

CHILDREN'S SERVICES PORTFOLIO DECISION RECORD

3rd October, 2005

Present:

Councillor Cath Hill (Children's Services Portfolio Holder)

Officers: Adrienne Simcock, Director of Children's Services
John Collings, Assistant Director, Children's Services
Peter Davies, Principal Youth Officer
Anne Smith, Acting Assistant Director, Children's Services
Danielle Swainston, Early Years Manager
Pat Watson, Democratic Services Officer

19. Post 16 Transport Policy (*Director of Children's Services*)

Type of decision

Non-key

Purpose of report

To seek approval to amend the policy on post 16 transport assistance for 2005/06.

Issue(s) considered by the Portfolio Holder

The legislative background to home to school and post-16 transport, a mix of statutory duties and powers, was described in the report. The Portfolio Holder had approved the existing policy for 2005/06 and a copy of this was circulated with the report.

The Portfolio Holder was advised that the policy required that applicants for post 16-transport assistance had to meet specific criteria and the criteria was in need of review. The proposed amendments were detailed in the report.

Decision

Approval was given to the proposed amendments, to the post 16 transport policy for the academic year 2005/06, as detailed in the report.

20. Early Years Review *(Director of Children's Services)*

Type of decision

Non-key

Purpose of report

To endorse the outcomes of the yearly years review report and the implementation plan.

To seek approval for the proposed change in formula funding for early education as set out in the early years review report.

Issue(s) considered by the Portfolio Holder

The Portfolio Holder was advised that the review related to the work of Hartlepool Children's Services Department in making and funding provision for early years education. The review had been completed during 2004/05 academic year.

The report advised that Section 118 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 places a duty on local authorities (LAs) to secure sufficient provision (whether or not by them) of nursery education for their area for children who have not attained compulsory school age but have attained the prescribed age (3 and 4 year olds).

A review was set up after a discussion had taken place at a Schools Forum meeting during which Headteachers highlighted the issue of surplus places in maintained nurseries resulting in inequitable distribution of funds to schools. The remit of the Review Group was detailed in the report. The Review Group had looked at possible funding options to ensure the funding system was equitable. The review report was provided as an appendix and the key areas were highlighted.

The four options considered by the Review Group were outlined in the report, with more detailed information in the appendix. Options two and three were presented to the Schools Forum in June 2005 and it was agreed that option three, which provides funding on the basis of weighted actual pupil numbers for the previous financial year, would be recommended for approval by the Portfolio Holder.

The remaining issues highlighted within the review were addressed in the Improvement Plan also attached to the report.

Decision

The Portfolio Holder endorsed the outcomes of the early years review report and the Implementation Plan attached to the report.

The Portfolio Holder approved the proposed change in formula funding for early education as set out in the report and the Early Years Review Group Executive Summary attached to the report.

21. Barnardo's B76 - Service Level Agreement with Hartlepool Borough Council *(Director of Children's Services)*

Type of decision

Non-key

Purpose of report

To request the Portfolio Holder's consideration and approval of a Service Level Agreement (SLA), between Hartlepool Borough Council and Barnardo's B76.

Issue(s) considered by the Portfolio Holder

The report outlined the history, background and relationship that exists between the Council's Youth Service and Barnardo's B76. It detailed the excellent work that had been done by B76 over recent years, in respect of the grant it receives, and the contribution made to Youth Service outcomes. The report recommended that the present annual grant be translated into a three-year SLA, which would provide a measure of stability to the voluntary project, and allow better planning opportunities for both partners.

The Portfolio Holder commented that she felt a good service was provided by B76 and the staff involved.

Decision

The Service Level Agreement between Hartlepool Borough Council and Barnardo's B76 was approved.

22. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

Under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public were excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the paragraph referred to below of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

Minute 23 - Children's Homes: Regulation 33/34 Reports (para 6 – Information relating to the adoption, care, fostering or education of a particular child)

23. Children's Homes: Regulation 33/34 Reports (para 6)
(Director of Children's Services)

Type of decision

For information

Purpose of report

To present the Regulation 33/34 (formerly Regulation 22) report of a visit to Exmoor Grove Children's Home.

Issue(s) considered by the Portfolio Holder

Appended to the report was a pro-forma in respect of a visit to Exmoor Grove Children's Home to cover issues for the month of July/August.

Following consideration of the report and details included in Appendix A, the Portfolio Holder requested that the issue identified for action at the last inspection in relation to medicine files be acted upon by Officers as soon as possible.

Decision

The Portfolio Holder received and noted the report.

J A BROWN

CHIEF SOLICITOR

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