

# **CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM AGENDA**



**Tuesday 17 January 2012**

**at 4.30 pm**

**in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Hartlepool**

**MEMBERS: CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM:**

Councillors C Akers-Belcher, Fleet, Griffin, Ingham, Lauderdale, Maness,  
P Thompson, Wells and Wilcox

Co-opted Members: Eira Ballingall and Sacha Paul Bedding

Resident Representatives: Joan Steel, and 2 vacancies

Young People's Representatives: Hanna Bew, Ashleigh Bostock, Bianca Gascoigne  
and Kim Henry

School Council Representatives: Two vacancies

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

**2. TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS**

**3. MINUTES**

- 3.1 To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 23 November 2011.
- 3.2 To confirm the minutes of the joint meeting of Children's Services Scrutiny  
Forum and Health Scrutiny Forum on 3 November 2011.

**4. RESPONSES FROM THE COUNCIL, THE EXECUTIVE OR COMMITTEES OF THE  
COUNCIL TO FINAL REPORTS OF THIS FORUM**

No items

**5. CONSIDERATION OF REQUEST FOR SCRUTINY REVIEWS REFERRED VIA  
SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE**

No items

**6. CONSIDERATION OF PROGRESS REPORTS / BUDGET AND POLICY  
FRAMEWORK DOCUMENTS**

- 6.1 Children's Services: Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTF) 2012/13 to  
2014/15 - Consultation Proposals – *Scrutiny Support Officer*

**7. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION**

- 7.1 Primary School Councils' Forum: First Annual Conference Report –  
*Representatives from the Primary School Council*

**Investigation Into Young People's Access To Transport**

- 7.2 Verbal update on the progress of the investigation into 'Young People's  
Access to Transport' – *Young People's Representatives*

**Investigation into the Provision of Support and Services to Looked After  
Children / Young People**

- 7.3 The provision of support and services to children and young people looked  
after by South Tyneside Council:-

- (a) Covering Report – *Scrutiny Support Officer*
- (b) Presentation – *Head of Children and Families Social Care, South  
Tyneside Council*

- 7.4 Feedback from the group exercises held on 23 November 2011 and the site  
visit to the Star Centre held on 12 December 2011:-

- (a) Covering Report – *Scrutiny Support Officer*
- (b) Written feedback from the group exercises held on 23 November 2011
- (c) Verbal feedback from Members who attended the site visit to the Star  
Centre held on 12 December 2011
- (d) Nominations for Members to visit a Children's Home in Hartlepool and a  
Children's Home in Stockton

- 7.5 Six Monthly Monitoring of Agreed Children's Services Scrutiny Forum's  
Recommendations - *Scrutiny Support Officer*

**8. ISSUES IDENTIFIED FROM FORWARD PLAN**

**9. ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS ARE URGENT**

**ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

**Date of Next Meeting Tuesday 31 January 2012, commencing at 4.30 pm in the Council  
Chamber**

# **CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM**

## **MINUTES**

**23 November 2011**

The meeting commenced at 4.30 pm in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool

**Present:**

Councillor: Christopher Akers-Belcher (In the Chair)

Councillors: Sheila Griffin, John Lauderdale and Angie Wilcox

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 4.2 (ii), Councillor Brenda Loynes was in attendance as substitute for Councillor Ray Wells and Councillor Carl Richardson as substitute for Councillor Sarah Maness

**Co-opted Members:**

David Relton

**Also Present::**

Representatives from partner organisations, foster carers and looked after children/young people

**Officers:** Sally Robinson, Assistant Director, Prevention, Safeguarding and Specialist Services  
Ian Merritt, Strategic Commissioner  
Jane Young, Business Unit Manager  
Wendy Rudd, Head of Business Unit  
Emma Rutherford, Social Inclusion Co-ordinator  
Jackie Yeaman-Vass, Family Placement Team Manager  
Margaret Hennessey, Team Manager  
John Ellison, Principal Practitioner  
Kath Bishop, Social Worker  
Laura Stones, Scrutiny Support Officer  
Denise Wimpenny, Principal Democratic Services Officer

## **61. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Fleet, Ingham, Maness and Wells.

**62. Declarations of interest by Members**

None

**63. Minutes of the meeting held on 1 November 2011**

Confirmed.

**64. Minutes of the Joint Meeting of the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum and Health Scrutiny Forum held on 3 November 2011**

The minutes of the joint meeting, a copy of which were tabled at the meeting, were deferred to allow Members the opportunity to consider the minutes.

**65. Responses from the Council, the Executive or Committees of the Council to Final Reports of this Forum**

None

**66. Consideration of request for scrutiny reviews referred via Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee**

None

**67. Consideration of progress reports/budget and policy framework documents**

None

**68. Investigation into the Provision of Support and Services to Looked After Children/Young People – Group Exercises – Covering Report** (*Scrutiny Support Officer*)

The Scrutiny Support Officer advised that as part of the Forum's investigation into the Provision of Support and Services to Looked After Children/Young People, officers from the Child and Adult Services Department, partner organisations, foster carers and looked after children/young people had been invited to attend the meeting to discuss how looked after children/young people were supported across all aspects of their lives.

As part of the evidence gathering session, Members of the Forum together with invited participants would split into four groups whereupon each group would focus on a specific theme to determine how looked after children/young

people were supported across all aspects of their lives.

The Chair reiterated the purpose of the break out sessions indicating that feedback would be analysed to contribute to the Forum's recommendations in relation to the future delivery of services.

The Forum, together with invited participants separated into four groups. Following group discussion, feedback was provided from the various sessions in response to the following key questions:-

### **Health and Housing**

- (1) *How good is the health and wellbeing of children in care? Could this be improved, if yes, how?*
- (2) *How good is the standard of any residential care provided or used by the Council? Could this be improved, if yes? how?*

### **Corporate Parenting**

- (1) *How well does the Council do in commissioning or providing services for looked after children / young people?*
- (2) *How stable and secure are the lives of looked after children / young people while they are in care? Could this be improved? If yes, how?*
- (3) *What more could be done to fulfil the Council's responsibilities as a 'corporate parent'?*

### **Education**

- (1) *How well do looked after children / young people do at school, both academically and in terms of other kind of achievements? Could this be improved, if yes, how?*
- (2) *How effective is the professional workforce of social workers and others responsible for running services for and working with looked after children/young people?*

### **Placements**

- (1) *How well does the Council do at finding appropriate adoptive families for children for whom it is decided this is the right option?*
- (2) *How well do foster care arrangements work? Could this be improved? If yes, how?*

- (3) *What support does the Council provide to children / young people leaving care and how effective is it?*

### **Group 1 – Feedback – Health and Housing**

- The Group discussed the physical health monitoring process of children in care and access to the looked after children dedicated nurse. It was noted that 90% of health assessments were completed in the timescales and children looked after were aware of the process for accessing such services.
- The emotional wellbeing and mental health of looked after children was debated including the process for measuring emotional and mental health issues. The need to continue to develop a multi-agency approach was emphasised.
- In discussions regarding the standard of residential care provided, the Group referred to difficulties in relation to sustaining tenancies, the reasons for failed tenancies, the need to extend joint working and liaise with a range of housing providers with a view to addressing these problems. The lack of residential provision in Hartlepool for young people generally was noted. It was suggested that care provision be extended beyond the age of 16 for anyone not wishing to live independently at 16.

### **Group 2 – Feedback – Corporate Parenting**

- The need to ensure that placements were appropriate to meet the needs of the child, the importance of questioning whether it was appropriate to place a child outside the town as well as consider the impact of placements outside the area and how best to reintegrate children into an area as part of adulthood.
- In terms of security and stability of looked after children, the Group discussed the importance of suitable matching, the potential impact of emergency foster placements, the need for additional support for foster carers and the option to examine performance figures of the Council in relation to stability of placements for looked after children and young people.
- In considering what more could be done to fulfil the Council's responsibilities as a corporate parent, the Group emphasised the need to question whether the level of support for a looked after child would be acceptable for their own child and emphasised the benefits of placing siblings together.

### **Group 3 – Feedback – Education**

- Statistical information was provided which indicated that outcomes for looked after young people at key stage 2 (end of year 6) and key stage

4 were significantly lower than their peers. It was noted that four looked after young people were currently studying at university.

Reference was made to tracking information which indicated the level of attainment on the date they became looked after to the level of attainment on the date they left the system as a comparator which suggested that the majority of young people were making progress. School attendance levels of looked after children had improved year on year since 2006.

- A looked after young person shared her experiences with the Group highlighting that being looked after had a significant impact on her education. She felt that as a looked after child she was singled out at school and suggested that any meetings in relation to personal circumstances should be held out of school hours to maintain confidentiality and schools should provide an individual they could talk to eg Citizenship Member.
- In relation to post 16 education, it was pointed out that whilst the HCFE were not officially advised of details of looked after children, as a result of the recent removal of the education maintenance allowance and the need to apply for a bursary this information was no longer confidential. Whilst the improvements in attendance figures were noted, it was stated that further improvements were necessary.
- With regard to support mechanisms, it was noted that effective support mechanisms were in place for children looked after when problems arose. The benefits of monitoring personal education plans to provide clarity in terms of funding availability were outlined. Social Workers indicated that their role was key in supporting improvements in education attainment and the potential benefits as a result. The need for settled placements and to improve links with foster carers to ensure young people were placed at the right schools was highlighted. It was considered that changes in social workers affected performance in school.

#### **Group 4 – Feedback – Placements**

- The Forum was advised that the number of children planned for adoption was rising and the number of adopters was reducing nationally. The methods of addressing this issue were outlined which included a recent successful advertising campaign which resulted in an increase in adopters for Hartlepool. One of the measures was finding the right match and reference was made to Hartlepool's success in the adoption process. One of the main issues identified was the need to support carers to accommodate sibling groups with complex needs.
- The approval and matching process was discussed including the need

for improved links with the adoption team.

- In relation to how well the current foster care arrangements worked, arrangements were in place to ensure appropriate levels of support were available. However, the benefits of appointing a second point of contact in the event that the link worker was not available was suggested. In relation to sharing information, the need to publicise the 24 hour support service and improve communication methods with foster carers was highlighted. The Group noted the detrimental impact legal proceedings placed on looked after children.
- In relation to the support provided by the Council to young people leaving foster care, the need for improvement was acknowledged as well as the need to co-ordinate services and ensure the appropriate skills were available to move onto adulthood.

The Chair thanked all participants for their valuable contribution to the group discussions which would form part of the recommendations in relation to this investigation.

### **Recommended**

That feedback from the group discussions and comments from the Forum be noted and utilised to assist with the scrutiny investigation.

## **69. Inquorate Meeting**

It was noted that the meeting was not quorate.

## **70. Additional Information: Children's Services: Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2012/13 to 2014/15 – Initial Consultation Proposals – Covering Report** *(Scrutiny Support Officer)*

The Chair referred to the additional information requested by Members at the meeting on 1 November in relation to the budget together with further information which had been tabled at the meeting.

With regard to previous discussions in relation to in-house residential care provision, the Chair suggested a site visit of the former Flint Walk facility be undertaken to assist the Forum with further debate in relation to future provision. The Assistant Director referred to a recent Cabinet report that had been submitted regarding future commissioning of services which may assist the Forum with the context and models of service delivery. The Chair requested that this report be circulated to all Members of the Forum in advance of the site visit. The Chair stated that costings in relation to provision of a Children's Home would be revisited following the site visit. The Assistant



Director added that information in relation to staffing costs from the private and voluntary sectors would be provided in advance of the site visit.

In response to a suggestion that the Forum may wish to consider an additional site visit to an independent provider, as a comparator, Members were of the view that this would assist with the scrutiny investigation into looked after children/young people.

**Recommended**

- (i) That site visits be undertaken at the former Flint Walk facility as well as an independent provider, feedback from which to be reported at the next meeting of the Forum.
- (ii) That costing information together with the Cabinet report in relation to future commissioning of services, referred to above, be provided in advance of the site visits.

The meeting concluded at 6.05 pm.

CHAIR

# **JOINT MEETING OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM AND HEALTH SCRUTINY FORUM**

## **MINUTES 3 NOVEMBER 2011**

The meeting commenced at 10.00 am in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool

**Present:**

Councillors: Christopher Akers-Belcher, Stephen Akers-Belcher, Mary Fleet, Sheila Griffin, Marjorie James, Geoff Lilley, Arthur Preece, Jean Robinson, Linda Shields, Paul Thompson, Ray Wells and Angie Wilcox

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 4.2 (ii), Councillor Rob Cook was in attendance as substitute for Councillor Sarah Maness

**Resident Representatives:**

Joan Steel, Noma Morrish, Evelyn Leck

**Co-opted Members:**

David Relton

**Also Present:**

Councillors Ann Marshall and Carl Richardson, Adult and Community Services Scrutiny Forum

Councillors Alison Lilley and Edna Wright

Councillor Chris Simmons, Children's Services Portfolio Holder

Councillor Ged Hall, Adult and Public Health Services Portfolio Holder

Officers: Sally Robinson, Assistant Director, Prevention, Safeguarding and Specialist Services

John Robinson, Parent Commissioner

James Walsh, Scrutiny Support Officer

Denise Wimpenny, Principal Democratic Services Officer

## **1. Appointment of Chair**

Nominations were sought for the appointment of Chair. It was agreed that Councillor Stephen Akers-Belcher be appointed as Chair and Councillor Christopher Akers-Belcher be appointed as Vice-Chair for this joint meeting.

**COUNCILLOR STEPHEN AKERS-BELCHER TOOK THE CHAIR**

## **2. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Lawton, Maness, J W Marshall, Sirs and Resident Representative Michael Unwin.

### **3. Declarations of interest by Members**

Councillor Angie Wilcox declared a personal interest in minute 7.

### **4. Responses from the Council, the Executive or Committees of the Council to Final Reports of this Forum**

None.

### **5. Consideration of request for scrutiny reviews referred via Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee**

None.

### **6. Consideration of Progress Reports/Budget and Policy Framework Documents**

None

### **7. Early Intervention Strategy – Covering Report/Presentation** *(Scrutiny Support Officer/Assistant Director of Prevention, Safeguarding and Specialist Services )*

At the meeting of Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee on 19 August 2011, during consideration of the Forward Plan entry relating to the Early Intervention Grant/Strategy, concerns had been raised regarding the budget implications of this proposal and the timing of this decision in that it would not allow:-

- (a) An adequate consultation period with this Committee, or
- (b) The outcome of the Adult and Community Services Scrutiny Forum's Early Intervention and Reablement Services investigation to be taken into consideration.

Members requested that the Portfolio Holder and lead officer be invited to an early meeting of Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee in advance of the commencement of the budget process to:-

- (a) Agree a sensible timetable of consultations with Scrutiny in relation to this issue; and
- (b) Receive further information, as part of the consultation process in relation to Information Advice and Guidance (IAG) Services.

The report included details of the background to the request for a joint meeting to consider the draft strategy in detail.

Members were asked to consider the concerns raised by Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee, as outlined above, look in detail at the draft Early Intervention Grant and formulate a response for consideration by Cabinet as part of the consultation process.

