
Meeting: Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Date: 23 November 2010
Subject: Future Provision of Bedfordshire Music Service
Report of: Cllr Mrs Anita Lewis, Portfolio Holder for Children's Services
Summary: The report proposes options with regard to future provision and management arrangements for the Music Service when the Service Level Agreement with Bedford Borough Council comes to an end in March 2011. This report does not include the Sensory Impairment Music Therapy Service which is covered in the Special Educational Needs report.

Advising Officer: Edwina Grant, Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Children's Services
Contact Officer: Sylvia Gibson, Interim Assistant Director, Learning & Strategic Commissioning
Public/Exempt: Public
Wards Affected: All
Function of: Executive

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

Bedfordshire Music supports the following Council priority:

- Educating, protecting and providing opportunities for children and young people.

It also contributes to the Children and Young People's Plan, the Key Stage 2 and 3 Curriculum strategies, the Music Manifesto and the Government's aspirations for music education.

Service community outreach work aims to help people at all stages of life participate in and enjoy music, supporting individuals in reaching their full potential in developing their musical skills. Projects and programmes are targeted at particular areas of need within schools and the community.

Financial:

The Music Service is currently funded as follows:

Central Bedfordshire Council	£272,000.00
Bedford Borough Council	£346,000.00 * subject to review
Central Bedfordshire Council Standards Fund	£437,000.00
Bedford Borough Council Standards Fund	£285,000.00
Income from fees, charges & other activities	£1,105,000.00

The intention is that the new arrangements will deliver a cost neutral service in 2012/13.

Legal:

On 1 April 2009 the former Bedfordshire County Council's obligations for the provision of music services transferred to Central Bedfordshire Council and Bedford Borough Council. It was agreed that Central Bedfordshire Council would host the Music Service and maintain it as a shared service.

The Deputy Chief Executive/Director of Children's Services has overall responsibility for the delivery of the service supported by a financial contribution from Bedford Borough Council.

Risk Management:

Developing a more sustainable option for the provision and management of the Music Service is expected to reduce the risk of service failure. At the time of writing the report an Audit Report for the Service is being drafted which is expected to contain some recommendations for improvement.

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

In implementing new service arrangements, a consultation with schools will be required.

Changes to the staffing structure will be the subject of a separate full consultation with all staff at risk. Central Bedfordshire will fully consider the rights of staff in the Music Service including the TUPE rights of permanent staff in the Music Service.

Equalities/Human Rights:

An Equalities Impact Assessment has been undertaken.

Community Safety:

N/A

Sustainability:

N/A

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee considers the report and comments on the options to be presented to the Executive at its meeting on the 7 December 2010.

Background

1. Bedfordshire Music is a Music Education Support Service for the schools and communities of Central Bedfordshire and Bedford Borough councils. It is a shared service, hosted by Central Bedfordshire Council. Its present core activities focus upon the provision of instrumental teaching and learning opportunities for children, young people and families, and the provision of a range of additional enrichment activities, concerts, events and projects provided both in schools and in communities.
2. The Service Level Agreement with Bedford Borough Council comes to an end in March 2011. This has provided an opportunity for both Central Bedfordshire Council and Bedford Borough Council to review the existing arrangements.
3. Pressures on local government finances and the need to make savings from the Council's base budget require a consideration of the way the service is delivered, its current methods of operation and alternative methods of delivery, with a view to contributing to the Council's savings target.
4. An analysis of the cost of Bedfordshire's Music Service indicates that whilst the Service is well known for its high quality, this is at a significant cost when compared to our statistical group of Councils and near geographical neighbours.
5. The long-term sustainability of the Service is dependent upon having certainty with regard to its level of public subsidy.

Current Service Provision

6. The Service regularly engages some 10,000 children, young people and adults each week, and has an annual turnover in excess of £3 million. The cost of all opportunities currently provided by Bedfordshire Music is subsidised by local authority and/or Music Standards funding at levels between 50% and 100%. Additional Government funding streams over recent years have enabled the Service to provide a number of free learning and enrichment opportunities, particularly for primary aged children.
7. Service provision comprises:
 - Instrumental and vocal lessons in whole class, group and individual learning settings in schools and communities
 - A first access vocal learning programme to all lower schools
 - Curriculum support and enrichment projects in lower and middle schools
 - Special Schools Music IT projects
 - Instrumental day events and workshops
 - Master Classes
 - Concerts and celebration opportunities
 - Five Community Music Centres:
 - Mark Rutherford School, Bedford
 - Redborne Upper School, Ampthill
 - Holmemead Middle School, Biggleswade
 - Vandyke Upper School, Leighton Buzzard

