

## **CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE COMMITTEE: MINUTES**

**Date:** Tuesday 4 December 2018

**Time:** 3.00pm – 5.15pm

**Venue:** Kreis Viersen Room, Shire Hall, Cambridge

**Present:** Councillors S Hoy (Chairwoman), D Ambrose Smith, A Bradnam, P Downes, A Hay, L Every, S Taylor, J Whitehead and J Wisson

Co-opted member: A Read

**Apologies:** Councillor S Bywater (Chairman)

Co-opted member: F Vetteze

**Also present:** Cllr T Sanderson (Items 1-8)

### **CONSTITUTIONAL MATTERS**

#### **178. CHAIRWOMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairwoman stated that the Chairman was unwell and sent his apologies. In his absence she would chair the meeting.

#### **179. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Apologies were noted as recorded above.

#### **180. MINUTES OF THE MEETING ON 13 November 2018**

The minutes of the meeting on 13 November 2018 were approved as an accurate record and signed by the Chairwoman. There were no declarations of interest.

#### **181. ACTION LOG**

The action log was reviewed and the following update noted:

- i. Minute 98: The Service Director for Education had met with representatives of The Fields Children's Centre in November and a balanced budget had been achieved.

#### **182. PETITIONS**

No petitions were received.

### **KEY DECISION**

#### **183. CONSTRUCTION CONSULTANTS FRAMEWORK (KD2018/072)**

The Education Capital Project Manager stated that a 'Design and Build' model of procurement had been in place since 2013. Despite a good relationship with

consultants from the LGSS Consultants framework the processes of appointment had proved quite cumbersome in practice leading to alternative options being considered. Following soft market testing and analysis of other comparable frameworks officers had concluded that the best way to achieve value for money and access to the most experienced consultants would be for the Council to procure its own lead Framework on the basis of a three year contract with the option of a one year contract extension (3+1). Performance would be monitored through the Education Capital Team.

In discussion of the report a Member asked why four different suppliers were proposed as that seemed a lot. Officer stated that this was what was currently used. Due to the ebb and flow of market forces some suppliers might fall away during the course of the contract so having four suppliers permanently available provided optimum flexibility.

It was resolved unanimously:

- a) approve the procurement of the Construction Consultants' Framework;
- b) delegate the responsibility for awarding the contract to the Executive Director: People & Communities in consultation with the Chairman of the Children and Young People Committee.  
**(Action: Executive Director – People and Communities)**

## **OTHER DECISIONS**

### **184. FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE REPORT – OCTOBER 2018**

The Senior Finance Business Partner stated that the overall position for the People and Communities Directorate to the end of October 2018 had worsened by £1.3m. The main areas of change in those areas within the remit of the Children and Young People Committee were Home to School Transport where the forecast overspend had increased by £750k to £1,500k and Looked After Children Transport which was anticipated to be £300k over budget. The projected overspend on Children in Care had reduced to £1,262k due to a reduction of £105k on accommodation costs for unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASC). The Looked After Children forecast overspend had remained static during the period despite rising numbers of Looked After Children, indicating that this area of expenditure was coming under control which was positive.

During discussion of the report:

- A Member questioned the overspend generated by the Schools Forum's decision to discontinue de-delegation for the Cambridgeshire Race Equality and Diversity Service (CREDS) from 1 April 2018. Officers stated that this represented winding up costs associated with closing the service;
- A Member expressed some nervousness about proposed mitigations to address the forecast overspend on Out of School Tuition. Officers stated that such measures would only be taken where appropriate and that there was a focus towards supporting schools to direct you people away from the need for Out of School Tuition;
- Two Members commented that the position described in the report was grim;