The Assistant Director, who was in attendance at the meeting provided a presentation which focussed on the following issues:-

- Overview of the Strategy
- £6m Grant to bring together a number of previously separate funding streams and grants
- Rationale – localism – removal of ring fences
- Working Group established
- Analysis of local data to establish need
- Outcome of data analysis – wards identified as vulnerable/high level of need
- Types of problems faced by families
- How to meet the needs of children and families
- Current arrangements
  - development of multi-agency systems
  - improved co-ordination
  - not early enough
  - not always family focused
  - practitioners dealing with symptoms as opposed to underlying causes
- Outcome/key messages of Scrutiny Investigation into Think Family – Preventative and Early Intervention Services
- Definition of Early Intervention
- Vision
- Aim
- Principles
- Service Re-design
- Multi-disciplinary team approach
- Common Assessment Framework
- The Role of Information Advice and Guidance (including Careers Guidance)
- How will we know we have been successful?
- Strategic Outcomes
- Next Steps

Following conclusion of the presentation a number of issues/views/queries were raised which included the following:-

- (i) A Member referred to a recent scrutiny investigation into Think Family Preventative and Early Intervention Services and was pleased to note the proposal to develop and promote a simplified self-referral route with one point of contact as recommended in the scrutiny investigation. The importance of ensuring staff undertaking

this role received the necessary training and possessed the necessary skills to ensure individual needs were met was highlighted.

- (ii) The query was raised in relation to reference in the report to receiving information, as part of the consultation process, in relation to Information Advice and Guidance (IAG) Services and the recommendations from the face to face scrutiny investigation that a generic service be delivered on estates. Whilst the need for such provision in schools was acknowledged the importance of outreach delivery on estates was highlighted. This issue would be monitored as part of the scrutiny monitoring arrangements.
- (iii) In relation to the outcomes from the data analysis and the wards identified as vulnerable, a Member pointed out that a number of other areas suffered similar levels of deprivation.
- (iv) With regard to service redesign and the suggested single point of access to family services in the centre of town, it was suggested that further information as to who was accessing the services by age group would assist in determining the most appropriate location for community based services. The benefits of local delivery of services were outlined including the need to consider the costs incurred by vulnerable families in accessing services outside their immediate locality.
- (v) Some concern was expressed in relation to the implications of the proposal to transfer statutory responsibility for Universal Careers Guidance from local authorities to secondary schools from September 2012 and whether as a result of that transfer children not currently accessing such services would be identified.
- (vi) In terms of the next steps, it was pointed out that the political process in terms of consultation and seeking agreement needed to be addressed as a high priority.
- (vii) Further discussion ensued in relation to the outcome of data analysis to establish the highest level of need by ward. A Member was keen to examine further data in this regard to reflect the new ward boundaries as well as historical data. A Member questioned the accuracy of the data provided indicating that children subject to child protection plans in certain wards did not appear to be included in the figures. It was agreed that this be further explored with the officer direct following the meeting.
- (viii) A lengthy discussion ensued in relation to accommodation for young people and the lack of provision for them.
- (ix) Emphasis was placed on the importance of communicating a consistent message and the need to focus on aspirations as

opposed to the vision.

- (x) The Chair was pleased to note that the recommendations arising from the Think Family scrutiny investigation had been considered in the strategy. In terms of the proposed multi-disciplinary team approach, reference was made to the importance of the Lead Family Support Worker role and emphasis was placed on the need to undertake a skills analysis to ensure specialist skills were retained for that role as well as other key roles identified in the multi-disciplinary team. The disadvantages of operating a multi-skilled approach in these circumstances were outlined. Members were advised that retaining specialist skills were key issues that had been debated including how best to shape the commissioning framework.
- (xi) It was suggested that a number of measures be included in the strategy including how outcomes would be measured in terms of success of narrowing the gap in health inequality, the removal of ring fenced budgets, establishing links with the public health grant and Well Being Board, as well as the success of the sub group of the Health and Wellbeing Board.
- (xii) The need to examine how post 16 provision and the tracking of young people following the proposed transfer of responsibility to schools was highlighted. **At this point in the meeting Councillor Paul Thompson declared a personal interest in this item of business.** A Member expressed concern that home visits were being undertaken to track post 16s and indicated that more efficient methods of communication should be utilised.
- (xiii) Members went on to discuss the impact of deprivation on children and young people, the type of placements and support provided for 16 to 19 year olds leaving social care, education and achievement outcomes of children and young people generally, as well as the importance of supporting young people in this age range and not in full time education.

### Recommended

That authority be granted to the Chair and Vice-Chair to formulate a response to Cabinet based on the views/comments of Members, as set out above.

## **8. Issues Identified from Forward Plan**

None.

## **9. Any Other Items which the Chairman Considers are Urgent**

The Chairman ruled that the following item of business should be considered by the Committee as a matter of urgency in accordance with the provisions of Section 100(B) (4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972 in order that the matter could be dealt with without delay.

## **10. Any Other Business – Feedback from Health Meeting**

The Chair provided feedback following a recent meeting with the Minister of State for Health in relation to the Council's concerns regarding the closure of the Accident and Emergency Unit at the University Hospital of Hartlepool:-

Following a 45 minute meeting, the Minister of State for Health concluded that the issue was a local matter. The Chair expressed his disappointment in relation to the outcome of the meeting and stated that a number of concerns/queries were raised of the Health Minister which included how to hold the Trust to account, lack of accountability, the Trust's failure to take the views of the public forward as well as how public confidence could be restored. In response, the Minister of State for Health indicated that in future issues of this type could be referred to Health and Wellbeing Boards. It was, however made clear that issues in relation to changes in services was a matter for clinicians and that both clinicians and Councillors should be responsible in taking that message forward. Whilst the Council's representatives together with the Town's MP pressed the Deputy Minister for further information, the meeting was closed without the provision of any clear advice on a way forward.

In response to a request for clarification regarding the timescales for potential availability of funding for a new hospital, the Minister did not commit to a timescale as to when a decision was likely to be taken. Members were disappointed in the Minister's views in response to concerns regarding transport connections to a new hospital.

The Chair thanked his colleagues, Councillors Chris Simmons, Hilary Thompson, Brenda Loynes, Ian Wright MP and Grahame Morris MP for their attendance and support at the meeting.

Councillor Simmons endorsed the comments of the Chair and provided further feedback from the meeting indicating his disappointment regarding the outcome of discussions.

A Member commented on the need to work in collaboration with neighbouring East Durham colleagues in terms of the next steps. Various options with regard to a way forward were outlined including the option to explore the benefits of a judicial review in partnership with East Durham and that legal advice be sought in this regard. In response to a request for further urgent consideration of this issue, the Chair reported that discussion could take place at the next Council meeting under matters arising from the minutes. It was noted that arrangements had been made for the Chair of the Council's Health Scrutiny Forum to meet with Durham County Council's Cabinet Member for Health and Chair of Health Scrutiny the following day to discuss joint working arrangements.

The Chair of the Council made reference to recent correspondence received in relation to this issue and outlined the background to the questions submitted by members of the public at the recent public meeting and apologised for the delay in submission of the questions to the Trust. In response to a request for clarification, the Chairman of the Council provided details as to how representatives of the Council had been chosen to attend the meeting with the Health Minister.

The Adult and Public Health Portfolio Holder commented on the Minister's definition of "local" and highlighted that the issue was much wider than the borough of Hartlepool and East Durham as it affected other constituencies of Sedgefield and Stockton. Reference was made to the previous reasons given for the closure of the accident and emergency unit being that of safety.

The Forum discussed at some length its displeasure in relation to the outcomes of the meeting, the boundaries and population of the town, the implications of the Darzi report and the decision to merge Hartlepool with North Tees, the recent interview on BBC Radio Tees with the Chief Executive of the Trust, the level of usage of the One Life Centre and whether it represented value for money. The value of further debate was questioned and the need for action in response to the Council's motion of "no confidence" was emphasised. The suggestion of working in collaboration with neighbouring authorities to address the concerns outlined were reiterated. A Member clarified that the decision to withdraw services was that of the Board of North Tees and Hartlepool Trust.

Members of the public, who were in attendance at the meeting, expressed their disappointment in relation to current health provision and supported the comments of the Forum in relation to the need for urgent action. Concerns were also raised regarding the comments of the Chief Executive of the NHS Trust in a recent BBC Tees Radio interview in terms of future health provision. Another member of the public shared his experience as a recent patient of the One Life Centre emphasising that this was not a satisfactory service and no substitute for A and E.



**Recommended**

- (i) That the comments/views of the Forum, be noted.
- (ii) That urgent action be taken by Council in response to their motion of no confidence in the decision making of the Chief Executive, Alan Foster and Chairman, Paul Garvin and the Board of North Tees and Hartlepool Trust NHS Foundation Trust to address the concerns in relation to the removal or reduction of services from Hartlepool.
- (iii) That collaborative working with neighbouring authorities, be pursued.

The meeting concluded at 12.45 pm.

CHAIR

## **CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM**

17 January 2012



**Report of:** Scrutiny Support Officer

**Subject:** CHILDREN'S SERVICES: MEDIUM TERM  
FINANCIAL STRATEGY (MTF) 2012/13 TO 2014/15 -  
CONSULTATION PROPOSALS

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### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To provide the opportunity, as part of the consultation process in relation to the development of the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTF) for 2012/13 to 2014/15, for the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum to consider finalised proposals in relation to those service areas of the Child and Adult Services Department's budget that fall within its remit.

### **2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 2.1 As a starting point for the 2012/13 budget process, Cabinet on the 10 October 2011 considered a detailed report in relation to the development of the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTF) for 2012/13 to 2014/15 and approved details of the consultation process and timetable for consideration of the Executives proposals. In addition to this, it was also brought to the Cabinet's attention that, over and above dealing with core budget issues, the Local Authority will also have to deal with:
- A number of one-off strategic financial issues, around redundancy/early retirement costs, housing market renewal, land remediation costs and capital investment requirements; and
  - The impact of Government Proposals for changing Business Rates and Council Tax funding arrangements; and
  - Changes to Grant regimes.
- 2.2 At the meeting of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee held on 23 September 2011 it was agreed that, as in previous years, consideration of the budget proposals would be split to enable each standing Scrutiny Forum to look in detail at the service areas that fall within their remit. Comments / observations were then fed back to the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee, to enable a formal response to Cabinet on 19 December 2011.

- 2.3 This process was undertaken throughout November 2011, and the comments/observations of each Forum were fed back to the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee held on 2 December 2011, for inclusion in the formal Scrutiny response to Cabinet. The Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee's formal response was received by Cabinet on the 19 December 2011 and the comments/observations expressed were taken into consideration during the finalisation of its Budget and Policy Framework Proposals for 2012/13. Minutes attached at **Appendix 1**.
- 2.4 For Members information, details of the comments / observations formulated by the Forum, as part of the initial budget consultation process, and the Cabinet response to them, are outlined in **Appendix 2**.
- 2.5 The Executive's finalised budget proposals were subsequently considered by the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee on 13 January 2012, and repeating the process previously implemented they were referred to the appropriate Scrutiny Forum for consideration. The process to be undertaken during January 2012.
- 2.6 In accordance with the wishes of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee, the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum is today being asked to look in detail at the finalised proposals in relation to those service areas within the Child and Adult Services Department that fall within its remit. Details of the proposals in relation to Child and Adult Services Department and other corporate areas / issues, which Cabinet have referred to Scrutiny for consideration, are outlined within the following appendices. Please note that these departmental issues are unchanged from the initial proposals referred to the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee in October 2011:-

**Appendix A -** Proposed pressures;

**Appendix B\*-** Proposed Savings (Child and Adult Services Department Business Transformation (BT) Programme Budget Reductions); and

**Appendix C -** Review of Reserves.

\*Please note that this now summarises the savings on a project basis to reflect the detailed reports submitted to Cabinet and specific Scrutiny Forums on individual projects.

- 2.7 The comments / observations formulated by each Forum are to be fed back to the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee on the 27 January 2012, to enable the submission of a formal Scrutiny response to Cabinet on 6 February 2012.
- 2.8 To assist Members of this Scrutiny Forum in the consideration of the finalised proposals, arrangements have been made for the Assistant Director of Performance and Achievement and the Assistant Director of Prevention, Safeguarding and Specialist Services to be in attendance and an invitation to

this meeting has also been extended to the relevant Portfolio Holder(s) (attendance subject to availability).

### **3. RECOMMENDATIONS**

3.1 It is recommended that the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum: -

- a) as part of the Budget and Policy Framework consultation proposals for 2012/2013, consider the (BT) Programme Targets, pressures and reserves relating to the Children's services areas of service provision within the Child and Adult Services Department; and
- b) formulates any comments and observations in relation to each to be presented by the Chair of this Scrutiny Forum to the meeting of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee, to be held on 27 January 2012, to enable a formal response to be presented to the Cabinet on 6 February 2012.

**Contact Officer:-** Laura Stones – Scrutiny Support Officer  
Chief Executive's Department - Corporate Strategy  
Hartlepool Borough Council  
Tel: 01429 523 087  
Email: laura.stones@hartlepool.gov.uk

### **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- (i) Report of the Corporate Management Team entitled 'Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2012/2013 To 2014/2015' presented to Cabinet on 10 October 2011
- (ii) Minutes from Cabinet - 10 October 2011
- (iii) Report of the Chief Finance Officer entitled 'Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2012/2013 To 2014/2015 – Initial Consultation Proposals' presented to Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee on 14 October 2011
- (iv) Minutes of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee - 14 October 2011
- (v) Report of the Corporate Management Team entitled 'Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2012/2013 To 2014/2015' presented to Cabinet on 19 December 2011
- (vi) Minutes from Cabinet - 19 December 2011
- (vii) Report of the Chief Finance Officer entitled 'Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2012/2013 To 2014/2015 – Consultation Proposals' presented to Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee on 13 January 2012

# **CABINET**

## **MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD**

19 December 2011

The meeting commenced at 9.15 am in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool

### **Present:**

The Mayor, Stuart Drummond - In the Chair

Councillors: Jonathan Brash (Housing and Transition Portfolio Holder)  
Robbie Payne (Deputy Mayor) (Finance and Procurement Portfolio Holder),  
Gerard Hall (Adult and Public Health Services Portfolio Holder),  
Cath Hill (Culture, Leisure and Tourism Portfolio Holder),  
Chris Simmons (Children's Services Portfolio Holder),  
Hilary Thompson (Performance Portfolio Holder),

Also Present: Councillor Christopher Akers Belcher, Vice Chair of Scrutiny  
Coordinating Committee and Chair of Children's Services Scrutiny  
Forum.  
Councillors Turner and Wells.

Officers: Nicola Bailey, Acting Chief Executive  
Andrew Atkin, Assistant Chief Executive,  
Chris Little, Chief Finance Officer  
Peter Devlin, Chief Solicitor  
Joanne Machers, Chief Customer and Workforce Services Officer  
Dave Stubbs, Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods  
Damien Wilson, Assistant Director, Regeneration and Planning  
Graham Frankland, Assistant Director, Resources  
Jill Harrison, Assistant Director, Adult Social Care  
Caroline O'Neill, Assistant Director, Performance and Achievement  
Phil Homsby, Head of Service  
Joan Stevens, Scrutiny Manager  
Steve Hilton, Public Relations Officer  
David Cosgrove, Democratic Services Team

### **181. Apologies for Absence**

Councillors Pam Hargreaves (Transport and Neighbourhoods Portfolio Holder) and Peter Jackson (Regeneration and Economic Development and Skills Portfolio Holder).  
Councillor Stephen Akers-Belcher, Chair of Health Scrutiny Forum.

**184. Formal Response to the Executive's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2012/2013 to 2014/2015 – Initial Budget Consultations** (*Scrutiny Coordinating Committee*)

**Type of decision**

None.

**Purpose of report**

To provide the formal response of the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee in relation to the Executive's initial proposals for the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2012/2013 to 2014/2015.

**Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet**

The Vice-Chair of the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee reported that at the meeting of the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee held on 14 October 2011, consideration was given to the Executive's initial proposals for the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2012/2013 to 2014/2015.

At the meeting it was agreed that, as in previous years, each of the Standing Scrutiny Forums would consider the budget proposals covering the service areas within their remit. Comments / observations were subsequently fed back to the meeting of the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee held on 2 December 2011 to assist in the formulation of this Committee's formal response to Cabinet. The Vice-Chair of Scrutiny Coordinating Committee also highlighted that further consideration would be given to Cabinet's finalised proposals by the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee at its meetings on 13 January 2012 and 27 January 2012.

