifically on the chapter on education and that the Planning Group with the addition of Councillors Ferrans, Miles and V Hopkins would draft a response on behalf of the Committee, which would be circulated to all members for comment before being fed into the consultation process. The draft response would also be checked with officers for factual correctness.

**RESOLVED -**

1. That the Committee notes the imminent publication of the Plan:MK document and that there would be a 12 week public consultation period on the proposals.
2. That, on behalf of the Committee, the Committee's Planning Group, together with Councillors Ferrans, V Hopkins and Miles, drafts a submission in relation to the chapter on education as part of the public consultation process.

**CYP15**

**WORK PROGRAMME 2017/18**

An additional meeting had been added to the 2016/17 cycle of meetings, but the proposed date of 11 April fell in the schools' Easter break and several members of the Committee had indicated that they would not be able to attend that day due to other

commitments. As there were no local elections in Milton Keynes in 2017 it would be possible to move this meeting and various possible dates were discussed.

The Committee also reviewed and agreed the items suggested for scrutiny as part of the 2017/18 Work Programme.

RESOLVED -

1. That the meeting originally scheduled for 11 April be moved to 2 May 2017.
2. That the proposed topics for scrutiny during 2017/18 be agreed.

THE CHAIR CLOSED THE MEETING AT 9:45 PM