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North Yorkshire Council

Executive

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday, 22nd August, 2023 commencing at 11.00 am.

Councillor Carl Les in the Chair plus Councillors Gareth Dadd, Derek Bastiman, Michael Harrison, Simon Myers, Janet Sanderson, David Chance, Greg White and Annabel Wilkinson.

In attendance: Councillors Paul Haslam and Chris Aldred.

Officers present: Karl Battersby, Richard Flinton, Richard Webb, Nic Harne, Jennifer Norton, Will Baines, Harriet Clarke and Howard Emmett.

Apologies: Councillor Keane Duncan, Stuart Carlton, Gary Fielding and Barry Khan.

Copies of all documents considered are in the Minute Book

292 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Keane Duncan, plus officers Stuart Carlton, Gary Fielding and Barry Khan.

293 Minutes of the Meeting held on 18 July 2023

Resolved –

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 18 July 2023, having been printed and circulated, be taken as read and confirmed by the Chairman as a correct record.

294 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

295 Public Participation

There were no public questions or statements.

296 Proposal to amalgamate Wavell Community Junior School and Catterick Garrison, Wavell Community Infant School to create a single 3-11 primary school across both school sites

Considered – A report of the Corporate Director for Children and Young People's Service on the public consultation outcome to the proposal to amalgamate Wavell Community Junior School and Wavell Community Infant School in Catterick Garrison.

Councillor Annabel Wilkinson introduced the report, noting that the public consultation had been well supported, with the buildings already connected by a corridor and a shared reception point for parents. The military community had also welcomed the proposals, particularly the improved transition arrangements.

Councillor David Chance sought reassurance on the financial situation, with Councillor Annabel Wilkinson responding that there will be some transitional funding protection arrangements in place and the School Improvement Team will also be working with the Headteacher and Leadership Team to address any issues.

Resolved -

- i) That the Executive give approval to publish a statutory notice and statutory proposals on 11 September 2023 proposing:
 - To amalgamate Catterick Garrison, Wavell Community Infant School and Wavell Community Junior School through the technical closure of Wavell Community Junior School as a separate entity and the enlargement and change of age range of Catterick Garrison, Wavell Community Infant School to create a single 3-11 primary school across both school sites, with effect from 8 April 2024.
 - To reduce the PAN applicable to the Reception Year of the newly amalgamated school to 60 for the 2024/25 academic year and beyond.
- ii) That the Executive schedule taking a final decision on these proposals on 17 October 2023.

297 Proposal to establish a new special school provision for Autistic children aged 11-19 at the former Woodfield Community Primary School, Harrogate from 1 September 2024

Considered – A report of the Corporate Director for Children and Young People’s Service to report on the public consultation outcome on the proposal to open a new special school in Harrogate, and to seek approval to proceed with the required Presumption Route process.

Councillor Annabel Wilkinson introduced the report, noting the sad circumstances surrounding the closure of Woodfield Community Primary School on 31 December 2022 due to a lack of pupils. These proposals are now an opportunity to enhance the provision for autistic children using the former Woodfield site to open a new special school for pupils aged 11 to 19. The target opening date is 1st September 2024.

Councillor Paul Haslam welcomed the report as the local member and felt the local community welcomed the proposals, as shown in the positive consultation responses. He made a request that the large playing fields at the school be considered for dual access, to potentially allow community use of the fields. Councillor Annabel Wilkinson committed to passing the request on to whoever will take over the school for consideration.

Councillor Michael Harrison made a statement noting the criticism of the Executive when the decision was taken to close Woodfield Community Primary School with the justification of low pupil numbers and sufficient places in schools close by to accommodate the children affected. He highlighted that the Council commitment to education in the area, and that site specifically, is now evidenced by these proposals to reopen a special school on that site to address a shortfall of provision for children with autism locally and further afield. He also welcomed the retention of the library and community building as part of the plans. Following personal experience of working with neurodiverse adults, he has seen the importance of having the right support through education and very much welcomed the plans now to repurpose the school.

Resolved -

That approval be given to undertake the required Presumption Route process to establish a new special school for Autistic children aged 11-19 at the former Woodfield Community Primary School in Harrogate, with a target opening date of September 2024.

298 Early Years Supplemental Grant

Considered – A report of the Corporate Director, Children and Young People's Service, providing an overview of the proposed operation of the Early Years Supplementary Grant.

Councillor Annabel Wilkinson introduced the report, seeking to comply with grant acceptance requirements of the North Yorkshire Council Financial Procedure Rules and to provide prompt payment of the Early Years Supplementary Grant, with the associated financial benefit, to the early years sector within North Yorkshire. The grant was announced earlier this year by the Department of Education, to increase the funding levels paid to the early years sector for the period September 2023 to March 2024.

Howard Emmett, Assistant Director - Resources, noted the risk that the grant terms and conditions will not be released by the Department of Education until mid to late September, but following dialogue with government officials, officers are content that the risk is mitigated by the use of monthly payments.

Resolved -

That the Executive:

- i. Approve the acceptance of the Early Years Supplementary Grant which is scheduled to be received in September 2023 with the initial grant funding allocation estimated to be £1.8m.
- ii. Approve the Early Years Supplementary Grant to be paid in full to early years providers, as per the DfE requirement, at the funding rates detailed in section 4.2 of this report.
- iii. Approve the payment of the Early Years Supplementary Grant to commence in the local authority monthly payment to early years providers in September 2023. The Executive is asked to note that the payment will be required to be processed in advance of the conditions of grant being received from the DfE.

299 Appointments to Committees and Outside Bodies

Considered – A report of the Assistant Chief Executive (Legal and Democratic Services)

Councillor Carl Les introduced the report, noting that the vacant Outside Body appointments were to be deferred to a future date. He also updated the Executive on Member Champion roles, with the following appointments made:

Armed Forces Champion – Councillor Kevin Foster

Digital Champion – Councillor Gareth Dadd

Flooding Champion – Councillor John Cattanach

Cycling / Active Travel Champion – Councillor Keane Duncan

Road Safety Champion – Councillor Steve Watson

It is expected that these Member Champion roles will be reviewed on an annual basis.

Resolved -

- i. That the Executive appoint Councillor George Jabbour to the Council's Corporate Parenting Members' Group.
- ii. That the Executive defer the appointment to the vacant Outside Body positions to a future meeting.
- iii. That the Leader appointments made to the Member Champion roles be noted.

300 Forward Plan

Considered –

Councillor Carl Les asked the Chief Executive for a report to be arranged on the Harrogate Station Gateway as a matter of urgency. It was proposed to consider this at the Executive meeting on Tuesday 19 September 2023.

The Forward Plan for the period 7 August 2023 to 31 August 2024 was presented.

Resolved - That the Forward Plan be noted.

301 Any Other Items

There were no other items of business.

The meeting concluded at 11.20 am.