

Children's Services Committee: 30 November 2010**Comments Regarding Savings Proposals contained within the Corporate Budget Strategy Report presented to Executive on 2 November 2010**

At its meeting of 30 November 2010, the Children's Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee considered the viability and suitability of specific proposals relating to the Children's Services Directorate. Detailed below are the outcomes flowing from this meeting.

1. CS4 – Special Education Needs – Service Reductions

Whilst the Committee reluctantly endorsed (by majority vote, 6 for, 2 against & 2 abstentions) the general direction of service delivery as set out in this proposal, it also requested the Director of Children's Services to take on board the following comments and refer such to the Executive. The Committee also requested that the Executive feedback its response to such comments to the next meeting of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee:

- (i) The Committee found it very difficult to assess the implications of the proposal without a concise definition of the phrase "truly vulnerable" and suggested that without such a definition an informed decision could not be reached.
- (ii) It was the Committee's opinion that there was insufficient detail contained within the proposal to assess its full consequences on service delivery.
- (iii) As a result of the two previous comments, it was the Committee's opinion that the saving proposed in year 2 (i.e. 2012/13) of £272k should not proceed without a much more detailed report to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee, which would describe the implications of the proposal on service delivery (the Committee was content however to support the Director of Children's Services in implementing the saving proposal of £128k in 2011/12).

RECOMMENDATION: That the Executive notes the Overview & Scrutiny Committee's reluctant endorsement of the general direction of service delivery as set out in the proposal, whilst responding to the comments set out in Items 1(i) to 1(iii) above.

2. CS5 – Remodelling of Services to Young People including the Youth Service – Service Reduction

Whilst considering this proposal, the Portfolio Holder drew Members' attention to a supplementary savings proposal regarding this service, which would be considered by the Executive at its meeting on 7 December. In essence, this supplementary proposal recommended

accelerating service reductions so that all were achieved in 2011/12, rather than the phased approach over 2011/12 and 2012/13 as originally planned.

Members were particularly dismayed at this latest initiative, which in their opinion would not allow sufficient time to build capacity and provide training and support to the voluntary sector and schools that a move away from council run provision to a commissioning approach would require.

The Committee therefore agreed to urge the Executive to consider adopting the original 2 phased approach to the remodelling of services to young people.

RECOMMENDATION: Whilst reluctantly acknowledging the need to support the remodelling of services to young people, the Overview & Scrutiny Committee urges the Executive to adopt a 2 phased approach to the proposal, as originally outlined (i.e. a saving of £570k in 2011/12 and a further saving of £1.328M in 2012/13).

3. CS8 – Parenting Support – Service Reduction

The Committee was content to endorse in principle this saving proposal.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Executive implements the saving proposal outlined.

4. CS9 – Music Service

The Committee was content to reiterate and endorse the recommendations agreed at its meeting on 23 November regarding this particular savings proposal, which are outlined within the Executive's report at Item 9 of today's agenda.

RECOMMENDATION: Please refer to the Summary of Overview & Scrutiny Comments detailed within Item 9 of the Executive's agenda of 7 December 2010.