Children and Young People Committee: Minutes

Date: 3 June 2025

Time: 2.00pm - 4.46pm

Venue: Red Kite Room, New Shire Hall, Alconbury Weald

Present: Councillors L Beckett, A Bradnam, L Damary-Homan
Y Deter, D Divine, J Edge (Vice Chair) M Goldsack,
B Goodliffe, J Kerr, C Lowe, E Murphy (Chair), A Osborn, E Tong and C Whelan

Co-opted Members:
J Young

1. Notification of the Appointment of the Chair and Vice-chair

At the meeting of Council on 20 May 2025 Members were pleased to appoint Councillor Edna Murphy as Chair of the committee and Councillor Jonny Edge as Vice Chair for the municipal year 2025/26.

2. Apologies for absence and declarations of interest

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor James Stuart (Substituted by Councillor Lorna Dupre) and Dr Andy Stone.

Councillor Laurence Damary-Homan claimed a non-statutory pecuniary interest in item 9 on the agenda as he was the local member for Sawston and Shelford.

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Children and Young People Committee Minutes – 25 February 2025

The minutes of the meeting on 25 February 2025 were approved as an accurate record. The minutes action log was noted.

4. Public questions and Petitions

One public question was received from Ms Day.

Ms Day explained that she was a parent to a 20-year-old son with special educational needs and disabilities. Over the years she had stood on the painful crossroads of unmet need, delayed provision and systems that too often made families feel invisible. She explained that she offered peer support and advocacy when she could but that her main priority had always been her son. She stated that

Cambridgeshire's participation in the safety valve agreement, the better value programme and the wider SEND transformation plan under the banner of 'Inclusion for all' had produced a real and growing concern when local policies became budget lead rather than needs lead, children's entitlements risked being compromised. She stated that it was not just disappointing but that it was potentially unlawful. She highlighted that statutory rights under the Children and Families Act 2014 must be the starting point for all decisions, and that cost pressures could not justify unmet needs. She commented that it was particularly worrying that a revised safety valve proposal had already been submitted to the Department for Education and no councillors, not even those on the scrutiny and audit committees had been given access to it, let alone proper oversight. It was her opinion that this lack of transparency not only undermined trust, but it weakened democratic accountability that should underpin public decision making. She urged the committee to press for full visibility, scrutiny and public accountability around the reapplication process and to ensure that any further financial planning remained firmly anchored in law and in the rights of the children it affected.

Her formal question to the Committee was: Will the Committee confirm that no part of the Cambridgeshire Safety Valve agreement, Better Value programme, or SEND Transformation Plan will override or delay lawful statutory entitlements under the Children and Families Act 2014, and will the Council commit to publicly demonstrating how person-centred outcomes - not financial constraints - are the basis for decisions in Education, Health, and Care provision?

The Chair thanked Ms Day and stated that she would receive a written response within 10 working days. **(Response attached as appendix 1)**

5. Education Capital Delivery Routes and S106 Site Specification

The committee considered a report which outlined alternative routes through which future construction of new schools and extensions to existing schools would be delivered; Academy led construction and Developer led construction. The committee was also asked to adopt an updated site specification which would be used in S106 legal agreements with developers. The outcome of these decisions will ensure that sufficient high quality education places continue to be delivered across Cambridgeshire.

In presenting the report officers highlighted a number of key points:

- Historically school delivery and expansions had been led by the council. The report recommended that the default route remained with the council but that in specific circumstances, delivery by developers and academy trusts was also considered.

- The council would always supply the school brief, specifying the places and type of school that was needed, and this specification would be based on the detailed analysis of demand for school places by area

- An update on the site specification which was separate to the school building specification that came later in the process and would be tailored to each individual school project.

- Many Cambridgeshire Schools were in Academy Trusts that had detailed knowledge of the school sites and directly receive stock condition funding from the Department for Education to maintain and improve the condition of their grounds. Where a multi academy trust was interested in the delivery of an expansion scheme of one of their schools, and the council had identified a need for more places, only where specific conditions were met funding would be ported to the multi academy trust to deliver the scheme through a grant funding agreement. This allowed for a trust to rectify issues that they received direct funding for at the same time as a capital build which would enable the trust to maximise the funding and site expertise.

- Developer lead delivery had the advantage of the developer owning the risks of the scheme delivery and may prove best value for money to the Council; however, it meant that the Council would be positioned as a key stakeholder as opposed to leading the scheme, without the power to heavily influence the design of the school.

