

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE EDUCATION AND SKILLS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE,
HELD ON 30 NOVEMBER 2015 AT 7.30PM IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER,
COUNCIL OFFICES, WEELEY**

Present: Councillors Fairley (Chairman), Raby (Vice-Chairman), Amos and Stephenson

Also Present: Councillor McWilliams, Portfolio Holder for Well-being and Partnerships

In Attendance: Corporate Director (Corporate Services) (Martyn Knappett), Democratic Services Manager (Colin Sweeney) and Executive Projects Manager (Keri Lawrence)

Also In Attendance: Ian Pearson, Principal of Tendring Enterprise Studio School (TESS)

18. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Bennison (with Councillor Stephenson substituting), Bucke and Calver.

19. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE

The minutes of the last meeting of the Committee, held on 21 September 2015, were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

20. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made by Members at this time.

Mr Martyn Knappett, Corporate Director (Corporate Services) declared a non-pecuniary interest in relation to Agenda Item No.4 (Discussion with Ian Pearson, Principal (TESS) on Vocational Training in Tendring), by virtue of the fact he was a governor at TESS.

During consideration of Agenda Item No.4 (Discussion with Ian Pearson, Principal (TESS) on Vocational Training in Tendring), Councillor Raby declared a non-pecuniary interest in relation to this matter, by virtue of the fact he was a governor at Alton Park School.

21. DISCUSSION WITH IAN PEARSON, PRINCIPAL OF TESS, ON VOCATIONAL TRAINING IN TENDRING

The Chairman welcomed Mr Ian Pearson, Principal of TESS, to the meeting.

Mr Pearson explained to Members what TESS was, which types of students it enrolled, what it set out to achieve and how it went about its business in terms of providing vocational qualification education within Tendring.

Mr Pearson said that TESS, whilst unique, continued to provide an impressive range of vocational qualifications (nine in total) in addition to English, Maths and Science. With regard to how students were taught, Mr Pearson said that in addition to the teaching of life skills, every student undertook vocational courses one day each week and a genuine work placement, also one day each week, for approximately 18 months and that some

students had, in the past, been offered apprenticeships as a result of such work placements.

Mr Pearson advised the Committee that TESS was committed to its key principles and to ensure the good health and well-being of its students. In addition, he said, TESS also actively encouraged enterprise and charity work amongst its students including Children in Need, cooking and selling food for profit and “TESS Grows”, whereby students grew their own produce to sell at low cost. He was particularly pleased to report that students marketed and ran their own businesses.

Despite all of its reported good work, Mr Pearson was sad to announce that TESS was to close in August 2016. He said that Level 1 and 2 training courses had been dropped by most schools within the Tendring District and that this had had an impact upon post-16 funding. He went on to say that Colchester and Braintree were hosting most of the vocational qualifications but that TESS students could not easily travel there.

In conclusion, Mr Pearson spoke about the likely implications arising from the closure of TESS. He said he was keen to establish an alternative provision free school as a successor school, to set-up links with other alternative provision providers and to look at other sponsors (e.g. trusts) to fund this.

Mr Pearson then responded to questions by Members.

The Committee wished to record a vote of thanks to Mr Pearson for his interesting and informative presentation.

Following discussion, it was **AGREED** that:

1. The plight of TESS and the opportunity to ask Essex County Council what it could do to help, be considered at the next meeting of the Tendring Locality Board;
2. Mr Pearson’s presentation be incorporated into the business of the Tendring Locality Board’s meeting in the hope that it might influence a higher level approach; and
3. Letters be sent from the Portfolio Holder for Well-being and Partnerships, on behalf of the Committee, to Essex County Councillors Kevin Bentley (Deputy Leader and Chairman of Tendring Locality Board) and Ray Gooding (Portfolio Holder for Education at Essex County Council).

REPORT OF THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR WELL-BEING AND PARTNERSHIPS

22. REVIEW OF THE TENDRING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE STRATEGY (Report A.1)

There was submitted a report by the Portfolio Holder for Well-being and Partnerships, which outlined findings of an Officer-led review of the Tendring Children and Young People Strategy 2011 to 2016.

In conjunction with the report, the Committee received a presentation by the Council’s Executive Projects Manager, which addressed those findings as follows:

(i) Community Leadership Role

- Essex County Council had overall responsibility and accountability for children and young people. Tendring District Council’s responsibility as

community leader was to influence, support and lead and to try to ensure that partners worked together to achieve the best outcomes.

(ii) Delivery Plan

- A partnership approach was essential
- A need to identify innovative, multi-faceted solutions
- A requirement to ensure that the needs of children and young people were met in a planned and sustainable way; and
- Annual Delivery Plan – co-ordinated, targeted and accountable response

(iii) Governance

- Accountability to formal partnership body;
- Tendring Health and Well-being Board to have accountability for delivery; and
- Tendring Locality Board to provide oversight and review

(iv) Priorities

- Safeguarding
- Child Poverty (Tendring had the highest levels in Essex)
- Education
- Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEETs)

The Council's Executive Projects Manager advised Members that the review had found that the vision within the original Strategy should remain the same, reflect the community leadership and effective delivery role and include Education. She added that Tendring District Council was a key player and was able to bring partners together, which was beneficial as any plan would work so much better with a variety of viewpoints.

The Committee requested that consideration be given to the inclusion of another activity to work through Planning (under Education strand) and that this be reviewed in twelve months' time, that is, with regards to Planning and Development and school places. The Council (and its Planning Committee) heard that schools were full and this Committee was keen to address how the Council could fit into the consideration of planning applications when there was currently nothing to demonstrate school places were available.

Accordingly, it was **RESOLVED** that:

1. The findings of the review of the Tendring Children and Young People Strategy 2011 to 2016, be noted;
2. The Committee **RECOMMENDS** to **CABINET** that the Draft Revised Tendring District Council Children and Young People Strategy, as detailed at Appendix A to the report, be approved; and

3. The Committee **RECOMMENDS** to **CABINET** that the Draft Tendring District Council Children and Young People Delivery Plan 2015 to 2016, as detailed at Appendix B to the report, be approved

The meeting was declared closed at 9.12pm

Chairman