

Medway Council
Meeting of Children and Young People Overview and
Scrutiny Committee

Thursday, 11 January 2018

6.35pm to 8.45pm

Record of the meeting

Subject to approval as an accurate record at the next meeting of this committee

Present: Councillors: Aldous, Cooper, Fearn, Franklin, Johnson, Joy, Kemp, Price, Purdy, Royle (Chairman), Saroy, Wicks (Vice-Chairman) and Williams

Co-opted Members with voting rights on educational issues only:

Clive Mailing (Roman Catholic Church representative)

Added members without voting rights:

MYC Chairman (Medway Youth Council), MYC Cabinet Member (Medway Youth Council), Keith Clear (Medway Parents and Carers Forum) and David Laming (Healthwatch Medway CIC Representative)

Substitutes: Councillors:
Bhutia (Substitute for Opara)

In Attendance: Kate Ako, Principal Lawyer - People
Ann Domeney, Deputy Director, Children and Adults Services
Michael Griffiths, Partnership Commissioning Lead, Children and Families
Dawn Hollis, Public Health Commissioning Manager, NHS England South (South East)
Jade Milnes, Democratic Services Officer
Dr John Rodriguez, Consultant in Public Health, Kent and Medway Screening and Immunisation Lead
Hilary Sparling, Manager, Medway Adoption Team
Ian Sutherland, Director of Children and Adults Services
Angela Taylor, Youth Participation Worker to Medway Youth Council
James Williams, Director of Public Health
Jackie Wood, Head of Provider Services

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634 Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman welcomed Keith Clear, as representative of the Medway Parents and Carers Forum, to the Committee.

The Chairman also welcomed Akinola Edun and David Willian Lane, parent governors of schools maintained by Medway Council, to the meeting. The chairman noted that a proposal had been put forward under Item 12 (Work Programme) to recommend to Full Council the appointment of both governors to the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee as Parent Governor Representatives.

635 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Opara, Fay Cordingley (Teacher Representative) and Tina Lovey (Headteacher Representative).

636 Record of meeting

The record of the meeting of the Committee held on 5 December 2017 was agreed and signed by the Chairman as correct, subject to Councillor Price's name being removed from list of Members present at the meeting.

637 Urgent matters by reason of special circumstances

There were none.

638 Disclosable Pecuniary Interests or Other Significant Interests and Whipping

Disclosable pecuniary interests

There were none.

Other significant interests

Following advice from the legal officer, Councillors Johnson and Price declared a non-pecuniary interest in Item 9 (Member's Item Young Refugees and Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children) because both Councillors were on the Steering Group of the Medway City of Sanctuary. Having considered the provision in the Member Code of Conduct on "other significant interests" they both left the meeting during discussion of this item.

Other interests

Councillor Cooper declared a non-pecuniary interest in Item 11 (Employment Opportunities for 18-25 Years Olds (Including Apprenticeships)) because she was a governor of Rivermead School.

639 Attendance of the Portfolio Holder for Adult Services

Discussion:

Members received an overview of progress on the area within the terms of reference of this Committee and covered by the Portfolio Holder for Adult Services, as set out below:

- Independent Safeguarding and Reviewing Service

The Portfolio Holder for Adult Services responded to Member's questions and comments as follows:

- **Administration Support Team** – With reference to staff shortages and training in the Administration Support team, the Portfolio Holder explained that administrative support was a very important function for which specific skills were required. He added that staff would need to be inducted into the job role and would need the requisite time to become effective.
- **Average Independent Reviewing Officer/Child Protection Chair Caseload** – In respect of the decision to not replace the 1.5 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) employees who had left the team, the Portfolio Holder explained that in the event an employee had left the Council, the decision to recruit to the vacant post would be discussed with the Director of Children and Adults Services and consideration would be given to the budget, statutory requirements and the risks associated with any decision, to determine whether the Service could still provide the support required. He added that the decision reached would be under continuous review. In reference to this particular case, the Portfolio Holder confirmed that following consultation with the Director of Children and Adults Services, he was satisfied that the Service was able to manage the caseloads and carry out statutory duties for children and young people in Medway.
- **Recruitment of three permanent Independent Reviewing Officers** – The Portfolio Holder advised he was confident that the vacancies would be filled.
- **Mind of My own app (MoMo)** – A Member commented that the MoMo app was excellent and had been used well. At the request of a Member, the Chairman of the Committee undertook to discuss the delivery of a presentation on the app, at a future meeting of the Committee, at the next agenda planning meeting.
- **MoMo Express** – In relation to a question requesting a specific date the MoMo Express App would be introduced, the Director of Children and Adults Services advised that the software was being created by a third party and undertook to confirm the date.