- An updated site specification document had been included to enable negotiations with developers to provide a parcel of land with the right services and the right location for a school site. It would need minor alterations for each section 106 agreement for site specific factors.

Individual members raised the following issues in relation to the report:

- Queried whether the local authority and academy trust would still have enough involvement in the input into the design and the layout of the building including community space and carbon zero requirements with developer lead delivery. Officers explained that these details would be explored with the developer ahead of any development.

- Sought confirmation that the recommendations set out in the report were options rather than the way all school developments would be handled. Officers confirmed that this was the case and that academy lead development projects would be considered on a case-by-case basis with rigorous assessment. The default position would be that developments would be council lead. Developer lead delivery would be built into section 106 agreements and would come back to committee for decision.

- Queried to what extent the authority would retain a design influence in relation to developer lead delivery and were there particular standards that would need to be adhered to both locally and nationally. Officers explained that there was Department for Education guidance in relation to new school builds that would need to be adhered to. Officers explained that the influence on the design would be more limited in relation to developer lead delivery.

- Questioned if there had been major changes to the site specification document. Officers explained that the changes were mainly in relation to clearer and more specific wording in relation to the guidance on the quality of playing fields and the maximum in relation to road frontage in relation to safeguarding requirements and in reaction to air quality of the site.

- Requested that members were kept up to speed with all of the developments on a regular basis and not just when coming to committee for approval. Officers explained that they would provide briefings to members throughout the process.

- Queried what would happen to the ownership of the land for developer lead and academy lead delivery for land owned by the local authority. Officers clarified that developer lead delivery for new school builds; land would remain under the ownership of the developer during the build period. On completion the site would then revert to council ownership and then if an academy trust were to run the school, the site would be leased to the trust under a standard 125-year lease.

- Questioned whether the section 106 for the Waterbeach RLW site had been revised recently as this had been set back in 2019. Officers explained that they did not have the information to hand and would update the Committee following the meeting. **Action Required**

- Sought clarity on how the timings of delivery of schools would be monitored in the new system. Officers stated that they would continue to look at the data and pupil numbers to determine at what point a new site was built working in partnership with the DfE.

- Queried if there was a risk that developers take on an obligation that they were then unable to deliver. Officers explained that there would be very specific legal and procurement advice taken before entering into an agreement in order to mitigate risk.

- Sought assurance that the responsibility for building schools ultimately sat with the local authority but that the task for building schools could be delegated, and that any such change control including sprinkler systems would come back through committee for decision. Officer explained that the sufficiency duty sat with the local authority and that there was rigor in the governance process and anything that progresses that met the threshold would come through committee for decision.

- Queried if this approach would be for all types of school. Officers clarified that this process would be for all types of schools including special schools.

It was resolved unanimously to:

a) approve the approach to porting capital contributions to Academy Trusts to carry out expansion schemes on Cambridgeshire schools

b) approve the approach to potential developer delivery of new Cambridgeshire schools

c) approve the updated site specification for new school sites

6. Block Purchase Arrangements for Children's Provision in Cambridgeshire

The committee received a report which sought approval for the commissioning of block purchase arrangements through mini competition within existing frameworks for children and young people (CYP) who required Supported Accommodation; Residential Children's Homes (RCHs); Independent Special School Placements (ISEPs); and for children with Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND) needing Out of School Tuition (OoST).

In presenting the report officers highlighted a number of key points:

- Block purchasing had been used successfully in the Adults services and was used where supply was difficult to get hold of and to control price and linked to the wider residential strategies over the last few years, working alongside providers to build longer term strategic relationships.

- Looked to block purchase 15 beds with 10 hours or less support, in supported accommodation for 16–17 year old children in care at a ceiling of £500 a week and 10 residential beds in children's residential homes in county, keeping children closer to their families and communities.

- Looked to block purchase up to 60 placements for SEND, with a block of 10 for ISEPs ideally within the county and up to 60 placements in OST in blocks of 10 up to 15 hours per week, keeping children local, and the right help at the right time.

Individual members raised the following issues in relation to the report:

- Queried if the ISEP placements were inclusive of places such as Red Balloon or were they more formalised. Officers stated that the placements they would be making would be providers that were currently on their DPS but could check and report back to members. **Action Required**

- Sought assurance that the focus of the placements would be in county. Officers stated that the majority of placements would be in Cambridgeshire were possible but that there may be some SEND placements that would be on county borders.

