

CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

At a meeting of the **CHILDREN'S SERVICES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** held in Room 15, Priory House, Monks Walk, Shefford on Tuesday, 29 March 2011

PRESENT

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

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

Parental Co-optees: H Copley
D Landman

Church of England
Co-optee:
Roman Catholic J Reynolds
Co-optee:

Apologies for Absence: Cllrs P A Blaine
Mrs F Image
Mr B Sear

Members in Attendance: Cllrs J G Jamieson
Mrs A M Lewis, Portfolio Holder Children's Services,

Officers in Attendance:	Miss H Bell	Democratic Services Officer
	Mr B Carter	Overview & Scrutiny Manager
	Mrs S Tyler	Head of Child Poverty and Early Intervention & Prevention
	Mr M Wheeler	Interim Assistant Director Children's Services

CS/10/107 Minutes**RESOLVED**

that the Minutes of the meeting of the Childrens's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on the 1 March 2011 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record subject to an amendment to the titles of Mr J Reynolds as a Church of England Co-optee and not a Roman Catholic Co-optee and Mrs F Image, Roman Catholic Co-optee and not Church of England Co-optee.

CS/10/108 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/10/109 Chairman's Announcements and Communications

The Chairman had no announcements or communications.

CS/10/110 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/10/111 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/10/112 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/10/113 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/10/114 Portfolio Holder Update

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

- Councillor Mrs A M Lewis thanked the Committee for all of its help and work throughout the year.
- The Council had received a grant following the Henley Review of music services which was 10% less than the grant received in 2010. There was now a shortfall in the cost of providing the music service. Additionally, the non availability of previous subsidies results in the potential increase in fees and charges.
- The consultation on the changes to the music service provision ended on Monday 28 March 2011, results were to be evaluated.
- A meeting had been held on Tuesday 22 March 2001 at Dunstable Fire Station, to which all stakeholders associated with the music service were invited. It was reported that only 18 people attended which was very disappointing. In response to this, several Members of the Committee raised concern that they did not know that the meeting had taken place and that they did not receive an invite and therefore questioned the method of communication taken to inform stakeholders of the meeting. Following a detailed conversation about these concerns, Councillor Mrs A M Lewis clarified that a letter had been issued to all stakeholders and that schools had been asked to cascade the invite to all parents.
- It was noted that several letters and phone calls had been received from parents about the Special School review in Houghton Regis, wanting further information. It was noted that a further update with regard to the situation would be available when the new Council was in place.
- PRU – It was noted that the process was continuing and disaggregation was due to take place on 31 March
- A meeting had been held to discuss Youth service Commissioning and over 70 people had attended. The results of the commissioning process would be reported to the Executive on 31 May 2011.

CS/10/115 Child Poverty & Early Intervention Presentation

The Head of Early Intervention & Prevention gave a presentation on child poverty and early intervention.

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

CS/10/116 Budget Management Report Quarter ended 31st December 2010

The Committee received and considered the Budget Management report quarter ended 31 December 2010, which set out the full year forecast overspend of £1.43 million.

The Portfolio Holder for Children's Services updated the Committee on the current situation with regard to the fostering of an abandoned baby in Central Bedfordshire and congratulated Children's Services on how efficiently and effectively they had dealt with placing the baby in foster care.

Members raised a number of queries regarding the budget information, which were addressed by the Portfolio Holder for Children's Services and the Interim Assistant Director for Children's Services.

RESOLVED

- (1) that the current projected full year forecast of £1.43 overspend be noted**
- (2) that management actions as set out in paragraphs 43-45 of the report of the Portfolio Holder for Children's Services be agreed**
- (3) that the budget virements as set out in paragraph 46 of the report of the Portfolio Holder for Children's Services be noted.**

CS/10/117 Quarter Three Performance Report

The Committee received and considered the report of the Portfolio Holder for Children's Services which set out the quarter three performance for the Children's Services Directorate.

RESOLVED

That the report of the Portfolio holder for Children's Services which set out the quarter three performance for the Children's Services Directorate be noted.

CS/10/118 **Work Programme 2011 - 2012 & Executive Forward Plan**

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

RESOLVED

That the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee work programme 2010-2011 be noted.

(Note: The meeting commenced at 10.00 a.m. and concluded at 12.13 p.m.)

