

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE COMMITTEE: MINUTES

Date: Tuesday 6 December 2016

Time: 2.00pm to 4.10pm

Present: Councillors Sir P Brown, S Bywater, D Divine, P Downes, S Hoy, M Leeke, Z Moghadas, L Nethsingha, S Taylor and J Wisson

Apologies: Councillors J Whitehead, D Brown and M Loynes

Co-optee: F Vettese

225. ELECTION OF A CHAIRPERSON FOR THE DURATION OF THE MEETING

In the absence of Cllr J Whitehead (Chairwoman) and Cllr D Brown (Vice Chairman) it was resolved to:

- i. Appoint Cllr P Downes as Chairman for the duration of the meeting;
- ii. Appoint Cllr S Taylor as Vice Chairwoman for the duration of the meeting.

The Chairman welcomed Cllr Hoy to her first meeting since her appointment to the Committee, succeeding Cllr Harty. On behalf of the whole Committee the Chairman sent warmest wishes to Cllr Kenney who had been due to attend the meeting as the nominated substitute for Cllr D Brown, but who had been hospitalised earlier that day.

226. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies for absence were noted as recorded above. Flavio Vettese declared an interest in Item 5 Free School Proposals as the Roman Catholic Diocese of East Anglia might in future wish to consider seeking to establish a free school. Cllr Hoy declared an interest in relation to Item 6 Business Planning as she had a family member attending Meadowgate School.

227. MINUTES OF 8 NOVEMBER 2016 AND ACTION LOG

The minutes of the meeting held on 8 November 2016 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

The Chairman noted that most items on the Action Log had been marked as complete, but in some cases it was unclear how actions had been resolved and in others there still seemed further work required. The following points were noted:

- Minute 168 Building Community Resilience: The Interim Executive Director reported that a number of strategies were being progressed, including the development of community hubs. She would be chairing a meeting of representatives of district councils, health service providers, Peterborough City Council and Cambridgeshire County Council in January 2017 and would circulate an update to Members after this had taken place;
(Action: Interim Executive Director, Children Families and Adults (CFA))

- Minute 200 Business Planning – Development of Revenue Proposals: The Service Director for Adult Social Care said that a briefing note had been produced for the Adults Committee for information setting out options if a 1.9% increase in Council Tax was agreed. This would be circulated to Members of CYP for information;
(Action: Service Director, Adult Social Care)
- Minute 210 Children’s Centre Service Delivery and Proposed Future Developments in 2017-18: Work on this remained in hand and would further detail would be brought to the Committee in Spring 2017. Status to be changed from ‘completed’ to ‘in progress’;
- Minute 221 Finance and Performance Report September 2016: The Interim Executive Director was in discussion with LGSS about council practice in relation to early interventions to reduce legal costs and would update the Committee when this work was complete;
- Minute 222 Agenda Plan, Appointments and Committee Training Plan 2016-17: The Interim Service Director was asked to follow up a query from Cllr Sir P Brown about current arrangements for the Adoption Panel.
(Action: Interim Service Director)

It was resolved to:

1. Approve the minutes of the meeting held on 8 November 2016 as a correct record;
2. Note and comment on the action log.

228. PETITIONS/ PUBLIC QUESTIONS

There were no petitions or public questions.

229. KEY DECISIONS

There were no Key Decisions.

DECISIONS

230. FREE SCHOOL PROPOSALS

The Committee received a report from the Strategic and Policy Place Planning Manager setting out the current position on free school proposals submitted directly to the Department for Education (DfE).

The following points were raised in discussion:

- Officers were waiting to hear which of the 15 applications to open new free schools in Cambridgeshire submitted during the Wave 12 round had reached the next stage of the process. Final decisions on these applications would be made in March 2017;
- Representatives from the Committee and senior officers had met with the Regional Schools Commissioner (RSC) in October 2016 to discuss their concerns that the Local Authority had no voice in the in the assessment of free school applications made direct to the DfE. This included the concern that local councillors remained responsible for managing the cost of school places efficiently, but when free schools opened very quickly this could have a

significant impact on numbers and the financial position of existing schools. The RSC noted these concerns and undertook to explore with the DfE whether the Local Authority might in future be represented in the DfE's assessment panel process;

- It was proposed to use the free school presumption competition route and/ or the centrally commissioned route in relation to the proposed new special schools in Northstowe and Alconbury Weald;
- Direct applications to the DfE to open new free schools remained confidential until decisions were made;
- Some Members were uncomfortable that some schools made studying for a GCSE in Religious Education compulsory. The Chairman reported that he was aware of a proposal that faith schools would in future be able to admit all pupils on faith-based criteria;
- Mr Vettese said that the Roman Catholic Diocese of East Anglia was looking at potentially opening free schools within the Diocese in the future and would discuss this with the local authority where appropriate. If it was decided to proceed this would be done strategically and take into account both identified local need and the potential impact on existing schools in the area;
- Cllr Bywater asked to be advised of dates relating to the Alconbury Weald application.