- Questioned whether officers could be confident that providers offering the lower price point for out of school tuition would be able to provide a quality service. Officers explained that there had been conversations through the provider forums and that there were further discussions taking place to clarify what the model would look like. Officers assured members that there were a number of providers under the £60 price point and it was maximising the providers that could provide the same model of tuition. Officers clarified that they also carried out a lot of

benchmarking and that there was national guidance in this area that had to be followed, so there was a constant analysis of pricing.

- Queried how the blocks would be monitored and if there was flexibility to withdraw if delivery was not good enough. Officers stated that there were a number of terms and conditions within the contracts, supported accommodation and homes were OFSTED registered, and quality assurance visits took place on a regular basis as part of contract monitoring. There were also quarterly contract monitoring meetings which would increase with block purchasing. There were exit clauses built into contracts around quality of service with advice from colleagues in adults services and legal. Children could be moved to more appropriate placements if the quality required from the contract was not met.

- Commented that if this approach was successful if it could be extended as it had been successful in other authorities. Officers explained that they had started with a small manageable block and would look to increase in relation to performance.

- A member commented that the length of the contract had not been included in the recommendations. All Committee members agreed that the contract length be added to the recommendations.

It was resolved unanimously to:

a) agree to the commissioning of block funded placements for Supported Accommodation provisions, RCHs, ISEPs and OoST. A 12 month block contract refers to an agreement where a local authority pays a fixed fee to a service provider to reserve a specific number of placements or beds to guarantee capacity while achieving a reduced discount. By securing placements as part of a block contract, this will ensure that placements are readily available and are made within suitable timeframes.

b) delegate authority for awarding and executing a contract for an initial period of 12 months for the provision of block contracts within the current Children External Placement (CEP) Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) and Pseudo Dynamic Purchasing System (p-DPS) for supported accommodation commencing 1st October 2025 and 12 month extension period, if required, to the Executive Director for Children, Education & Families.

7. Recommissioning of Early Intervention Mental Health Services for Children and Young People

The committee considered a report which outlined the Early Intervention Mental Health Services available for children and young people funded by the local NHS and the Public Health Grant. The Committee was asked to consider the recommendations for recommissioning the early intervention YOUnited Service as per current arrangements.

In presenting the report officers highlighted a number of key points:

- The service was jointly commissioned with the ICB as the lead commissioner.
- Sought agreement from the committee to continue the arrangements for the next two years.
- Would be reviewing the children's mental health provision as a system which was a priority of the Health and Wellbeing Board. This work would look at the existing system and co-designing a new model. Work was underway and would conclude this year and would look at outcome measures including a single front door and much more joined up service provision.
- Officers were looking at making the outcome measures more robust.

Individual members raised the following issues in relation to the report:

- Questioned if there was a service level agreement between the local authority and YOUnited. The Director of Public Health explained that the ICB were the lead commissioner and had the contract with YOUnited and that the local authority had joint contract meetings with the ICB and YOUnited. There were key performance measures within the contact and the authority would be working on developing more long-term measures.

- Questioned if there was any risk to the contracting arrangements due to the significant financial and structural changes within the ICB. The Director of Public Health explained that there would still be a need for this type of contracts and local service delivery and that the authority would continue to work with the ICB and keep an eye on arrangements but that this was a low-risk arrangement.

- Highlighted that in 2.2.5 of the report that it stated that the public health contribution went towards the early intervention offer provided by the two VCSs and that although there was no quantitative data to demonstrate improvements in outcomes, there was qualitative data to support this service and questioned if there was a way of collecting quantitative data. The Director of Public Health stated that officers were looking at how this data could be collected including retrospective data, however the focus was on getting the measures right going forwards. Officers explained that the data was available included how long the child was on the waiting list to receive the service and some information from some of the partners regarding journey and outcome measures.

- A member commented that before the authority commissioned a service that there must be deliverables in place. He questioned what was expected from the service for the period up to June 2026 as there were no goals currently and that the authority should be upfront about what was expected and he felt uncomfortable with this approach and that there should be more scrutiny at the front end. Officers explained that when the service was first commissioned the ICB share was £1.8 million and the local authority £350,000 and this went towards the prevention element of the service making sure that the partnership with the voluntary sector providers in relation to the front door of the service and there were some definitive indicators on waiting times and the performance indicators were coproduced with young people and based on 'I statements on how the service helped them. Officers were looking on how this could be developed to build in more outcome measures. The Chair stated that the report outlined what the authority wanted out of the service and were looking for more

evidence to support the theory that the service was effective and was good practice, an outcome as opposed to a thing that the authority was buying.