The Vice-Chair of the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee commented that during the determination of a formal response, Scrutiny Members were largely supportive in principle of the identified saving proposals, pressures, capital receipts, reserves and outturns and were keen to examining in greater detail the final budget proposals, once approved by Cabinet. Details of the specific comments made by each of the scrutiny forums was set out in the report.

Tabled at the meeting was a document setting out Cabinet's initial responses to the scrutiny comments on the initial budget proposals. The Mayor indicated that this would be formally forwarded to scrutiny with the MTFS for further consultation.

**Decision**

That the report be received.

## **185. Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2012/13 to 2014/15** *(Corporate Management Team)*

### **Type of decision**

Budget and Policy Framework.

### **Purpose of report**

The purpose of the report is to update the MTFS and to enable Cabinet to refer formal budget proposals to Scrutiny Coordinating Committee.

### **Issue(s) for consideration by Cabinet**

The Chief Finance Officer referred to the comprehensive report submitted to Cabinet on 10 October 2011 (Minute No.111 refers) and referred to Scrutiny Coordinating Committee on 14 October 2011. The report advised Members that the public sector and the Council are facing the greatest financial challenge which has existed in the past 50 years. This position reflects both national financial issues reflecting the Governments deficit reduction plan and locally the impact of demographic pressures.

The previous report identified two key financial issues facing the Council over the next three years.

- (i) the need to address a £15.083m budget deficit on the current net general fund budget of £91.8m.
- (ii) the need to fund one-off strategic costs of £14m, mainly relating to redundancy/ early retirement costs and unfunded Housing Market Renewal commitments.

The report presented to this meeting provided an update on these issues and other factors relevant to the budget strategy for the next three years.

Existing legislation requires the Government to formally make an annual settlement announcement regarding the allocation of grants to individual Councils. The 2012/13 settlement had not been announced by the Government when this report was prepared and was expected to be issued late on 8th December 2011. An additional appendix to the report had been circulated to Cabinet in advance of the meeting setting out the key issues arising from the formal consultation proposals for the distribution of Formula Grant for 2012/13 issued by the Department for Communities and Local Government on 8 December, 2011.

The Chief Finance Officer confirmed that there were no changes to the initial proposals set out by the government in February 2011 and therefore the grant cut of £4.1m (8%) for 2012/13 had been confirmed. The Chief Finance Officer referred Members to the table in the report comparing Hartlepool's 'spending power' cuts for 2010/11 and 2011/12 with other authorities, which shows the higher cuts facing Hartlepool. The Chief Finance Officer did indicate that the Government had announced that they would abolish Whitehall capping and replace it with Council Tax

referendums.

The Government were proposing thresholds for 'excessive' Council Tax increases which would trigger referendums, as follows:

- 3.5% for local authorities;
- 3.75% for the City of London;
- 4% for the Greater London Authority, police authorities and single purpose fire and rescue authorities.

These proposals needed to be formally approved by Parliament in late January 2012 as part of the final report on the 2012/13 Local Government Finance Settlement. It was expected these thresholds would be subject to annual review by the Government.

If an authority determined to approve a proposed Council Tax increase above the 'excessive' threshold a Council Tax referendum needed to be held not later than the first Thursday in May.

Authorities going down this route effectively needed a 'fall back' budget based on the referendum being unsuccessful. Under this scenario the Council Tax increase would be limited to the 'excessive' increase determined by the Government for triggering a referendum, i.e. 3.5% for 2012/13.

The Government's consultation on the 2012/13 Local Government Finance Settlement closes on 16 January 2012. It was suggested that Hartlepool did not seek a meeting with the Minister and provided only a written response, which it was proposed the Chief Finance Officer agreed with the Mayor.

Key issues that would be covered in the consultation response would be: -

- The fairness of the proposed settlement;
- The concern that funding had not been found to extend Transitional Grant to follow principles adopted for the previous 'floor damping system' which provided protection for a number of years. Particularly against background of Government finding significant funding to freeze Council Tax for 2012/13;
- The concern that the 2012/13 Council Tax freeze grant would only be paid for one year. This proposal clearly recognised that councils need additional funding, but only provided a temporary solution which would increase the financial challenges facing councils in 2013/14. The removal of this funding could not be viewed in isolation and needed to be considered in the context of other changes being made in 2013/14, including re-localisation of business rates, Council Tax Benefit changes and reform of the Local Government funding system.

The Chief Finance Officer went on to highlight the main aspects of the report for Cabinet's information. The matters highlighted sought Cabinet's approval to the detailed consultation issues that were to be referred to



Scrutiny Coordinating Committee. In addition to the fourteen matters that had been set out in the report, the Chief Finance Officer also indicated that in light of the Government announcement on Council Tax Referendums, Cabinet needed to have a view on a potential Council Tax rise.

The Mayor commented that as well as submitting a response on behalf of the Council to the Government's Consultation, Hartlepool would also be part of the joint response of North east Councils being coordinated by the Association of North East Councils (ANEC). This was welcomed by Cabinet members. Members suggested that any response for Hartlepool needed to include the comparison of spending power cuts set out on page 2 of the report as this highlighted the significant and undue pressure the council was being placed under through the government's cuts.

During the debate on the report, the following issues/questions were discussed –

- Would the Furniture Solutions proposal be going through a tendering process. The Director of Regeneration and Neighbourhoods indicated that if agreed it, then yes it would.
- The proposal to create a fund to tackle empty properties as set out in the report was supported.
- Concerns were expressed at the fact Hartlepool didn't qualify for transitional funding for 2012/13.
- Cabinet considered that the public needed to be made fully aware of the situation that would arise in the 2013/14 budget if the government's grant for maintaining a council tax freeze in 2012/13 was accepted. The Chief Finance Officer stated that if the Council did not support a Council Tax rise in 2012/13, then that income was effectively gone forever and this would increase the 2013/14 budget deficit by approximately £1m. Through the consultation response, the Council needed to emphasise that putting the money into transitional funding would have assisted council's more than the money being spent on the council tax freeze. Many other authorities had seen through this and were proposing increases for 2012/13.
- The prudential borrowing to fund the coastal defence works in Seaton Carew was welcomed.
- The revenue saving of £39,000 relating to the Church Square Capital fund was to be considered further.
- It was proposed that an element of capital receipts be utilised in the Central Linear Park to provide changing facilities.
- The Mayor indicated that the Government was hoping that authorities would see the grant to maintain the council tax freeze as a 'gift' but it had huge longer term consequences and with the changes to business rates and the cuts in benefits; a council tax rise of around 5% would be needed in 2013/14 to regain the income lost. Neighbouring authorities had already chosen not to take the grant and were proposing council tax rises of 3% to 3.5%.
- The new council tax rise referendum were discussed and Members commented that it effectively set a ceiling as it was unlikely that a vote

for a rise above the threshold would ever be won. The Mayor considered that through extensive consultation, beyond what was normally undertaken, it could be possible to bring forward the same response as a referendum would. Consultation would need to be geared towards what people didn't want, i.e. service cuts.

Cabinet supported the consultation set out in the report with the additions outlined above. In relation to Council Tax, Cabinet reluctantly agreed to recommend acceptance of the government grant and maintain a council tax freeze for 2012/13. Cabinet did recommend that the consultation with scrutiny include an indicative council tax rise of 3.5% being built into the budgets for 2013/14 and 2014/15.

### **Decision**

1. That the following issues be referred to Scrutiny Coordinating Committee for formal scrutiny:
  - (i) Details of revised outturn detailed in Appendix A to the report and proposal to earmark: -
    - a. £50,000 to provide a cash backed fund for the completion of housing works in default;
    - b. between £29,000 and £359,000 to support the 2012/13 budget; and
    - c. the remaining 2011/12 outturn balance of £867,000 to £1,197,00 to be carried forward to 2013/14 to either support the 2013/14 budget, or to provide a transitional scheme to partly mitigate the impact of changes to the Council Tax Benefit regime.
  - (ii) Seek views on the use of the 2011/12 savings of £76,848 from the Acting Chief Executive arrangements and £21,402 from the joint Head of HR role.
  - (iii) Seek views on the use of the one-off saving arising from the Industrial Action based on an estimated value of £50,000.
  - (iv) Proposed pressures detailed in Appendix B to the report.
  - (v) Revised planning assumptions detailed in Appendix C to the report.
  - (vi) Proposed savings detailed in Appendix D to the report.
  - (vii) Review of Reserves detailed in Appendix E. to the report
  - (viii) Seek views the proposed acceptance of the government's one year grant in order to maintain a council tax freeze for 2012/13 but that indicative council tax rises of 3.5% be set for 2013/14 and 2014/15.

- (ix) Seek views in the proposed strategy for funding the increased costs on the PCP capital schemes detailed in paragraph 4.12 of the report.
  - (x) Seek views on the proposal to create a capital investment fund of between £0.8m and £1.0m to develop a business case to buy and refurbish existing properties to provide affordable houses. This would also need to consider the impact of Section 106 monies secured on the Wynyard development of £1.2m. It was anticipated these monies would be phased over a few years and would increase the total resources to £2.2m.
  - (xi) Seek views on the allocation of the available Furniture Project reserve of £50,000 to kick start this project.
  - (xii) Seek views on whether the Major Regeneration Capital budget of £0.39m should be retained, or the budget should be deleted and a revenue saving of £39,000 taken by removing the Prudential Borrowing repayment budget, subject to the Director or Regeneration and Neighbourhoods providing more information.
  - (xiii) Seek views on the proposal to demolish the Brierton 'top site' building and ancillary buildings.
  - (xiv) Seek views on the proposed purchase of the Ambulance Station.
2. That a written response to 2012/13 Local Government Finance Settlement consultation, which closes on 16 January 2012, be submitted by the Chief Finance Officer following agreement with the Mayor and does not seek a meeting with the Minister.

**P J DEVLIN**

**CHIEF SOLICITOR**

**PUBLICATION DATE: 23 DECEMBER 2011**

**SUMMARY OF SCRUTINY FEEDBACK ON BUDGET PROPOSALS AND CABINET RESPONSE**

| <b>Scrutiny Comments on Cabinet Proposal</b>  | <b>Cabinet Response to Scrutiny</b>   |
|---|---|
| <b>Children's Services Scrutiny Forum 1 November</b>  |   |
| <b><u>BT Programmes</u></b>   |   |
| <p><u>Social Care Commissioning – Looked After Children Nurse</u></p> <p>The Forum reaffirmed their views expressed in the report considered by Cabinet on 5<sup>th</sup> December 2011 in relation to this area. Members emphasised the need for the Looked After Children Nurse position to be retained once the PCT ceased to exist. Members reiterated the importance of this being relayed to new Clinical Commissioning Group and endorsed by Health and Wellbeing Board.</p> | <p>Comments noted and this will be taken forward with Clinical Commissioning Group.</p>   |
| <p><u>Review of Divisional Management Structure</u></p> <p>The Forum reaffirmed their views expressed in the report considered by Cabinet on 5<sup>th</sup> December 2011 in relation to this area, where it was suggested that the option of a secondment from the third sector to undertake the Head of Service role for youth offending be explored.</p>   | <p>Comments noted, this option will be explored as part of consideration of long term service delivery model for youth offending service.</p>   |
| <p><u>Reduction in Youth Support Commissioning</u></p> <p>Members did not support this reduction and reaffirmed their views expressed in the report considered by Cabinet on 5<sup>th</sup> December 2011 in relation to this area. Members emphasised the need to advise all service providers that the service would not be withdrawn on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2012 and would continue for up to 6 months until a new contract was introduced/awarded.</p>                         | <p>This message is being communicated to existing providers and tenders for services will be progressed subject to Cabinet approval of the Early Intervention Grant Strategy on 19/12/11.</p> <p>Existing providers will be eligible to submitted tenders. Transitional funding will be provided where appropriate.</p> |

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| <p><b><u>Pressures</u></b><br/><b><u>School Catering</u></b></p> <p>Members, as Corporate Parents could not agree to a pressure of this magnitude until the position was clear with regards to what is happening with the Learning Disability and Health Improvement Grant and whether this money could be used to fulfil this pressure. Members also requested that clarification be sought from schools on whether the Healthy Eating Grant would be used to subsidise school meals or it would be used for another purpose.</p>                   | <p>Cabinet would comment that the £140,000 pressure is a known issue arising from the Dedicated Schools Grant subsidy not continuing. Pressure has been included to protect this service.</p> <p>The Learning Disability and Health Improvement Grant relates solely to adults and is a ring fenced transfer of resource from the PCT for named individuals with a learning disability who were previously resettled from long stay institutions and now live in the community in Hartlepool.</p> <p>With regard to the Healthy Eating Grant this issue will be referred to the School Forum in January for consideration and decision. Officers will attend this meeting to outline the Councils case.</p>                   |
| <p><b><u>Reserves to be reviewed</u></b><br/><b><u>City Learning Centre</u></b></p> <p>With regard to the long term use of the building, it was suggested that the possibility of soft market testing be pursued. Concerns were raised by Members regarding the costs incurred in funding redundancy costs for a facility that was not Council owned given the current budgetary situation and a query was raised regarding the Council's legal position in terms of funding such costs. The decision to be followed by meaningful consultation.</p> | <p>Cabinet will consider the proposal to use this reserve to meet any one-off costs which arise in relation to Brierton Sports Centre. Cabinet does not consider it prudent to use the reserve to meet the ongoing Brierton pressure which needs to be included in the revenue budget.</p> <p>In relation to any uncommitted reserve Cabinet would suggest that this is specifically retained for any essential works which may arise at Mill House.</p> <p>The legal position is that all staff currently employed at the CLC are Council employees. This dates back to the start of the CLCs in the 1990s so if schools no longer wish to allocate a budget share to sustain the provision, the Council would not be in</p> |

|  |   |
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|  | a position to fund it and staff would need to be made redundant |
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**SCHEDULE OF 2012/13 BUDGET PRESSURES - Child and Adult Services**

| Budget Area     | Value of Pressure<br>£'000 | Description of Pressure  | Comment |
|-----------------|----------------------------|--|---------|
| School Catering | 140                        | The 2011/12 base budget anticipated a £0.14m subsidy for this service from the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). This level of subsidy will not be possible in 2011/12 and a £0.07m pressures has been recognised in the 2011/12 outturn strategy. From 2012/13 there will be no DSG subsidy for this service. Alternative measures for funding this pressure for 2012/13 are being investigated and will be reported to a future Cabinet. At this stage it is prudent to make provision for this potential pressure. |         |
|                 | 140                        |  |         |

