

**CHILDREN'S AND CULTURE SCRUTINY  
COMMITTEE**

MEETING, 6<sup>TH</sup> APRIL, 2016

Present – Councillors Dean (Chairman), Wild (Vice-Chairman), Graham, Hall, Haworth, Iqbal, Jones, Kirk-Robinson, Murray, Shaikh, Spencer and Watters.

Also in attendance

Councillor Mrs Thomas	-	Executive Cabinet Member Deputy Leader
Councillor Cunliffe	-	Cabinet Member for Education, Schools, Safeguarding and Looked After Children
Councillor J. Byrne	-	Cabinet Member for Culture, Youth and Sport
Mr. J. Daly		Acting Director of People
Mr. A. Birch		Assistant Director, Education and Learning
Mr. G. Kelly		Capital Programme Manager, Children's Services
Mrs V. Ridge		Democratic Services Manager

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Gillies, Hornby and Sherrington and from Ms Raja (Co-opted Member)

Councillor Dean in the Chair.

**30. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting of the Children's and Culture Scrutiny Committee held on 10<sup>th</sup> February, 2015 were submitted.

Resolved – That the minutes be received and signed as a correct record.

### **31. THE COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME**

The Borough Solicitor submitted a report which set out details of the work programme for the Committee for the remainder of the Municipal Year.

Resolved – That the work programme be noted.

### **32. IMPACT OF GROWTH IN SECONDARY AND PRIMARY SCHOOL PLACES**

Mr G. Kelly gave a presentation on pupil growth in Bolton and the subsequent impact on demand for secondary and primary school places.

By way of background information, the presentation provided statistical information regarding the increase in pupil numbers since 2008 and outlined the measures that were being put in place to address this growth.

In respect of primary schools, a £50m programme of expansion across the Borough had been in place since 2010. This had created more than 500 new reception places and over 3,500 new primary school places together with the provision of new places at 34 different primary schools.

A map showing where the additional provision was being created within the Borough was also provided.

With regard to secondary schools, members were advised that total year 7 capacity would be exceeded by 2018 although effective capacity would be exceeded by 2017.

Details of the minimum expansion required to meet demand were provided together with information on where expansion within the Borough would be required on a priority basis which would in turn inform proposals going forward.

In order to plan for the shortfall, members were advised that engagement was ongoing with secondary schools in order to identify and agree opportunities for expansion. A School Organisation Plan 2016-25 had been prepared for approval by the Executive Cabinet Member in June, 2016.

The presentation went on to highlight other pupil projection issues including:

- £13.3M Basic Need Funding for 2018/19 recently announced;
- special school pressures (both primary and secondary);
- changing school landscape and academisation – the Local Authority less likely to be a provider of school places;
- increasing pressure for in-year admissions;
- pressures from new house building such as Horwich Loco Works and the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework; and
- data was based upon current birth rates which could change.

Following the presentation, members raised the following issues:

- new and emerging communities were increasing pressure on in - year admissions;
- the impact of academisation and free schools;
- staffing implications and how to attract quality teaching staff;
- the implications arising from the low primary school expansion funding for 2017/18;
- emergency funding for the expansion of secondary schools; and
- issues arising from the recent Ombudsman case where pupil names were drawn out of a hat when a tie-break situation occurred.

Resolved – That Mr Kelly be thanked for his informative presentation.

### **33. UPDATE ON BOLTON ARENA**

A report of Mr Paul Bartle, the Managing Director, Bolton Middebrook Leisure Trust was submitted which gave members an overview on the work and activities at Bolton Arena over the past year.

The main areas highlighted in the report were as follows:

- the Trust continued to perform well financially with a small surplus each year. Targets had been delivered over the last several years with decreasing levels of revenue subsidies and were now at the point of being sustainable with zero subsidies from Bolton Council. All surplus over and above reserves policy were reinvested in the programs, the people and the facilities;
- participation and use of the facilities continued at high levels with over a million visits per annum and peak time utilisation at close to 100%;
- programs and activities remained diverse with a continued emphasis on balancing commercial and community based activities for all;
- the gymnastics program had been particularly successful with over 600 children now enrolled and a waiting list approaching 1000;
- educational use of the facilities had been specifically concentrated on with over 13000 visits from all levels of educational establishments ranging from primary through to higher and university levels;
- partnerships continued to be very important and a new initiative was being developed with 13 trusts forming a Greater Manchester wide association to enable county wide, scalable delivery platforms to meet the anticipated challenges and opportunities that GM devolution of the Health and Wellbeing agenda would present. This would inevitably deliver further close partnership between the

Arena and Bolton Community Leisure to present a One Bolton front.

- a partnership with St Joseph's School was now operational, and the Trust were assisting them in managing their sports facilities out of school hours with the aim of increasing community usage during those times; and
- future aspirations remained to secure more covered sports hall facilities to satisfy the continuing demand for those facilities whilst ensuring that delivery of high levels of quality service to the local community were maintained.

Particular reference was made to the disappointment in the inability to secure additional funding to continue the inspire2action pilot project which had been discussed by this Committee at its meeting in April, 2015. A small amount of funding had been secured going forward which would enable a much reduced program catering for direct referrals from public health.

Resolved – That the report be noted and that Mr Bartle be invited to attend a future meeting of this Committee to provide a more detailed presentation on the work of the Arena.

#### **34. MEMBERS' BUSINESS**

The Committee received the extracts of minutes of other meetings of the Council relevant to the remit of this Committee:-

The Executive Cabinet Deputy Leader's Portfolio held on 15<sup>th</sup> February and 14<sup>th</sup> March, 2016.

Resolved – That the minutes of the various meetings be noted.

(The meeting started at 5.30pm and finished at 6.20pm)

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**NOTES**