- Manshead Upper School, Dunstable
 - Extended service ensemble opportunities
 - Youth Opera company
 - Rock Schools
 - School based ensemble delivery
 - Live music concerts in schools, residential care homes and day centres
 - Specialist professional development provision for school teachers
 - Local and regional vocal training and advocacy for school teachers and music leaders (until March 2011).
- 8 Youth music groups and ensembles meet on a course basis during school holiday periods. Each course ends with a concert performance. At present there are:
- 5 County Youth orchestras ranging from junior to advanced levels
 - 3 County Youth Wind Bands ranging from junior to advanced levels
 - A Youth Opera company
 - A series of chamber music courses
 - A percussion course
 - A jazz course.
- 9 Students from Luton and Milton Keynes are invited to participate in youth music course activities. At present these opportunities are projected to reach up to 600 children and young people during the current academic year.
- 10 Bedfordshire Music employs a team of up to 227 staff (86.97 full time equivalent staff), comprising leadership and management teams, an administration team and teaching teams.
- 11 The service is a trading business unit. The majority of charges are made directly to parents and carers. These charges and others shown later in the report will be subject to consultation in the fees and charges report to be presented to the Executive. This is shown in the Forward Plan to be in December 2010.
12. The Service manages a stock of musical instruments which are loaned free of charge to students receiving lessons from its teachers. At present all first access learners, and continued learners of string, brass and the majority of woodwind learners have access to service instruments. These instruments are also hired to community groups for a small fee. This area of work can be developed.
13. The Service operates an assisted purchase scheme enabling parents/carers to purchase instruments for their children free of V.A.T. The service is operated in line with current tax legislation and a small administration charge is made for this service.
- 14 The Service provides a comprehensive sheet music library, predominately orchestral, band and choral works, which is available to service staff and local authority schools at no charge. A hire charge is made to community groups and to other local authority groups who access the library.

Governance

15. The Bedfordshire Music Trust, a registered charity, was founded in 1999. A Music Partnership Board was established in 2003 with a view to full transfer to the Bedfordshire Music Trust. This did not occur and, as all of the risks and liabilities associated with the Service rest with Central Bedfordshire Council as the host authority; the arrangements with the Music Partnership Board have been ended. In the absence of a transfer to a full Trust, the Partnership Board which was essentially a meeting of Trustees from the Bedfordshire Music Trust and representatives from the Council, both Members and officers. This Partnership Board had no formal accountability. The accountability for the delivery of Children's Services remained with the Director of Children's Services as is required in statute.
16. It is therefore necessary to establish new governance arrangements that are representative of current accountabilities. It is appropriate, therefore, to consider the governance options in the context of any new model for future service delivery if any options other than a directly run service are finally proposed.

Service Options Appraisal

17. A Service options appraisal is attached at Appendix A where the following service management options are considered
 - Option 1 Discontinue the service
 - Option 2 Consider transferring the service to a trust.
 - Option 3 Reorganise and retain the Music Service as a shared service hosted by either Central Bedfordshire Council or Bedford Borough Council to achieve a cost neutral service whilst ensuring an appropriate offer is in place that meets local needs for music education.
 - Option 4 Reorganise and disaggregate the Music Service to achieve a cost neutral service for Central Bedfordshire whilst ensuring an appropriate offer is in place that meets local needs for music education.

Members are advised as follows:

18. Option 1: This is unlikely to be a strong option. The current provision of music services adds significantly to the learning and enrichment opportunities for children and young people and is unlikely to be an option that is responded to positively.
19. Option 2: This is unlikely to be a strong option. This option would take an estimated 18 to 24 months to implement and is likely to cost some tens of thousands of pounds of unbudgeted expenditure when the transfer rights of staff and possible liabilities are fully costed.

20. Options 3 and 4 are stronger options in the view of officers. However, Member's views are sought on all four options for further development.

Conclusion and Next Steps

21. The Executive will consider its position on the options at its meeting on the 7 December 2010. Comments from the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny committee on their preferred options for development are sought. These views will be incorporated into the development of the options in the Executive report that will be submitted to that meeting.

Appendices:

Appendix A - Service Option Appraisal

Background Papers: (open to public inspection)

None.