

## **Appendix F - Personas to illustrate impact of Children and Young People Committee Business Planning Proposals and 2020 Strategy**

**November 2015**

A child with a severe learning disability who is not able to travel to school in shared transport and whose parents do not want to take the current 40p per mile allowance to transport their child

We would currently support this child to attend school by contracting a taxi to transport them to and from school each day. This would be very expensive as the taxi could not be shared with other children.

*By 2020, our changed approach to support will allow us to respond differently.* This might include offering the child's parent a Personal Transport Budget of £5000 a year to transport their own child to school. This is more attractive to the parent as it can be used completely flexibly by the parents as long as the child arrives in a fit state to learn and has good attendance. It allows the parents to share transporting the child with other members of the family or find cheaper alternatives to get their child to school, such as walking or using public transport, with no bureaucracy. The parent benefits from having more contact with their child's school and making informal support networks with other parents at the school. The child benefits from the extra time with their parents whilst making journeys to school and arrives at school feeling calmer. A fixed sum of £5000 which can be used flexibly is potentially considerably cheaper than the local authority contracting for a taxi for that child every day.

A family with school-aged children who live too far from school for the children to walk

We would currently support this child to attend school according to our statutory responsibility, which could involve funding a bus route. This responsibility is expected to remain the same. However, we would explore the following low-cost options with families and communities, to see if they are acceptable.

- Promote car sharing and use of volunteer drivers
- Bike purchase scheme
- Community Transport initiatives
- Incentivise schools to offer their own transport solutions
- Volunteer drivers
- Web-based car share scheme
- Real time spare seat availability information
- Developing partnerships with providers and operators
- Investing in appropriate infrastructure e.g. bike racks
- Ensuring our website and on line systems are as useful as possible in terms of enabling parents to make informed decisions

A school that has been judged as requiring intervention following an Ofsted inspection

We would make an initial assessment following the Ofsted judgement. We would decide whether options such as an Interim Executive Board to run the school would be necessary. In the last resort, we would have to close the school. However, we would not wish to do this, and would consider other interventions first.

The local authority would continue in its role as champion of the interests of the children attending the school. We would co-ordinate a short-term support plan to address any immediate concerns raised by the Ofsted report. Once the situation is stable, our approach would be to broker support and set up a group to co-ordinate improvement.

The authority is currently working with schools to establish a school-led Improvement Board, where leading schools can co-operate to ensure that suitable support is provided by the best teachers and school leaders in the county to schools that are judged as requiring intervention. A school requiring intervention would therefore be referred to the School Improvement Board for support. The School Improvement Board would then make the key decisions about the best way to support the school to improve, based on their expertise in running successful schools. The School Improvement Board would hold an intervention budget to support the commissioning of any specific external support. The School Improvement Board would also use funding from other government sources around school-to-school improvement to support the school.

It is likely that there would be an automatic assumption of academy conversion; the local authority would work with Department for Education to move to a sponsored academy.

A child of secondary school age whose attendance has suddenly deteriorated. For the last few weeks she has missed or been late at least one day of school, giving a variety of explanations to teachers

We know that attendance at school is a good indicator of the health and wellbeing of a child. However, in the next few years, we are unlikely to have the resources to provide support at the point where a child has missed a few days of school unexpectedly, unless there was a clear reason to think that the child might need much more intensive support in the future.

Our role would be to help the school access the information to decide whether it is a high level concern or something less serious. To this end, we would offer the school Educational Welfare Officer support on a traded basis – the school could purchase the support if it felt that it needed it, that the case was too complex and / or sensitive to address without external support.

A Looked After Child who has been through several disrupted placements.

We would currently support this child or young person by finding placements with the few organisations that can support children with very complex and challenging needs. Such placements, usually in residential children's homes, are rare and expensive and usually only available outside Cambridgeshire.

However, by 2020 our changed approach to support will allow us to respond differently. This might include the child continuing to live at home, but with the County Council providing significant additional support around the family that could involve workers visiting every day in order to manage the risk in the home environment. The extra help for the family to sustain this type of care plan might require us to use the funding which is normally only reserved for 'placements' with foster carers or residential homes. In future we will use that fund flexibly including to support children to stay at home, provided this represents the best overall value for money for public services as well as achieving good outcomes.

We might also look at the potential long term cost of a care placement and consider that spending more in the short term will be cheaper in the long run. For example funding specialist and intensive behaviour support within a mainstream school setting and additional pastoral support after school might be the only way to keep a child in care engaged in education. But if eventually this could be scaled back and it avoided the need for education to be in a specialist residential school then the short term expense would be supported.

We are also commissioning more specialist placements and specialist education provision in Cambridgeshire so even where these are required they should be closer to home and less costly to access by 2020.

A family in crisis and where there are young people in a home environment which is unsafe and where they are emotionally abused. The relationships within the family have now broken down and the parents are asking that the young people are taken into care

At present it is likely that the young people in such a family would become looked after under section 20 of the Children's Act. They would be placed in either a temporary foster placement, a residential home or a supported accommodation setting whilst an assessment is undertaken. Once in care for a period there would be a comparatively high likelihood of them remaining in care and of relationships with their immediate family becoming irreparable.

However, by 2020 our changed approach to support will allow us to respond differently. We will have further developed our preventative and edge of care of care services into a coherent offer which means we can match the needs of families to the most suitable service response from a range of options.

This family would probably be referred to the 'Alternatives to Care' Team who would be able to respond immediately visiting the family straight away, providing a clear message that the young people are better off in the long run if they stay at home and so working initially to stabilise the immediate crisis and ensure the young people can be at home for the first night. They would agree to return the next day and begin work to establish a sustainable plan which keeps the young people within their family network. This would include contacting and considering whether any other family members could provide care and accommodation, either temporarily or permanently. Alongside the family they would develop a family-plan which clearly identifies all of the risks but also all of the family's strengths which can be built on. The team would work this case intensively for a period of weeks, visiting frequently, helping develop the family relationships, offering practical help to get family life on a more stable footing. They would maintain a firm line that the children will not come into care and that change needs to occur. This family might also be referred to other forms of specialist help such as drug and alcohol services, multi-systemic therapy or mental health services depending on the needs. If additional resource were required to keep the family together this would be provided if it represented a more cost-effective option than taking the young people into care. After a period of intensive support we would expect this family to be 'stepped down' to either local authority early help services or to be supported by a plan overseen by school or other universal services and community support.