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# SCRUTINY FOR POLICIES, CHILDREN AND FAMILIES COMMITTEE SUMMARY OF DECISIONS

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**20 June 2022**

(Published on 05 July 2022)

Item No.	Title
<b>2</b>	<b>Declarations of Interest</b>
	<p>DECISION</p> <p>The following declaration of interest was made at the meeting: -</p> <p>(a) Ruth Hobbs – co-opted member – Governor at Herne View Church of England Primary School.</p>
<b>3</b>	<b>Notes of the Advisory Board meeting held on 28 February 2022</b>
	<p>DECISION</p> <p>The notes of the Advisory Board meeting held on 28 February 2022 were accepted.</p>
<b>5</b>	<b>Scrutiny for Policies, Children and Families Committee Work Programme</b>
	<p>DECISION</p> <p>The Committee considered and noted the Committee’s current work programme and meetings overview from the last Municipal Year and the Executive Forward Plan of planned key decisions in coming months including Executive meetings. The Chair also explained the role / purpose of the Committee work programme and outcome tracker.</p> <p>The Chair said that there is a standing invitation for the lead members to attend the Scrutiny Committee. It was agreed that an additional meeting be scheduled for July 2022 and meetings going forward will be in the afternoon, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Monday 25 July – additional meeting</li><li>• Monday 5 September</li><li>• Monday 3 October</li></ul>

Item No.	Title
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monday 7 November</li> <li>Monday 12 December</li> <li>Provisional – budget meeting – Monday 16 January 2023</li> </ul>
<b>6</b>	<b>Family Safeguarding - overview</b>
	<p>DECISION</p> <p>The Committee received a PowerPoint presentation from the Council's Strategic Commissioner, in Children's Services Louise Palmer and the Council's Head of Service for Assessment and Safeguarding in Children's Social Care, Paul Shawcross who provided an implementation update on Family Safeguarding in Somerset.</p> <p>The Committee noted the successes and evaluation undertaken by York Consulting which is due in the next month, the positive interim report headlines and issues for consideration - impact of the pandemic on the implementation; the 'workbook'; increasing complexity of cases.</p> <p>It was agreed that the Evaluation Report be circulated to the Committee and that information be circulated on Somerset's statistical neighbours. On behalf of the Committee the Chair thanked Ms Palmer and Mr Shawcross for the presentation.</p>
<b>7</b>	<b>School Place Planning</b>
	<p>DECISION</p> <p>The Committee received a PowerPoint presentation from the Council's Assistant Director, Education Partnerships and Skills, Amelia Walker, the Assistant Director Inclusion, Dr Rob Hart and the Strategic Manager, Phil Curd who provided an overview of school and early years places.</p> <p>The Committee noted the pupil numbers, key trends, challenges and pressures on school places and the action being taken and the growth of specialist places and the significant rise in the number of children with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs), the challenges and response.</p> <p>From 2018 the local authority has delivered 10 significant special school and resource base projects providing 306 additional places at a cost of £49.25m. A £4.75m expansion project is underway at Sky Academy, providing another 40 places in time for September 2022. There is also a £2m capital approval available to deliver a specialist hub for up to 40 children in West Somerset and officers are working with the DfE to deliver a new special free school in South Somerset for</p>

Item No.	Title
	<p>120 children. In addition, officers are working with mainstream secondary schools to deliver a number of 'Enhanced Learning Provisions' which will those schools to support children's needs and reduce demand for places in special schools. Another project will deliver a Therapeutic Education provision for a small number of children - the Council's High Needs Capital Allocation will underpin this.</p> <p>The Committee additionally received an overview of early years provision and the key challenges and risks, immediate pressures in terms of workforce, sustainability and viability and how this is being tackled and also the issue of school transport.</p> <p>The Committee had a broad discussion on the issues highlighted, covering – school capacity and pupil place planning, the take up of places in early years, special educational needs and disability numbers, the new Education White Paper which the Committee will look at in the future, clarification that there are no plans to close schools and the opportunities available for people to become school governors.</p> <p>On behalf of the Committee the Chair thanked Ms Walker, Dr Hart and Mr Curd for the informative presentation.</p>