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- **Looked After Children (LAC) reviews** – In response to a question concerning the percentage of young people who had declined Independent Reviewing Officer visits, the Director of Children and Adults Services explained that overall 35% of visits had been declined during the period and undertook to provide the percentage relating to declines by young people. He clarified these visits were not a statutory requirement unlike social worker visits.

Decision:

The Committee:

- a) thanked the Portfolio Holder for Adults Services for his attendance at the meeting and the answers he had provided.
- b) noted that at the next agenda planning meeting consideration would be given to the Committee receiving a presentation on the Mind of My own (MoMo) app.

640 Update on Children's Immunisations

Discussion:

The Committee received a report, which set out an update on the NHS England Commissioned Childhood Immunisation Programme in Medway.

It was noted that the Committee considered an update report on childhood immunisations on 5 October 2017 and at the request of the Committee, the current report set out:

- the measures NHS England had taken to ensure that Medway children were being immunised against vaccine preventable diseases;
- action undertaken locally to verify that data collection and reporting of immunisation in Medway was accurate; and
- current, validated data showing the percentage of children in Medway who had received specified vaccinations in the age cohorts of one, two and five.

The Director of Public Health drew the Committee's attention to the formation of the Medway Immunisation Programme Board, as set out at Appendix 1 to the report and introduced Dr John Rodriguez, the Consultant in Public Health and Kent and Medway Screening and Immunisation Lead, NHS England and Dawn Hollis, Commissioning Manager, NHS England South (South East).

The Committee was advised that as part of the re-procurement of Community and Schools Based Immunisation Services for 0 -19 Year Olds, catch up clinics would be provided at a variety of community based clinics, which in addition to other opportunities that already existed, would provide a further opportunity for

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parents to vaccinate their children. It was added that NHS England had been working with the Council on its 0-19 Healthy Child Programme procurement, which included Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) in relation to immunisation rates. It was suggested these services could contribute to improving vaccination uptake. Lastly, the Committee was advised that NHS England was working with NHS Digital on a Child Digital Strategy which aimed to improve data flows nationally.

Members raised a number of points and questions including:

- **Data reliability** – In response to a question about the reliability of the data, the Consultant in Public Health and Kent and Medway Screening and Immunisation Lead, NHS England explained that at this juncture the data was as reliable as possible having gone through three main levels of data cleaning before publication. However, it was recognised that the reliability could be improved. The Committee was advised that a series of actions were being undertaken to improve the reliability of the data, including the work of the NHS Digital team. The Committee was also advised that in the interim, the Public Health team were cross referencing the immunisation data with other data sets and through working with Clinical Commissioning Groups and Health Visitors improvements were also being made in the registration of children at General Practices and in the Child Health Information System (CHIS).
- **Data transfer** – In response to a question concerning improvements in the transfer of data, it was not possible to confirm whether the transfer of data between General Practices and the Child Health Information System had improved. The Committee was advised of actions being carried out to improve data flow, for example cross tabulation. The Consultant in Public Health and Kent and Medway Screening and Immunisation Lead, NHS England stated that in his opinion the true immunisation rates were higher than the published data. He added that this opinion had been drawn from the review of evidence which had not been published.
- **Statistics** – Further to a question regarding overreliance on comparative statistics, the Committee was advised that statistics could be a distraction and caution should be observed when relying on simple statistics. However, more detailed statistics could be interrogated to determine patterns.