**SCHEDULE OF BT PROGRAMME BUDGET REDUCTIONS**

| Dept | Projects (Title)                              | Target savings (£K) | Scrutiny Forum                     | Date reported to Cabinet |
|------|---|---------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| C&A  | Education Services & Out of School Activities | £128,000            | Children's Services Scrutiny Forum | 5th December             |
| C&A  | Children's Social Care & Safeguarding         | £408,000            | Children's Services Scrutiny Forum | 5th December             |
| C&A  | Support Services                              | £115,000            | Children's Services Scrutiny Forum | 5th December             |
| C&A  | Transport                                     | £160,000            | Children's Services Scrutiny Forum | 5th December             |
|      |   |                     |                                    |                          |
|      |   |                     |                                    |                          |
|      | <b>Total Target Savings</b>                   | <b>£811,000</b>     |                                    |                          |



| Created 2010/11 as per Outturn Strategy<br>£'000 | Department | Reserve                       | Actual Balance 31/03/2011<br>£'000 | Reason for/purpose of the Reserve  | Total Value of Reserve to be released for One-off Strategic costs<br>£'000 | Value of Reserve to be retained<br>£'000 | Reason for retention of reserve   |
|--|------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|--|--|---|
| £000   |            |                               | £000                               |  | £000   | £000                                     |   |
| 267  | Children's | Looked After Children         | 1,066                              | Contribution to the Safeguarding and Specialist Services for the development of Looked After Children in this volatile area.   | 0  | 1,066                                    | Volatile area and risky to release reserve with increasing numbers of Looked after Children.  |
|  | Children's | Brierton/Dyke House BSF Costs | 300                                | Reserve created to fund BSF costs.   | 0  | 300                                      | Funding of costs including specialist advisors and BSF costs.   |
| 0  | Children's | Think Family                  | 299                                | 2010/11 balance of grant funding to be carried forward into 2011/12 to assist with continuation of service following reductions in 2011/12 grant allocations as part of the Early Intervention Grant.. | 50   | 249                                      | This is used as part of invest to save work, piloting children on edge of care, including support and training for foster carers. Residual £50k not required.   |
| 0  | Children's | BSF Implementation Costs      | 242                                | This is the revenue reserve to fund the revenue costs of the School Transformation Team.   | 0  | 242                                      | Profiled to fund Transformation Team staffing and BSF costs.  |
| 0  | Children's | Ring-Fenced Grants            | 227                                | A number of ring-fenced grants were underspent at the end of 2009/10 and 2010/11 therefore this Reserve was created in order to carry the funding forward into future years.                           | 41   | 186                                      | <b>Breastfeeding</b> - £58k to support PCT initiative.<br><b>NDC - Learning Initiatives Ready for Baby</b> - £5k.<br><b>Children's Fund</b> - £68k funding agreed by Members as part of 2011/12 budget setting.<br><b>Education Business Partnerships</b> - £5k to work with vulnerable young people. |
| 0  | Children's | Youth Offending Reserve       | 206                                | Ring-Fenced as YOS is a Partnership Budget. Created from planned underspends in previous years to fund YOS initiatives.  | 40   | 166                                      | Funding to manage Service, payment of rent for premises and cost of redundancy appeals (4 staff supernumerary)<br>£40k can be released.   |

| Created 2010/11 as per Outturn Strategy<br>£'000 | Department | Reserve   | Actual Balance 31/03/2011<br>£'000 | Reason for/purpose of the Reserve  | Total Value of Reserve to be released for One-off Strategic costs<br>£'000 | Value of Reserve to be retained<br>£'000 | Reason for retention of reserve   |
|--|------------|---|------------------------------------|--|--|--|---|
| £000   |            |   | £000                               |  | £000   | £000                                     |   |
| 0  | Children's | Community Facilities in Schools - Children's Services Funding | 154                                | There was a revenue budget created in 2009/10 for Community Facility subsidies to assist with funding those facilities which were operating a deficit. There was no call on this Reserve during 2009/10. In 2010/11 there was also base budget provision of £100k which an element contributed towards the deficit at the St John Vianney Children's Centre. The balance of this budget has been transferred to this Reserve. The base budget has been deleted as part of the savings exercise so this is now a 'Contingency' budget.. | 54   | 100                                      | To hold balance as a contingency, 11/12 to be a transitional year. Reserve maybe required to support schools.   |
| 0  | Children's | School Rates  | 116                                | This was created to manage the volatility of business rate charges within school budgets. Following the implementation of the Dedicated School Grant which now finances any schools rates volatility, and the 2010 review of rateable valuations, this reserve is no longer required.  | 116  | 0  | N/A   |
| 85   | Children's | Raising Educational Achievement                               | 85                                 | Incorporates funding to ensure the most vulnerable young people are tracked and supported to remain in education.  | 0  | 85                                       | Required to meet needs of vulnerable young people supported in education, especially those who are at risk of entering the Youth Justice System                           |
| 2  | Children's | Positive Activities for Young People                          | 77                                 | 2010/11 balance of grant funding to be carried forward into 2011/12 to assist with continuation of service following reductions in 2011/12 grant allocations as part of the Early Intervention Grant..   | 0  | 77                                       | Funding required to meet the needs of vulnerable young people and ensure engaged in purposeful activities, especially those at risk of entering the Youth Justice system. |
| 0  | Children's | Early Years Development Childcare Plan                        | 57                                 | This reserve has been created to develop the provision of services for 3 and 4 year olds. Not required for funding services.   | 57   | 0  | N/A   |

| Created 2010/11 as per Outturn Strategy<br>£'000 | Department | Reserve   | Actual Balance 31/03/2011<br>£'000 | Reason for/purpose of the Reserve   | Total Value of Reserve to be released for One-off Strategic costs<br>£'000 | Value of Reserve to be retained<br>£'000 | Reason for retention of reserve   |
|--|------------|---|------------------------------------|---|--|--|---|
| £000   |            |   | £000                               |   | £000   | £000                                     |   |
| 0  | Children's | Community Facilities in Schools - Corporate Funding       | 50                                 | Corporate Funding set aside in 2006/07 specifically to cover any deficits in school Community Facilities in order to ensure that the facilities can continue to provide services.<br>Reserve not required. Contingency already in place if required.  | 50   | 0  | N/A   |
| 0  | Children's | Carlton Outdoor Centre                                    | 66                                 | This Ring-Fenced Reserve was created from underspends on the Carlton Centre budget during refurbishment, initially to cover the LA contribution towards any second phase of capital development at Carlton Outdoor Centre. However, following the withdrawal of both Redcar and Stockton from the partnership this Reserve has been used as an 'Income' contingency reserve to ensure that the Carlton budget does not overspend and fall as a cost to Hartlepool tax payers. | 0  | 66                                       | Required to support Carlton Centre following withdrawal of funding by other LAs.  |
| 33   | Children's | Sustainable Travel/Post 16 Travel                         | 33                                 | Funding towards Post-16 travel previously funded by government grants.  | 0  | 33                                       | Pathfinder grant for Post 16 students stopped in 11/12. Currently piloting scheme where colleges pay cost of travel, required as contingency. |
|  | Children's | Raising Educational Achievement                           | 32                                 | Incorporates funding to enhance the Educational achievement and experience through Playing for Success.   | 0  | 32                                       | To fund salaries to continue initiative with Hartlepool FC until Aug 11.  |
| 32   | Children's | City Learning Centre                                      | 32                                 | This is Contingency funding to enable the continuation of the service based at the Space to Learn Centre.<br>Not required as planned.   | 32   | 0  | N/A   |
| 15   | Children's | Educational Psychologists                                 | 30                                 | Created to support initiative at Springwell School during 2011/12.  | 0  | 30                                       | Supporting the bursars of 2 student psychologists, including one at Springwell School.  |
| 0  | Children's | Local Safeguarding Children's Board (Partnership Funding) | 29                                 | Ring-Fenced Reserve - This is Partnership Funding with other bodies so not all HBC funding. Relates to underspends carried forward.   | 0  | 29                                       | Partnership funding held by LA, ringfenced to support Serious Case Reviews.   |

| Created 2010/11 as per Outturn Strategy<br>£'000 | Department | Reserve                         | Actual Balance 31/03/2011<br>£'000 | Reason for/purpose of the Reserve  | Total Value of Reserve to be released for One-off Strategic costs<br>£'000 | Value of Reserve to be retained<br>£'000 | Reason for retention of reserve   |
|--|------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|--|--|---|
| £000   |            |                                 | £000                               |  | £000   | £000                                     |   |
| 0  | Children's | Workforce Development           | 25                                 | 2010/11 balance of grant funding to be carried forward into 2011/12.   | 0  | 25                                       | CWDC specific grant funding to support Agency Social Workers and to cover social work training costs for the academic year. |
| 0  | Children's | Child Poverty Local Duties      | 21                                 | Late Notification of ABG allocation to be carried forward to fund targeted family work in 2011/12.   | 0  | 21                                       | One off funding required to pilot targeted intervention work with identified poverty issues.                                |
| 0  | Children's | Parenting Support               | 20                                 | This was created from additional income over and above the grant generated from the Parenting Support Programme in 2007/08.<br>Over achievement of income, not required for core service.  | 20   | 0  | N/A   |
| 0  | Children's | Teenage Pregnancy               | 20                                 | Reserve was created from income generated by the Teenage Pregnancy initiative which has been set aside to enhance the TP Programme.<br>Funding not required as planned.  | 20   | 0  | N/A   |
| 0  | Children's | Swimming Pool Maintenance       | 20                                 | It was decided not to install a moveable floor at Brinkburn Pool which was the original purpose of this Reserve. The Children's Services, Performance Management and Regeneration, Liveability and Housing Portfolio Holders have requested that this be earmarked for the general upkeep of Swimming Pools within the town.<br>Not required as previously planned for pool floor. | 20   | 0  | N/A   |
| 0  | Children's | Youth Service - General         | 10                                 | Youth Advisory Group Balances and youth centre catering surpluses have been carried forward from previous years to fund service developments.  | 10   | 0  | N/A   |
| 3  | Children's | Raising Educational Achievement | 9                                  | Incorporates funding to enhance the Educational achievement and experience through Playing for Success.  | 0  | 9  | Specific grant funding to fund salaries to continue initiative with Hartlepool FC until Aug 11.                             |

| Created 2010/11 as per Outturn Strategy<br>£'000 | Department | Reserve                  | Actual Balance 31/03/2011<br>£'000 | Reason for/purpose of the Reserve  | Total Value of Reserve to be released for One-off Strategic costs<br>£'000 | Value of Reserve to be retained<br>£'000 | Reason for retention of reserve                                 |
|--|------------|--------------------------|------------------------------------|--|--|--|---|
| £000   |            |                          | £000                               |  | £000   | £000                                     |   |
| 0  | Children's | Care Matters             | 4                                  | Contribution to the Safeguarding and Specialist Services for the development of Looked After Children in this volatile area. | 0  | 4  | Required to fund educational visits during Summer 2011 for LAC. |
| 2  | Children's | Youth Opportunity Grants | 2                                  | Specific Grant Awards given to the Young People for activities during 2011/12.   | 0  | 2  | Activities booked with young people in 11/12.                   |
| 439  |            |                          | 3,233                              |  | 510  | 2,723                                    |   |

## Hartlepool Primary School Councils Forum

### First Annual Conference

### Hartlepool Maritime Experience

July 4th 2011

Organised and Supported by West View  
Project



"Mam works days, dad works nights"

"The need for quality time with parents"

How can we create a happy medium?

People / Schools in attendance

Lynnfield Primary School

Stranton Primary School

Clavering Primary School

Eldon Grove Primary School

Owton Manor Primary School

Brougham Primary School

Springwell Primary School

Greatham CofE Primary School

Barnard Grove Primary School

St Helen's Primary School

Throston Primary School

Sacred Heart RC Primary School

St Bega's RC Primary School

West View Primary School

Hart Primary School

St Cuthberts RC Primary School

Ward Jackson Primary School

John Robinson – HBC Children's Services

Councillor Chris Simmons

Sally Forth – Anti – Social Behaviour Unit

Jayne Donkin – Team Around the Primary School

Dave Andrews – Team Around the Primary School

Paul King – Team Around the Primary School

Rebecca Hewitson – Team Around the Primary School

Anne Collinson – (School Governor), St Helen's Primary School

Katie Donoghue – Anti Social Behaviour Unit

## Background

The aims of the conference were to bring together junior schools in Hartlepool with representation from their student councils. The Primary School Council project is a development of the Children's Fund Participation Project that was instrumental in supporting young people to participate in children's services scrutiny. West view project has taken the lead on the primary school council project and is now working with a number of schools in North and Central Hartlepool. Funding permitting it is hoped that this work will also develop in the south of the town.

Some of the schools already meet on a termly basis and have been working on a project about their neighbourhoods. We have worked with the children on the area around their school, what they think is bad and what they think is good. They have been out in the area photographing what they think is good or bad in the area. From this they have developed A3 sheets with their thoughts on their area's which will be handed to neighbourhood services. The project was aimed to link with Hartlepool Borough Councils Neighbourhood's department and the NAP's.

The conference was put together for a number of reasons;

- This has been a strategic aim since the school council forum project began 3 years ago.
- Hartlepool Borough Council wanted the views of children about how safe they feel in town and what they would like to see to make the town safer.
- The children involved in the School Councils wanted the opportunity to meet together.

ALL primary schools in Hartlepool were invited to bring 2 – 4 representatives from their school council, of the 30 schools 18 replied and 17 attended.

## Outcomes

The day was chaired by Councillor Chris Simmons one of West View Project's directors but also the chair of Children's Services Scrutiny. Chris is very interested in hearing children's views and acting on them and was pleased to be involved in the day. Sally Forth, Community Safety Manager led on 'how safe do you feel in Hartlepool'. She gave an overview of how the town is currently kept safe and took a few questions from the children before they broke into smaller groups for discussions. Smaller group discussions were facilitated by TAPS and West View Project staff. Once the children had finished group discussions they were invited to make a poster about being safe, some which can be seen on the bottom of this document. After lunch and some interviews from TFM Radio the children were back in their groups and ready to discuss the neighbourhoods they live in and the changes they would like to make to the town. John Robinson led this session and the room was buzzing with discussion of things the children liked and didn't like.



We have had a lot of positive feedback from the conference from both schools and adults involved and they would all like to see it happen again next year with every school in Hartlepool involved.

The discussions were informally recorded with facilitators taking notes of key points which are noted below under the headings used.

**In what Places do you feel safest?**

|                                  |                                   |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Home                             | Sports clubs                      |
| School – except for the crowds   | Dancing                           |
| Feel less safe when it's dark    | Choir                             |
| Rugby club                       | Church                            |
| Football club                    | Friend's homes                    |
| Scouts                           | Park – Marine drive               |
| Beavers                          | In our area playing in the street |
| Boys / girls brigade             | School council meetings           |
| My village                       | Horse riding                      |
| When with my parents             | Leisure centre                    |
| Hart wood with the dog           | Library                           |
| Clavering Park when with parents | At the swings (with phone)        |
| Home farm                        | Supervised places                 |
| 'ghostie' – walks with family    | Shops                             |
| Summerhill                       | Caravan                           |
| Car                              | Bus                               |
| Taxi                             | School trips                      |
| Cafe 177                         | In the garden                     |
| Near police station              | Hospital                          |
| Family's homes                   | Country side                      |
| Where there are lots of people   | In a tree                         |
| When with groups of friends      |                                   |

### **What makes you feel safe?**

People we know

Dog

Family

Friends

Police – neighbourhoods

Neighbours (Farmers)

Lollipop lady

Fire brigade

Home security – locks on doors and windows

Zebra crossings

Mobile phone

Lamp posts / street lights

Teachers / dinner ladies

School security – fire alarms, CRB Checks

ID Badges

People sticking up for you

Being with people who are close to you

In the community

CCTV

PCSO

My Dad because he is strong

People knowing where you are when you are out, what time you're going to be in and who you are with

House alarms

Popularity – people knowing you

Knowing rules

Zebra crossings

Gates on the back streets

Dogs kept secure

Getting on with neighbour's

Life guards

Fence

People who know me

Paramedics / doctors

Council (on CCTV)

