

CHILDREN'S SERVICES PORTFOLIO DECISION RECORD

24 January 2011

The meeting commenced at 2.00 pm in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool

Present:

Councillor Cath Hill (Children's Services Portfolio Holder)

Officers: Sally Robinson, Assistant Director of Children's Services
(Safeguarding and Specialist Services)
Danielle Swainston, Sure Start, Extended Services and Early
Years Manager
Mark Smith, Head of Integrated Youth Support Services
Tina Juko, Strategic Separation Specialist
Peter Morgan, Senior Commissioning Officer
John Robinson, Parent Commissioner
Ann Turner, Governor Support Officer
Jo Wilson, Democratic Services Officer

18. To approve a variation to the Instrument of Government for Manor College of Technology *(Director of Child and Adult Services)*

Type of Decision

Non key

Purpose of Report

To seek approval to a variation to the Instrument of Government to reflect the appointment of Hartlepool College of Further Education as an additional Sponsor Governor to the Governing Body for Manor College of Technology.

Issues for Consideration

In accordance with the School Governance (Constitution) (England) Regulations 2007, the Governing Body of Manor College of Technology reviewed the Sponsor Governor representation and appointed an additional Sponsor Governor from Hartlepool College of Further Education. The Instrument of Government had been amended to reflect this change.

Decision

That the variation to the Instrument of Government as detailed within the appendix to the report be approved with effect from 24th January 2011.

19. The Families Information Service and Holiday Activity Information for Children and Young People *(Director of Child and Adult Services)*

Type of Decision

Non key.

Purpose of Report

To update the Portfolio Holder on changes to the Families Information Service Hartlepool (FISH) and to seek approval to cease production of a printed 'What's On' holiday guide for children and young people.

Issues for Consideration

FISH is a statutory duty under the Childcare Act 2006, providing information, advice and guidance to children, young people, their families and professionals that work with them until the young person is 19 years old. FISH has been based in the Central Library for more than 4 years however officers felt it would be more in line with current government thinking to integrate FISH into Sure Start Children's Centres. It was proposed therefore to move the 3 FISH officers to Children's Centre localities in the North, South and Central areas from February 2011.

A further legal requirement is to maintain an electronic guide to services for children, young people and their families. Hartlepool's guide, The Directory, is managed by FISH. Since 2007 a 'What's on' holiday guide had also been printed for key school holiday periods using information taken from The Directory. While the booklet was popular amongst parents it was costly to produce and resource intensive. In 2010 booklet production was scaled down due to issues of cost, time and accuracy. A full evaluation of the booklets had subsequently been undertaken and officers felt production should now cease and users be directed to FISH and The Directory as a way to save money and resources. Any information that a parent needed from The Directory could be printed out by staff or at information kiosks.

Decision

That the relocation of The Families Information Service Hartlepool (FISH) to children's centres be noted

That production of a printed 'What's On' holiday guide for children and young people cease and service users be directed to The Directory for information.

20. Chatham House Children's Centre OFSTED Inspection *(Director of Child and Adult Services)*

Type of Decision

Non key

Purpose of Report

To note the inspection report and outcome for Chatham House Children's Centre OFSTED inspection

Issues for Consideration

The Apprenticeship, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 gave OFSTED the legal duty to inspect and report on the effectiveness of children's centres. Two OFSTED inspectors spent time in Chatham House Children's Centre in October 2010, reviewing paperwork, interviewing parents and stakeholders and attending sessions. The overall outcome was good with the main finding stating that the centre provided good and improving support to children and families living within its locality. Strengths were highlighted and a number of recommendations for further improvement made, all of which were included in an action plan. Both the full report and action plan were appended for the Portfolio Holder's attention

Decision

That the inspection report and outcome for Chatham House Children's Centre OFSTED inspection be noted.

21. Separated Families Partnership Progress *(Director of Child and Adult Services)*

Type of Decision

Non key.

Purpose of Report

To notify the Portfolio Holder of the progress of the Separated Families Partnership.

Issues for Consideration

The Separated Families Partnership was one of 10 national pilots funded by the Department of Children and Family Services. In Hartlepool since 2009 this was a partnership between the Council, Families Talking, Relate, Harbour, Headland Futures and the Citizens Advice Bureau, with Families Talking the lead organisation. The pilot aims to deliver a range of integrated services to separating and separated parents in order to reduce conflict, improve co-parenting, improve the parent/child relationship and reduce the financial impacts of separation. Each partner provides specific services to the project as well as access to core services. Details were given on the progress of the pilot project between April 2010 and November 2010, including the number of referrals to individual partners and the reasons for families seeking support.