Chairman

Dated

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Overview and Scrutiny

29th March 2011

Child Poverty

Overview and Scrutiny

29th March 2011

- Child Poverty Strategy adopted by the Childrens Trust
- Partners integral to delivery
- Childrens Trust monitoring actions against priorities as part of established quarterly reporting mechanism

Overview and Scrutiny

29th March 2011

- Our strategy produced in line with guidance issued before the election but amended by the new government
- National Strategy not yet produced – and it may necessitate some changes to ours – rapidly developing area

Overview and Scrutiny

29th March 2011

- Objective one:
Parental Employment and Skills

Partners involved:

Economic Development partners –
Development of All age skills strategy

Job Centre Plus

Local Employers

Adult Training Partners

Overview and Scrutiny

29th March 2011

- Objective two
Financial Support

Partners Involved:

Schools

Voluntary and Community Groups offering money management and financial advice such as Citizens Advice Bureaux, Homestart, and others

Overview and Scrutiny

29th March 2011

- Objective three
Life Chances

Partners involved:

Voluntary and Community Groups running
Childrens Centres

Childcare Professionals

Schools

Health Partners

Overview and Scrutiny

29th March 2011

- Objective four
Place

Partners involved:

Health Colleagues

Housing professionals – Housing strategy

Adult Social Care colleagues

Police

Overview and Scrutiny

29th March 2011

- Data not fully available for some of the different types of poverty
 - Relative Low Income – This is the figure quoted extensively
 - BUT 2 year time lag when HMRC publish the figures around August each year

Material Deprivation, Persistent Poverty and Absolute Poverty

- Technical issues at National level regarding the measurement techniques for these types of poverty so targets not set – new government looking at other possible indicators

Overview and Scrutiny

29th March 2011

- Nationally Changing Picture
 - National Child Poverty Strategy
 - Field Review
 - Allen Review
 - Payment by Results
 - Basket of National Indicators previously used to monitor aspects of Child Poverty are being removed

What could things look like by end of 2011?

Overview and Scrutiny

29th March 2011

- Producing a National Strategy
 - Government is required by legislation to produce own strategy
 - Consultation took place until Middle February to inform the strategy
 - Wanted to hear the views, solutions and opportunities from the public, private and voluntary sectors on the best approaches to ending child poverty in a way that lasts.
 - This included what could potentially be new indicators that could be put in place
 - The question was asked:
 - Should these be simply income based or include other aspects of Life Chances

Overview and Scrutiny

29th March 2011

- Frank Field Review “ Preventing poor children becoming poor adults”

Recommends :

- new suite of measures “Life Chances Indicators” – measuring known factors predictive of future outcomes
- More support for parenting in very early years
- Gradually weighting funding towards the most disadvantaged
- Full-time care available for disadvantaged 2 year olds
- Appointment of Cabinet minister for Foundation Years

Government are considering these proposals in conjunction with production of National Child Poverty Strategy

Overview and Scrutiny

29th March 2011

- Allen Report – Early Intervention: The Next Steps
 - First report of two
 - Support for particular evidence-based programmes
 - Suggestion of creating a Foundation to evaluate programmes
 - Adopt Foundation Years of similar status to Primary and Secondary – main objective to produce school readiness.
 - More regular assessments for 0-5 year olds
 - Improved workforce capability
 - National parenting campaign
 - Several of these are shared with the Field Review
 - Second Part of report awaited – Ongoing government consideration of recommendations

Overview and Scrutiny

29th March 2011

- **Payment by Results**
 - Pilots planned during the next year to roll out payment by results for some aspects of funding for Childrens Centres
 - Consulting on how this would work in practice
 - No definitions yet of what services will be covered
 - No definitions of which criteria will be used and how they will be monitored
 - Pilot in Ministry of Justice on PBR starting to be evaluated – issues around providers/risk-taking

Overview and Scrutiny

29th March 2011

- By the end of 2011 - an emerging field of criteria
 - We should have a National Child Poverty Strategy
 - This may include new indicators
 - Life Chance indicators may be included alongside or instead of monitoring simply income levels
 - A further report on Early Intervention will have been produced
 - The government approach to Early Intervention may have crystallized
 - Pilots may have begun on Paying by Results

Overview and Scrutiny

29th March 2011

- To be monitored by the Childrens Trust – with all Partners involved
- Overview and Scrutiny will get mid year report in October
- Part of the Childrens Trust reporting mechanism
- Opportunity to give advice to the Trust on how the work is going

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