Being somewhere familiar

Siblings

Security

Other people with you

Anywhere I know there are nice people

Street lights

Following the advice of adults – particularly to do with the internet and gaming

**In what ways can adults make you feel safer?**

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Adults can protect us                              | Comfort you  |
| Tell teenagers off                                 | Adults in school keep gates locked to keep us safe         |
| Ring the police for you                            | Sort bullying out  |
| Stick up for you                                   | Knowing them for a long time = trust                       |
| We can trust them                                  | Dinner ladies keep us safe at lunch time                   |
| Tell us not to worry                               | Road safety  |
| Give advice  | Cycle proficiency  |
| Family / teachers are always there for us          | Make you laugh   |
| Provide comfort                                    | Stop smoking   |
| Keep you close by                                  | Put walls around neighbourhoods so they stay nice          |
| Telling you to keep your phone to stay in touch    | Cars going slower  |
| Make sure adults ask children where they are going | Keeping their eye on us                                    |
| Giving advice – good and right type                | Share their life experiences so we can learn from mistakes |
| Being kind and caring                              | Easy access to medical attention                           |
| Keep you inside                                    | Having heroes' we can call on if we feel unsafe or picked  |
| Not getting angry unnecessarily                    | Protect us by walking next to us                           |
| Helping you when you are ill / hurt                | Call for help in an emergency                              |
| Telling you where is safe and ok to go to          | Putting blocks on websites such as facebook                |
| Knowing who to trust a stranger or an adult        |  |
| Go with you to places                              |  |

**What would help you feel safer near your home?**

|  |  |
|--|--|
| If the teenagers didn't hang around the shops (clavering)                  | Better street lighting   |
| More street lights   | Adult supervision  |
| Cleaner streets  | Slow down the traffic  |
| Less / no vandalism  | Put on burglars alarms   |
| More police patrols  | Not let children see things they shouldn't e.g. films / computer games |
| More CCTV  | Teach us to be safe  |
| Activities for teenagers to stop them hanging around (more local/exciting) | Green cross code   |
| Clubs – youth clubs, computer clubs, after school clubs                    | Adults behave better   |
| Knowing if there is a problem it will be solved quickly                    | Safe places to leave our bikes or scooters                             |
| More lollipop ladies   | Think of ways to make us feel safe at the park                         |
| Enforcing dog fouling laws   | Age limits on parks  |
| Seeing no vandalism  | Pass's to get in   |
| More litter bins   |  |
| More recycling bins (in communities)                                       |  |
| Road sweepers  |  |

**What's good about living in Hartlepool?**

|                             |                              |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| Wildlife                    | Bingo                        |
| Beaches                     | Cafes / Restaurants          |
| Parks                       | Old people's homes           |
| Church                      | New housing                  |
| Art gallery                 | Friendly people              |
| Docks on the headland       | Neighbourhood watch          |
| Arcades                     | Good schools                 |
| Historic quay               | Factories bring jobs         |
| Skate Park                  | Gym's                        |
| No smoking in public area's | Hospital                     |
| Tall Ships                  | One life centre              |
| HUFC                        | Pharmacies                   |
| Mosque                      | Seasonal activities          |
| Headland                    | Close to sea and countryside |
| Seaton Carew                | Fish quay                    |
| Train Station               | Circus (seasonal)            |
| Beaches                     | Corner shops                 |
| Garden centres              | Summerhill                   |
| Allotments                  | Marina                       |
| Colleges                    | Football coaches for teams   |
| New DHS                     | Tennis courts                |
| Retail park                 | Restaurants                  |
| Cinema                      | Millhouse                    |
| Bowling                     | Radio Hartlepool             |
| West View Project           | Tweddle farm                 |
| Soft play area's            | Libraries                    |

People are polite

Good pet shops

A variety of shops for daily needs

The carnival

The golf course

Caravan parks nearby

Belle view centre

Heugh battery

Space to learn

Nature reserve

Train station

Victoria Park

Special events

## What's bad about living in Hartlepool?

|  |  |
|--|--|
| People drunk – teenagers   | Too many drug dealers                  |
| Prices have gone up  | Taxis charge too much                  |
| Unsafe places  | Smashed glass everywhere               |
| Poor local facilities in Greatham                                | Run down playgrounds                   |
| Litter   | Parking restrictions / charges         |
| Smell of the sea   | Crime                                  |
| Weather  | Pollution                              |
| Town centre – old fashioned                                      | Burger king                            |
| People smoke in front of children                                | Not enough stuff to do for little ones |
| Not enough police to tackle litter problems                      | Lots of pot holes                      |
| Fighting   | Uneven pavements                       |
| Graffiti   | Smashed glass                          |
| Dog mess   | Impolite people                        |
| Foul language  | Skate park                             |
| Smelly factories   | Housing                                |
| Vandalism  | Empty Buildings                        |
| Drugs  | Teenage anti social behaviour          |
| Land fill sites are smelly                                       | Dirty beaches                          |
| Not enough dog dirt bins   |  |
| Not enough cigarette end bins                                    |  |
| Polluting the river  |  |
| Too many burglaries  |  |
| Too many shops selling alcohol                                   |  |
| Too much industry when driving into Hartlepool – not very scenic |  |
| Bus services poor  |  |

**What would you change?**

More local police stations

Encourage fitness in young people

Better security at football matches

Keep the beaches tidy

Smarten up Seaton Carew

Protect the wildlife

Better Street Lights

Loo's in the park

Evening buses to the headland

More things for teenagers to do

Graffiti wall for teenagers

Swings protected with CCTV

Different swings for teenagers

Refurbish leisure facilities

Better facilities for children

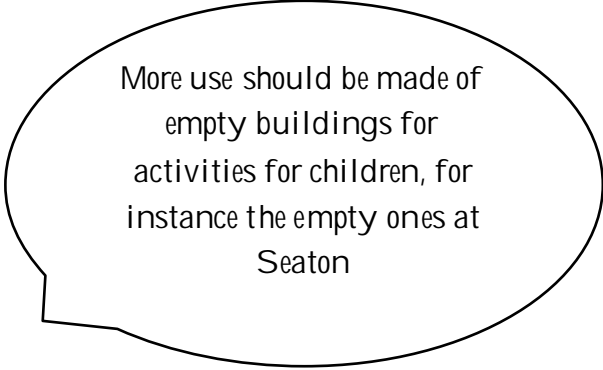
Time with parents

Parents working times

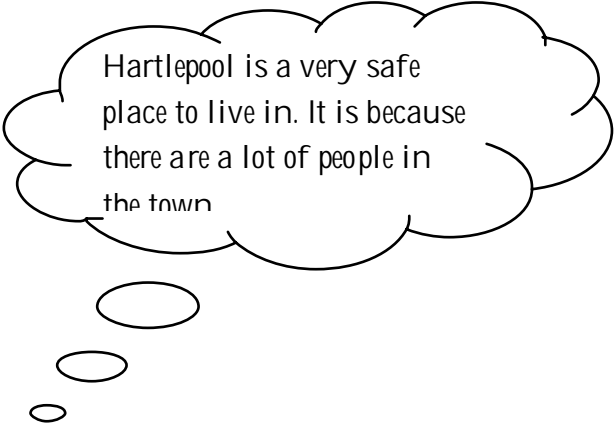




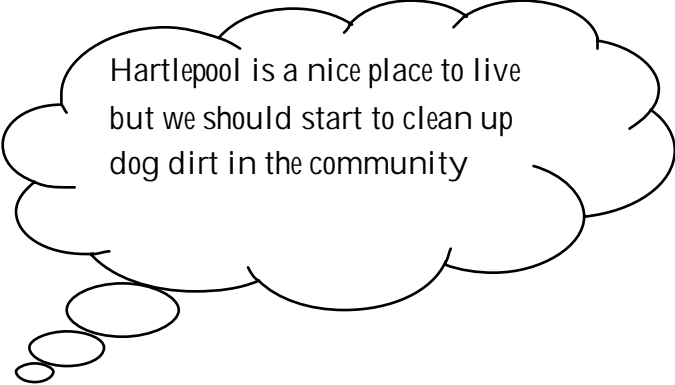
Other comments made by the children



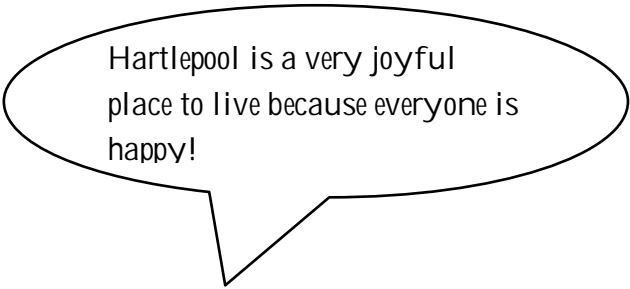
More use should be made of empty buildings for activities for children, for instance the empty ones at Seaton




Hartlepool is a very safe place to live in. It is because there are a lot of people in the town



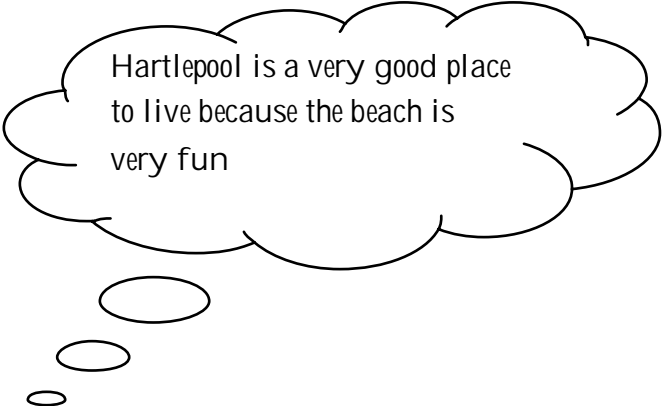
Hartlepool is a nice place to live but we should start to clean up dog dirt in the community



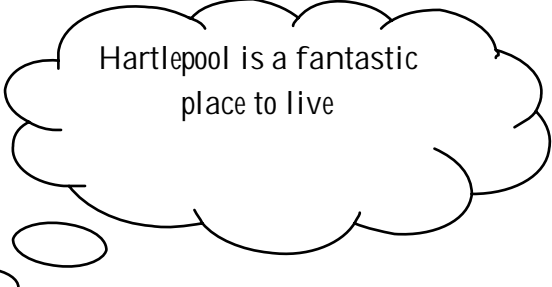
Hartlepool is a very joyful place to live because everyone is happy!



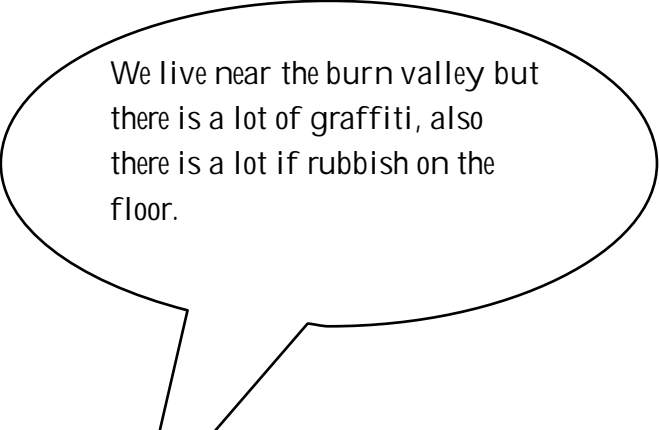
I would like to see more police walking up and down the streets



Hartlepool is a very good place to live because the beach is very fun

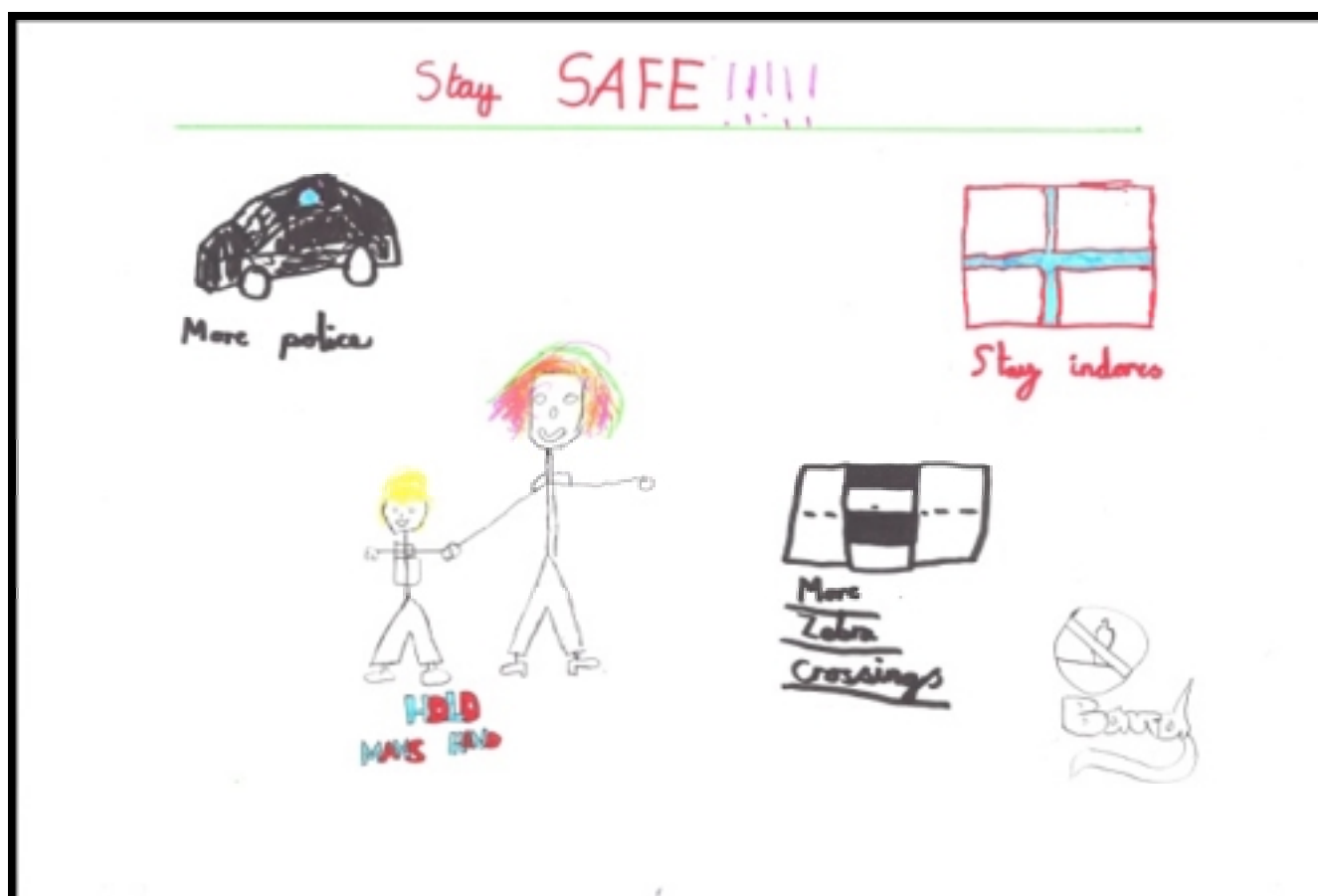
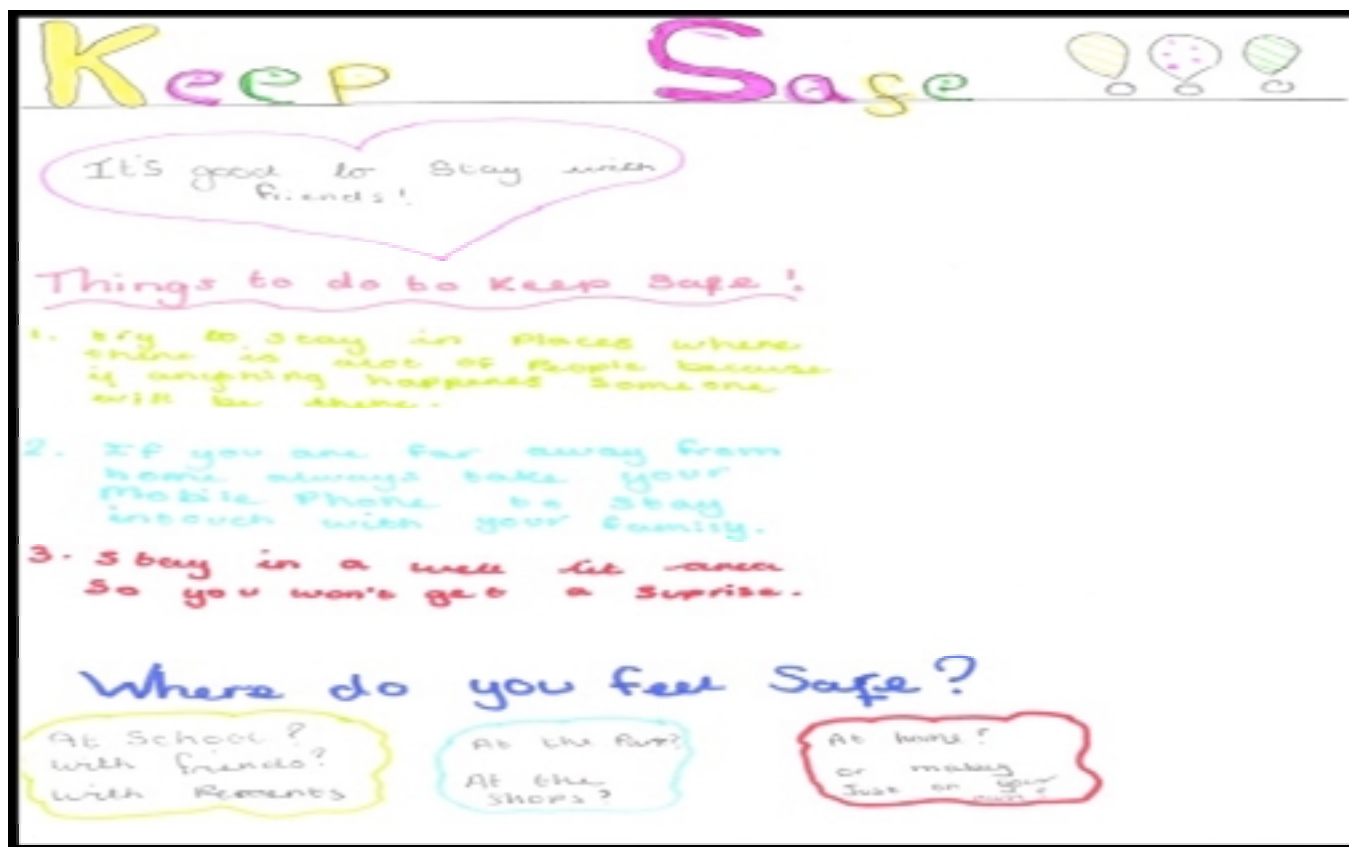