- Officers stated that the increase in the forecast overspend on Home to School Transport was linked to the increase in numbers of Looked After Children and children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) who required transport. Data and intelligence on this issue was being strengthened to inform a more proactive approach and work to review transport for children with SEND would be starting in mid-December 2018;
- A Member questioned the reference to 'Reconstruction of panels to ensure greater scrutiny and supportive challenge' under the mitigating factors to limit overspend on the Looked After Children placements budget. Officers apologised for the lack of clarity in the language used and stated that this referred to the Thresholds and Access to Resources Panel which provided constructive challenge at a senior level regarding what was in a child's best long-term interests in relation to placement;
- A Member noted the forecast £504k overspend on the MOSAIC project and asked how much money had been spent on this given the subsequent decision not to proceed with implementing this for Children's Services. The Service Director for Children's Services and Safeguarding undertook to provide a note on this, but stated that the MOSAIC Project had been implemented in relation to Adult Services.  
(**Action: Service Director for Children's Services and Safeguarding**)

It was resolved unanimously to:

- a) review and comment on the report.

## 185. DRAFT 2018/19 CAPITAL PROGRAMME

The Lead Education Officer stated that the report was designed to provide the Committee with a more detailed overview of education capital projects to inform its decision-making. Proposals relating to Spring Common Academy and the proposed amalgamation of Eastfield Infant and Nursery School and Westfield Junior School had been the subject of previous reports and had been discussed at length by the Committee. Since the Committee had last considered the proposals relating to Spring Common Academy officers had been working in consultation with the headteacher to identify ways to address the condition and suitability issues highlighted when the proposals were first discussed in October 2018. The revised proposals would cost in the order of £3m compared to the £5.9m previously forecast and on the basis of this officers were recommending that the project be reinstated into the capital programme. Further work had also been undertaken at the Committee's request to provide greater detail around the options for the proposed amalgamation of Eastfield Infant and Westfield Junior Schools. All of the three options identified would cost significantly more than the figure currently contained within the capital programme and Options 2 and 3 included the sale of some land within the site which had not yet been discussed with the schools. The proposed revisions to the Wisbech Secondary School project represented a very preliminary outline of a possible option for re-working the project and had been included to seek a steer on this from the Committee prior to any substantive work.

The Chairwoman stated that a request to speak in relation to the Spring Common Academy project had been received from Councillor Tom Sanderson in his capacity as the member for Huntingdon West. Councillor Sanderson had spoken previously on this issue when it was first considered by the Committee in October 2018.

Councillor Sanderson thanked the Committee and the Lead Education Officer for looking again at the proposals relating to Spring Common Academy in the light of the

representations made at the meeting in October 2018. Both he and Spring Common Academy were delighted with the officer recommendation that the project should proceed to Milestone 2. Given the financial challenges which the Council faced both he and the Academy were greatly appreciative of the indicative figure of £3m.

In discussion of the report:

#### Spring Common Academy

- A Member asked how the revised figure of £3m had been achieved in relation to the project. The Lead Education Officer stated that this was very much an estimate based on professional experience. To get greater cost certainty it was recommended to proceed to Milestone 2. This would necessitate incurring some revenue costs, for example to obtain architects drawings. If there was any material change in the estimated costs this would be brought back to the Committee for further consideration, but smaller variations which could be accommodated within the agreed budget would be managed by officers;
- A Member asked about the reasoning for the Spring Common project being added to the capital programme after the programme went to the General Purposes Committee or full Council. Officers stated that it would need to be reinstated as it had been taken out of the capital programme when previously discussed by the Committee pending further work. Adding it at a later date would allow firm costs to be obtained to inform that decision. The Lead Education Officer offered an assurance that the need to address the issues identified was recognised by officers and that there was no risk that it would become lost in the system;
- A Member commented that Spring Common was an academy school and as such responsible for its own maintenance. They sought an assurance that, should the capital works be approved, the academy trust would take on responsibility for their upkeep. Officers stated that as a special school academy Spring Common's relationship with the Council was slightly different in that the Council commissioned places from them. Officers worked alongside the academy trust to apply to the Education Skills and Funding Agency to draw down funds to address other needs. The works proposed were solely to address suitability and access needs.

