

CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

At a meeting of the **CHILDREN'S SERVICES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** held at Council Chamber, Priory House, Monks Walk, Shefford on Tuesday, 1 March 2011

PRESENT

Cllr J Street (Chairman)
Cllr Mrs D B Gurney (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors:	Mrs A Barker	Councillors:	Dr R Egan
	P A Blaine		P Hollick
	D Bowater		K Janes
	N B Costin		A Shadbolt

Parental Co-optees: Mrs H Copley
D Landman

Roman Catholic Co-optee: Mr J Reynolds

Apologies for Absence: Mrs F Image, Church of England Co-optee
Mr B Sear, Parent Co-optee

Members in Attendance: Cllrs J G Jamieson
Mrs A M Lewis, Portfolio Holder Children's Services
Mrs C Turner, Assistant to the Portfolio Holder
Children's Services,

Officers in Attendance:	Mr B Carter	Overview & Scrutiny Manager
	Mrs M Clampitt	Committee Services Officer
	Mrs E Grant	Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Children's Services
	Mr S Morrow	School Improvement Officer
	Mr R Parsons	Head of School Organisation and Capital Planning
	Mr B Pearson	Head of Joint Strategic Commissioning

CS/10/96 **Minutes**

RESOLVED

that the minutes of the meeting of the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 25 January 2011 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

CS/10/97 Members' Interests**(a) Personal Interests:-**

There were no declarations made.

(b) Personal and Prejudicial Interests:-

There were no declarations made.

(c) Any Political Whip in relation to items on the agenda:-

There were no declarations made.

CS/10/98 Chairman's Announcements and Communications

The Chairman had no announcements or communications.

CS/10/99 Petitions

No petitions were received from members of the public in accordance with the Public Participation Procedure as set out in Annex 2 of Part A4 of the Constitution.

CS/10/100 Questions, Statements or Deputations

The Chairman confirmed that no questions, statements or deputations from members of the public had been received in accordance with Public Participation Procedure as set out in Annex 1 of Part A4 of the Constitution.

CS/10/101 Call-In

No decisions from the Executive were referred to the Committee for review in accordance with Procedure Rule 10.10 of Part D2.

CS/10/102 Requested Items

No items were referred to the Committee for consideration at the request of a Member under Procedure Rule 3.1 of Part D2 of the Constitution.

CS/10/103 Portfolio Holder Update

The Portfolio Holder for Children's Services provided the Committee with the following information:-

- The Council had received a grant from the Henley Review which would be within 10% of the grant received last year. The fees would still be adjusted but by a lesser amount. It was noted that a report was to be considered at the Executive on 15 March which would contain the new fee levels. It was confirmed that the increase would be marginally under 70%.
- PRU – it was noted that the process was continuing with the tenders having been awarded and the confirmatory interviews to be held by Friday 4 March 2011. Once the interviews had been concluded, the decision would be made public.
- An overview of achievements during the municipal year in Children's Services.
- An acknowledgement of the hard work School Governors undertook on behalf of schools in Central Bedfordshire.
- Details regarding two bids made by educational establishments within Central Bedfordshire to create University Technical Colleges (UTCs). One bid in particular from Central Bedfordshire College, proposing a site in Houghton Regis, was the subject of further discussion and Members agreed to invite the Principal of Central Bedfordshire College to a future Children's Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee to discuss the UTC should the college be successful.

CS/10/104 **Overview of Budget for Children's Services**

The Deputy Chief Executive / Director of Children's Services gave three presentations, which covered the following areas:-

- a brief update on the impact of the budget settlement both nationally and locally:-

Members agreed to receive a report towards the end of the calendar year covering residential care for disabled children. This was already on the officer's workplan for an Executive report.

- update on the youth commission:-

Members agreed to receive a presentation at their next meeting covering a possible performance data set for child poverty and early intervention.

- the impact of the Education Bill on the Dunstable and Houghton Regis Review

A copy of the presentation slides are attached to these minutes at **Appendix A**.

CS/10/105 **Outcomes of the Review of Transforming Teaching and Learning in Dunstable and Houghton Regis**

The Portfolio Holder for Children's Services informed the Committee that the purpose of the meeting today was to consider the information provided and agree in principle options going forward. A more detailed report exploring agreed options would then be presented at the 24 May 2011 meeting prior to Executive consideration of the report at its meeting on 31 May 2011. The Committee acknowledged the start of the review process and were pleased to learn that there would be more opportunity for consultation.

Officers provided an overview of the in-depth analysis which had been carried out to create the four options which were in front of the Committee for consideration today.

Option 1:- a continuation of the current 3 tier model but with schools formally engaged in hard federations, Academy chains and/or trusts:-

The Committee discussed in some detail the advantages and disadvantages of staying with the 3 tier system currently in place. The main concern for this option was the overwhelming need to ensure higher outcomes and results compared to recent years. It was noted that the results of federations had varied in Central Bedfordshire however it was felt that given time and clear guidance this system could work well.