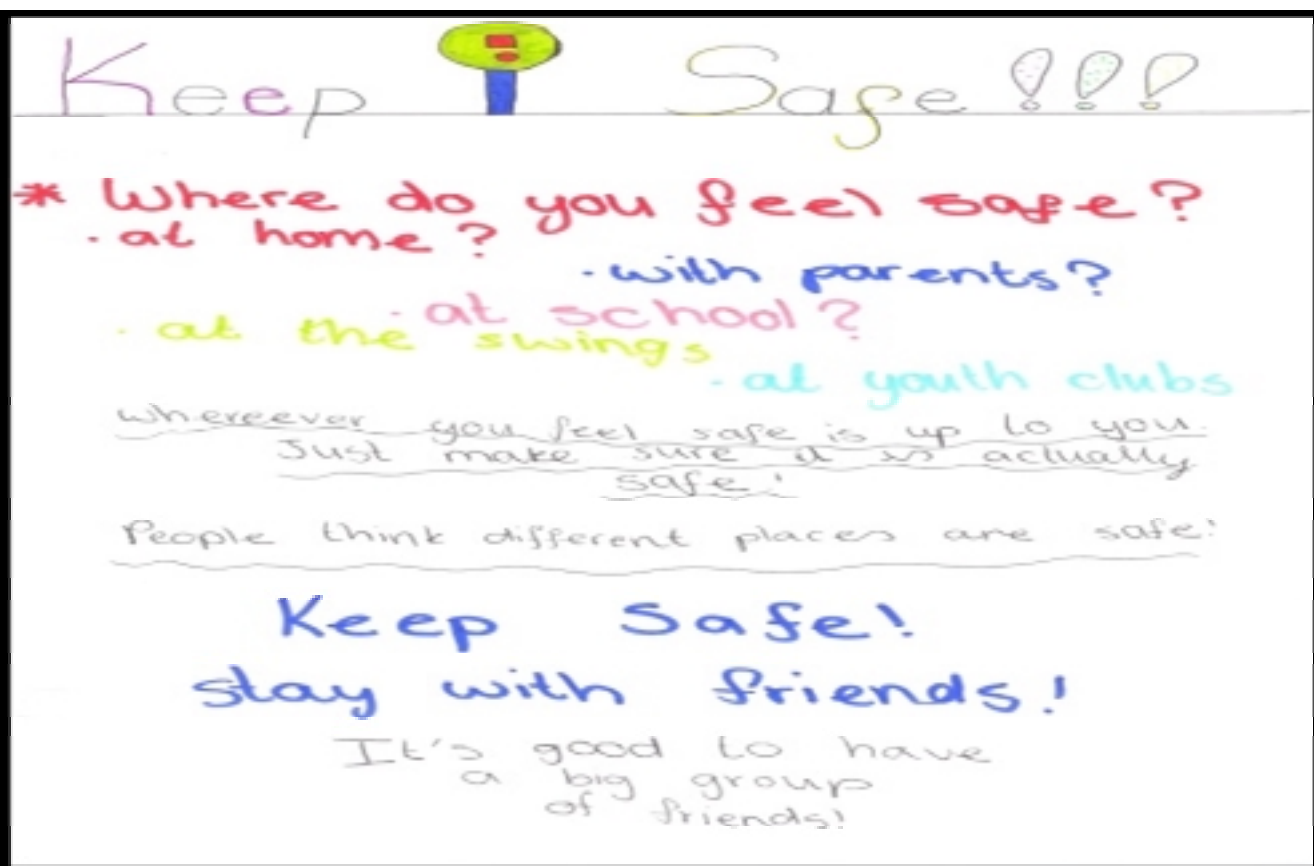
Hartlepool is a fantastic place to live



We live near the burn valley but there is a lot of graffiti, also there is a lot of rubbish on the floor.



















### Follow up work

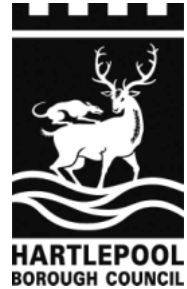
West View Project will in the next academic year 2011/12 continue to work with the North and 2 Central Primary School Council forums we currently have set up. With these forums we endeavour to continue the work this conference has begun. We also hope to have the south forum up and running to include them in the work we would like to do.

Throughout this academic year we aim to get each forum a meeting with The Mayor to put their thoughts and questions to him. We also hope to continue to engage the children of these forums in the futures plans, consultations and events in the town. We also hope to put on an event during 11 Million takeover day in November 2011.

The work which they have already been involved in is being put forward as a regional project about Poverty ran by Children North East and some of which will be displayed in the Sage, Gateshead. There will also be a conference in Hartlepool to display children's work and look at how Hartlepool can help bring poverty down.

## CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM

17 January 2012



**Report of:** Scrutiny Support Officer

**Subject:** PROVISION OF SUPPORT AND SERVICES TO  
LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN / YOUNG PEOPLE:  
EVIDENCE FROM SOUTH TYNESIDE COUNCIL-  
COVERING REPORT

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### 1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To inform Members of the Forum that the Head of Children and Families Social Care at South Tyneside Council has been invited to attend this meeting to discuss the provision of support and services to children and young people looked after by South Tyneside Council.

### 2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 Members will recall that at the meeting of this Forum on 18 October 2011, the Terms of Reference and Potential Areas of Inquiry / Sources of Evidence for this Scrutiny investigation were approved by the Forum.
- 2.2 Subsequently, the Head of Children and Families Social Care at South Tyneside Council has been invited to attend this meeting to deliver a presentation to cover the following questions:-

#### **Corporate Parenting**

- (1) *How well does the Council do in commissioning or providing services for looked after children / young people?*
- (2) *How stable and secure are the lives of looked after children / young people while they are in care? Could this be improved? If yes, how?*
- (3) *What more could be done to fulfil the Council's responsibilities as a 'corporate parent'?*

#### **Placements**

- (1) *How well does the Council do at finding appropriate adoptive families for children for whom it is decided this is the right option?*

- (2) *How well do foster care arrangements work? Could this be improved? If yes, how?*
- (3) *What support does the Council provide to children / young people leaving care and how effective is it?*

### **Health and Housing**

- (1) *How good is the health and wellbeing of children in care? Could this be improved, if yes, how?*
- (2) *How good is the standard of any residential care provided or used by the Council? Could this be improved, if yes? how?*

### **Education**

- (1) *How well do looked after children / young people do at school, both academically and in terms of other kind of achievements? Could this be improved, if yes, how?*
- (2) *How effective is the professional workforce of social workers and others responsible for running services for and working with looked after children / young people?*

## **3. RECOMMENDATION**

- 3.1 That Members of the Forum consider the views of the Head of Children and Families Social Care at South Tyneside Council in relation to the questions outlined in section 2.2 of this report.

Contact Officer:- Laura Stones – Scrutiny Support Officer  
Chief Executive's Department - Corporate Strategy  
Hartlepool Borough Council  
Tel: 01429 523 087  
Email: [laura.stones@hartlepool.gov.uk](mailto:laura.stones@hartlepool.gov.uk)

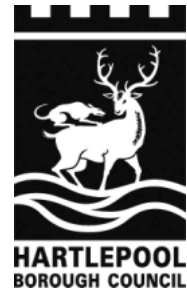
## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

The following background paper was used in preparation of this report:-

- (a) Scrutiny Investigation into the 'Provision of Support and Services to Looked After Children / Young People' - Scoping Report (Scrutiny Support Officer) – 18.10.11

## **CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM**

17 January 2012



**Report of:** Scrutiny Support Officer

**Subject:** PROVISION OF SUPPORT AND SERVICES TO LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN / YOUNG PEOPLE - FEEDBACK FROM THE GROUP EXERCISES UNDERTAKEN BY THE CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM ON 23 NOVEMBER 2011 AND FEEDBACK FROM THE SITE VISIT – COVERING REPORT

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### **1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1.1 The purpose of this report is to:-

- (a) provide Members of the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum with the feedback from the group exercises held at the meeting of 23 November 2011;
- (b) to facilitate a discussion in relation to the site visit to The Star Centre held on 12 December 2011; and
- (c) seek nominations for a visit to a Children's Home in Hartlepool and Stockton

### **2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

#### *Feedback from Group Exercises*

- 2.1 As part of this investigation, the Forum at its meeting of 23 November 2011 split into small groups to gather views from looked after children; foster carers; partner organisations; and officers from the Child and Adult Services Department including social workers on how looked after children / young people are supported across all aspects of their lives. Several organisations attended including Cleveland Police; Housing Hartlepool; Hartlepool College of Further Education; a General Practitioner; Young Foundations; and representatives from the NHS. Several foster carers and looked after young people attended and contributed to the discussions.

- 2.2 The feedback from this exercise is attached as item 7.4 (b) of today's agenda. The comments are listed alongside each of the questions that were asked with a column outlining the suggestions for improvement which were made. In addition to the feedback, written views have also been submitted which are attached to the feedback.

*Feedback from Site Visit to the Star Centre*

- 2.3 As part of the evidence gathering process for the undertaking of this investigation, Members of the Forum attended a site visit on 12 December 2011 to The Star Centre, formerly a children's home (Flint Walk). The Centre is now used to work creatively with children and young people in care, their carers and other professionals to achieve positive outcomes. Members who attended the site visit requested a floor plan and condition survey for the Centre, both are attached as **Appendix A** to this report.
- 2.4 Information regarding supported lodgings is attached as **Appendix B** to this report, for consideration as part of this investigation, as requested by Members.

*Nominations for site visit to a children's home in Hartlepool and a children's home in Stockton*

- 2.5 At the meeting of the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum of 23 November 2011, Members requested a site visit to the children's home in Hartlepool. In addition to this Stockton Borough Council has offered the opportunity for Members to visit one of their children's' homes.
- 2.6 The site visit to the children's home in Hartlepool and the children's home in Stockton will take place on **24 January 2012, 10am to 12 noon.**
- 2.7 Due to the size of the units and that they are young people's homes, 3 places are available. Members are requested to nominate 3 Members to attend the visit.

### **3. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 That the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum:-
- (a) considers the feedback from the group exercise held on 23 November 2011;
  - (b) discuss the findings from the site visit held on 12 December 2011 to The Star Centre; and
  - (c) Nominate 3 Members to visit the children's home in Hartlepool and the children's home in Stockton.

Contact Officer:- Laura Stones – Scrutiny Support Officer  
Chief Executive's Department - Corporate Strategy  
Hartlepool Borough Council  
Tel: 01429 523 087  
Email: laura.stones@hartlepool.gov.uk

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

The following background paper was used in preparation of this report:-

- (a) Scrutiny Investigation into 'The Provision of Support and Services to Looked After Children / Young People' - Scoping Report (Scrutiny Support Officer) – 18.10.11
- (b) Investigation into the Provision of Support and Services to Looked After Children / Young People – Group Exercises - Covering Report (Scrutiny Support Officer) – 23.11.11
- (c) Minutes of the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum held on 18 October 2011 and 23 November 2011

**Report generated on :**      **16/12/2011**      **15:11**

Property Name =Star Centre, 198 Flint Walk



CS Survey Details

| AMP Reference       |                                | 000473L1            |             |                                 |              | Building Survey Date   |               |                        |      | 13/12/2011     |      | Mechanical Survey      |         |            |   |
|---------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------|-------------|---------------------------------|--------------|------------------------|---------------|------------------------|------|----------------|------|------------------------|---------|------------|---|
| UPRN                |                                | 000473L1            |             | Property                        |              | Star Centre, 198 Flint |               | Electrical Survey Date |      |                |      | Inflation History Date |         | 01/04/2010 |   |
| Room Ref.           | Location                       | Attribute           | Defect      | Prt<br>Type                     | Prt<br>Grade | Cond<br>Grade          | Life<br>Cycle | Year                   | Resp | Reason<br>Code | Qty  | Cost                   | Action  | Remarks    |   |
| Block Ref.          | 0                              | Floor               |             |                                 |              |                        |               |                        |      |                |      |                        |         |            |   |
| Element             | External Areas                 |                     | Sub Element | Paths And Pedestrian Paved Area |              |                        |               |                        |      |                |      |                        |         |            |   |
| External            | - External                     | Pavings-Concrete    |             | R                               | 4            | B                      | No            | 2014                   |      |                | 0.00 | M2                     | £1.00   | Service    | N.B. Ignore cost and action.<br>N.B. Ignore cost and action.    |
| External            | - External                     | Pedestrian Concrete |             | R                               | 4            | B                      | No            | 2014                   |      |                | 0.00 | M2                     | £1.00   | Clean      |   |
| Sub Element Total : |                                |                     |             |                                 |              |                        |               |                        |      |                |      | £2.00                  |         |            |   |
| Element             | External Areas                 |                     | Sub Element | Roads And Car Parks             |              |                        |               |                        |      |                |      |                        |         |            |   |
| External            | - External                     | Vehicle Concrete    |             | R                               | 4            | B                      | No            | 2014                   |      |                | 0.00 | M2                     | £1.00   | Clean      | N.B. Ignore cost and action.                                    |
| Sub Element Total : |                                |                     |             |                                 |              |                        |               |                        |      |                |      | £1.00                  |         |            |   |
| Element             | External Areas                 |                     | Sub Element | Walls Fences And Gates          |              |                        |               |                        |      |                |      |                        |         |            |   |
| External            | - External                     | Walls - Brick       |             | R                               | 3            | B                      | No            | 2013                   |      |                | 0.00 | M2                     | £500.00 | Repair     | Minor repointing and repair required.<br>Redecoration required. |
| External            | - External                     | Fencing Steel       |             | R                               | 3            | B                      | No            | 2014                   |      |                | 0.00 | LM                     | £350.00 | Redecorate |   |
| Sub Element Total : |                                |                     |             |                                 |              |                        |               |                        |      |                |      | £850.00                |         |            |   |
| Element Total :     |                                |                     |             |                                 |              |                        |               |                        |      |                |      | £853.00                |         |            |   |
| Block Total :       |                                |                     |             |                                 |              |                        |               |                        |      |                |      | £853.00                |         |            |   |
| Block Ref.          | A                              | Floor               |             |                                 |              |                        |               |                        |      |                |      |                        |         |            |   |
| Element             | Ceilings                       |                     | Sub Element | Ceilings                        |              |                        |               |                        |      |                |      |                        |         |            |   |
| Room 0              | - Internal                     | Ceiling Plastered   |             | R                               | 4            | B                      | No            | 2014                   |      |                | 0.00 | M2                     | £1.00   | Service    | N.B. Ignore cost and action.                                    |
| Sub Element Total : |                                |                     |             |                                 |              |                        |               |                        |      |                |      | £1.00                  |         |            |   |
| Element Total :     |                                |                     |             |                                 |              |                        |               |                        |      |                |      | £1.00                  |         |            |   |
| Element             | External Walls Windows & Doors |                     | Sub Element | Walls Structure                 |              |                        |               |                        |      |                |      |                        |         |            |   |