#### Wisbech Secondary School

- A Member sought more information about the proposed revisions to the Wisbech Secondary School Project, commenting that they did not see the logic in delaying building core elements of the project such as a dining space. Officers stated that all of the facilities needed to allow the school to open with an initial 600 places would be provided. However, it was suggested that some additional facilities, such as a second large communal space in addition to the main hall, might be added at a later date when required. The proposal offered an alternative means of delivering the scheme, but with reduced up-front costs. The Service Director for Education stated that the capital programme was funded by borrowing so there was a revenue cost to projects. If a free school bid was successful in Wisbech his expectation was that it would be built initially to offer 600 places.

A Member commented that they would be minded to approve the two stage approach as a risk worth taking, provided that the additional planned accommodation could be added quickly when the level of demand was confirmed.

Officers confirmed that if this approach was chosen the initial design would take account of the requirement to grow.

A Member asked whether the changes proposed to the Wisbech Secondary School project were being proposed to fund the increased costs associated with the proposed amalgamation of Eastfield Infant and Nursery School and Westfield Junior School. The Service Director for Education stated that officers had been tasked with identifying ways of reducing capital expenditure. These were not 'either/ or' options, but officers' views on all of the options available to enable the Committee to form a considered view. The commitment to providing a new secondary school in Wisbech remained absolute; all that was in question was the means of delivery.

The Chairwoman asked whether there was a risk that this two stage approach might lead to increased overall costs. Officers confirmed that this could happen. However, it avoided the risk of building a larger school which might subsequently have spare capacity if planned housing developments did not progress. Officers had been tasked to look for savings within the capital programme and they considered a two stage approach to be a prudent option to bring before the Committee for consideration. The Chairwoman acknowledged this, but stated that the two stage proposal was not one with which she agreed. Wisbech was recognised as an area of deprivation and located within an Opportunity Area. There had been great excitement locally at the prospect of a new school being built and to diminish that now did not seem right. The Children and Young People Committee had chosen the proposed location due to anticipated growth and proposals were in place for substantial numbers of new homes in the local area. On that basis she judged that the capital programme proposals relating to Wisbech Secondary School should remain unchanged. Should the position change in the future this could be reviewed at that time.

#### Wintringham Park

- A Member commented that they were happy with the plans for Wintringham Park.' They also asked the status of the project as it was shown as uncommitted expenditure. Officers confirmed that consultation had taken place with other schools and undertook to clarify whether the references to 'committed' and uncommitted' expenditure in relation to Wintringham Park and Loves Farm had been transposed. (**Action:** Lead Education Officer)

#### Proposed Amalgamation of Eastfield Infant and Nursery School and Westfield Junior School

- Officers stated that the possibility of selling a parcel of land within the site was a fresh idea which had been raised by the Committee when it first considered this proposal in September 2018 and, as such, it had not been included in the original consultation;
- A Member commented that the costs for all three options were now very similar and as such their preference would be for Option 3, a complete new build;
- A Member commented that their understanding was that the infant school was not fit for purpose, but that the junior school was in an acceptable state of repair. On that basis they asked whether it would be feasible to expand the junior school only;

- A Member commented that additional costs could arise from further delaying the decision;
- A Member suggested an alternative option would be to task officers to go away and establish what could be achieved with a budget of £7m, taking into account potential capital receipts.

#### Other items

- Paragraph 2.2: Officers confirmed that the £6,905,350 was in addition to the £24,918,658 received in Basic Need funding for 2018/19;
- Section 6 - Policies and operational practice which contributed to the cost of capital projects. Officers confirmed that this related to areas where the Council had appropriate and safe standards in place, but local planning authorities were seeking to impose higher requirements. The Service Director for Education stated that officers were challenging back on these areas as they were not judged to be adding value for children. Further information would be shared with the Committee on this in a future report;
- A Member raised the issue of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and S106 money and whether things had become worse since the introduction of CIL. Officers stated that education was only one of a number of priorities which District Councils needed to consider in relation to CIL, whereas S106 money was specific to education. However, they acknowledged that challenges had arisen previously in relation to Huntingdonshire District Council's approach to CIL.