- Commented that appendix 1 and 2 to the report set out the activity of the service and the feedback received but that it would be useful to have a record of the numbers of young people that used the service. The Director of Public Health explained that figure one in the report showed the figures per month of young people going through the access hub and where they were directed to, and this data could be broken down further.

- The Chair commented that this was a huge area of unmet need and when young people reached a certain age and their GP or parents wanted them to be referred to the service and they did not want to be and if there was any sense of this unmet need. Officers stated that in those situations the services would offer sources of support for the parent offering signposting to pass on to the young person for when the young person was ready and this sat alongside the someone to talk to service run by Centre 33, offering open access to young people in a number of locations across the county. Officers explained that self-referral was relatively new but was well thought of by the providers but there was still work to be done.

- Welcomed the extended services for mental health for young people up to the age of 25.

- A member highlighted that recommendation d should read delegating authority and not delegating responsibility. All Committee members agreed with the word change.

It was resolved by majority to:

a) approve the proposed recommissioning of the YOUnited Service jointly with NHS Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Integrated Care Board (ICB) at the current annual value of £350,000 p.a. (funded through the Public Health Grant) beginning 1st July 2026 to 31st March 2028. Inflationary uplifts may be added to this as deemed necessary within the allocation of the annual Public Health grant uplift. This will enable a review of the CYP Mental Health services to be undertaken and allow sufficient time for a reprocurement.

b) agree for Cambridgeshire County Council's Public Health team to work with the ICB (the lead commissioner) to ensure the service specification and improved performance measures are in line with the Health and Wellbeing Board/ICP recommendations around whole-system working for children and young people's mental health. Depending on Peterborough City Council's decision regarding the same consideration, this could involve a tri-partite agreement, as is the current contractual case.

c) delegate authority for awarding and executing the Section 76 Partnering Arrangement with the ICB for the provision of the YOunited service starting 1st June 2026 to the Executive Director Adults, Health and Commissioning in

consultation with the Chair and Vice-chair of the Children & Young People's Committee.

8. Recommissioning the National Child Weight Management Programme

The committee received a report that described the National Child Weight Management (NCWM) Programme, its importance and how it was commissioned in Cambridgeshire. The committee was asked to consider the recommendations for recommissioning the programme and securing support for the proposed commissioning approach.

In presenting the report officers highlighted a number of key points:

- Commented that ideally this service would have been included in the Healthy Child Programme, but procurement regulations had not allowed for this as there had to be a competitive tender.

- Historically the NCWM sat in adult services, and it was thought it would be better to sit in children's services to ensure better outcomes and to have closer relationships in children's services.

- The service had been joint with Peterborough City Council since 2017. A small team carried out the service. Splitting the funding would mean the team would be divided and there would be no potential savings around management.

- The Healthy Child Programme had the same provider and there were many links, building pathways with a joint service provider.

- The service had maintained the national target of 90% of children weighed across all schools with a target of 92% and the team were well known and accepted within schools.

- The length of the proposed contract aligned with the end of the child weight management service.

Individual members raised the following issues in relation to the report:

- Sought more granular data on the impact of childhood obesity on areas of deprivation listed in figure one of the report. The Deputy Director of Public Health explained that there was a more granular report but had to be careful with small numbers. Had a good schools-based service which had recently been renamed 'School Age Health Improvement Service', about working with schools and communities.

- Queried if the service covered all types of schools including academies. The Deputy Director of Public Health explained that this was a mandatory service for all maintained schools and had started to go into special schools. Also had a grant scheme running recently that reached over 24,000 children in schools across Cambridgeshire who had received grants to do a wide range of projects in

relation to physical activity, and this was currently being reviewed in terms of impact.

- A member highlighted that recommendation d should read delegating authority and not delegating responsibility. All Committee members agreed with the word change.

It was resolved unanimously to:

a) re-commission the National Child Measurement Programme (NCMP) as a shared programme across Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council.

b) that Peterborough City Council (PCC) delegates to Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) the authority, through a Delegation and Partnership agreement to recommission the NCMP on its behalf whereby CCC will act as lead commissioner and undertake the procurement and ongoing contract management.

c) the contract has a total value of £475,000 over 3 years and 2 months with no break options. The total value is comprised of the following different funding streams.