(Action: Strategic and Policy Place Planning Manager)

It was resolved to:

1. Note and comment on the current position with regard to applications submitted directly to the Department for Education (DfE) to establish free schools in Cambridgeshire.

231. BUSINESS PLANNING

The Committee received a report and presentation from the Interim Executive Director for Children, Families and Adults (CFA) which provided an overview of the draft revenue and capital proposals in the CFA business plan which were within the Committee's remit.

During 2017-18 CFA would be delivering savings totalling £19.8m across more than 60 initiatives. This would be actively monitored and managed by senior officers through weekly meetings of the CFA Delivery Board and monthly meetings of the CFA Commissioning Board.

The approach to business planning in CFA focused on demand management, market development, optimisation of services, collaborative commissioning and return on investment. There was a clear recognition of the importance of listening to local communities and delivering the best services possible within the resources available. Joint commissioning was actively pursued wherever appropriate, offering both improved outcomes as well as economies of scale, whilst the important role of preventative and early intervention services and spend to save initiatives were noted.

The following points were raised in discussion of the report and in response to questions from Members:

Revenue Programme

- Savings would be made wherever appropriate, but overall there would be a net increase in the overall budget for children's services;
- Significant investment was still being made into children's services, including a proposed additional £3m investment in support for Looked After children;
- The proposed integration of children's social care and enhanced and preventative services would, if agreed, lead to a streamlining of management structures whilst delivering an improved level of service to customers;
- Money saved by the closure of the Hawthorns Residential Care Home was being recycled into investment in front-line staff across the service;
- The offer of systemic family meetings at an early stage had been implemented in a number of London boroughs with good outcomes. It supported more honest and open engagement with families and provided a preferred working model for social workers;
- No Wrong Door (Fostering Service): This would provide a wraparound service for families providing foster care to help sustain placements during challenging periods, possibly linked to some provision for respite residential support. It would be submitted as a bid for transformation funding;
- The SPACE Programme was designed to engage with mothers who had previously had a baby removed permanently from their care with the aim of reducing the likelihood of this happening again;
- Virtual Beds Model for the Delivery of Residential Children's Home Provision for Looked After Children and Young People: This related to the block purchase of 'virtual' beds. A report on this proposal would be submitted to the Committee as a Key Decision in January 2017. Officers were asked to consider whether the item might be renamed to make its purpose more clear

(Action: Head of Service, Commissioning Enhanced Services)

- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Home to School Transport – Meadowgate School footpath: Cllr Hoy voiced strong concern that the footpath described in this item had already been constructed without her having been consulted as the local member and apparently in advance of approval of the proposal. She felt that the footpath as constructed was inadequate, did not provide a safe route to the school and was unsuitable for cycles or wheelchairs. It ended before it reached the perimeter of the school and it did not link to other suitable walkways or cycle routes within the town, meaning that it would not offer a viable alternative to the provision of school transport. The number of children and parents using the footpath might also increase significantly if an additional free school or secondary school was built on the site in future. Cllr Hoy was concerned that the Community Impact Assessment (CIA) accompanying the proposal also failed to acknowledge the impact of such significant change on children and young people with autistic spectrum conditions, for whom changes in routine could be particularly difficult to manage;

The Director for Learning said that the footpath had been part of a proposal included in the 2016-17 business plan, the implementation of which had been delayed. His understanding was that all students at Meadowgate School would be in receipt of a Statement of Special Educational Need or an Education, Health and Care Plan and as such would have an individual assessment of need before any withdrawal of school transport. The proposal to establish a free school on the Meadowgate School site had not been progressed. Officers offered a site meeting with Cllr Hoy and the Headteacher of Meadowgate School if this would be helpful. A briefing note on the project would also be provided to

Cllr Hoy which would include a review of the assumption that students would no longer require transport to school.

(Action: Director for Strategy and Commissioning)

The Committee noted Cllr Hoy's serious reservations about this project and asked that these be referred to the General Purposes Committee as part of the consideration of the Council's overall business plan.

(Action: Interim Executive Director)

Capital Programme

- Officers confirmed that the additional secondary provision for Cambridge City was anticipated to come on-stream in the mid-2020s and would be located to the east of the city, although no specific location or site had yet been identified.

