

**NOTES OF A CONSULTATION MEETING BETWEEN ELECTED MEMBERS, OFFICERS  
AND REPRESENTATIVES OF THE OXFORDSHIRE GOVERNORS' ASSOCIATION  
(OGA) HELD AT  
COUNTY HALL ON WEDNESDAY 10<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 2018 AT 4.00 pm**

**Present:**

**OGA Representatives:** Carole Thomson [Chair] (CT), Judith Bennett (JB), Lucy Katz (LK) (until 5.20 pm), Doreen Rose (DR) and Brenda Williams (BW).

**OCC Elected Members and Officers:** Lucy Butler (LB) [Director for Children's Services] (from 4.20 pm), David Clarke (DC) [Deputy Director for Education and Learning], Cllr Lorraine Lindsay-Gale (LL-G) (Cabinet Member for Education and Cultural Services), and Allyson Milward (AM) (Head of Service School Organisation & Efficiency).

**In attendance:** Judy East (JE) [Clerk].

**Apologies for absence:** Jennie Perry (JP)

**1. Notes of the last meeting**

Notes of the meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2018 had been agreed as a correct record of the meeting by e-mail previously, which enabled publication on the OGA website soon after the meeting.

**2. Matters arising from notes of 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2018**

**Item 2.3 (Governor Services Review) :** It was agreed that the offer from Governor Services is much improved over last year, and the recent training for LLG's was very good. DC reported that he had e-mailed correspondence re having a Governor representative on the Learner Engagement Board.

**Item 2.4 (Mental Health) :** DC had been able to obtain further information. A series of briefings had been held around the County in May and June and dates had been circulated for meetings in October/November; Headteachers'/Chairs' briefings would be held in November and DC would monitor how these worked. Other briefings had gone ahead around the Inclusion agenda, and re-integration timetables. A more positive way of looking at elective home education was being considered, as well as whether children were "falling through the gap". Meetings around Exclusion and Attendance, started by the previous Deputy Director, had been well received. The October breakfast briefing had 3 items on the agenda : (i) SEND, (ii) the link between education and help – children in need/child protection, etc. An Early Help Board had just been established and DC wanted to link that into Education for Learning. (iii) Exclusion - It had been noted that children were being Excluded at a younger and younger age (Years 1/2) – which didn't necessarily mean that the school had acted inappropriately, but strategies needed to be brought in earlier.

BW felt that the issues being debated around Behaviour and what happened in the classroom was because what the children were being asked to do in the curriculum was so inappropriate – teachers didn't have the freedom to create an environment in which every child was capable of learning.

*LB arrived at 4.20 pm*

DC suggested looking at Inclusion as an agenda item for the next Consultation meeting and felt Inclusion should be looked at in a much wider sense. Time was an issue – DC would like to link up with other resources that could be used, but without swamping a school.

**Action: Next Agenda item**

Following on from progress meetings, links to CAMHS and Mental Health went into *Schools' News*. It was agreed that *Schools' News* should be cascaded to all Governors as it was an important means of communication: further agreed that Clerks' Briefings' should ask Clerks to circulate to all of their Governors so they had a wider sense of what was happening.

**Action: Inform Governor Services**

CT reported that, at the last meeting, Hannah Farncombe had suggested having an OGA Open Meeting with Maria Godfrey (Early help Strategic Lead) and Melissa Noton (CAMHS Manager). They had agreed they would do this and the meeting would probably take place in March 2019 – CT to let DC have date when fixed; JB emphasized that all were welcome to attend Open Meetings.

**Action: CT**

Item 5 (Northfield School): DC reported that the school was very close to completing a series of refurbishments needed to allow it to accommodate the 59 children on site from the beginning of the second half of this term. A lot of work had been needed to make it safe, not least asbestos removal. Additional improvements had also been carried out to make it fit for an educational environment. Meanwhile, the 9 Y7 pupils, who would have gone to Northfield, had been re-allocated places at Iffley Academy and Northern House. Parents had been very understanding through what had inevitably been a traumatic time for them. DC had met with all those who attended the Parents' meeting in July to thank them for their support – staff, too, had been wonderful

### **3. Special Education Needs Strategy**

DC spoke to a series of slides outlining the strategy.

#### **SEND Vision**

*Investing in and developing good quality local provision which meets the needs of children and young people with SEND within Oxfordshire – the right pupils in the right provision at the right place.*

Oxfordshire County Council had a whole-hearted commitment to investing in and developing schools' SEND provision for the children of Oxfordshire. DC emphasised that (OCC's) our 'local first' approach would ensure that children and young people's needs were at the core of our service planning.

