

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

22 February 2011

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

### **Present:**

Councillor Cath Hill (Children's Services Portfolio Holder)

Councillor Robbie Payne (Finance and Procurement Portfolio Holder)

Officers: Alan Dobby, Assistant Director, Resources and Support Services  
Ann Turner, Governor Support Officer  
Ian Merritt, Strategic Commissioner – Children's Services  
Penny Thompson, Childcare Market Officer  
Emma Marley, Special Educational Needs Manager  
John Robinson, Parent Commissioner  
Jill Coser, Parenting Co-ordinator  
Sarah Bird, Democratic Services Officer

### **26. Provision for Pupils with Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD) at Key Stage 2 (Outcome of Consultation)** *(Special Educational Needs Manager)*

#### **Type of Decision**

Key (Test ii)

#### **Purpose of Report**

The purpose of the report is to inform the Portfolio Holder of the outcome of consultation in relation to the proposal to discontinue the additionally resourced facilities for pupils with Special Educational needs relating to moderate learning difficulties at Golden Flatts Primary School and at Owton Manor Primary School.

#### **Issues for Consideration**

The report outlined the results of the consultation in relation to two options for future provision for the pupils with MLD at Key Stage 2. Individual responses were contained in Appendix 1 of the report with all being in favour of the section option i.e. to close the Key Stage 2 support bases for pupils with MLD at Golden Flatts and Owton

Manor Primary Schools allowing the funding to be reallocated to the Local Authority's individual pupil budget, managed by the Local Authority Special Educational Needs Team.

The Portfolio Holder supported the proposal as it maintained the inclusion policy in schools which she felt was beneficial both for pupils who needed support as well as other less disadvantaged children.

### **Decision**

The Portfolio Holder accepted the proposal to discontinue the additionally resourced support base at Golden Flatts Primary School for up to twelve children in the age range 7 – 11 years with moderate learning difficulties and authorised the Director of Child and Adult Services to publish the necessary statutory notices to carry out this decision.

The Portfolio Holder also accepted the proposal to discontinue the additionally resourced support base at Owton Manor Primary School for up to twelve children in the age range 7 – 11 years with moderate learning difficulties and authorised the Director of Child and Adult Services to publish the necessary statutory notices to carry out this decision.

## **27. Appointment of Local Authority Representatives to Serve on School Governing Bodies** *(Governor Support Officer)*

### **Type of Decision**

Non key.

### **Purpose of Report**

To request the Portfolio Holder for Children's Services consideration and approval of the recommendations of the General Purposes Committee in respect of the appointment of Local Authority representative Governors to serve on school governing bodies.

### **Issues for Consideration**

The report summarised the process for inviting applications for representative governors and the criteria for their selection. A schedule of those schools with vacancies and those recommended for appointment by the General Purposes Committee. A number of appointments had been recommended for Catcote School, Greatham C of E Primary School, Rossmere Primary School and West Park Primary School.

The Portfolio Holder commented that she spoken with the two Councillors who were interested in the vacancy at Seaton Carew and had decided not to go with the recommendation of the General Purposes Committee as the other Councillor had taken an interest in the school and had attended meetings of the Governing Body as an observer.

### **Decision**

The Portfolio Holder for Children's Services approved the recommendations of the General Purposes Committee in respect of the appointment of Local Authority representatives governors to serve on school Governing Bodies with the exception of the recommendation for Seaton Carew Nursery School and approved that Councillor Hilary Thompson be appointed to the Governing Body of that nursery school.

## **28. General Sure Start Grant – Early Years Capital** (Childcare Market Officer)

### **Type of Decision**

Non key.

### **Purpose of Report**

To seek approval to allocate £5000 of Sure Start early years capital grant to Golden Flatts Primary School in order to contribute to the refurbishment of the former caretaker's bungalow into a building fit for family services and to allocate any remaining early years capital (estimated to be in the region of £30000) to private, voluntary and independent daycare settings in Hartlepool to purchase equipment and/or to make minor modifications to their premises.

### **Issues for Consideration**

A number of reports had been presented to the Portfolio Holder in relation to Sure Start Capital grant spend. It is estimated that £35,000 of Sure Start capital grant remains which needs to be spent by 31 March 2011. As this part of the grant is not ring fenced it can also be spent on other appropriate capital projects aimed at children aged under 5 years and their families.

