

CHILDREN'S SERVICES PORTFOLIO DECISION RECORD

14 October 2008

The meeting commenced at 10.00 a.m. in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool

Present:

Councillor Cath Hill (Children's Services Portfolio Holder)

Officers: Sue Johnson, Assistant Director – Planning and Service Integration
Sally Robinson, Assistant Director – Safeguarding and Specialist Services
Danielle Swainston, Sure Start, Extended Services and Early Years Manager
Beth Storey, Youth Development Officer / Operations Manager
Jo Wilson, Democratic Services Officer

19. Aiming High – Short Break Respite Care *(Director of Children's Services)*

Type of Decision

Non key.

Purpose of Report

For the Portfolio Holder to note the funding and development for short break respite care as part of the Aiming High Development.

Issues for consideration by Portfolio Holder

The Government published Aiming High for Disabled Children in 2007. A transformation programme for disabled children's services in England is led jointly by the Department for Children, Schools and Families and the Department of Health. The vision behind the programme is for all families with disabled children to have the support they need to live ordinary family lives. As part of this funding has been allocated via the General Sure Start Grant to develop short break respite care. Implementation guidance had been issued setting out the requirements for Local Authorities over the next three years. Readiness in relation to the core offer needs to be demonstrated by March 2009. In order to accomplish this a planning group had been set up to develop an implementation plan. Following this there would be two task groups established to implement the programme including a strategic and operational group.

Details were given of the funding available through the Sure Start Grant over the next three years. Funding had also been allocated to Primary Care Trusts for short break respite care but as this was part of the PCT's base budgets they were unable to provide an exact figure of the amount involved.

The Assistant Director for Safeguarding and Specialist Services clarified that this would be an opportunity to meet the individual needs of children with varying disabilities rather than the current one size fits all situation.

The Portfolio Holder expressed her admiration for how the families of disabled children coped on a daily basis. If the Council had to care for them directly the costs would be prohibitive so they were owed a huge debt of gratitude.

Decision

That the funding and development for short break respite care as part of the Aiming High developments be noted.

20. Phase 3 Children's Centres *(Director of Children's Services)*

Type of Decision

Non key.

Purpose of Report

- I. To seek approval for the development of a Phase 3 Children's Centre at Throston Primary School
- II. To note the possible reconfiguration of the reach of the Phase 1 Children's Centres.

Issues for consideration

The Childcare Act 2006 places a duty on Local Authorities to improve the outcomes for children aged 0-5 years through the development of Children's Centres. These need to offer early education integrated with childcare, family support, outreach to parents and child and family health services. Following guidance issued in 2004 and 2005, Phase 1 and 2 Children's Centres were previously developed in the 15% and 30% most deprived areas of Hartlepool, including the Headland, Rossmere, Stranton and Rift House.

In 2007 guidance was issued setting out the requirements for Phase 3 Children's Centres. These do not have to deliver the full core offer of Phase 1 and 2 centres but will develop sessional universal services and

signpost to targeted and specialist services. Analysis had been carried out on the numbers of children currently reached by a Children's Centre and the levels of deprivation in each area. Following this analysis three areas had been identified – Throston, Seaton Carew and Fens. As Throston had the highest level of deprivation Hartlepool would be required to develop a centre in that ward and develop outreach services in Seaton and the Fens. If this was not done the target would not be achieved. Following consultation Throston Primary School had been identified as a site suitable for development. The Headteacher and Governors had indicated they would welcome such a development.

Details were also given within the report of the proposed reconfiguration of Phase 1 Centres to cover the Seaton and Fens Ward. This would be done by using Rossmere and St Theresa's Children's Centres to reach the Fens Ward while the Link on Lealhome Road would cover Seaton Ward. Services were also being developed for Seaton in partnership with Seaton Carew Nursery. Funding for Children's Centres is received into the Local Authority via the General Sure Start Grant and is ringfenced.

The Portfolio Holder indicated she was pleased all areas of the town would have access to Children's Centres by the end of the process.

Decision

That the development of a Phase 3 Children's Centre at Throston Primary School be approved and the situation in relation to further Phase 3 Children's Centre services be noted.

21. Youth Capital Fund Plus *(Director of Children's Services)*

Type of Decision

Non key.

Purpose of Report

To inform and seek comments from the Portfolio Holder about funding received in Hartlepool for the provision of youth facilities in areas of crime and need.

Issues for Consideration

The Youth Opportunity and Youth Capital Funds have been operating successfully in Hartlepool since 2006 on behalf of the Department for Children, Schools and Families. A group of young people in Hartlepool – 'Grant Givers' – had been trained and supported to disperse the funds to young people who apply for finance to carry out appropriate positive activities. In this financial year the group would distribute £135,500 for the Youth Opportunity Fund and £65,000 for the Youth Capital Fund.

However for this year only the 50 most deprived authorities have received an additional £452,000 in the form of the Youth Capital Fund Plus. This will be a one-off addition to fund new or refurbished youth facilities in neighbourhoods with high levels of deprivation, crime and anti-social behaviour and which currently lack good quality youth provision. It has been allocated entirely in 2008/9; however, when detailed spending plans are submitted the Government Office may make arrangements to re-profile the allocation to allow spending to be carried forward where necessary. While it is expected that the new facilities be made available as soon as possible it is recognised that more ambitious projects may take some time to complete. The Youth Opportunity Fund would provide an additional £50,000 for years 2009/10 and 2010/11 as revenue to support the programme. Details were given of the specific conditions attached to the receipt of monies including the evidence needed and requirements for project plans.

The 'Grant Givers' had been trained on Youth Capital Fund plus and had revised their processes accordingly. Following consultation three priority wards had been identified and these communities would be invited to submit proposals to secure funding. However given the sums involved and the known costs it was likely that only one community would be successful. To mitigate this it was intended that the process be as transparent as possible.

The Portfolio Holder commented that it might be innovative if the premises involved were owned by the young people and other members of the community came at their invitation. This would be a chance to show the positive contribution young people can make and how well young people can behave.

Decision

That the report be noted.

22. Local Government Access to Information

Under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public were excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.

Minute 23 – Children's Homes: Regulation 33/34 Reports (para 1) (Information relating to any individual)

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

Type of Decision

Non key

Purpose of Report

To present the Regulation 33/34 report of visit to Children's Home for Exmoor Grove covering the month of July 2008.

Issues for Consideration

The report covered the month of July 2008 for Exmoor Grove

Decision

That the report be noted

The meeting concluded at 10.40 am

PETER DEVLIN

CHIEF SOLICITOR

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