In Oxfordshire we were proud of the SEND education provision we currently delivered, which enabled more children and young people with SEND to access local provision. Our future programme and creative approaches were enabling this work to expand and deliver even better outcomes.

#### **Objectives**

- Address the increasing overspend across the HNB
- Ensure sufficient supply of SEND provision
- Reduce demand for independent and non-maintained specialist placements.
- Improve the internal processes and systems supporting the statutory assessment process, which determine the majority of High Needs Block spend.
- Deliver the recommendations in the Written Statement of Action

## Challenges

- Insufficient places
- Increase in demand
- HNB funding pressures
- OFSTED and Statutory requirements

## High Needs Project Structure

- Work-package 1: Top-up banding
- Work-package 2: Additional Payments process
- Work-package 3: Resource Base Commissioning
- Work-package 4: SENSS service
- Work-package 5: Commissioning Out of Area
- Work-package 6: Sufficiency Strategy for provision
- Work-package 7 : Redefined governance and performance framework

## Segment Shift Required

Step 1 – *Mainstream* – Inclusion - Quality First Teaching - Plan, do review - Outcomes

Step 2 – *Mainstream* – SEN 6K – Plan, do review - Support plans - Interventions - Outcomes

Step 3 – *Mainstream EHC -Resource base* -Top up funding follows the child - Support + Interventions - Plan, do review - Outcomes

Step 4 – *Special School Provision* - Special School funding per place - High level support - High level needs - Outcomes

Step 5 – *Individual Plan/Independent setting or other* - Outcomes

## SEND Improvement Strategy

Interlinked aspects:

- HNB Project
- Sufficiency of Places and Provision
- Northfield
- Written Statement of Action
- SEND Transport
- Alternative Provision
- Early Years

LB informed the meeting that OCC had submitted written evidence to the SEND enquiry carried out by the House of Commons Education Select Committee and had been asked to give oral evidence (scheduled for 23.10.2018).

## 4. Post-Carillion support

LL-G said she was the Cabinet Member for the last 2 years dealing with the Carillion crisis. She reported that the situation was still potentially difficult and the final bill had not been paid, but work was nearly complete and would go through the budget process in the Autumn. The Council was spearheading a group of councils which were going to challenge how the Government dealt with the crisis – Property Services' Deputy Director, Alexandra Bailey, was the lead figure. The worst was over now with very few schools left in a difficult position, most having found new contractors. CT asked, going forward, whether there would be consultation with schools on how it was going to work, or if the Council would be setting up a new process, pointing out that there was a lot of concern about Headteachers' time being taken

up with building issues. AM replied that she had just been invited to take part in a Workshop on moving forward.

LL-G reported that the County Council wanted to maintain a good relationship with schools and intended to borrow money – an extra £40m would be spent on schools’ repair and maintenance, which was why Northfield would be re-built. CT conceded this was good news because a lot of schools were likely to have been cutting back on premises maintenance due to financial pressures. Schools and OCC needed to work co-operatively to maintain school buildings to a reasonable standard.

LK left at 5.20 pm

#### **5. Implications arising from a new operating model for OCC**

There had been some discussion around the Hampshire issue in Schools Forum. LB said she was unable at this time to answer the question about relationship and assurances, but a paper had been written last month - the detail was yet to be debated, but when it had been the Council would be engaging with schools. CT said that OGA had made the point that a very long lead time would be needed – schools needed to have time to build changes into their plans and a watching brief was needed on behalf of schools. It was agreed that this should be a standing Agenda item.

**Action: Standing Agenda item**

#### **6. Dynamic procurement system**

CT pointed out that those professionals with a reputation for excellence in their field tended to be in demand and taking time to present bids for work may be an issue for them and wondered how confident the Council was that they were not losing out due to the vagaries of the procurement system. AM said she believed the process was intended to meet procurement regulations. It was noted that a meeting was being held the following day and AM/DC would raise this question with the team.

**Action: DC/AM**

#### **7. Parking charges**

DC had spoken to colleagues and the proposal arose from Oxford City Council attempting to reduce congestion and air pollution in the City. OCC hadn’t looked into whether schools might be exempt, but at this time the idea was only being explored. CT reported that the response from OGA colleagues when she had shared the *Schools Week* article had been very negative, not least because of the effect it would have on recruitment & retention, which was already a challenge. Noted that DC and LB would be part of further discussions and would feed in – LB wondered if there might be a possibility of exceptions for key workers.

**Action: DC/LB**

#### **8. Date of next meetings**

Tuesday 26 <sup>th</sup> February 2019	4.00-5.30 pm
Thursday 16 <sup>th</sup> May 2019	4.00-5.30 pm

The meeting ended at 5.35 pm