

## **CHILDREN'S SERVICES PORTFOLIO DECISION RECORD**

21 April 2009

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

### **Present:**

Councillor Cath Hill (Children's Services Portfolio Holder)

Officers: Adrienne Simcock, Director of Children's Services  
Sue Johnson, Assistant Director, Planning and Service Integration  
Paul Briggs, Assistant Director, Resources and Support Services  
Ann Turner, Governor Support Officer  
Beth Storey, Youth Development Officer  
Danielle Swainston, Sure Start, Extended Services and Early Years Manager  
Sarah Bird, Democratic Services Officer

### **47. Positive Activities for Young People (PAYP), Weekend Working** *(Youth Development Officer)*

#### **Type of decision**

Key – test ii applies

#### **Purpose of Report**

The report was presented in order to seek approval for the allocation of part of the additional Positive Activities for Young People (PAYP) budgets for 2009-10 and 2010-11 for additional weekend youth work. It was proposed that the project would be managed by Hartlepool Youth Service and delivered in partnership with the Third Sector.

#### **Issues for consideration by the Portfolio Holder**

The government had demonstrated its commitment to the provision of diversionary positive activities for young people aged 13 – 19 at weekends and as the government progressed on its agenda through the My Place, Youth Capital Fund Plus, Youth Sector Development and YCAP initiatives, weekend working was likely to become a permanent fixture.

There was already some Youth Service provision within the town on most Friday and Sunday evenings, but a lack of regular working on Saturday evenings. Recently the Youth Service had been charged with the responsibility for delivering part of the Youth Crime Action Plan (YCAP) programme but in the short term where grant funding had been received at short notice, this had been delivered through overtime and relied on good will from staff. A range of activities had been piloted with young people in different settings beginning with a showcase event based on consultation with young people. Lessons learned from this pilot were outlined in the report.

The proposal was to utilise additional PAYP monies of £101,720 for 2009-10 and £173,377 for 2010-11 to reflect the identified need for weekend provision for young people aged 13 – 19. The use of the additional money would increase the capacity of the Youth Service and Third Sector partners through the ability to :-

- Provide extra activities to ensure that the three main Youth Service centres (Throston, Brinkburn and Rossmere; placed strategically through the town), are open on Friday, Saturday and Sunday evenings. This provision would focus on local services rather than large showcase events, and build sustainability through a long term, affordable approach.
- Commission Third Sector Partners, through a transparent and accountable process, to deliver on Friday and Saturday evenings in communities, and so maximise the range of opportunities for young people.
- Provide funding for central promotion of all activities, and resource costs.
- Provide additional detached and outreach work on Friday and Saturday evenings.
- Provide a specialist youth worker in alcohol and sexual health work to support delivery in both Youth Service and Third Sector Projects.

The additional monies outlined previously would fully support the development of extra weekend provision and a significant element of this would be used to commission work from Third Sector Partners. Contracts would be time limited, to coincide with the funding available, and sustain the project for the time available. The Risk Implications were outlined in the report.

The Portfolio Holder expressed support for the proposals although was concerned about its limited time span. She was informed that because the project was being focussed on the three main youth service centres it was hoped that these could be sustainable after the funding ceased. The Portfolio Holder acknowledged that staff had voluntarily delivered additional services for young people and was pleased that funding was now available.

## **Decision**

The Portfolio Holder considered and agreed the proposals as outlined in the report using the additional PAYP budget.

### **48. Outdoor Centre Charges for the School Year 2009/10** *(Assistant Director, Resources and Support Services)*

#### **Type of Decision**

Non key

#### **Purpose of Report**

The report was presented in order to request the Portfolio Holder to determine the charges to be set by Hartlepool Borough Council for Hartlepool schools attend the Carlton and Lanehead outdoor centres for the school year 2009/10. Both centres operate in accordance with joint arrangements between former Cleveland Local Authorities – Hartlepool, Middlesbrough and Redcar and Cleveland. The report also outlined the 2009/10 charges relating to external users of the Carlton Centre which had been determined by the Joint Authority Steering Group at its meeting on 23 March 2009.

#### **Issues for consideration by the Portfolio Holder**

Carlton and Lanehead are the subject of joint arrangements between Hartlepool Middlesbrough and Redcar and Cleveland Local Authorities, but due to budget pressures, Redcar and Cleveland Council gave notice in December that they would be unable to maintain their commitment to these agreements. Negotiations were currently ongoing to establish the extent of Redcar and Cleveland's ongoing support and whether their schools would continue to attend the centres with or without their LA subsidy.

The running costs of each centre were funded by annual contributions from the joint authorities in accordance with a Partnership Agreement. Schools attend the centres in accordance with an agreed allocation process and each authority partially recovers its costs via subsidised charges levied by them to the schools in their areas. Historically Hartlepool's charges were significantly lower than charges in the other Authorities.

For 2008/09 the Portfolio Holder had agreed increases above inflation which recognised and partially addressed the divergence in subsidy levels between joint authorities and recognised the substantially improved facilities at the Carlton Centre and provided a modest contribution towards the Department's efficiency savings target as identified in its 2008/09 budget submission.

The report set out the proposed charges for 2009/10 for Carlton Outdoor Education Centre and external users and the proposed charges for Lanehead Centre, Coniston. These charges were a proposed increase of approximately 15% for 2009/10 and Hartlepool Schools had been consulted and were generally supportive. The Assistant Director highlighted an amendment to the report which was in Table 3 regarding exclusive use of the Centre for a cost of £3,000. This would include up to 68 places per 24 hour period including 6 instructors and the use of 3 mini-buses.