## CS Survey Details

**AMP Reference** 000473L1  
**UPRN** 000473L1

**Property** Star Centre, 198 Flint

| Room Ref.           | Location                       | Attribute            | Defect      | Prt<br>Type               | Prt<br>Grade | Cond<br>Grade | Life<br>Cycle | Year | Resp | Reason<br>Code | Qty  |    | Cost      | Action  | Remarks  |
|---------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------|-------------|---------------------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|------|------|----------------|------|----|-----------|---------|--|
| Room 0              | - External                     | Walls Brick          |             | R                         | 3            | B             | No            | 2013 |      |                | 0.00 | M2 | £250.00   | Repair  | Minor repointing required to brick work and verg (access costs included within redecoration item). |
| Sub Element Total : |                                |                      |             |                           |              |               |               |      |      |                |      |    | £250.00   |         |  |
| Element             | External Walls Windows & Doors |                      | Sub Element | Windows And Doors Framing |              |               |               |      |      |                |      |    |           |         |  |
| Room 0              | - External                     | Doors-Softwood       |             | R                         | 4            | B             | No            | 2014 |      |                | 0.00 | No | £1.00     | Service | N.B. Ignore cost and action.   |
| Room 0              | - External                     | Doors-Upvc           |             | R                         | 4            | B             | No            | 2014 |      |                | 0.00 | No | £1.00     | Service | N.B. Ignore cost and action.   |
| Room 0              | - External                     | Window-Upvc Dg       |             | R                         | 4            | B             | No            | 2014 |      |                | 0.00 | No | £1.00     | Service | N.B. Ignore cost and action.   |
| Sub Element Total : |                                |                      |             |                           |              |               |               |      |      |                |      |    | £3.00     |         |  |
| Element Total :     |                                |                      |             |                           |              |               |               |      |      |                |      |    | £253.00   |         |  |
| Element             | Fixed Furniture                |                      | Sub Element | Non Teaching Kitchen      |              |               |               |      |      |                |      |    |           |         |  |
| Room 0              | - Internal                     | Kitchen Fixed Furn   |             | R                         | 3            | C             | No            | 2013 |      |                | 0.00 | No | £2,150.00 | Replace | Renew kitchen fittings in room 15.   |
| Sub Element Total : |                                |                      |             |                           |              |               |               |      |      |                |      |    | £2,150.00 |         |  |
| Element             | Fixed Furniture                |                      | Sub Element | Non Teaching Other        |              |               |               |      |      |                |      |    |           |         |  |
| Room 0              | - Internal                     | Fixed Furn Non Teach |             | R                         | 4            | B             | No            | 2014 |      |                | 0.00 | No | £1.00     | Service | N.B. Ignore cost and action.   |
| Sub Element Total : |                                |                      |             |                           |              |               |               |      |      |                |      |    | £1.00     |         |  |
| Element Total :     |                                |                      |             |                           |              |               |               |      |      |                |      |    | £2,151.00 |         |  |
| Element             | Floors And Stairs              |                      | Sub Element | Floor Screed & Finish     |              |               |               |      |      |                |      |    |           |         |  |
| Room 0              | - Internal                     | Flooring Quarry Tile |             | R                         | 3            | C             | No            | 2013 |      |                | 0.00 | M2 | £315.00   | Upgrade | Overhaul tiles to laundry floor.   |
| Room 0              | - Internal                     | Flooring Carpet      |             | R                         | 3            | C             | No            | 2013 |      |                | 0.00 | M2 | £2,170.00 | Replace |  |
| Room 0              | - Internal                     | Flooring Boarded     |             | R                         | 4            | B             | No            | 2014 |      |                | 0.00 | M2 | £1.00     | Service | N.B. Ignore cost and action.   |
| Room 0              | - Internal                     | Flooring Pvc Sheet   |             | R                         | 4            | B             | No            | 2014 |      |                | 0.00 | M2 | £1.00     | Service | N.B. Ignore cost and action.   |

CS Survey Details

CS Survey Details

AMP Reference000473L1

UPRN000473L1

PropertyStar Centre, 198 Flint

| Room Ref.           | Location               | Attribute          | Defect      | Prt<br>Type | Prt<br>Grade        | Cond<br>Grade | Life<br>Cycle       | Year                | Resp      | Reason<br>Code | Qty   | Cost      | Action    | Remarks    |   |                              |
|---------------------|------------------------|--------------------|-------------|-------------|---------------------|---------------|---------------------|---------------------|-----------|----------------|-------|-----------|-----------|------------|---|------------------------------|
| Element             | Floors And Stairs      |                    | Sub Element | Staircases  | Treads              | And           | Risers              | Sub Element Total : |           |                |       | £2,487.00 |           |            |   |                              |
|                     |                        |                    |             |             |                     |               |                     |                     |           |                |       |           |           |            |   |                              |
|                     |                        |                    |             |             |                     |               |                     |                     |           |                |       |           |           |            |   |                              |
| Room 0              | - Internal             | Stair Tread Carpet |             | M           | 2                   | B             | No                  | 2012                |           |                | 0.00  | M2        | £830.00   | Upgrade    | Install colour contrasting nosings to improve access.   |                              |
| Sub Element Total : |                        |                    |             |             |                     |               |                     |                     |           |                |       | £830.00   |           |            |   |                              |
| Element Total :     |                        |                    |             |             |                     |               |                     |                     |           |                |       | £3,317.00 |           |            |   |                              |
| Element             | Internal Walls & Doors |                    | Sub Element | Doors       | And                 | Glazed        | Screens             | Sub Element Total : |           |                |       | £1.00     |           |            |   |                              |
|                     |                        |                    |             |             |                     |               |                     |                     |           |                |       |           |           |            |   |                              |
|                     |                        |                    |             |             |                     |               |                     |                     |           |                |       |           |           |            |   |                              |
| Room 0              | - Internal             | Doors Internal     |             | R           | 4                   | B             | No                  | 2014                |           |                | 0.00  | No        | £1.00     | Service    | N.B. Ignore cost and action.  |                              |
| Sub Element Total : |                        |                    |             |             |                     |               |                     |                     |           |                |       | £1.00     |           |            |   |                              |
| Element Total :     |                        |                    |             |             |                     |               |                     |                     |           |                |       | £4.00     |           |            |   |                              |
| Element             | Internal Walls & Doors |                    | Sub Element | Walls       | And                 | Partitions    | Sub Element Total : |                     |           |                | £3.00 |           |           |            |   |                              |
|                     |                        |                    |             |             |                     |               |                     |                     |           |                |       |           |           |            |   |                              |
|                     |                        |                    |             |             |                     |               |                     |                     |           |                |       |           |           |            |   |                              |
| Room 0              | - Internal             | Walls-Plastered    |             | R           | 4                   | B             | No                  | 2014                |           |                | 0.00  | M2        | £1.00     | Service    | N.B. Ignore cost and action.  |                              |
| Room 0              | - Internal             | Walls-Glazed       |             | R           | 4                   | B             | No                  | 2014                |           |                | 0.00  | M2        | £1.00     | Clean      |   | N.B. Ignore cost and action. |
| Room 0              | - Internal             | Walls-Tiling       |             | R           | 4                   | B             | No                  | 2014                |           |                | 0.00  | M2        | £1.00     | Service    |   |                              |
| Sub Element Total : |                        |                    |             |             |                     |               |                     |                     |           |                |       | £3.00     |           |            |   |                              |
| Element Total :     |                        |                    |             |             |                     |               |                     |                     |           |                |       | £4.00     |           |            |   |                              |
| Element             | Redecorations          |                    | Sub Element | External    | Sub Element Total : |               |                     |                     | £6,715.00 |                |       |           |           |            |   |                              |
|                     |                        |                    |             |             |                     |               |                     |                     |           |                |       |           |           |            |   |                              |
|                     |                        |                    |             |             |                     |               |                     |                     |           |                |       |           |           |            |   |                              |
| Room 0              | - Redecoration         | External Timber    |             | R           | 3                   | C             | No                  | 2013                |           |                | 0.00  | M2        | £6,715.00 | Redecorate | Redecorate timber doors, fascias and soffits (price includes to erect and dismantle independent scaffolding and carry out necessary pre-paint repairs). |                              |
| Sub Element Total : |                        |                    |             |             |                     |               |                     |                     |           |                |       | £6,715.00 |           |            |   |                              |
| Element Total :     |                        |                    |             |             |                     |               |                     |                     |           |                |       | £6,715.00 |           |            |   |                              |
| Element             | Redecorations          |                    | Sub Element | Internal    | Sub Element Total : |               |                     |                     | £6,715.00 |                |       |           |           |            |   |                              |
|                     |                        |                    |             |             |                     |               |                     |                     |           |                |       |           |           |            |   |                              |
|                     |                        |                    |             |             |                     |               |                     |                     |           |                |       |           |           |            |   |                              |

CS Survey Details

AMP Reference000473L1

UPRN000473L1

PropertyStar Centre, 198 Flint

| Room Ref.           | Location          | Attribute           | Defect      | Prt<br>Type                       | Prt<br>Grade | Cond<br>Grade | Life<br>Cycle | Year | Resp | Reason<br>Code | Qty  |    | Cost       | Action     | Remarks  |
|---------------------|-------------------|---------------------|-------------|-----------------------------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|------|------|----------------|------|----|------------|------------|--|
| Room 0              | - Redecoration    | Redecoration        |             | R                                 | 3            | B             | No            | 2014 |      |                | 0.00 | M2 | £500.00    | Redecorate | Minor internal redecoration required.<br>Redecorate skirting boards and architraves to improve colour contrasting for partially sighted users. |
| Room 0              | - Internal        |                     |             | M                                 | 2            | B             | No            | 2012 |      |                | 0.00 | M2 | £3,575.00  | Redecorate |  |
| Sub Element Total : |                   |                     |             |                                   |              |               |               |      |      |                |      |    | £4,075.00  |            |  |
| Element Total :     |                   |                     |             |                                   |              |               |               |      |      |                |      |    | £10,790.00 |            |  |
| Element             | Roofs             |                     | Sub Element | Flat Converings And Insulation    |              |               |               |      |      |                |      |    |            |            |  |
| Room 0              | - Roof            | F/R Cover Felt      |             | R                                 | 3            | B             | No            | 2013 |      |                | 0.00 | M2 | £4,100.00  | Replace    | Felt roof reaching end of life span.<br>Replacement required.  |
| Sub Element Total : |                   |                     |             |                                   |              |               |               |      |      |                |      |    | £4,100.00  |            |  |
| Element             | Roofs             |                     | Sub Element | Pitched Converings And Insulation |              |               |               |      |      |                |      |    |            |            |  |
| Room 0              | - Roof            | P/R Concrete Tiles  |             | R                                 | 4            | B             | No            | 2014 |      |                | 0.00 | M2 | £1.00      | Service    | N.B. Ignore cost and action.   |
| Sub Element Total : |                   |                     |             |                                   |              |               |               |      |      |                |      |    | £1.00      |            |  |
| Element             | Roofs             |                     | Sub Element | Pitched Drainage                  |              |               |               |      |      |                |      |    |            |            |  |
| Room 0              | - Roof            | P/R Rwp Pvc         |             | R                                 | 4            | B             | No            | 2014 |      |                | 0.00 | LM | £1.00      | Clean      | N.B. Ignore cost and action.   |
| Sub Element Total : |                   |                     |             |                                   |              |               |               |      |      |                |      |    | £1.00      |            |  |
| Element Total :     |                   |                     |             |                                   |              |               |               |      |      |                |      |    | £4,102.00  |            |  |
| Element             | Sanitary Services |                     | Sub Element | Toilets Fittings                  |              |               |               |      |      |                |      |    |            |            |  |
| Room 0              | - Internal        | Sanitary Ware-Other |             | R                                 | 4            | B             | No            | 2014 |      |                | 0.00 | No | £1.00      | Service    | N.B. Ignore cost and action.   |
| Sub Element Total : |                   |                     |             |                                   |              |               |               |      |      |                |      |    | £1.00      |            |  |
| Element Total :     |                   |                     |             |                                   |              |               |               |      |      |                |      |    | £1.00      |            |  |
| Block Total :       |                   |                     |             |                                   |              |               |               |      |      |                |      |    | £20,619.00 |            |  |

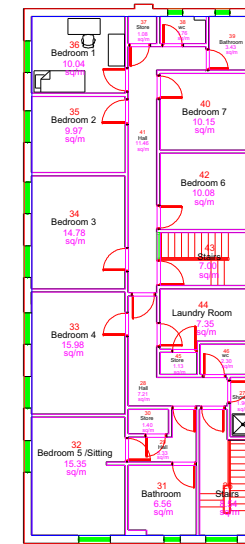
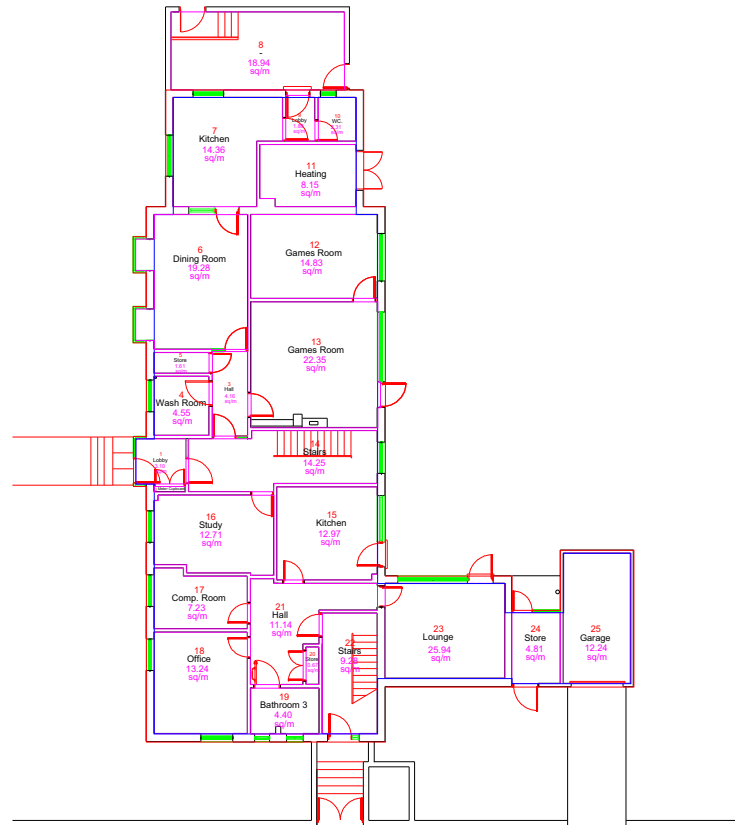
CS Survey Details

AMP Reference000473L1

UPRN000473L1

PropertyStar Centre, 198 Flint

| Room Ref.        | Location | Attribute | Defect | Prt<br>Type | Prt<br>Grade | Cond<br>Grade | Life<br>Cycle | Year | Resp | Reason<br>Code | Qty | Cost       | Action | Remarks |
|------------------|----------|-----------|--------|-------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|------|------|----------------|-----|------------|--------|---------|
| Property Total : |          |           |        |             |              |               |               |      |      |                |     | £21,472.00 |        |         |



## Star Centre, Flint Walk

GIA - 390.48 sq/m

GEA - 431.89 sq/m

|             |                         |            |       |            |
|-------------|-------------------------|------------|-------|------------|
| LOCATION    | Star Centre, Flint Walk | DRAWN BY - | DATE  | 01/04/10   |
|             |                         |            | SCALE | 1:200 @ A3 |
| DEED PACKET | DU3083                  | OS MAP     | -     | DRWG NO -  |



HARTLEPOOL BOROUGH COUNCIL  
NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES DEPARTMENT  
PROCUREMENT & PROPERTY SERVICES DIVISION

Graham Frankland B.Eng(HONS) C.Eng M.I.C.E  
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**1. How many supported lodgings have been provided and for what period does it cover?**

The original supported lodgings contract with Barnardo's commenced on 1<sup>st</sup> May 2010 and initially ran for 11 months. During that period 5 young people were placed with hosts.