Proposals were therefore that £5000 was offered to Golden Flatts Primary School to contribute to the refurbishment of the former caretaker's bungalow into a building fit for family services. It was also proposed that the remainder was offered to private, voluntary and independent sector daycare settings to equipment and/or minor refurbishment works to their premises. Such providers would be expected to apply for funding through a grant application process

and the funds would be allocated on need.

The Portfolio Holder asked why the remaining funds could not be used for Local Authority nursery provision and was informed that government direction indicates that the majority of the grant should be spent within the private, voluntary and independent sector however that the maintained sector is not excluded. To date more than 50% of the capital grant has been spent in schools to improve their nursery environment and the remainder offered as grant to providers. Eleven such private nurseries have benefited from work such as new play areas, equipment for children with additional needs or internal refurbishment work. Apart from the Golden Flatts project, there were no further maintained early years environment projects to be considered at this stage.

It was clarified that equipment bought by the private, voluntary and independent sector was usually sourced by Hartlepool Families First to ensure competitive pricing due to buying in bulk.

### **Decision**

The Portfolio Holder deferred the decision in relation to Golden Flatts Primary School and asked that this decision be made by Cabinet.

The Portfolio Holder agreed to allocate any remaining early years capital to private, voluntary and independent daycare settings in Hartlepool to purchase equipment and/or to make minor modifications to their premises. Any work should be offered to in-house providers in the first instance.

## **29. Children's Services Departmental Plan Quarter 3 Progress Report** *(Assistant Director, Resources and Support Services)*

### **Type of Decision**

Non key.

### **Purpose of Report**

To inform the Portfolio Holder of the progress made towards achieving Departmental Plan actions, Performance Indicators (PIs) and risks for the period to 31 December 2010.

### **Issues for Consideration**

The report summarised progress over the third quarter of 2010/11 on the actions and PIs within the Children's Services priorities of the

## Child and Adult Services Departmental Plan 2010/11.

Of the actions, one of these required intervention. This was in relation to the Under 18 Conception rate and officers were working closely with colleagues from health to tackle the issue through a range of initiatives. Of the Performance Indicators, one required intervention. This was the number of applications for access to the Youth Opportunity Capital funds for which there had been 68 applications. This was lower than expected but the applications were for larger amounts so the Portfolio Holder was assured that all the money would be allocated. It also covered the current position of associated risks. Overall the picture was similar to the previous quarter.

### **Decision**

The Portfolio Holder noted the progress made towards completing actions and performance indicator targets during the third quarter of 2010/11. The Portfolio Holder noted actions taken in relation to areas of delivery which were seen to be high risk at present and agreed to receive further reports on annual progress to be given quarterly in line with corporate requirements.

## **30. Progress Report – Targeted Parenting Support Programmes and Parenting Experts** *(Parent Commissioner)*

### **Type of Decision**

Non key.

### **Purpose of Report**

For the Portfolio Holder to note the report and current progress.

### **Issues for Consideration**

The Support Programme was now seen as a resource for parents to provide additional support when necessary. The programmes were intended to remove stigmas from attending courses and were accessible by all parents not just those with issues. Courses on offer were:-

- The Nurturing Programme
- 123 Magic Programme
- The Mellow P Parenting Programme
- Strengthening Families 10 – 14 Programme

Feedback from the programmes had been extremely positive and

there were large numbers of parents accessing the programmes. The programmes ensured that parents learned from lessons from their own childhood experiences. Classes were also provided by primary and secondary schools in the town. Hartlepool will be one of the first local authorities whose parenting workforce will gain a recognised qualification in parenting; the Department for Education recommended 'Working with Parents'. Some parents who had accessed the course had gone on to access literacy and numeracy programmes and others had engaged in Open University study.

The Portfolio Holder said that the results were encouraging and should empower parents to change or challenge bad behaviour by other families in their neighbourhood.

### **Decision**

The Portfolio Holder noted the report.

## **31. 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 32 –. Social Care Contracts – Exceptions to the Contract Procedure Rules. 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)

## **32. Social Care Contracts – Exceptions to the Contract Procedure Rules** *(Strategic Commissioner – Children's Services)*

### **Type of Decision**

Non key.

### **Purpose of Report**

To seek approval to make an exception to the Contract Procedure Rules in respect of several social care contracts.

**Issues for Consideration**

These were outlined in the exempt section of the minutes.

**Decision**

This was outlined in the exempt section of the minutes.

The meeting concluded at 10.57 am.

**P J DEVLIN**

**CHIEF SOLICITOR**

**PUBLICATION DATE: 25 February 2011**