The pilot was due to end in March 2011 and officers were now concerned that just as the service was becoming embedded it might cease without future funding. The Portfolio Holder felt this was criminal in light of the positive impact the Partnership was proving to have on children who were the product of broken homes. However given the current economic situation there was little alternative and it was therefore with sadness that she noted the report. The Assistant Director highlighted the positive impact of the Partnership in terms of an increased awareness on the part of officers.

Decision

That the development of the Family Separation Partnership, and its progress, be noted and acknowledged.

22. The Development and Achievement of the Team Around the Primary School (TAPS) *(Director of Child and Adult Services)*

Type of Decision

Non key

Purpose of Report

To notify the Portfolio Holder of the development and progress of the Team Around the Primary School project

Issues for Consideration

The Team Around the Primary School project has been in operation since January 2009, working with a full staff team since September 2009. Since its formation TAPS had continued to develop and expand. In addition to the Anti Social Behaviour, Child Poverty and Youth Crime elements of the Family Intervention Project Hartlepool now had a specific Housing Challenge Family Intervention Project set within the Belle Vue area. Relationships had been formed with all primary schools in Hartlepool resulting in families gaining support at a much earlier time and reducing the need for the involvement of statutory services and crisis intervention. The relationship with social care teams had also developed, resulting in an increase in both TAPS and Family Intervention Project referrals. Further updates were provided within the report, including some current case load examples.

The Parent Commissioner advised that more comprehensive reports on this project would be brought to the Portfolio Holder in the future. The team were now in a position to channel services to get the best use out of them over the coming years. The Portfolio Holder raised concerns that unqualified people might be delivering anger management training to vulnerable youngsters. The Parent Commissioner acknowledged that this did happen however in the case examples given in the report the work had been undertaken by qualified workers. It is important to support young people to channel their anger in positive ways and this can be done using a number of methods. The Strategic Separation Specialist highlighted the importance of this, saying that if unchecked anger caused by parental separation could, in extreme cases, lead to criminal behaviour, mental health problems and suicidal tendencies.

Decision

That the report and the progress made by the project in its work with families be noted

23. Local Government (Access to Information (Variation) Order 2006

Under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be 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 the paragraphs below of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order

Minute 24 –. National Citizen Service Pilot – Hartlepool. This item

contains exempt information under Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972 (as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006) namely (para 3) information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)

Minute 25 – Autism Spectrum Conditions – Collaborative Framework Agreement. This item contains exempt information under Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972 (as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006) namely (para 3) information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)

24. National Citizen Service Pilot - Hartlepool *(Director of Child and Adult Services)*

Type of Decision

Non key.

Purpose of Report

Details provided within the exempt minutes due to a national embargo.

Issues for Consideration.

Details provided within the exempt minutes due to a national embargo.

Decision

Details provided within the exempt minutes due to a national embargo.

25. Autism Spectrum Conditions – Collaborative Framework Agreement *(Director of Child and Adult Services)*

Type of Decision

Non key.

Purpose of Report

To inform the Portfolio Holder of the decision made by the Director of Child and Adult Services to sign up to a Collaborative Autism Framework Agreement for the provision of care and support for

children and adults with autism spectrum conditions.

Issues for Consideration

The Child and Adult Autism Spectrum Collaborative Framework Agreement is designed to enable care managers, family carers and people with a learning disability the opportunity to seek expressions of interest from 8 providers able to provide care and support to people with an Autism Specific Condition. It is a collaboration between Redcar & Cleveland, Middlesbrough, Stockton and Hartlepool Councils aimed at supporting the development and delivery of local services and promoting consistency and quality of service provision across the region. A competitive tender process had been undertaken, hosted by Middlesbrough Borough Council with the 8 providers selected to be used by all the local authorities in the framework. Details of the providers and their prices were appended to the report in a confidential appendix.

The Portfolio Holder queried whether the condition was something which people grew out of. The Assistant Director advised that it was a lifelong condition but the management of it changed as people grew older. A key area was actual diagnosis as many sufferers were misdiagnosed and therefore did not get the support to which they were entitled.

Decision

That the decision made by the Director of Child and Adult Services to sign up to a Collaborative Framework Agreement for the provision of care and support for children and adults with autistic spectrum conditions be noted.

The meeting concluded at 2:45 pm

P J DEVLIN

CHIEF SOLICITOR

PUBLICATION DATE: 31st January 2011