

## Agenda Item No 2

### Children and Young People's Services Select Committee

16 January 2014 – At a meeting of the Committee held at 10.30am at County Hall, Chichester.

Present: Mr Burrett (Chairman)

Mr Barling	Mr High	Mr Parsons
Mr Blunden	Mrs Le Rossignol	Mrs Ryan (part)
Mr Cloake	Mr Oppler	Mr Smith
Mrs Duncton (part)	Mr Oxlade	Mr Wickremaratchi

In attendance by invitation: Mr Evans (Cabinet Member for Children – Start of Life).

Apologies for absence were received from Mrs Arculus and Mrs Bennett.

#### Declaration of Interests

116. There were no declarations of interest at this point, see minute 125 below.

#### Minutes

117. Resolved - That the minutes of the meeting held on 27 November 2013 be approved as a correct record and that they be signed by the Chairman.

#### West Sussex Think Family Early Help Action Plan 2014-17

118. The Committee considered a report by the Director of Children's Services (copy appended to the signed minutes).

119. Amanda Radley, Early Help Strategic Commissioning Manager, introduced the report and provided a Powerpoint presentation (copy appended to the signed minutes).

120. The Committee made comments and asked questions, including those that follow. Members: -

- Queried the financial implications of implementing the plan and how effective data sharing would be enabled. *Mrs Radley advised that initially it would be necessary to ascertain what resources were currently used for service delivery. Then, along with partner agencies, the most efficient method of providing services in a joined up way could be developed. In this respect opportunities existed to deliver services differently which would provide scope for savings in the long term. Enabling safe and effective data sharing between the County Council and partner agencies was a key challenge but the possibility of developing common approaches amongst agencies would be explored.*
- Raised concern that the cuts implemented to the youth service and resulting reduction in open access youth provision could mean children in need of help, who previously would have been identified by youth workers, would now be missed. *Mrs Radley explained that schools often also assisted in making the County Council aware when a child was in need of help. Stuart Gallimore,*

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*Director of Children's Services, advised that where open access youth provision was being delivered by an external organisation, strong communication links were developed between the County Council and that organisation. This included providing clarity about who they should inform at the Local Authority if they felt a child utilising their service needed assistance.*

- Requested a copy of the list of partner organisations that had been consulted during preparation of the action plan. *Mrs Radley agreed this would be circulated to the Committee.*
- Stressed the importance of raising awareness of the action plan widely amongst partners such as schools, school governors, doctors, district and borough councils etc. but were concerned that some schools would be less willing than others to engage with the action plan. *Mrs Radley advised that work would be done with schools to explain the plan and its purpose. In addition Mr Gallimore explained that Ofsted was now measuring how well schools were performing in raising the attainment level of those children in receipt of free school meals to be on a par with other children. As this same focus on raising attainment was also one of the aims of the action plan it would be perceived as a benefit for schools to engage.*
- Queried how children below school age, at risk of harm or in need of assistance, would be identified. *Mr Evans, Cabinet Member for Children - Start of Life, explained that a key role for Children and Family Centres was to work with vulnerable families from pregnancy through early childhood and recognise indicator signs in children that needed help. Members raised concern about children at risk whose families did not attend Children and Family Centres. Judith Wright, Director of Public Health, Commissioner for Health & Social Care, advised that health visitors would be visiting young children and could highlight children in need of help. She also explained that the County Council would be responsible for commissioning health visiting services for 2015/16 onwards and so could design the type of service appropriate for West Sussex, taking into account the aspirations of the action plan.*
- Suggested that all Members should be made aware of the Early Help Action Plan as they could contribute to implementing the plan and offer the service the benefit of their local knowledge. This could be achieved through a Member training day and by holding an awareness raising event on Full Council day to target all Members.

121. Resolved: that the Committee: -

- (1) Supports the principle of Early Help for families in West Sussex and endorses the Action Plan.
- (2) Requests that the Cabinet Member explores the opportunity for provision of an all-Member training session on Think Family and the Early Help Action Plan.
- (3) Requests that the Cabinet Member explores the potential of raising the profile of the Early Help Action Plan amongst all Members through an appropriate event on a Full Council day.
- (4) Reviews the impact of implementing the Action Plan at an appropriate interval, the timing of which to be identified by the Business Planning Group.
- (5) Requests that they are provided with the opportunity to consider the approach to commissioning the Health Visiting Service for 2015/16 prior to a decision being made.

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### The County Council Draft Budget 2014-15

122. The Committee considered a report by the Director of Finance and Assurance (copy appended to the signed minutes).

123. Nigel Street, Service Finance Manager – Children’s and Learning, introduced the report and clarified that the funding set aside for Think Family would be explicitly allocated to support this service and spend against this budget would be set out in future Total Performance Monitoring Reports.

124. Mr Gallimore highlighted that an area at risk of high spend was the Child Disability budget due to the higher number of children with disabilities requiring access to the service.

