

**A EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE
WAS HELD ON 28 JULY 2014**

Councillors Beavis (P), Mrs Cully (P), Farr (P), Forder (Chairman) (P), Mrs Forder(P), Foster-Reed(P), Gill (Vice Chairman) (P), Hazel (P), Mrs Hook (P), Hylands (P), Jessop (P), Scard.

12. APOLOGIES

An apology for inability to attend the meeting was received from Councillor Scard.

13. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

14. REPORTS RECEIVED

ATTAINMENT OF GOSPORT PRIMARY SCHOOL CHILDREN

The Committee were introduced to Brian Pope, the Area Director for the Hampshire Inspector and Advisory Service in East Hampshire. He advised the Committee that he was accompanied by his colleague Naomi Carter, the School Improvement Manager for Fareham and Gosport.

Councillor Edgar, as Executive Member for Education at Hampshire County Council, addressed the Committee.

He advised that Hampshire County Council had been growing the education services that they provided, despite a change in Government policies. He advised that 82% of Hampshire's schools were rated as 'Good' or 'Outstanding' by OFSTED, with 2% marked as inadequate.

The Committee were advised that recently the Isle of Wight had been directed to buy in to Hampshire County Council's education services to improve their performance. In addition, the Academy Schools, based in Hampshire, also often bought in Education Services from Hampshire County Council, as they proved to be better quality and value for money.

Councillor Edgar recognised that provision for post 16 education had attracted significant investment in Gosport and Fareham, with the CEMAST vocational training college opening recently.

Councillor Edgar advised that Hampshire County Council were responsible for finding primary school places for 15000 children every year, he advised that 90% of children were placed in their first choice school and 97% of children were placed in a school that was one of their three choices. He advised that they were one of the only authorities able to offer such a choice.

The Committee were advised that the County Council had acknowledged Government direction that all KS1 pupils should receive a free hot school meal every school day, the additional costs were recognised, but it was also acknowledged that it would provide significant educational advantages to the children.

Councillor Edgar advised that there had been significant investment made into the Siskin Schools site to improve the facilities.

Brian Pope was invited to address the Committee; he introduced a presentation (attached to the minutes as appendix A).

The Committee were advised that the Early Years Stage covered children up to the age of 5, Key Stage 1 up to the age of 7 and Key Stage 2 up to the age of 11.

The Early Years Stage provided children with the opportunity to learn through play, three main areas of development were covered in this stage, personal social and emotional development, communication and language and physical development. These were further sub divided into specific areas including, mathematics, literacy, understanding the world and expressive art and design. Assessments are made, by teachers, when the children are 5 years old.

The Early Years Stage in Gosport includes County Council Early Years Centres, private and voluntary run centres and other care providers including childminders. The Early Years providers network, through the Gosport Education Improvement Partnership, supports consistent moderation, to ensure that assessments are comparable. The network was proving to be successful as Gosport had been the only district in Hampshire where all moderation was correct.

The Committee were also advised that practitioners engaged in Personal, Social and Emotional Development networks, to help better prepare children to attend school. In addition, an outdoor learning project involving 95 Early Years providers in Gosport and Fareham promoted learning and development outside of the classroom. Sports partnerships including healthy eating and lifestyle education to reduce obesity were also delivered with the support of the Local Children's Partnership. Early Years providers were also trialling and leading the way in liaising with health experts in preparation for children undergoing statutory health and development checks at two years old.

The Committee were advised that in Gosport assessment for Good Level of Development, as set by the Government, was generally in line with the national average, although assessment had been completed in Gosport in 2014, the national figures were not yet available to compare.

Mr Pope advised the Committee, in detail, of the Primary level initiatives for development and improving practice. These included; greater understanding of how children learn, particularly through memory and cognition, a network to support schools determined by OFSTED as requiring improvement to become good schools, and exploring the delivery of outstanding practice and English subject networks. In addition to this, head teachers were offered a network to provide practical and emotional support, the use of the pupil premium network to improve the effectiveness of teaching assistants and SENCO networks were also delivered under the Gosport Education Improvement Partnership.

The Committee were advised that outcomes at the end of Key Stage One for reading, writing and mathematics were on par with the national averages.

Mr Pope advised the Committee that work was being undertaken to ensure that schools on the same sites worked closely together, research had shown that children leaving a primary school rated themselves as happier than those that attended separate Infant and Junior Schools. Schools would not be forced to convert to Primary schools but could consider becoming confederations or develop closer links.

The Committee were advised that similarly to Key Stage 1, Key Stage 2 results for reading, writing and mathematics results in Gosport were on par with national averages. The assessments undertaken at Key Stages 1 and 2 were a combination of teacher assessments, external marking and were externally moderated.

Members questioned attainment at Key Stage 3, Key Stage 4 and GCSE results as they were lower than the outcomes achieved in Early Years, Key Stages 1 and 2. The Committee were advised that improvement in attainment in the Primary sector had increased dramatically and that support and research on to how best to support the Secondary sector to improve was ongoing.

Mr Pope provided clarification regarding the inspection of free schools and academies and also clarified that the check for two year olds would be a joint assessment of health and development to set criteria.

Members questioned how the results of the assessments in the Early Years, Key Stage One and Two compared to other districts in Hampshire. The Committee were advised that comparisons were not often made to other districts as expectations for each district in the County differed. Member's acknowledged this, however they requested information on the outcome in other districts and Hampshire overall, be provided.

Members thanked Mr Pope for his presentation, and welcomed that attainment in the primary school sector was good. It was recognised that the networks established and the support from the Gosport Education Improvement Partnership to share best practice, were useful and successful.

Members felt it would be beneficial for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to visit some schools that the networks had supported to improve. Mr Pope agreed to facilitate this for the autumn term.

GROUNDS MAINTENANCE

The Borough Solicitor and Deputy Chief Executive provided the Committee with examples of ward maps that could be produced, detailing the different areas of horticulture within the Gosport that the Borough Council was responsible for maintaining.

Members welcomed the maps and it was requested that Ward Councillors receive a hard copy map of the ward they represented and that all ward maps be made available on the Members Portal. It was requested that the detailing on the reverse of the ward map also included the frequency that maintenance was scheduled to take place, as part of the grounds maintenance contract.

Members also requested that similar maps be made available detailing street cleansing schedules.

RESOLVED: That ward maps detailing grounds maintenance responsibility be made available in hard copy to Ward Councillors and that copies of maps for every ward be made available on the Members Portal.

15. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Councillor Gill advised that, as requested at the previous meeting of the Committee, he had been liaising with Bridgemary School to arrange a visit. He advised that a new head teacher had been in place since Easter 2014, and that she was happy to welcome visitors after the October half term break.

The Meeting concluded at 7.40pm

CHAIRMAN