

meeting COUNTY COUNCIL

date 15 April 2010

agenda item number **7a iv.**

REPORT OF THE CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES

North Worksop Sure Start Children's Centre launch

On Thursday, 4 February 2010, the Chairman of the County Council officially launched the North Worksop Sure Start Children's Centre building in Rhodesia.

The Chairman and his lady joined parents, children, partner agencies, staff and the Chair of North Worksop Children's Centre Advisory Board, Councillor Sybil Fielding, in celebrating the local services for children aged under five in Rhodesia, and combined the launch with visiting Haggonfields School new school hall facility.

The Children's Centre offers local people the opportunity to access health, social care and educational support; from midwifery clinics and health visiting support, to behaviour management advice and adult learning opportunities, which are offered in partnership with Haggonfields School and North Nottinghamshire College.

Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Futures

Under the provisions of the Apprenticeships Skills Children and Learning Act (2009), all Local Authorities will, from 1 April 2010, inherit the duties of the Learning and Skills Council in respect of learners between the ages of 16 and 18. This means the allocation of funds to General Further Education Colleges, School Sixth Forms and a number of private sector providers, totalling in Nottinghamshire approximately £50m annually; in addition the authority is responsible for the education of all 16-18 year olds normally resident in the County wherever they learn, including young people in residential provision and those in Young Offenders Institutions.

The local arrangements are that many of these duties will be carried out on behalf of the City and County Councils by Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Futures, an extension of the role of the existing Connexions company. The Board of the Futures will comprise three voting members from each authority plus an independent non-voting Chair. The current Chief Executive of Connexions will be the new Chief Executive of Futures.

In addition to the new funding and responsibilities the Authority inherits 11 staff from the LSC under TUPE arrangements; the bulk of these will be seconded to work in Futures.

These changes represent a number of significant opportunities to improve the services we offer to young people in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire, including:

- joining up services aimed at young people aged 16 and over with those that apply to younger people
- connecting the advice and guidance available to young people with the learning opportunities that are available to them
- laying the groundwork for the implementation of the raising the participation age to 17 in 2013 and to 18 in 2015.

Building Schools for the Future (BSF)

On 24 March a joint Cabinet report from Councillor Martin Suthers and myself was approved which gave authority for the submission of the Outline Business Case (OBC) for BSF which provides the Partnership for Schools and the other government agencies involved in BSF with details of the BSF project proposals in Nottinghamshire. It is expected that Nottinghamshire will receive approval of the OBC after the May elections.

Since the OBC was submitted outline planning approval for the proposed schemes at the two sample schools (Garibaldi and the Grove/Orchard campus) has been received. Planning is underway for a BSF Bidders Day on 21 April. At this Bidders Day the Council will be engaging with prospective private sector partners who are interested in bidding for the Nottinghamshire BSF contract.

Deputy Portfolio Holder events

“Youth Showcase”, the Youth Service’s Annual Performance Arts Showcase of Young People’s Talents

On 16 & 17 February the Palace Theatre in Mansfield was the venue for the annual showcase of young people’s skills in the performance arts. An audience of nearly 950 over the two nights came to see 175 young people from across Nottinghamshire performing live on stage a variety of artistic skills ranging from short plays, poetry monologues, street dance routines, Film /Fashion show, hip hop, rock bands and live vocal musical performances.

The event is the celebration of a year’s work involving a whole series of events from across the county, and the performances themselves were a “Showcase” of the hard work undertaken by the young people and the Youth Service’s County Youth Arts Team.

The audience, which included Councillor Allen Clarke and the Leader of the Council, Councillor Kay Cuts, were witness to the wide range of skills the young people had developed, and the finale with all the performers taking to

the stage was a fitting tribute to achievements of the young people over the year.

Visit to Chancery Lane Children and Young People's Department Social Care Office in Retford

Councillor Allen Clarke took the opportunity to visit Social Care staff based at Chancery Lane in Retford as part of his visits to different locality offices. During his visit he talked to team managers, social workers and administration staff who work on the frontline of safeguarding children and young people.

Councillor Clarke was also able to observe a Legal Planning meeting, which he valued as giving him an insight into decision making processes before issuing Care Proceedings.

Visit of Councillor Lynn Sykes to the Daybrook Learning Centre

Councillor Lynn Sykes visited the Daybrook Learning Centre (DLC) on the afternoon of 4 February 2010. She was welcomed by the Senior Leader, David Blackley, and given a tour of the facility.

Councillor Sykes was able to see learners actively involved in lessons and was particularly complimentary on how engaged and calm they were. She was shown work that had been completed in the centre and displays made by our children and young people. She made reference to the quality of artwork on display.

During the tour Councillor Sykes was able to see the calm and professional way in which members of staff dealt with a distressed young person and commented on their professionalism.

Following the tour she was shown the way that the learning platform and web site are used to enhance learning for our pupils and met with a group of DLC learners. The learners asked her questions and served her with some cake that had been prepared in a cooking lesson that she had earlier observed.

On leaving the centre Councillor Sykes expressed her gratitude for the way the visit had been conducted and said she had very much enjoyed the experience. A short while later she contacted the centre by email as follows:

'Thank you so much for making my visit last Friday so enjoyable and informative. I enjoyed meeting the young people and staff and particularly enjoyed the cake. It blew my diet! Please pass on my appreciation to all concerned and I look forward to the next time.'

Visit of Councillor Lynn Sykes to the Eastbourne Centre

Councillor Lynn Sykes was given a warm welcome when she visited Skills for Employment at the Eastbourne Centre, Sutton in Ashfield, on Tuesday, 2 March.

Councillor Sykes was given a conducted tour of the site which delivers training programmes to disadvantaged and vulnerable young people in areas such as Horticulture, Painting and Decorating, Property Maintenance, Construction and also an Apprenticeship programme in Health and Social Care. Councillor Sykes was introduced to the students and spent time discussing their training programmes and the progress they hoped to achieve. Councillor Sykes then spent an hour in a training session on employability where she shared views and opinions with the students regarding interview techniques and the needs and expectations of employers. Councillor Sykes has agreed to return to the Eastbourne Centre to undertake interviews with the young people.

Nottinghamshire Voluntary Youth Partnership event

The Nottinghamshire Voluntary Youth Partnership, supported by the Youth Service, held a 'market place' event at County Hall during the evening of Monday, 22 March. A total of eighteen 'umbrella' groups from the Partnership showcased their organisation's work with young people. The event was attended by individuals from both statutory and voluntary agencies and enabled information sharing and facilitated the opportunity to exchange ideas. Most of those I spoke to found it a positive and worthwhile event.

The Chair of the group, Matt Rooney, gave an overview of the work of the Partnership and I took the opportunity to thank the volunteers present for their continuing work with the young people of Nottinghamshire. Josh Davies, Chair of the Young People's Board, also spoke of the value of voluntary groups and volunteering.

COUNCILLOR PHILIP OWEN

Cabinet Member for Children and Young People's Services

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