In response to a question concerning the overall data presented at Tables 1 to 3 of Appendix 1 to the report, in particular whether data reflecting immunisation rates within different areas of Medway was obtainable, the Committee was advised that the statistics were recorded by Practice and queries by Practice could be run within the data sets to evaluate data by area. In this way, Practices with lower immunisation rates had been targeted to improve performance.

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It was added that population catchment could affect immunisation rates, but there were many other barriers. Under the new contract for the Community and Schools Based Immunisation Services for 0 -19 Year Olds, levels of deprivation, as a barrier would be specifically targeted.

- **Childhood Immunisation Performance** – At the request of a Member, the NHS England officers undertook to set out the reasons why the percentage of Medway children immunised against Meningitis B, who were aged 1 and the percentage of Medway children immunised against Diphtheria/tetanus/pertussis/polio, who were aged 5 was significantly below the England average and the specific actions which could be taken to decrease the gap.

In reference to the Community and Schools Based Immunisation Services for 0 -19 Year Olds, the Committee was advised that under the new Service, work would be undertaken with General Practitioners to offer vaccinations to those who had not already taken up the offer and to understand the barriers to children and parents so that these barriers might be addressed.

In response to a question about reasons why immunisation appeared to be higher in children aged 2 and 5 years, the Committee was advised there were a series of hypotheses for example cohort effects. However, the reasons were not clear.

- **Governance and accountability of the Medway Immunisation Programme Board** – With reference to the governance and accountability of the Medway Immunisation Programme Board, the Consultant in Public Health and Kent and Medway Screening and Immunisation Lead, NHS England explained to the Committee that the Board had been established by NHS England, and individuals would report to their own organisations. He added that the Terms of Reference were in draft form and it was intended for the Board to be a forum for information sharing and joined up working, as many responsibilities for action to improve Childhood Immunisation overlap.
- **Community based clinics** – A Member commented that the introduction of community based clinics was pleasing and would enable face to face contact between the practitioner and parents. At the request of a Member, the Commissioning Manager, NHS England South (South East) undertook to provide the details of the location of the community based clinics prior to September 2018 when the new Service would be in place.
- **Feedback from young people** – In response to a question concerning how feedback from young people was being used to inform the procurement of the Community and Schools Based Immunisation Services for 0 -19 Year Olds, the Commissioning Manager, NHS England South (South East) advised the Committee that young people

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were engaged in creating the specification of the procurement. In addition, the contracts would include Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) on user satisfaction which young people would be asked to evaluate.

- **Emerging Flu Strains** – In response to a question in relation to emerging flu strains, such as Australian Flu, the Committee was advised that the current flu vaccination was matched to the specific circulating strains of flu. It was added that it was too early in the current flu cycle to determine the effectiveness of the vaccines offered. However, it was noted that it was better to be vaccinated because if the flu was contracted the illness would be much less severe.
- **Further update** – At the request of a Member, the Chairman of the Committee undertook to discuss the presentation of a further update to the Committee, on the NHS England Commissioned Childhood Immunisation Programme in Medway, at the next agenda planning meeting.

Decision:

The Committee:

- a) noted the actions being taken by NHS England, as set out in Appendix 1 of the report, to improve the uptake of childhood immunisation in Medway.
- b) noted that at the next agenda planning meeting consideration would be given to the Committee receiving a further update on the NHS England Commissioned Childhood Immunisation Programme in Medway.

641 Maternity Services Transformation

Discussion:

The Committee received a report, which set out a further update on the transformation of Maternity Services taking place across Kent and Medway, including the work of the Kent and Medway Local Maternity System (LMS) and the Kent and Medway Local Maternity System Transformation Plan, which was submitted to NHS England in October 2017. It was noted that NHS England had provided positive feedback on the Plan with some areas of improvement required. The Committee was advised that the improvements required would be included in the next iteration of the Plan.