    I. CCC: £332,500
    II. PCC: £142,500

d) delegate authority for awarding and executing a contract for the provision of the NCMP starting October 1, 2025, and ending on the 30 November 2028 to the Executive Director of Children's Services.

9. Children in Care Residential Strategy: Additional Property

The committee received a report which sought approval for the commissioning of a new Children in Care Residential Service (the Service) for 2 children's placements for children with complex needs and challenging behaviour. This was to be delivered by an external provider, through a council-owned property. The service would mitigate pressures on the supply of children's residential placements within the county and budget, as well as offering greater stability for children in care in line with the Cambridgeshire County Council's (the Council's) residential strategy.

Individual members raised the following issues in relation to the report:

- Sought clarity on the differences in savings between solo use and dual use of the property outline in the table at 2.7 in the report. Officers stated that the reason for the difference in savings was that each individual child had different needs and some more complex than other meaning that they could only be placed on their own.

- Queried if the only external opinion on the service would be through OFSTED. Officers clarified that OFSTED were the regulator and would undertake their

regular visits. The local authority who was also external to the provider would undertake quality assurance and contract meetings. A member commented that they felt more information was needed about what the local authority were buying into in terms of a service level agreement. Officers explained that the provider was OFSTED regulated and complied with all of the relevant legislation and standards and there was a service specification that had to be adhered to ensure that all of the requirements were set out in terms of quality and the terms and conditions had clauses in there to manage the quality of care expected.

- Stated that there was no mention of local government reorganisation and as it was a long contract who would have the responsibility to maintain the contract. Officers explained that it was standard to have a break clause in all contracts and there was no further clarity as to which organisation would have the responsibility going forwards.

- A member highlighted that recommendation c should include the contract length. All Committee members agreed for the wording to be added.

It was resolved unanimously to:

a) agree the recommendation to externally commission the delivery of the Service in the County utilising Council owned property for children with complex needs and challenging behaviour.

b) agree the recommendation that the Service will be tendered either via the Children's External Placement p-DPS (pseudo-Dynamic Purchasing System) or via a competitive flexible procedure.

c) delegate authority for awarding and executing a contract for the provision of the Service starting during 2026 (full date to be confirmed subject to building refurbishment and successful tender for provider and subsequent extension periods up to 10 years - 5 year period 2+2+1) to the Executive Director Children and Families in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Children and Young People Committee.

10. Finance Monitoring Report – Outturn 2024-25

The committee considered a report set out the budget outturn for 2024-25 for Children, Education and Families.

In presenting the report the Executive Director for Children, Education and Families highlighted a number of key points:

- There was an overall overspend of £6.92 million.

- The external placements budget overspent by £7.5 million and this was primarily driven by the number of young people requiring care and limited availability of suitable and in county providers. The shortage of care placements was a

national issue and it was anticipated that the block contracts outlined in a previous report on the agenda would have a positive impact on some of these costs.

- Vacancy factor underspent by £1.48 million due to workforce controls and some roles harder to recruit to

- Education strategic management budget underspent by £2.06 million as result of the continuation of the Household Support Fund.

- The Home to School Transport Service overspent by £2.64 million as demand was driven by increasing numbers of children and young people meeting the eligibility criteria for transport and inflationary costs within the transport sector.

- The Dedicated Schools Grant revised deficit of £40 million was brought forward in 2024-25 and to the end of March this year was £22.8 million.

Individual members raised the following issues in relation to the report:

- A member questioned how accurate the forecasting of budget had been in previous years and if the authority had learnt from any mistakes made in forecasting previously. The Executive Director of Children Education and Families explained that forecasting had been done, for example, on external placements however the authority had not predicted that in year placement numbers would double, combined with the complications in the marketplace. He explained that the forecasting going forward would include this greater increase. The member queried what had caused the doubling of placements. The Executive Director of Children Education and Families explained that there was an increase in residential placements for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children and a growth of children in care and some of this was linked to the national transfer scheme. He explained that the local authority received a grant as part of the scheme but that the grant did not cover the costs.

- A member highlighted the underspends in family support and safeguarding which they found concerning and queried how the underspends would be utilised going forwards. The Executive Director of Children, Education and Families explained that there was a low rate of children coming into care across the region and Cambridgeshire had the third lowest rate in the region. He explained that some of the underspend was grant carry forwards and this was used to offset overspends elsewhere.

