

LEARNING SCRUTINY

Minutes of a Learning Scrutiny Panel meeting held at Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Consett on 6th March, 2007 at 4.00 p.m.

Present

Councillor J.T. Greener (In Chair)

Councillors A. Atkinson, C. Bell, D. Broadley, T. Clark, A. Donaghy, G.C. Glass, W.J Tyrie

Apologies

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors, F. Todd.

In Attendance

Lester Crawford, Ginny Williams

The meeting commenced with one minutes silence for the late Ian Armstrong

23. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest submitted.

24. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 5th December were agreed as a correct record.

25. KEY STAGE 2 – 4 RESULTS

The Education Partnership Development Officer gave a presentation which informed members of Key Stage 2 Results.

At 11 years old pupils undertake Self Assessment tests the expectancy is to achieve level 4 and above by 2008.

Derwentside figures are above the national and county average for English, Maths and Science. There has been added investment from NRF this has meant language skills / speech therapy opportunities has put English results above average.

At Key Stage 3, 14 year old pupils are expected to achieve level 5 and above. There is an upward trend in the District , but behind in the national and County Average, given the deprivation in this region, overall the district is performing well.

Grades A – C are equivalent to the old ‘O’ Level grade. Stanley School has achieved all pupils gained 5 A- Gs.

In response to questions the Education Partnership Development Officer said funding previously allocated by NRF for Speech Therapy would be received as core funding from Central Government, schools are contributing to this years funding. A retention rate of pupils has been one of the highest in the County due to NRF.

The Chair thanked the Education Partnership Officer for an excellent presentation.

RECOMMENDED that the content of the presentation be noted.

26. N.E.E.TS

The Education Partnership Development Officer gave an overview on N.E.E.T.S –‘Not in Employment, Education or Training.’ The Officer said they were working closely with the LSC to address a downward spiral he has been seconded to work with the 14 -19 Strategy Team to engage employers. Targeting interventions to reduce this population has been restricted previously due to information sharing protocols.

There are:-

369	18 – 21 year olds in the District
49	16 year olds
114	17 year olds
129	18 year olds
75	19 year olds
1	20 year old
1	21 year old

The decline has been mainly due to the way statistics are collected and people are now registered under another heading. It also needs to be noted students drop out of a course and are then difficult to track after age 16 years. It is difficult re-engage students.

Derwentside Training is very labour intensive they have successfully re-engaged people over the last two years. A worker has been employed within 3 months has successfully got 8 young people into employment and 2 – 3 people re-engaged to college. Intervention can take place whilst pupils are still at school. The level of N.E.E.T.S stands at 12.6% in Derwentside the target is to meet 10%. Our neighbours at Wear Valley and Sedgefield are at 13% level.

The Education Officer said are a number of employers who are happy to work with young people. In response to a question the Education Officer said teenage pregnancies also come into the N.E.E.T.S. programme.

The Education Officer explained of a mentoring programme in operation in Colleges. Each Mentor ensures they meet with young people at the start of their course (over a period of 3 weeks.) They typically see a caseload of 100 students and proceed according to need.

RECOMMENDED: that the content of the report be noted.

RESOLVED: ON THE MOTION OF COUNCILLOR A ATKINSON, SECONDED BY COUNCILLOR C BELL THAT UNDER SECTION 100(A) (4) OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972, THE PRESS AND PUBLIC BE EXCLUDED FROM THE MEETING FOR THE FOLLOWING ITEMS OF BUSINESS ON THE GROUNDS THAT THEY INVOLVE THE LIKELY DISCLOSURE OF EEMPT INFORMATION AS DEFINED IN PARAGRAPH 3 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972.

27. REVIEW OF GRAZING LICENCES

The Director of Development and Asset Management present the report 'B' which informed members at a meeting of the Executive held on the 7th June 2004, a report setting out a Programme for the Review of the Council's Land and Property Holdings was duly considered and approved by members.

The report concerns the review undertaken in relation to the Councils Grazing portfolio and sets out options for consideration and direction.

The report was considered at meeting of the panel held on 5th December 2006, local ward members were consulted on the proposals for sites within their wards.

Consultation has taken place and 3.8 of the report B has been recommended for retention. Section 3.7 is surplus to requirements and is to be advertised on the open market.

The disposal of the land will commence in the summer, tenants will be given first refusal, land is then advertised if tenants do not purchase.

RECOMMENDATION that the content of the report be approved.

Conclusion of Meeting

The meeting closed at 5.05 p.m.

Chair.