The Partnership Commissioning Lead, Children and Family Services drew the Committee's attention to the comments of the Health and Wellbeing Board held on 7 November 2017. In particular, it was noted that the figure for stillbirths in Medway had now been clarified and would be included in the next iteration of the Plan, which would be submitted to NHS England by 31 December 2018. The Committee was assured that this figure was low and was below the national average. In addition, it was confirmed that information relating to

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alcohol pregnancy Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD) would be included in a future iteration of the Plan.

Members thanked the Partnership Commissioning Lead, Children and Family Services for an informative report and raised a number of points and questions including:

- **Bereavement Suite** – With reference to a lack of a private place to grieve a stillbirth at hospital, it was explained that following patient feedback, Medway Foundation Trust had developed a Bereavement Suite which was located outside of the Delivery Suite, where parents could spend uninterrupted time with their child in a compassionate environment.
- **Adult Substance Misuse** – In response to a question from a Member about why drug dependency had not been included within the Plan, the Committee was advised that there were established protocols for adult substance misuse and that the risk would be assessed by the midwife. The Partnership Commissioning Lead, Children and Family Services undertook to include adult substance misuse in a future iteration of the Plan. The Director of Public Health further explained that it was the responsibility of the Council to commission drug and alcohol services, this service had recently been procured and the Director of Public Health assured the Committee he would link these services to the work within the Kent and Medway LMS.
- **Children with Disabilities** – Following a question enquiring why children with disabilities were not reflected within the Plan, the Partnership Commissioning Lead, Children and Family Services reiterated the formation of the Plan was an iterative process and undertook to review what ought to be included in liaison with the Medway Parents and Carers Forum and include this within future iterations.
- **Maternity Voice Partnerships** – The Partnership Commissioning Lead, Children and Family Services confirmed women and family voices from both Kent and Medway would be represented within the Kent and Medway LMS. It was added that previously, Medway had a Maternity Services Liaison Committee. This was a forum for service users and professionals that helped to deliver important change in maternity services. Under the Kent and Medway LMS the proposals included three Maternity Voice Partnerships to cover Kent and Medway. Medway would be covered under the North Kent branch. This work stream was supported financially by NHS England.
- **Kent and Medway LMS website** – At the request of a Member, the Partnership Commissioning Lead, Children and Family Services undertook to provide details of the Kent and Medway LMS website when it went live.

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- **Neonatal unit** – A Member commented that Medway had an excellent Neonatal facility, and asked why this had not been reflected in the Plan. It was advised that the Kent and Medway LMS Service was governed by the Sustainability and Transformation Plan (STP) and the arrangements for the wider LMS i.e. the use of the skills, capacity and resources that Medway had, had not yet been formalised within the Plan or the wider context of the STP.
- **National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) guidelines** – In relation to a question from a Member regarding the inconsistent application of the NICE guidelines, the Committee was advised that a national template for a revised maternity specification would be released imminently and would be reviewed by the Commissioners. Under the new specification providers would be expected to follow the NICE guidelines as part of the specification and contract.
- **Data transfer** – With reference to examples of poor data transfer, a Member sought assurances that the data shared between the Kent and Medway Acute Trusts and Clinical Commissioning Groups would be reliable. It was advised that much of the information held was paper based. The Partnership Commissioning Lead, Children and Family Services assured the Committee that data issues would be addressed and managed under the necessary workstream within the Kent and Medway LMS, in particular moving to electronic records.

Decision:

The Committee noted the Kent and Medway Local Maternity System Transformation Plan, set out at Appendix A to the report, which has been submitted to NHS England for approval.

642 Annual Adoption Report

Discussion:

The Committee received a report, which set out the Adoption Agency's Annual Report covering the period September 2016 to 2017. The Annual report detailed adoption performance during the period and updated the Committee on the work of the team and the progress made towards the formation of a Regional Adoption Agency.

Members thanked the Adoption Team for the comprehensive report and services provided to service users and raised a number of points and questions including:

- **Life Story** – A Member commented that one of the focus areas going forward should be the Life Story.

