
Meeting: Executive
Date: 7 December 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 and Director of Children's Services
Contact Officer: Sylvia Gibson, Interim Assistant Director, Learning & Strategic Commissioning
Public/Exempt: Public
Wards Affected: All
Function of: Executive
Key Decision Yes
Reason for urgency/ exemption from call-in (if appropriate) Not applicable

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 ¹

¹ 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.

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.

Due to Base Budget savings a full staff restructure is planned.

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 equality impact assessment is attached at Appendix B.

Community Safety:

N/A

Sustainability:

N/A

Summary of Overview and Scrutiny Comments:

- At its meeting of 23 November 2010, the Children's Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee considered the future provision of Bedfordshire Music Service and in particular examined the 4 service options presented. Members debated at length the key issues affecting the service and also received an ePetition from members of the public entitled "Save the Music Service", which currently has 391 signatures and draws to a close on 15th December 2010.

It was Members' opinion that insufficient regard had been given to collaborating with interested parties to identify creative ways to preserve the service and moreover, the service review itself was ill-timed, given that the outcomes flowing from the independent Henley review of music education would be available for consideration before the end of the year. The Committee therefore agreed the following recommendations for Executive consideration:

1. That the Executive be requested to reserve its decision until such time as the outcomes of the Henley Review have been published and ensure that nothing irrevocable is done to the music service in the meantime;
2. That the Executive take steps to bring together at the earliest opportunity a small representative group of interested people to identify creative ways in which to achieve retention of Bedfordshire Music Service; and
3. That the Executive receive and respond to the ePetition entitled "Save the Music Service".

RECOMMENDATION(S):

- 1. That the Executive considers all the options and agrees that the Music Service moves forward with disaggregating from Bedford Borough Council on 31 August 2011.**
- 2. That the Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Children's Services, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Children's Services, takes forward detailed work on the re-design of the service to meet required efficiencies for the service whilst ensuring an appropriate offer is in place that meets local needs for music education in Central Bedfordshire.**

Reason for Recommendation(s): The Service Level Agreement with Bedford Borough Council for the provision of a shared Music Service, which is led by Central Bedfordshire Council is due to end on 31st March 2011. In the light of this, current provision has been reviewed and options for the future delivery of the Music Service have been explored. At its meeting of 2nd November 2010 Executive agreed proposed efficiency savings as set forward in the budget efficiencies report by the Portfolio Holder for Children's Services outlining savings to the Music Service as part of the wider efficiencies savings. On the basis of the imperative to ensure these efficiencies, Executive is asked to decide their preferred option for future delivery of the Music Service.

Executive Summary

This report sets out the current configuration of the Music Service as a shared service provided by Central Bedfordshire Council on behalf of Bedford Borough Council. As this Service Level Agreement is due to come to an end on 31st March 2011 the report sets out four options for the future delivery of the Music Service. These are an option to end provision; an option to delegate to a Trust; an option to continue the SLA as a shared service; and an option to disaggregate from Bedford Borough Council and provide a service for Central Bedfordshire.

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. It is unclear whether the Music Standards Fund will be maintained in the future.

Current Service Provision

6. The Service regularly engages some 10,000 children, young people and adults each week. 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 will be subject to consultation in the fees and charges report to be presented to the Executive 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 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. Regular officer to officer and Lead Member to Lead Member meetings have taken place across the two councils. Bedford Borough Council has been kept apprised of the options for the future and has received a draft copy of this report. Bedford Borough Council has been asked to give their views formally on this report.
18. 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.

Appendix A sets out the options for full consideration. Members are advised as follows:

19. 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.

20. 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 a minimum of £300,000 of unbudgeted expenditure when the transfer rights of staff and possible liabilities are fully costed.
21. Options 3 and 4 could be considered stronger options in the view of officers.

Conclusion and Next Steps

22. The Executive is asked to consider all the options and make a decision on the future delivery of the Music Service.

Appendices:

Appendix A – Service Option Appraisal

Appendix B – Equality Impact Assessment

Background Papers: (open to public inspection)

Corporate Budget Strategy – Appendix B (Executive Agenda Item 8, 2nd November 2010)

Location of papers: (Priory House, Chicksands)