The Committee agreed to consider Options 2 – 4 at the same time as there was small differences between the Options as detailed below:-

Option 2 – two tier 5 – 11 and 11 – 19 (close all Middle Schools):-

Officers informed the Committee that the costs indicated within the report did not include any funds to improve the existing conditions of the sites. The Committee felt that Option 2 was an unrealistic option and did not consider it any further.

Option 3 – two tier 5 – 11 and 11 – 19 Secondary Schools (close all Middle schools) – each secondary operating across 3 sites (ie existing upper and two former middle school sites).

The Committee expressed concerns at the schools being spread out over the sites and how the students would access the various sites. Whilst it was acknowledged that large schools were not always a bad idea, leadership can be problematical. The Committee did not feel that this was the best way forward but should not be ignored completely.

Option 4 – two tier 5-11 and 11-19 (close all Middle Schools) limiting each Secondary in size to its existing capacity.

The Committee felt that this would be an advantageous option going forward but were also realistic about the financial implications. The Committee noted that the whole consultation and implementation process would not be

completed for some considerable time yet and that by then it was hoped the Council would be in a better financial position. The Committee felt that the Council should consider this Option as its preferred option going forward, together with Option 1.

The Committee therefore agreed to recommend in principle and for further consideration Options 1 and 4, subject to finances being available, otherwise option 3 should be considered instead of option 4. The Committee noted that further analysis of these preferred options would be brought to the 24 May 2011 meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee prior to Executive consideration on 31 May 2011.

Cllr Dr R Egan proposed an amendment to only consider Option 4 but this was not supported.

RESOLVED

1. **that the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee noted the progress of the Dunstable and Houghton Regis review.**
2. **that Options 1 and 4 be agreed in principle (subject to finances being available, otherwise Options 1 and 3) for further consideration at the 24 May 2011 Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee to allow for comment to be referred for Executive's consideration on 31 May 2011.**

CS/10/106

Work Programme 2010 - 2011 & Executive Forward Plan

Members considered the report of the Chief Executive which provided details of the current committee work programme and the latest Executive Forward Plan.

Members agreed that a presentation on performance and data measures for Child Poverty & Early Intervention be brought to the 29 March 2011 meeting.

RESOLVED

that the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee work programme be noted.

(Note: The meeting commenced at 10.00 a.m. and concluded at 1.30 p.m.)

Chairman

Dated

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Overview & Scrutiny 1st March 2011

Three presentations:

- Brief update on the impact of the budget settlement national and local
- Update on the youth commission
- Impact of the Education Bill on the Dunstable and Houghton Regis Review

Edwina Grant

Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Children's Services

Brief update on the impact of the budget settlement national and local



- Total children's services savings agreed at Council - £3.4 m plus transport saving of £1 m out of a base of £35.5 m
- Plus, directorate share of cross cutting savings – total cross cutting efficiencies £5 m – figure to be established on the share of this to be taken by children's services
- Action plans to meet the budget savings on-going and any pressures or concerns will be reported to this Committee in the first quarter budget report for the Council's financial year 2011/12
- Pressures for children's social care have been acknowledged
- On the education side, the service is now largely linked to identified allocations from the Direct Schools Grant (see next slide)



Direct School Grant Allocation 2011/12

- SEN and Inclusion £5,629k
- Specific Grant £4,906k - to be proposed at the next School Forum meeting to be delegated to Schools through the Individual Schools Budget (ISB)
- School Support Services £1,321k
- Other Schools Budgets £ 903k (these are funds held to pay schools for adjustments in rates / pupil numbers/ joint use arrangements / redundancy etc)
- School Improvement £ 661k
- Child Information £ 70k
- Contribution to Overheads £2,076 (This contributes to Children's Services overheads of circa 10m for services such as Customer Services, Internal Audit, Communications, Policy and Performance, Business Support including the School Finance Team, all of these services are not charged to Schools)
- Should the School Forum agree to the Specific Grants being included in the ISB this would reduce the 'top slice' to 6.3%
- Academies receive money directly from Young People's Learning Agency for Behaviour Support, Education Welfare etc.