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- **Children subject to court proceedings** – In response to a question enquiring how the Committee could support the Adoption team to reduce the average time from application to the completion of proceedings and whether this was solely an issue at the Courts, the Head of Provider Services advised the Committee that the legal processes had caused delays in some instances. She added that there seemed to be a preference towards Special Guardianship Orders even when adoption had been recommended.

The Deputy Director, Children and Adults Services explained that following a scoping exercise it was understood that Medway had two particular challenges. Firstly, in comparison to neighbouring authorities Medway had a larger number of young mothers and therefore more relatives needed to be assessed to satisfy the court and secondly Medway had a larger number of sibling groups, which added complexity to court proceedings. The Deputy Director, Children and Adults also explained that regular meetings were held with the Family Justice Council and the judges separately, where concerns could be raised.

- **Performance indicator A1** – A Member commented that the national target for the average time between a child entering care and moving in with the family of 426 days was not reasonable on the basis that no local authority in England had met the target and therefore this target should be changed.
- **Children with disabilities** – Further to a question regarding placement of children with disabilities and additional support available for potential adopters, the Committee was advised that the most prevalent conditions had been Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD) and drug dependencies. It was added that all children would be considered for adoption in the same manner. The preference would be for a child to remain with the birth family where it was safe to do so. Where there were additional needs, consideration would be given to the payment of an adoption allowance and there would also be an Adoption Support Plan in place.

Decision:

The Committee noted the Annual Adoption Report.

643 Member's Item Young Refugees and Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children

Discussion:

The Committee received a report setting out the response to a number of questions, raised by Councillor Johnson regarding young refugees and unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASC).

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The Deputy Director, Children and Adults drew the Committee's attention to two key points of note. Firstly, the statutory responsibility for the welfare of the young people was retained by the placing authority regardless of where the child was placed. Secondly, the exact number UASC could not be disclosed where there were fewer than five in order to ensure the children and young people could not be identified.

Members thanked Councillor Johnson for raising the questions in relation to young refugees and unaccompanied asylum seeking children.

Decision:

The Committee noted the report.

644 Medway Youth Council - Annual Conference Findings

Discussion:

The Committee received a report which set out the findings and outcomes from the Medway Youth Council Annual Conference held in November 2017, which was entitled 'The Bully: Understanding Both Sides.'

Members commended the Medway Youth Council for its work on this subject and raised a number of points and questions including:

- **Social Media** – In referring to the increased use of social media, a Member commented that social media exposed any individual to bullying and that bullying was not confined to the school boundary.
- **Tackling Racism** – In response to a question concerning links between the 2017 conference and the 2016 Conference held by the Medway Youth Parliament entitled 'Race, Religion and You(th): United in Tackling Racism and Religious Discrimination,' the Chairman of the Medway Youth Council advised that connections between the two topics had been observed. He added that during the discussions on bullying the young people taking part in the conference identified that bullying could be racially motivated.

Decision:

The Committee noted the Medway Youth Council Annual Conference Report 2017, attached as Appendix 1 to the Report.

645 Employment Opportunities for 18-25 Year Olds (Including Apprenticeships)

Discussion:

The Committee received the final report of the in depth Task Group review on Employment Opportunities for 18-25 Year Olds (including apprenticeships).

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The Committee thanked all the witnesses who gave evidence, in particular the young people as well as officers who had supported the Task Group. The Committee commended the Task Group on the production of a comprehensive report and raised a number of points and questions including:

- **External witnesses** – A Member commented that the Task Group had hoped to receive evidence from a mainstream secondary headteacher, however this was not possible. The Director of Children and Adults Services advised the Committee that a Medway Education Partnership had been established and would have representatives from Medway headteachers' associations and the further education college. In addition to the Skills Board, this group would also take particular interest in the work of the Task Group and comments of the Committee.
- **Careers advice** – With reference to the careers advice provided at secondary schools, Members commented that schools needed to improve the quality of the advice given to young people. A Member highlighted that Parliamentary Select Committees had raised concerns in relation to careers advice and the Chairman of the Medway Youth Council also noted that the British Youth Council had recognised this was a national issue.
- **Financial support for apprentices** – In relation to the areas examined by the Task Group, a Member suggested that financial support for young apprentices should be examined, owing to the potential impact this could have on young people as they reach the age of 16. Whilst referring to a particular case in which grant support was withdrawn from a young person by the Department of Work and Pensions, while the young person had been undertaking a low paid apprenticeship, a Member suggested financial support should be improved. Members suggested this could be taken forward by the Skills Board.
- **Housing Task Group** - A Member identified a link between the outcomes of this Task Group and the Housing Task Group with regard to schools promoting apprenticeships to close the skills shortage gap.