The Portfolio Holder was informed that the current manager was committed to promoting the Carlton Outdoor Centre which had recently been re-furnished and was being promoted as a useful place for team building courses for colleges, the Local Authority and businesses. She suggested that an attractive web-site would be an added bonus. The Portfolio Holder queried which outdoor centres Stockton Borough Council used and the Assistant Director, Resources and Support Services agreed to let her know.

### **Decision**

The Portfolio Holder:-

Agreed the proposed charges for Hartlepool Schools to use the Carlton Centre as set out in Table 1 of the report with the basic daily rate set at £23.00 with effect from 1 September 2009

Agreed the proposed charges for Hartlepool schools to use the Lanehead Centre as set out in Table 4 with the basic daily rate set at £23.00 with effect from 1 September 2009

Noted the charges for Carlton Centre users outside the joint agreement as determined by the Joint Authority management Group as set out in Tables 2 and 3.

## **49. Childcare Sufficiency Assessment Update 2008-2009** *(Sure Start, Extended Services and Early Years Manager)*

### **Type of Decision**

Non key

### **Purpose of Report**

The report was presented in order allow the Portfolio Holder to approve the publication of the childcare sufficiency update 2008-09.

### **Issues for Consideration**

The report outlined the background relating to the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (CSA) and the updated document was included as appendix 1. Key findings from the updated document were that there was a reduction in the total number of registered and unregistered places in comparison to the previous year although there still seemed to be adequate childcare places.

Feedback received from the Office of Public Management and Hempsall Consultancies commissioned by Government Office North East, after the evaluation of the previous year's assessment was good but there were a number of actions required to improve further and would be taken on board in order to ensure the next full CSA covered all aspects required in the statutory guidance.

An action plan was attached to the report which set out what was necessary to support the management of the childcare market.

The Portfolio Holder asked whether the reduction in demand for childcare places was due to the state of the economy but was informed that some demand had increased due to families struggling and having to get second jobs.

The Portfolio Holder asked about the need for a professional researcher and was informed that the department had conducted its own research previously but most Authorities had commissioned a professional. Some elements of the data necessary required professional help and therefore this may be utilised in the future.

### **Decision**

The Portfolio Holder approved the publication of the childcare sufficiency update for 2008-2009.

## **50. To Approve and Instrument of Governance for the Federated Governing Body of Elwick Hall CE Aided Primary School and Hart Primary School** *(Governor Support Officer)*

### **Type of Decision**

Non key.

### **Purpose of Report**

The report was presented to request the Portfolio Holder to approve and make an Instrument of Government for a new constitutional

model of a Federated Governing Body with effect from 1 September 2009.

### **Issues for Consideration**

In accordance with the School Governance (School Federation) Regulations 2007, the governing bodies of Elwick Hall CE Voluntary Aided Primary School and Hart Primary School consulted with a wide variety of stakeholders over a six week period beginning 20 October 2008 until 1 December 2008 when the governing bodies of the 2 schools agreed to formally federate with effect from 1 September 2009 including a change of name for Elwick Hall C E Primary School to St Peter's Elwick Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary school. The Director of Children's Services and Director of Durham Diocese have been consulted from the onset.

The instrument of government records the name of the school and sets out the size of the governing body and its constitution in accordance with the regulations. The make up of the federated governing body was outlined in the report.

The Governing Bodies of Hart Primary School and Elwick CE Voluntary Aided Primary School, the local authority and the Diocesan Authority have agreed the constitution and formal federation including the change of name of Elwick Hall CE Voluntary Aided School to St Peter's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School, Elwick.

The Governor Support Officer said that there had been interest from other Authorities to find out how the federation was being managed. The Portfolio Holder wished the two schools success in their federation.

### **Decision**

The Portfolio Holder approved and made the Instrument of Government for the Federated Governing Body as outlined in Appendix 1 of the attached report.

## **51. Next Steps for Early Learning and Childcare** *(Sure Start, Extended Services and Early Years Manager)*

### **Type of Decision**

Non key

### **Purpose of Report**

The report was presented in order for the Portfolio Holder to note the

**'Next Steps for Early Learning and Childcare' Department for Children, Schools and Families document**  
**Issues for Consideration**

The government published a 10 year childcare strategy in December 2004 which set out the government's vision for early learning and childcare. In February 2009 the government published the 'Next Steps for Early Learning and Childcare' setting out the progress on the 10 year childcare strategy and the challenges for the future.

The report summarised the details of the document. Progress made on the 10 year childcare strategy included extension of maternity leave, request for flexible working now available for parents, development of Sure Start children's centres, universal take up of 3 and 4 year old early learning offer.

The report also set out future developments for government, local authorities and providers including that Families Information Services, Children's Centres and Extended Schools take account of the needs of friends and relatives who care for children, as well as parents and also the expansion of the 'Every Child a Talker' programme. It was noted that Hartlepool is a pilot Authority offering free learning and childcare places to the most disadvantaged 2 year olds.

The Portfolio Holder said that she was aware that there was concern with the attainment levels of some 3 year olds so the provision for the most disadvantaged 2 year olds may improve this.

The Portfolio Holder stated that the actions outlined in the report should ensure that all young people starting secondary school in the future should be further ahead than young people now.

**Decision**

The Portfolio Holder noted the 'Next Steps for Early Learning and Childcare' document (Department for Children, Schools and Families).

The meeting concluded at 10.45 am

**P J DEVLIN**

**CHIEF SOLICITOR**

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