

AT A MEETING  
- of the -  
**CHILDRENS SERVICES**  
**AND LIFELONG LEARNING**  
**SCRUTINY AND**  
**PERFORMANCE PANEL**  
held at the Council House,  
Walsall on **Thursday 20**  
**October 2005** at 6.00pm

PRESENT

Councillor Bird (Chairman)  
Councillor Chambers  
Councillor Khan  
Councillor Walker  
Councillor Wilkes  
Mr A Butterworth (Lichfield Diocesan  
Board of Education)  
Mrs E. Collins (Parent Governor)  
Mr. M.Lee (Parent Governor)  
Mr. R.Grainger (NUT)  
Mr. D.Jones (Primary School  
representative)

OFFICERS

Rachel Humphreys (Walsall tPCT)  
Diane Osborne (Teenage Pregnancy  
Co-ordinator)  
David Bovell (Social Care)  
Tony Stainer (Education Walsall)  
Stuart Bentley (Scrutiny Support)

APOLOGIES

Apologies for non attendance were submitted on behalf of Councillors E. E. Pitt, R. Martin and B. Cassidy.

SUBSTITUTIONS

The chairman advised that no notifications of substitution had been received.

DECLARATION OF INTEREST AND PARTY WHIP

There were no declarations of interest declared at this meeting.

## MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD 8 SEPTEMBER 2005

(annexed)

### 14 Resolved:

That the minutes of the previous meeting, held on 8 September 2005, copies having been previously circulated to each member of the panel be approved and signed by the chairman as a correct record.

## MATTERS ARISING

Stuart Bentley reported back that he had approached Kathy McAteer over the status of the Beacon View site. He had been advised that the site would be unavailable for the proposed purpose as the Learning Disability service are planning to redevelop the site as part of the Learning Disability commissioning plan.

## LATE ITEM: CHILDRENS OVERWEIGHT AND OBESITY REPORT

The chairman advised the panel that he had agreed to take the late item due to the time limited nature of the recommendations.

(annexed)

Rachel Humphreys spoke to the report and briefly reviewed each Theme in turn.

Councillor Wilkes asked what areas of the borough would be targeted for the acquisition of Data. Rachel Humphreys replied that the aim was to target a primary and secondary school from each of the four corners of the borough.

Mrs. Collins asked if the children's participation in the scheme would be voluntary. Rachel Humphreys replied that it was a sensitive issue but it had been decided to apply an opt-out approach to the data gathering.

Councillor Wilkes agreed that it was important to address the issue within the educational environment, but that this would be, potentially, undermined if parental inclusion was not achieved. Rachel Humphreys replied that this issue was a central part of Theme 2, raising public awareness.

Tony Stainer stated that the report was very helpful and highlighted a clear link to education and prompted the question of what Education Walsall could input into the action plan.

Councillor Bird stated that there had been a relatively recent trend towards downplaying competitive sport within education. Mr. Grainger agreed and stated that sport had been squeezed out to make room for the national curriculum. Tony Stainer stated the forthcoming launch of "Enjoyment and Excellence - The Primary Strategy" for Walsall would include a strand aim at physical development. Mr. Jones stated that Physical Education was still part

of primary school education, but that it had changed in its nature. He further stated that the action plan should be linked to the extended schools agenda and that there was a need to explore other sporting activities than football etc. to help include children with activity limiting illness such as asthma.

Rachel Humphreys asked the panel to support the development of an action plan, to be in place by January 2006, and to support the appointment of an obesity co-ordinator for the borough.

Councillor Bird thanked Rachel Humphreys for her presentation and stated that he thought it was an excellent piece of work. Councillor Chambers echoed Councillor Bird and asked how the panel could move this forward and how it might be monitored.

Councillor Bird suggested that the co-ordinator could be a joint funded role as it was clear that there was significant overlap between the interests of Walsall MBC, Walsall tPCT and Education Walsall.

#### 15. Resolved:

That the Children's Service and Lifelong Learning Scrutiny and Performance Panel endorse the recommendations of the report and, in doing so, recommend that Cabinet explore the opportunities for joint funding from Education Walsall, Walsall tPCT and Walsall MBC for the Obesity Co-ordinators post.

#### FEEDBACK FROM THE SCHOOL BUILDINGS WORKING GROUP

Councillor Bird advised that panel that the working group had met on 23 September, but the group had been unhappy with the lack of progress on clearing the priority one backlogs as expressed in the minutes, previously circulated.