- A member expressed his view that some of the children in care homes were not just naughty but downright evil, smashing cars up, running away from home and they were on drugs, and it was a case that they had learnt from their bad parents not to react correctly. The Executive Director of Children, Education and Families stated that it was important to recognise that any child in care was a child that had experienced early childhood trauma. It was that trauma that could often lead to difficult behaviours and emotional responses to challenging situations which children and young people found difficult to manage themselves. He explained that sometimes this could manifest in difficult behaviours but that it was important

that everyone remembered that under that behaviour was a child that had experienced something incredibly difficult and something that had changed the way that they were able to manage their own emotions, often putting themselves at serious risk rather than other people and it was the local authority's responsibility to ensure that they receive quality consistent care which allowed them to grow up into a responsible adult in society and achieve their ambitions. He recognised the comment about coming from an unstable home environment and explained that there was a targeted support service that was a broad offer for many families and the low rates of children in care within the county was evidence that the targeted support was doing a good job in supporting families to make positive changes earlier on.

- A member stated that all members had a responsibility for these children as corporate parents and that members should be careful about labelling children as naughty children, and that children were reacting to the situations that they had been subject to which were through no fault or control of their own.

- A member commented that at one of the Council meetings in the previous term, every councillor was issued with a card reminding them that they had made ten promises to children in their care, because as corporate parents it was their responsibility to listen to the looked after children and meet their needs in a way that they needed to hear from them and enable them to thrive as children. Also, a series of pledges were made to care leavers to ensure that they would be given the opportunities to be the best people they could be. These young people were amazingly resilient and full of ideas.

It was resolved to note the report.

11. School Uniform Guidance

The committee received a report which outlined Feedback from schools regarding school uniform policies following changes to school uniform statutory guidance and subsequent non-statutory guidance.

Individual members raised the following issues in relation to the report:

- Queried what the next steps would be in terms of monitoring the guidance. The Service Director for Education explained that through the regular network meetings with primary heads, secondary head and MAT CEOs there would be regular opportunities to review the costs of school uniforms.

- Queried why the first survey conducted by the council had been unsuccessful. The Service Director for Education explained that there had been issues with the communication of the survey which officers had reviewed to ensure that the benefits for completing the survey were clearly articulated to schools.

- Highlighted that the wider piece of work and subsequent report had been carried out following a previous motion at Full Council which had been widely supported by Members.

- Requested a copy of the findings of the report that had been emailed to schools. **Action Required.**

- Queried if the authority had figures of the number of schools that did not have a uniform and questioned if there was any measurement on how this had affected morale and behaviour. The Service Director for Education explained that she could confirm numbers and get feedback from the schools on the rationale behind that. **Action Required.**

It was resolved to note how schools have responded to the change in guidance within Cambridgeshire and that information was shared with all Head teachers and Governors and be aware of follow up actions.

12. Recommissioning Drug and Alcohol Treatment Services for Children and Young People

The committee considered a report which was brought to members for information following approval of the recommendations at the Adults and Health Committee on January 23, 2025. The report related to the recommissioning of Drug and Alcohol Services for Children and Young People which was funded from the Public Health Grant. The report provided the background information and complexities associated with the recommissioning of Children and Young People's drug and alcohol treatment services along with the procurement and commissioning approach.

Individual members raised the following issues in relation to the report:

- Queried if there were prevention programmes in schools particularly in relation to vaping. The Deputy Director of Public Health explained there were numerous programmes around substance misuse with very experienced clinicians supporting them and there was a separate programme in relation to smoking and vaping. She explained that the School Age Health Improvement Service also tackled vaping

- Commended the work being done by the service and highlighted the importance of addressing not only drug and alcohol misuse but also the wider factors that influence substance misuse and the overall health and wellbeing outcomes in relation to socio-economic factors.

- Questioned if there was any evidence in relation to babies born to mothers that misuse drugs or alcohol that they were at higher risk of misuse in later life. The Deputy Director of Public Health explained that there were two factors to this, the physical effects that this might have and whether children go on to misuse in later life. She explained that any physical effects were closely monitored throughout childhood and that there was additional support to families.

- Queried if there was any evidence that young people that required the service had started their encounters through vaping. The Deputy Director of Public Health stated that this transition had not been widely documented as yet but that

there were many other factors that influenced drug and alcohol misuse. She stated that it was something to be watched over a period of time.