Early Intervention Grant 2011/12

Total Grant: £8.9m – roll up of a number of previous Grants – c. £3 m less than previous Grants
Allocated to activity that is on going in the Council and is not subject to budget reductions

- Health - £802k – substance misuse, teenage pregnancy prevention, mental health
- Early Intervention and Prevention - £898k – parenting service, family intervention service, child poverty projects, e.g. access to welfare benefits etc.
- Workforce - £30k – to support statutory children’s workforce functions
- Early Years and Children’s Centres - £5.5 m – **NB: although the ring fence has been lifted for this category, the Government is considering putting back the ring fence**
- Short breaks for disabled children - £870k
- EWO, anti poverty e.g. clothing grants and other interventions - £100k
- Statutory regulatory work - £42k

Remainder allocated to youth – £960k see next slide



Early Intervention Grant 2011/12

- Commissioning for Youth - £960k – include
 - January guarantee £135k
 - Information Advice and Guidance and support for NEETS - £135k
 - Residual Connexions service - £175k
 - Foundation learning for 14 – 19 year olds in deprived areas - £120k
 - Youth Commissioning, e.g. clubs - £500k



National Issues

- Moving the Early Intervention Grant to Payment by Results
- The Henley Review and Music Hubs (The figure since notified is £393,704.00)
- The future of health visitors and school nurses in the NHS reforms
- Future reductions to the Youth Offending Service
- Possible national funding formula
- The use of the pupil premium in schools
- New responsibility for free child care for 2 year olds from 2013
- Financial impact of raising the participation age



Overview & Scrutiny 1st March 2011

Progress on the Youth Commission

Timeline for Youth Support Services Commissioning



- 1st March – Overview & Scrutiny – information only – specification will be refined
- 2nd March – Partnership Event – information only – specification will be refined
- 9th March – Support event for potential bidders – information only – last time for questioning specification
- 9th March – final issue of specification
- 10th March – Pre Qualification Questionnaire (PQQ) open
- 24th March – PQQ close
- 25th March – PQQ reviewed by Procurement
- 29th March – send out invitations to Tender
- 29th April – Tender closing date
- 3rd May – Tenders processed through Council's procurement process
- 4th May – Tenders assessed
- 12th May – Interview of preferred bidders
- 13th May – Due diligence
- 31st May – Contracts issued through Executive – exempt item (subject to call in)
- 1st June – Implementation

Tender Specification



- Builds where possible on outcome of Scrutiny Report on services to youth
- Relates to additional work over and above statutory work paid for by Early Intervention Grant - £500k
- Reason for contracting out is that providers can bring more in by bidding for Grants that the Council cannot access and by exploiting local resources
- Different options for the staff have been considered but secondment is the most cost effective option for the Council, even though it may reduce the number of bidders
- Any broadening of the specification would need to be funded as a growth or pressure in the budget
- The saving of the £1.9 m starts on 1st April 2011. This timeline impacts on the 1st June 2011, therefore already pressure of 2/12th of £1.9m - £317k (originally this saving was planned for 2012/13)
- Timeline as shown
- Details of actual specification will be available



Dunstable and Houghton Regis and the possible impacts of the Education Bill

Education Bill and our overall Policy Direction



- You are aware of our Children and Young People’s Plan which still follows our familiar themes

Transforming learning and transforming our relationships with schools

Continued focus on child protection (safeguarding)
Child Poverty, Early Intervention and Prevention

- The role of health commissioning and the Council’s involvement in public health is a significant issue for Children’s Services



Education Bill



- Power of Search in Schools and FE/repeal of notice of detention/anonymity of teachers re: complaints – LA may be involved but has no powers except to advise on complaints
- Exclusions – PRU is challenging but does fit well with this direction
- Admissions – removal of duty to have an Admission Forum/Academies
- School meals – need to link with our own proposals
- New duty on LA's to open up a competition for an Academy when a new school is proposed
- School Inspections – exempt schools – but new framework in March
- Funding scheme – new power of Secretary of State regarding funding schemes
- Curriculum changes, including English Baccalaureate

Education Bill



- Careers services – new responsibilities for schools re Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG)
- Removal of school’s duty to cooperate and have regard to Children and Young People’s Plan
- Academies:
 - Don’t need a specialism
 - Provision for 16-19 academies and PRU academies to have different characteristics in their funding agreements to academy schools – due to different functions
 - Secretary of State can make an Academy order for any school that is eligible for intervention
 - Increases circumstances in which the Secretary of State must consider the impact on maintained schools, from simply an additional (new) school to any academy that would change the pattern of provision – i.e. service a wider age group than previously
 - Local Authority land and Academies
- Other stuff (and lots of acronyms)– early years, GTC, Ofqal, TDA, FE, YPLA, Induction



Impact on Central Bedfordshire (1)

- Well placed to respond to direction of travel
- Still have to maintain statutory and other meetings
- On the Dunstable and Houghton Regis review the impact is as follows:
 - Academies
 - Free Schools
 - New role for Council as decision maker
 - Development of freedoms in the market
 - Chain Academies
 - Possible challenge based on new legislative requirements – previous school adjudicator reports will not necessarily apply



Impact on Central Bedfordshire (2)

Possible national funding formula in the future

SEN Green Paper due soon

Payment by results (PBR) in Early Intervention

Approved national strategies for Child Poverty?

Field forces from Department for Education

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