(annexed)

The panel were also deeply concerned with the issue and the lack of progress made.

Stuart Bentley advised the panel that the 5 resolutions made at the last working group meeting would be addressed at the next meeting of the group scheduled for 10 November.

Councillor Bird advised the panel that he had met with David Brown (Executive Director for Children's Services) and had been informed that he was corresponding with central government over the issue of the capital funds for school repairs.

Councillor Wilkes raised the issue of the Old Church roof as he had been advised that this was encountering serious problems.

16 Resolved:

That a specific report on the state of the Old Church roof be presented to the next school buildings working group on 10 November 2005.

FEEDBACK FROM THE SOCIAL INCLUSION WORKING GROUP

Stuart Bentley advised the panel that the working group had not yet met and that Councillor Arif had asked to be removed from the membership due to other commitments. In light of this, a report had been drafted recommending that the group be re-constituted and outlining possible work streams.

(annexed)

Councillor Khan expressed an interest in looking at raising achievement, by addressing the social inclusion agenda, and asked about the Walsall's position on Children's Trusts. David Bovell replied that Children's Trusts were a key element of "Every Child Matters" and were aimed at promoting more effective inter-agency working as outline in section 3.3.1 of the report.

17 Resolved:

That the panel agree to re-constitute the Social Inclusion Working Group with the membership as follows:

Councillor Khan (Lead Member)  
Councillor Cassidy  
Mr. Grainger  
Mr. Jones

CORPORATE PARENTING

David Bovell spoke the report which gave a brief overview of the proposal to review the arrangements for member visits to children's homes and highlighted the key areas for member's consideration.

(annexed)

Councillor Bird thanked him for his report and asked what format the visits would take. David Bovell replied that the emphasis would be on opening a dialogue with young people and staff, along with making use of the regulation 33 management reports, rather than delving into reams of information. He suggested that members could become champions and advocates for children.

Councillor Bird stated that the process would have to be constructive in order to engage the elected members, but that it was an excellent idea. Tony Stainer added that information, relating to Looked After Children he would be presenting later, could be used by the members to engage with young people. Councillor Bird suggested that there was no reason why representatives from

Education Walsall should not be included on these visits. Tony Stainer welcomed the suggestion.

Councillor Walker suggested that there should be Champions for each area as the process may be sensitive. It was her opinion that it would be helpful to have 1 or 2 key contacts for each home in order to build a strong relationship.

#### 18 Resolved:

That the panel agree that the visits are an excellent idea and that they should be open to all members of this panel, with a view to possibly widening them to all council members.

That David Bovell draw up a draft of possible parameters and outcomes.

### PROGRESS AND ATTAINMENT

Tony Stainer presented the key messages from the report previously circulated to members.

(annexed)

Councillor Bird thanked him for his presentation and welcomed the good news. He recognised that there was still a way to go, but there had been a major step change. He highlighted that there now appears to be a good working relationship between school staff and SerCo. Mr. Grainger agreed and highlighted that there was now more education resources. Mr. Butterworth also complimented the presentation and thanked Tony Stainer for the up to date and useful data.

Mr. Jones asked about the results of Walsall Academy and what effect it was having on the schools in the neighbouring wards. Tony Stainer stated that he could not be sure as the Academy reported directly to the DfES and was not the responsibility of Education Walsall, but he suggested that he could look into the effect of the Academy on the neighbouring schools.

#### 19 Resolved:

That Education Walsall investigates the effect of Walsall Academy on the schools in the neighbouring wards and reports its findings to a future meeting of the panel.

### FORWARD PLAN – 19 SEPTEMBER 2005 – FOR INFORMATION

The forward plan for September 2005 was submitted: -

(see annexed)

The panel agreed to note the document.

### DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The panel were advised that the date of the next meeting would be 21 November and would specifically address the budget consultation.

Councillor Bird stated that he may not be available to attend this meeting and was unsure if the vice-chair would be available. He asked if the date could be altered to accommodate this.

Stuart Bentley advised the panel that the Municipal Diary was extremely congested and that a re-arrangement may not be possible, but he would investigate the possibility and feedback to the members in due course.

### TERMINATION OF THE MEETING

There being no further business the meeting terminated at 7.35 p.m.