It was resolved unanimously to consider and support the following recommendations that were approved by the Adults and Health Committee.

a) to renew the Section 75 for the provision of the Children and Young People's Drug and Alcohol Treatment Service with the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough NHS Foundation Trust (CPFT) for 7 years at a total value of £3,532,613, with the option of breaks at years 3 and 5.

b) to delegate authority for awarding and executing the Section 75 for providing the Children and Young People's Drug and Alcohol Treatment Service starting 1 April 2026, to the Executive Director Adults, Health, and Commissioning in consultation with the Chair and Vice-chair of the Adults, Health, and Commissioning Committee.

13. Agenda Plan, Training Plan, Appointments to Internal Advisory Groups and Outside Bodies

Members noted that Councillor Darren Green would like to be considered for the Cambridgeshire Music Forum and Schools Forum.

It was resolved to:

i. review its agenda plan attached at Appendix 1.

ii. review its training plan attached at Appendix 2.

iii. review the appointments to outside bodies as detailed in Appendix 3.

iv. review the appointments to Internal Advisory Groups and Panels as detailed in Appendix 4.

v. note the LA Governor Nominations/Appointments for Jan – March 2025 as detailed Appendix 5.

Chair

Appendix 1

Children and Young People Committee

3 June 2025

	Question from:	**Question/ comment:**
1	Ms Liz Day	Will the Committee confirm that no part of the Cambridgeshire Safety Valve agreement, Better Value programme, or SEND Transformation Plan will override or delay lawful statutory entitlements under the Children and Families Act 2014, and will the Council commit to publicly demonstrating how person-centred outcomes—not financial constraints—are the basis for decisions in Education, Health, and Care provision?
	Response from:	**Response:**
	Councillor Edna Murphy, Chair, Children and Young People Committee	We certainly can provide reassurance that all aspects of our SEND / Inclusion strategic plans ensure that we fulfil our legal duties, whilst striving to meet children and young people needs more effectively and earlier whilst also balancing the need to ensure that our use of public funds offers the best possible value for money. The Council's legal duties to identify and assess the special educational needs of children and young people for whom it is responsible are set out within The Children and Families Act 2014 (section 19) and associated SEND Code of Practice. Specifically, for those with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) detailing the councils legal duty to ensure the support they require to access education. In Cambridgeshire the strategic improvement plans for SEND/Inclusion are designed to meet the challenges that we face locally and that are mirrored nationally. For example, noting that in a National Audit Office (NAO) inquiry conducted between May and September 2024 it found that EHC plans had increased from 240,000 in January 2015 to 576,000 in January 2024, an increase of 140%. Since 2020 in Cambridgeshire our EHCPs have increased from 5331 to 8500. Despite investment both locally and nationally, the increase in demand continues to eclipse the funding available to meet this demand. Cambridgeshire County Council entered into a Safety Valve agreement with the DFE in March 2023. The Safety Valve agreement was intended to provide additional funding to help Cambridgeshire manage its high needs funding deficit. To date, the Council has only received part of the DFE allocation (21.5 m of an agreed 49m) that was agreed, and new proposals were submitted in October 2024 to release the remaining funding, but we remain in discussion with the DFE about this. Despite the disparity between available funding and demand, the Council must operate within legal guidelines. Inclusion for All is the approach adopted by the Council to ensure that children and young people with SEND can thrive. Inclusion for All is an ambitious, child-centred, approach that puts children at the heart of our improvement planning. One example of this, commented on within the recent Ofsted report published on May 13th is the

	Question from:	Question/ comment:
		programme to implement more Enhanced Resource Bases enabling more children to remain on mainstream school sites whilst accessing specialist support. The recent Ofsted inspection recognised that the Council has a coherent plan and that this is starting to have impact but the experience for children and young people with SEND is inconsistent and variable across the County. An area for development is the timeliness and quality of EHCPs. This has been impacted by the level of demand and the available capacity to meet that demand. The Council has invested additional funding to ensure that there is increased capacity within the workforce. Additional Educational Psychologists are being recruited, and further work is underway to ensure the right support is in the right places to address the inconsistency of experience for children and young people with SEND across the County through the implementation of Inclusion for All. To summarise, our approach is driven by the needs of children and young people and underpinned by a financial plan not the other way round.