Fees and Charges

- Each traded service had its own charging policy;
- Some of the changes shown were marginal and Cllr Bywater questioned why figures were not rounded up or down to streamline the calculation process;

(Action: Director for Learning to provide Cllr Bywater with a copy of the charging policy and clarify why rounded figures were not used)

- Members questioned why the fees and charges for the year 2016-17 were being brought to them for approval at this stage and not prior to them being introduced at the beginning of the academic year. Officers reported that the arrangements for submitting fees and charges for Member approval were currently under review and that this point would be addressed.

In light of the discussion it was resolved to:

1. Note the overview and context provided for the 2017/18 to 2021/22 Business Plan revenue proposals for Children, Families and Adults, updated since the last report to the Committee in October;
2. Comment on the draft revenue savings proposals that were within the remit of the Children and Young People's Committee for 2017/18 to 2021/22 and refer these comments to the General Purposes Committee as part of consideration of the Council's overall Business Plan;
3. Comment on the changes to the capital programme that were within the remit of the Children's and Young People's Committee and endorse them;
4. Consider the proposed levels of fees and charges for 2016-17 for the CFA Service that were in the remit of the Children and Young People Committee and endorse them, but to refer the process by which these were submitted to the Committee back to officers so that in future Members were in a position to comment on proposed levels of fees and charges within the Committee's remit before they were implemented.

232. FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE REPORT

The Committee received a report by the Strategic Finance Manager (Children and Adults) setting out the financial and performance position for those services for which the Committee held responsibility as at the end of October 2016. At the end of this period there was a forecast overspend of £2,012k which represented an improving position compared to the end of the previous month when an overcast of £2,338k was forecast. Concerns remained about funding around Looked After children, the High Needs Block and the Dedicated Schools Grant and these would be discussed in detail on 14 December 2016 at a meeting of the Cambridgeshire Schools Forum. The Forum's recommendations would be submitted to the Committee at its meeting in January 2017.

At the Chairman's request the Committee's review of Appendix 7 to the report considered in turn each of the items coded red, indicating that their current status was an area of potential concern. The following points were highlighted in discussion:

- The number of Looked After children per 10,000 children: Whilst the actual figure of 47.4 remained below the target of 40 it remained close to the numbers currently seen within the county's statistical neighbours;
- % of Year 12 in learning: The low figure reflected an annual pattern at this point in the academic year when data about young people's situations was still being collected. Officers reported that there was a particular focus on vulnerable groups within this cohort;
- The proportion of pupils attending Cambridgeshire maintained nursery schools judged good or outstanding by Ofsted: Members congratulated the Director for Learning and the county's nursery schools on maintaining a 100% success rate against this target from the previous year;
- The proportion of pupils attending Cambridgeshire secondary schools judged good or outstanding by Ofsted: The Director for Learning reported that figures received since the publication of the meeting papers showed that the current figure had improved further to 71% and that whilst this still remained short of the target of 75% it represented a significant improvement on the figure of 56.9% in the previous period;
- The attainment gap between pupils who do and do not receive free school meals in achieving the national standard in reading, writing and maths in Key Stage 2: More detailed figures would be available at the next meeting, but the direction of travel was encouraging.

It was resolved to:

1. Review and comment on the report.

233. AGENDA PLAN, TRAINING PLAN AND APPOINTMENTS TO INTERNAL ADVISORY GROUPS AND PANELS AND PARTNERSHIP LIAISON AND ADVISORY GROUPS

The Committee reviewed the agenda plan and noted a number of changes made since the plan was published. Members confirmed the appointment of Councillor P Downes as representative on the Virtual School Management Board, replacing Councillor G Kenney, and asked that the appointments held by Cllr Harty be reviewed in the light of his current illness.

(Action: Democratic Services Officer)

The Committee Training Plan was reviewed and it was agreed that it would be important to set in place an appropriate training programme following the local government elections in May 2017.

It was resolved to:

1. Note the Committee Agenda Plan, subject to the following amendments:
 - January 2017: New Key Decision: Virtual Beds Model for the Delivery of Residential Children's Home Provision for Looked After Children and Young People (KD2017/021);
 - March 2017: Histon and Impington Primary School Review Stage 2 Consultation Outcomes (moved from January);

- Extended Entitlement to an Additional 15 Hours Free Childcare for Eligible 3 and 4 Year Olds Nationally from September 2017 (deferred from January).
- 2. Review representation on Internal Advisory Groups and Panels and Partnership Liaison and Advisory Groups;
- 3. Confirm the appointment of Councillor Peter Downes as representative on the Virtual School Management Board;
- 4. Review the Committee Training Plan for 2016/17.

234. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Committee would meet next on Tuesday 17 January 2017 at 2.00pm in the Kreis Viersen Room, Shire Hall, Cambridge.

Chairwoman