In light of the discussion the Chairwoman proposed that, with the consent of the meeting, the recommendations be amended so that proposals for the Wisbech Secondary School be retained unchanged within the capital programme and that officers be tasked with finding out whether it was possible to deliver the proposed amalgamation of Eastfield Infant and Nursey School and Westfield Junior School within a budget of £7m and to look at the potential land sale available.

On being put to the vote it was resolved:

- a) to comment on the draft 2018/19 Capital Programme;
- b) that Wisbech Secondary School Project remain unchanged as it is in the Capital Programme;
- c) to support the request that the revised Spring Common Special School project proceed to Milestone 2 to provide greater cost certainty in respect of the identified suitability and basic need requirements for a 175 place school serving children and young people aged 2-19 with complex special educational needs and disabilities (SEND);
- d) to comment on the updated option appraisal for delivering a 630 place all-through primary school in place of Eastfield Infant and Westfield Junior Schools, St Ives, noting the revised estimated costs, and ask officers to see if it is possible to deliver this within £7m and to look at the potential land sale;
- e) to endorse the policies and operational practices detailed in Section 6 which add to capital project costs, and support the proposal that these are reviewed in

liaison with the Executive Director: Place and Economy, with the resulting recommendations being reported to a future meeting of the Committee;

- f) agree that where it proves necessary for new schemes to be added to programme following its adoption by full Council, for the reasons identified in section 6.2.2, these are detailed in the Finance Performance Report for approval initially by the Children and Young People's Committee and then the General Purposes Committee.

#### **186. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE COMMITTEE DRAFT REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUSINESS PLANNING PROPOSALS FOR 2019/20 TO 2023/24**

The Chairwoman stated that, exceptionally, the Chairman had accepted this report late on the following grounds:

- i. Reason for lateness: The need to incorporate some final changes to the finance tables to be considered by the Committee;
- ii. Reasons for Urgency: This report needed to be considered by the Children and Young People Committee at its December meeting in order for the Committee's comments to be reflected in the report required by the General Purposes Committee to review the full business plan.

The Executive Director for People and Communities stated that the business Planning proposals before the Committee reflected the previous discussion at the Committee's meeting in October 2018. One saving proposed related to the decommissioning of Multi-Systemic Therapy (MST). The Chairwoman stated that a request to speak about MST had been received from Mr Tom Jefford on behalf of Family Psychology Mutual Community Interest Company. Copies of the evidence in support of the continuation of MST services and the MST Outcome report 2017 submitted by Mr Jefford had been circulated to all members of the Committee in advance of the meeting.

Mr Jefford stated that a parent who used MST services had come along to hear the debate, but had stepped outside of the room. The Chairwoman adjourned the meeting at 4.20pm to enable the parent to be present for the full discussion.

The meeting resumed at 4.25pm. Mr Jefford stated that Family Psychology Mutual Community Interest Company (CIC) was established in 2017 as a 'spin out' company from Cambridgeshire County Council on the basis of a three year contract. Staff had TUPE transferred to the CIC from the Council and had been shocked to learn that it was proposed to end the contract at the end of the current year. MST was a well-established and mature service and Mr Jefford questioned whether any other service had demonstrated the same level of success. MST provided 24/7 support to families and had offered a reduced cost option for the services it provided. Mr Jefford shared a letter from a parent whose son had been referred to MST by the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service. This stated that MST was the only service which had made a difference to her son and that it had enabled him to return to school.

