

CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MEETING, 22ND DECEMBER, 2020

Present – Councillors Iqbal (Chairman), Brady (Vice-Chairman), Connor, Dean, Donaghy, Gibbon, Heslop, Khurram, McGeown, McMulkin (as deputy for Councillor Ismail), Murray, Newall, Parkinson, Radcliffe (as deputy for Councillor Fletcher), Sanders (as deputy for Councillor Weatherby) and Walsh.

Also in attendance

Councillor Galloway	-	Executive Cabinet Member for Children
Ms B. Brown	-	Director of Children's Services
Mr P. Rankin	-	Deputy Director of Children's Services
Ms H. Shearer	-	Start Well Professional Lead Early Years Education and Childcare
Mrs V. Ridge	-	Democratic Services Manager
Mrs S. Bailey	-	Principal Democratic Services Officer

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Fletcher, Ismail and Weatherby and from Canon C. Bracegirdle (Co-opted Member)

Councillor Iqbal in the Chair

19. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Resolved – That the minutes of the proceedings of the meeting of the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee held on 7th December, 2020 were submitted and signed as a correct record.

20. CALL IN – HARVEY NURSERY REVIEW

The Committee was advised that the decision in relation to the report regarding the Harvey Nursery Review had been called in by Councillor Donaghy at the meeting of the Executive Cabinet Member for Children's Services held on 30th November, 2020, in accordance with Article 5 of the Council's Constitution.

The Committee had previously been circulated with a copy of the report considered at the meeting of the Executive Cabinet Member held on 30th November, 2020 together with the minutes of the meeting and the procedural options available to the Committee following consideration of the matter.

It was moved by Councillor Donaghy and seconded by Councillor Murray that –

The report be referred to Council for further consideration.

Whereupon as an amendment, it was moved by Councillor Walsh and seconded by Councillor Dean –

This committee notes the decision of the Executive Cabinet Member for Children's Services on 30 November 2020 relating to consultation on the future of Harvey Nursery.

In so doing, Committee also notes the inability of the previous administration, through the Harvey Nursery Collaborative Management Committee which it established at the meeting of the Executive Cabinet Member for Children on 8 October 2018, to meet the terms of reference of that Committee to:

- identify cost savings,
- find new sources of funding, and

- increase usage, (noting that occupancy has actually fallen to 42% at March and September 2020) -

And that as a consequence the projected outturn for 2020/21, as reported to the Executive Cabinet Member on 30th November, will be a deficit of £103,868 plus additional support costs of £62,200 (report of 30th November at paragraphs 6.1.3 and 6.1.5) for 286 occupied sessions, being a cost of over £580 per session at a time when other nursery places are available in the vicinity.

The amendment was then put to the vote when the voting was as follows:-

For the amendment, (9) viz:

Councillors Brady, Connor, Dean, Heslop, McGeown, Newall, Parkinson, Radcliffe and Walsh.

Against the amendment, (6) viz:

Councillors Donaghy, Iqbal, Khurram, McMulkin, Murray and Sanders

Abstained, (1) viz:

Councillor Gibbon

Whereupon, the amendment was declared carried.

The substantive motion was then put to the vote when the voting was as follows:-

For the motion, (10) viz:

Councillors Brady, Connor, Dean, Heslop, McGeown, Newall, Parkinson, Radcliffe, Sanders and Walsh

Against the motion, (5) viz:

Councillors Donaghy, Iqbal, Khurram, McMulkin and Murray

Abstained, (1) viz:

Councillor Gibbon

At this point, Councillors Donaghy, Murray and McMulkin referred the item to Council for further consideration, including exploring the financial options, and then being referred back to the Executive Cabinet Member for further consideration

Resolved – That the item be considered at the meeting of Council on 13th January, 2021.

(The meeting started at 6.00pm and finished at 6.45pm)