125. Mr Cloake and Mr Oppler both declared personal interests as being foster carers.

126. The following points were raised in discussion; Members:-

- Raised concern at the lack of specific information in relation to the savings expected to be made within the Children – Start of Life budget, for example there was no detail about what monetary reduction would be made to the Children and Family Centres (C&FC) budget and the impact this could have. *Mr Gallimore explained that it was not possible to quantify the level of savings required from the C&FC service as a revised delivery method had not yet been decided, although it could be estimated at approximately £600,000.*
- Received confirmation that it was anticipated any reductions in the school transport budget would be minimal as this area had seen large reductions previously.
- Queried how the County Council could increase the in-house fostering resource and requested clarification regarding the apparent higher rates paid to independent foster agencies (IFA). *Mr Gallimore explained that a one-off funding allocation had been made by the County Council to be used to make improvements within the fostering service. Options being explored for utilising this funding to increase the number of County Council foster parents included financing additional support for foster parents and looking to work more closely with IFAs and potentially taking on some of their parent carers. In relation to higher rates, a premium was paid for an IFA placement but not all of this money went to the foster carer so the difference in the rate actually received by the foster parents as opposed to County Council foster carers was not that great.*
- Received confirmation that there was a sufficient number of adoptive placements available. Mr Gallimore was pleased to advise that the County Council was only one of eight authorities in the country which had achieved both of the government’s adoption targets, both being able to respond to demand and placing children in a timely manner.

127. Mr High proposed that the Committee endorse the County Council draft budget for its portfolio areas for 2014/15. This was seconded by Mr Wickremaratchi.

128. A vote was held and the proposal was agreed.

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129. Resolved: that the Committee endorses the County Council draft budget for its portfolio areas for 2014/15.

### **Report from the Business Planning Group**

130. The Committee considered a report by the Chairman of the Business Planning Group (copy appended to the signed minutes).

131. Resolved that: the Committee supports the proposed approach to the agenda items for forthcoming meetings and updates to the work programme as recommended by the Business Planning Group at its meeting on 20 November 2013.

### **Education and Schools Policy implementation progress review – establishment of a Task and Finish Group**

132. The Chairman advised that nominations were requested to join the Task and Finish Group to consider the Annual Report of the Learning Service, and to assess the performance of the Learning Service and progress towards achievement of the Education and Schools Policy.

133. The following Members expressed an interest in being part of the Task and Finish Group – Mr Burrett, Mr High, Mrs Duncton, Mr Blunden and Mr Oxlade. Mrs Le Rossignol indicated that if she was available on the date of the meeting she would like to be included in the Task and Finish Group membership.

134. Resolved that: The members listed in minute 133 be appointed to the Task and Finish Group.

### **West Sussex School Funding Review 2014/15**

135. The Committee considered a report by the Director Communities Commissioning (copy appended to the signed minutes).

136. Jeanmarie Long, Principal Manager Statutory and Strategic Compliance, introduced the report and highlighted that an additional factor had been introduced to the funding review by the government since production of the report. This related to attainment against the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP). Due to revisions to the EYFSP 48% of children in West Sussex achieved below Good compared to 38% under the previous regime. Therefore the government had agreed that a factor could be introduced to moderate the impact of this change on levels of funding to Primary Schools. It was suggested that the figure could be moderated to 40% achieving below Good for 2012/13 assessments only

137. The Committee made comments and asked questions, including those that follow. Members: -

- Received confirmation that the lump sum provided to all secondary schools was £150,000 and it would just be Rydon Community College that would receive an additional £50,000 as a result of the sparsity factor.
- Were advised that for those schools that were eligible to receive additional Special Educational Needs (SEN) support of £6,000 per pupil, the money was paid for the balance of the financial year. Therefore if a pupil moved schools

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during the year it was only their Individually Assigned Resource funding that was allocated to their new school not the balance of the additional SEN support funding.

- Raised concern about cases they had heard of where children had received a fixed term exclusion and, on expiration of this, were only attending school part time without any other educational provision. *Ms Long indicated that the County Council should be made aware if Members knew of such cases as this did not comply with the requirement to provide educational provision for children who had been excluded – whether partially or otherwise.*

138. Resolved that: the Committee endorses the proposals detailed in paragraphs 3.1 to 3.8 of the report.

### Forward Plan of Key Decisions

139. The Committee considered the Forward Plan – February - May 2014 (copy appended to the signed minutes).

140. Resolved: that the Forward Plan be noted.

### Members' Items

141. Mr Parsons requested an update regarding the 39 Club in Bognor Regis, which was experiencing delays in resolving some issues in relation to its lease with the County Council. The Cabinet Member agreed to speak to the Interim Principal Manager Youth Support and Development Service and update Mr Parsons on this matter via email.

### Date of the Next Meeting

142. The Committee noted that its next scheduled meeting will be held on 12 March 2014 at 10.30am at County Hall, Chichester.

The meeting ended at 1.45pm.

Chairman