Decision:

The Committee noted the report and recommendations made by the Employment Opportunities Task Group, set out at appendix A to the report and agreed to recommend it to Cabinet on the 6 February with the following comments:

- a) the Cabinet is recommended to refer the recommendations arising from the Task Group to the Skills Board for attention as a priority; and
- b) the Cabinet is recommended to ask the Skills Board to examine the financial support for young apprentices.

646 Work programme

Discussion:

The Committee received a report setting out the Committee's work programme for 2017/18 along with recommended amendments from the Committee's agenda planning meeting on 18 December 2017.

The Democratic Services Officer provided an update on the appointment of Parent Governor Representatives to the two vacant places on the Committee.

The Committee was also provided with details of a NHS England South procurement of Orthodontic Services which would affect Medway residents. The Committee was advised that an extension to the consultation deadline was agreed by NHS England so that the Committee could consider the proposals.

The Director of Public Health advised the Committee that he had reviewed the information provided by NHS England, as set out in section 6.5 of the report and drew the Committees attention to two main concerns. Firstly, whether population growth had been included within the assessment of need and secondly, whether the amendments to the Service proposed would be detrimental to service users.

In relation to this assessment, he advised the Committee that currently Medway had one specialist Service and, under the proposals from NHS England Medway would gain a second facility. As a result, it was likely that access for local residents would improve.

The Director of Public Health also advised the Committee that under the current arrangements, residents in Swale had accessed the services provided by the Medway facility. However, under the new proposals additional capacity would be provided in Swale. Whilst NHS England had proposed a reduction in Units of Orthodontic Activity (UOA) in Medway, as there had been no waiting lists in Medway and a greater provision would be provided in Swale, it was the opinion of the Director of Public Health that there was unlikely to be a detrimental effect on the Service offered to Medway residents and the changes could be beneficial given the provision of an additional site. However, it was important that NHS England held the arrangements under review to ensure the Service took account of Medway's future needs, for example population growth.

Members raised a number of points and questions including:

- **NHS England South procurement of Orthodontic Services** - A Member expressed concern regarding the timescales of the consultation afforded by NHS England but commented that the proposals to provide a second orthodontic centre could be beneficial to the residents of Medway.

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- **Cookham Wood** – A Member suggested that the report on Cookham Wood scheduled on the work programme for June be brought forward to the next meeting in March owing to the recent press coverage. The Chairman of the Committee advised that sufficient time needed to be afforded in March for questioning the Portfolio Holders being held to account at that meeting.
- **Regional Schools Commissioner** – At the request of a Member, it was confirmed the Regional School Commissioner had accepted the invitation to attend the Committee on 8 March 2018.

Decision:

The Committee:

- a) agreed the work programme as set out at Appendix 1, subject to adding:
 - 8 March 2018
 - Results of the Ofsted local area Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Provision Inspection
 - Special Educational Needs Transport Budget and Proposed Home to School Transport Policy - Outcome of Consultation
 - June (Exact date to be confirmed)
 - Update on Supported Accommodation for Children in Care and Care Leavers
- b) noted that further reports on Assistive Reproductive Technologies would be considered by the Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- c) recommended to Full Council on 25 January 2018 the appointment of Mr Akinola Edun and Mr David William Lane as Parent Governor Representatives on the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee for a four year term.
- d) agreed that the proposals in relation to the procurement of orthodontic services by NHS England do not constitute a substantial variation and supported the proposals on the basis of the additional information provided set out in 6.5 of the report.

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2018**

Chairman

Date:

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