Arising from discussion of the report and the comments by Mr Jefford:

- The Service Director for Children's Services and Safeguarding stated that research in the USA had indeed found that MST had a positive impact in improving outcomes for young people aged between 11-17 who were engaging in serious anti-social behaviour. However, the benefits were not significantly different to those achieved through other services. There were number of programmes and projects in this area

which achieved very high rates of young people not entering the care system, but research suggested that many of these young people may well not have entered the care system even without such intervention. He wished to be clear that he was not saying that MST could not be very successful for individual families, but in relative terms it was of benefit to a small number of children and young people. There was a need to properly identify and support those children and young people on the edge of care. If the recommendation to decommission the MST service was approved it was proposed to retain £300k of the £600k saving to enhance other services in support of those on the edge of care;

- A Member asked whether the Positive Behaviour Support Project described elsewhere on the agenda (minute 187 refers) provided an alternative to MST. Officers stated that this was not the case;
- A Member commented that the Council had instigated the outsourcing of MST and had given an undertaking to staff TUPE transferred across to the CIC that the Council contract would run for three years. They were unhappy both about cutting a project which was successful and also in relation to those staff. Their strong preference would be to review the MST contract at the end of the three year period originally agreed and they felt it was morally unacceptable to decommission the service before then given the assurances which had been given. Mr Jefford had stated that Family Psychology Mutual CIC was willing to look at reducing costs now and they felt that this offer should be pursued;
- A Member commented that the Council was in a different place now to that which had been the case in 2017 when the original contract had been let and that they were comfortable with officer assurances around the way in which the Council was working on this;
- The Chairwoman asked what reassurance could be given that decommissioning the MST service would not lead to an increase in numbers of Looked After Children. The Service Director for Children's Services and Safeguarding stated that there were now teams in place to support adolescents experiencing difficulties at home and that he judged that this was what would make the difference in future in avoiding this cohort of young people entering the care system;
- A Member commented that they had not yet received additional information relating to Early Years provision and a budget line which they had requested when the business planning report was considered previously. The Service Director for Education offered a briefing note on Early Years provision and the Democratic Services Officer undertook to follow up the outstanding actions;  
**(Action: Service Director for Education/ Democratic Services Officer)**
- A Member asked about the contract obligations in relation to Family Psychology Mutual CIC. Officers stated that the contract contained a break clause after one year.

On being put to the vote it was resolved unanimously to:

- a) note the overview and context provided for the 2019/20 to 2023/24 Business Plan revenue proposals for the Service, updated since the last report to the Committee in October;

It was resolved by a majority to:



- b) comment on the draft revenue savings proposals that were within the remit of the Children & Young People Committee for the 2019/20 to 2023/24, and endorse them to the General Purposes Committee as part of consideration for the Council's overall Business Plan.

## **187. RESOURCE FUNDING REQUEST FOR THE CONTINUATION OF THE POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR SUPPORT PROJECT**

The Service Director for Children's Services and Safeguarding stated that the Cambridgeshire Positive Behaviour pilot project had been set up in 2017 for a period of two years using £240k of Transformation funding. The project was designed to work intensively with eight young people identified as having severe learning disabilities and challenging behaviour to seek to avoid the need for support in an out of county residential setting. This would deliver better outcomes for the young people and their families whilst delivering a saving on the high cost of providing a residential placement. It would also avoid the additional costs associated with supporting and potentially re-locating these young people back to Cambridgeshire as adults. Learning from the pilot project suggested that the resilience of the service could be further enhanced by working across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. Peterborough City Council had agreed funding of £240k to continue the service. Health Service colleagues had acknowledged that they would have been required to meet a third of the cost of providing out of county residential placements for these young people had these been required. Health Committee would receive recommendations from the Joint Commissioning Unit that these costs would be paid back where the need for residential places was avoided.

In discussion of the report:

- A Member asked how officers could know that the young people would have required an out of county residential placement if the Positive Behaviour Support Project had not existed. Officers stated that the young people involved in the project had been identified as being at very high risk of requiring an out of county residential placement and fitted the profile of those likely to be taken into care;
- A Member asked how this proposal related to the recommendation to discontinue the Family Psychology Mutual CIC contract discussed under the previous report (minute 186 refers). Officers stated that the two services related to different cohorts of children with distinct and different needs. The young people supported through the Positive Behaviour Support Project were known to be at very high risk of requiring external care;
- A Member commented that the difficulty in demonstrating the benefit of interventions in preventing the need for additional services was inherently problematic, but that a systematic approach was needed in all cases;
- A Member commented that where the outcomes for individuals could be improved as well as savings being made it would be silly not to continue.

It was resolved by a majority to:

- a) recommend to the General Purposes Committee that it approve the funding of the resources not currently within the Council's base budget from the Council's Transformation Fund as summarised in Appendix A;

- b) recommend Option C of Appendix B as the preferred way forward: Identify multi-agency funding to develop and extend the offer long term.

## **INFORMATION AND MONITORING ITEMS**

### **188. FREE SCHOOL PROPOSALS**

The Strategic and Policy Places Planning Manager drew Members' attention to the latest position on Wave 11 and Wave 12 free schools in Cambridgeshire approved to pre-implementation stage by the Department for Education (DfE). The application deadline for Wave 13 had been 5 November 2018 and 12 applications had been received for Cambridgeshire, the highest figure for any local authority. Unlike in previous Waves almost all of the applications were for areas where additional places would be required in the future to meet basic need. This followed pre-application work with potential sponsors to discuss future need within the county. Final decisions on these applications were expected at the end of March 2019.

In discussion of the report and in response to questions from the Committee:

- Officers confirmed that the St Neots Primary Academy application had been submitted for the next primary school needed in the St Neots Eastern Expansion development;
- Officers stated that it was the Council's usual practice to build the roll of a new school over time, usually a year at a time from the bottom up, which meant that there would be some diseconomies until the school was running at full capacity;
- A Co-opted Member commented that two of the Wave 13 applications did not appear to meet a basic need for places. One of these was near to the site of an existing secondary school and they expressed concern about the potential impact on existing schools;
- A Member commented that the Service Director for Education and his team were to be congratulated on the work done with potential sponsors which had resulted in the majority of applications under Wave 13 being for areas with a basic need for additional school places.

It was resolved to note:

- a) the latest position regarding Wave 11 and Wave 12 free schools in Cambridgeshire;
- b) the level of interest with regard to establishing new schools in Cambridgeshire via Wave 13 of the government's central free school programme.

### **188. SCHOOLS FUNDING 2019/20 UPDATE**

Members noted the update on Schools Funding 2019/20. A Member commented that as part of the Council's consultation exercise schools were being asked whether they would support a transfer of funds from the Dedicated Schools Grant Schools Block to the High Needs Block to help manage the continued pressure on this area. Initial indications suggested that schools were broadly supportive of this approach.

It was resolved to:

- a) note the content of this report and the requirement to approve the Cambridgeshire schools funding formula at its meeting in January 2019.

**189. REVIEW OF IMPLEMENTATION OF CHANGE FOR CHILDREN PROGRAMME, INCLUDING DEVELOPMENT OF SHARED SERVICES ACROSS CAMBRIDGESHIRE AND PETERBOROUGH**

Members noted an update report on the implementation of the Change for Children programme, including the development of shared services across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. A Member commented that the success of the recruitment process was good to see.

It was resolved to:

- a) note the progress made in implementation of the new delivery model in Children's Social Care since May 2018, when approval was given by Children and Young People's Committee to the changes proposed;
- b) note the areas of performance that the new delivery model is intended to improve and the means for monitoring this;
- c) agree to receive a further report updating Members on continued impact of the changes in July 2019, to include updated key performance information including information about caseloads and vacancies.

**OTHER DECISIONS**

**190. AGENDA PLAN, APPOINTMENTS AND TRAINING PLAN**

The Committee reviewed the agenda plan, Committee appointments and training plan.

It was resolved to:

- a) note the Committee agenda plan;
- b) note Committee appointments;
- c) note the Committee training plan.

Councillor Simon Bywater  
Chairman