In April 2011 the contract changed to a spot purchase arrangement as a consequence of a reduction in grant funding. From April 1<sup>st</sup> 2011, to the present date there have been 8 young people living in supported lodgings including one young person whose foster carer converted to supported lodgings.

**2. How many supported lodgings should have been provided, based on the commissioning arrangements, needs, or requirements of young people?**

The original supported lodgings contract specified that 6 hosts should be recruited, assessed and supported to become supported lodgings hosts for the year May 2010 to April 2011.

The spot purchasing contract that was put in place from April this year does not specify the number of hosts that must be available. Overall, there are currently 11 hosts that have been approved by the Supported Lodgings Panel.

There 2 young people about to be placed with hosts. There is one host who has been approved and is waiting to be matched with a young person.

**3. How many staff/support people have been trained as hosts for supported lodgings and to what level?**

There are 11 hosts who have been recruited and assessed, with a detailed report of their suitability being considered and agreed by the Supported Lodgings Panel.

Many more enquiries were received, but some assessments did not result in the host being accepted as suitable by the panel; some assessments were stopped because circumstances changed and; a number of people did not fulfill the essential criteria needed to become a suitable supported lodgings host.

Hosts have to submit an application; engage in a rigorous assessment which includes taking up of references, CRB checks, checks on suitability of the potential host's home.

Risk assessments will also be agreed with hosts who have strategies to manage any presenting problems such as health issues, substance misuse or aggression.

Additional training is provided to the hosts as necessary to enable them to meet the needs of individual young people

There is an induction process to enable the host and young people to meet before they are placed. Regular contact and support is maintained with the host to support the placement and deal with any issues.

#### **4. What other outputs have been achieved as part of the contract**

Young people have had training and support in relation to developing independent living skills, which includes for example developing understanding about budgeting and credit. Young people have been supported to achieve their own tenancy, helped with tenancy application forms, accessing funding to help them set up home, and have had support plans and ongoing support to help them in their tenancies on an ongoing basis. Young people have had support to enable them to access employment, education and training, and have accessed educational qualifications through Barnardo's and other providers. Young people have also been supported to build their social skills, and improve relationships, and one young person returned home.

#### **Case Studies**

##### **James aged 17:**

James was removed from his parents care as a baby due to their drug misuse, soon after his removal they died from an overdose. James was put into the care of his grandfather who brought him up as a son. In December of 2009 James' grandfather died. James therefore had to move to live with alternative family members as where he lived he had no surviving relatives. James moved to Hartlepool to live with an Aunt and Uncle – however he had never met them before moving to live with them. The family home was overcrowded, James was sleeping on a couch or on the floor, and he didn't feel he was fitting in with the new family he had just met. James's Aunt decided she couldn't take the crowdedness anymore and asked James to leave.

He was then referred to Supported Lodgings. James lived in Supported Lodgings with a married couple and their 15 year old son, he adapted to a family lifestyle and got on well with his providers and their family. James enrolled at Hartlepool College to study Health and Social care and was doing well.

During his time in Supported Lodgings James was having regular contact with his family in Hartlepool on a positive basis, which he hadn't had before. The Supported Lodgings providers encouraged contact with his family and supported him in doing so.



With the support from Barnardo's and his Supported Lodgings Providers James built up a really good relationship with his uncle and cousins, therefore his Uncle asked him to move in with him. Following discussions with James he felt this is what he wanted to do so Barnardo's supported him in this and James moved into his Uncle's with a positive support package around him. Follow up support was provided by Barnardo's to prevent family breakdown and James reports that he feels his accommodation is now stable and is happy where he is.

**What difference did Supported Lodgings make?**

Barnardo's and the Supported Lodgings providers enabled James to have a positive relationship with his family, they supported him to develop a family link and to maintain this. He then found it possible to live with a family member which is where he is happy and feels at home.

**Joanna aged 18:**

Joanna was originally referred to Supported Lodgings when the scheme first started up however, this referral was withdrawn due to Joanna's emotional needs at the time. Joanna was then put into a Foster Care placement where dramatic changes in her took place.

Joanna comes from a family where there is a history of emotional and sexual abuse, her father has committed offences that mean he is a danger to children [used to be known as being a Schedule 1 offender] and she isn't allowed unsupervised contact with him and is not allowed to live with him. Joanna was very upset by this as all she wanted was to live with her father. Her attitude going into Foster Care was very negative and would often say she didn't want to be there.

As she turned 18 another referral was put into Supported Lodgings. On meeting with Joanna she was a different young person, she was positive about living in Supported Lodgings, talked very fondly of her Foster Carers and said she loved living there. Joanna was excited about the move into Supported Lodgings and was grasping it as a new challenge. Joanna was matched with a single female provider and she was very happy about that.

Since Joanna has been living in Supported Lodgings she has excelled in this placement, she has made many achievements in her Gymnastics club that she attends, she has completed registration to go to College and is looking for some voluntary work in Animal Care so that she can engage in something positive until she is able to go to College in September 2011.

**What difference did Supported Lodgings make?**

Supported Lodgings has given Joanna the opportunity to be settled and make plans for her future. It has given her a home that she sees as lasting until she has developed the skills to live independently – Joanna knows that this placement is not long term – but for as long as needs. Joanna talks positively

**7.4(a) Appendix B**

about her provider and feels Barnardo's has given her the appropriate support to enable her to make the right changes in her life. Joanna is looking forward to starting the Independent Living Skills Course and looking forward to her future.

Feedback from Group Exercises held on 23 November 2011

| QUESTION  | COMMENTS   | SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT   |
|---|--|---|
| <p><b>1. How good is the health and wellbeing of children in care? Could this be improved, if yes, how?</b></p>                         | <p>90% of health assessments completed in the timescales</p> <p>Dental health ok at present</p> <p>Some issue in being seen / waiting lists to get registered for doctor therefore have access to doctor through One Life Centre (fairly recently moved back into Hartlepool)</p> <p>Emotional health and wellbeing - young people in care for extended periods of time and multiple placements. Transition into adult life has a huge impact. CAMHS can be effective</p> <p>Children looked after aware of the services</p> | <p>Continue multi agency response working</p>   |
| <p><b>2. How good is the standard of any residential care provided or used by the Council? Could this be improved, if yes, how?</b></p> | <p>Difficulties in sustaining tenancies</p> <p>When is someone ready to live independently? Don't set young person up to fail</p>  | <p>Preparation for independent living</p> <p>Support to help stay with family</p> <p>The need to extend joint working and</p> |

|  |   |   |
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|  | <p>Impact of changes to Benefits in the future</p> <p>Young person feels there is an increased likelihood of eviction and rules are too rigid</p> <p>Low levels of supported accommodation within the Borough and lack of residential provision</p>   | <p>liaise with a range of housing providers</p> <p>Care provision be extended beyond the age of 16 for anyone not wishing to live independently at 16</p>               |
| <p><b>3. How well does the Council do in commissioning or providing services for looked after children / young people?</b></p> | <p>Would you send a child of your own out of town for a home?</p> <p>Smaller residential -If you have units you would fill them</p> <p>Dunston Road – Independent Provider currently in Hartlepool</p> <p>Over coming barriers / prejudicial against young person</p> <p>Young people placed out of the area run back home</p> <p>Sometimes young person needs to be out of town</p> <p>Issues for young people into adulthood, relationships</p> | <p>The need to ensure that placements are appropriate to meet the needs of the child</p> <p>Need to look at why Children Homes were closed, what were the problems?</p> |

|  |  |   |
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|  | Importance of questioning whether it is appropriate to place a child outside the town as well as consider the impact of placements outside the area and how best to reintegrate children into an area as part of adulthood |   |
| <b>4. How stable and secure are the lives of looked after children / young people while they are in care? Could this be improved? If yes, how?</b> | <p>Security and stability of looked after children – it is important to find suitable matching placements</p> <p>Potential impacts of emergency foster placements</p>  | <p>Foster carer should try and plan moves</p> <p>Young person over 18 years, should continue to support young person</p> <p>Reduce respite placement from carers</p> <p>Take children / young person on holiday with you</p> <p>Option to examine performance figures of the Council in relation to stability of placements for looked after children and young people.</p> <p>Additional support for foster carers</p> |
| <b>5. What more could be done to fulfil the Council's responsibilities as a 'Corporate Parent'?</b>  | <p>What would you want for your own children?</p> <p>Should feel part of the family</p>  | <p>Ensure young people have the same opportunities / involved in planning process</p> <p>Families should stay together</p> <p>The need to question whether the level of</p>   |

|  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
|  |  | <p>support for a looked after child would be acceptable for own child</p> <p>Placing of siblings together</p>  |
| <p><b>6. How well does the Council do at finding appropriate adoptive families for children for whom it is decided this is the right option?</b></p> | <p>Numbers of children for whom plan for adoption is rising, number of adopters reducing</p> <p>Report of success of adoption in Hartlepool for statistics in relation to placements within timescale of decisions Identified shortage and successfully advertised – more adopters however, this does not necessarily match the needs of children waiting. One of the measures was finding the right match and reference was made to Hartlepool's success in the adoption process.</p> <p>Trying to be flexible – education, willing to work with and support children</p> <p>Therapeutic support – Acorn</p> <p>How long does process take – balancing act – setting quality info and preparing people in timely way</p> <p>Adoption register process – getting right profiles for children</p> | <p>Measure success by how many placements are the right match evidenced by rates of disruptions compared with other local authorities</p> <p>Need to recruit and prepare adopters for children with more complex needs – support is crucial to this</p> <p>Contact after adoption to support placements</p> <p>Better links with adoption team</p> <p>One of the main issues identified was the need to support carers to accommodate sibling groups with complex needs.</p> |

|  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
|  | <p>Prospective adopters attend panel meeting</p> <p>Quality of written information to Panel</p> <p>Disruption meetings</p>   |  |
| <p><b>7. How well do foster care arrangements work? Could this be improved? If yes, how?</b></p> | <p>Placement breakdown – frequently linked to minimising problems. Once crisis over it has not gone away, need to look at what support is required</p> <p>Foster carers don't always speak out, they look to each other for support. Make judgement when to talk to link worker</p> <p>24 hour telephone support service available – managers from Hartlepool</p> <p>High numbers of foster carers in town</p> <p>Legal proceedings – children not well served by judicial system. Detrimental impact placed on looked after children by legal proceedings</p> <p>Carers need to be jack of all trades</p> <p>Good relationships between foster carer and social workers</p> <p>Situations where carers are left in the dark about future plans of the children they are</p> | <p>Link worker – if not available would like 2<sup>nd</sup> that has pre-existing relationship with foster carers need to be confident to speak out</p> <p>Foster carer email site. Put number on site</p> <p>Foster carers need to be kept up to date with developments</p> <p>Need to publicise the 24 hour support service and improve communication methods with foster carers</p> |

|   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
|   | <p>looking after until the last minute. This leaves the carers having to explain to the children that they can't answer their questions – leaves both carers and children distressed.</p> <p>Foster carers don't have luxury</p>  |   |
| <b>8. What support does the Council provide to children / young people leaving care and how effective is it?</b>  | <p>Leaving Care service available but often young people vote with their feet.</p> <p>Always room for improvement</p> <p>Getting message across of the reality of leaving home. Children should leave home when ready – children receiving reassurance</p> <p>Shouldn't be leaving care – should be supporting independence</p> | <p>Need innovative ways of providing services to hard to reach young people</p> <p>Provide breath of accommodation for young people, supported lodgings, supported accommodation, floating support, single person accommodation Accommodation whilst home from University</p> <p>Co-ordinate services and ensure the appropriate skills are available to move onto adulthood.</p> |
| <b>9. How well do looked after children / young people do at school, both academically and in terms of other kind of achievements? Could this be improved? If yes, how?</b> | <p>Results:-</p> <p><u>KS2 (7 children)</u><br/>43% level 4<br/>Increase from 30%</p> <p><u>KS4 (16 children)</u><br/>6% A* - C including English and Maths</p>   | <p>Mentors – good idea, one trusted person - Each school should have designated person</p> <p>A looked after young person felt that as a looked after child she was singled out at school and suggested that any meetings in relation to personal circumstances</p>   |



|  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
|  | <p>4 looked after young people were currently studying at university.</p> <p>(Statistics are based on a transient population)</p> <p>Individual progress is now measured with Personal Education Plans – informal progress (e.g sports etc) monitored</p> <p>Attendance monitored weekly and followed up immediately – greatly improved</p> <p>Post 16 education – Hartlepool College of Further Education were not officially advised of details of looked after children, as a result of the recent removal of the education maintenance allowance and the need to apply for a bursary this information was no longer confidential. Whilst the improvements in attendance figures were noted, it was stated that further improvements were necessary.</p> <p>Effective support mechanisms were in place for children looked after when problems arose.</p> <p>Social Workers role is key in supporting improvements in education attainment and the potential benefits as a result.</p> | <p>should be held out of school hours to maintain confidentiality and schools should provide an individual they can talk to eg Citizenship Member.</p> <p>The need for settled placements and to improve links with foster carers to ensure young people were placed at the right schools was highlighted.</p> |
|--|---|--|

|  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
|  | <p>Changes in social workers affected performance in school.</p> <p>Sometimes there is lack of communication between social workers and carers with regards to dates of visits, reviews and Personal Education Plan meetings. School has been left to find out from carers regarding changes of circumstances instead of being told from Duty.</p> |  |
| <p><b>10. How effective is the professional workforce of social workers and others responsible for running services for and working with looked after children / young people?</b></p> | <p>Networking is good, helps effective working</p> <p>Getting better at ensuring stability of school</p>   |  |

Comments / views from a Hartlepool Foster Carer fostering children from Stockton:-

Stockton Council offer all of their leisure facilities free to foster children and their carers, even if the foster carers reside in Hartlepool and are fostering children from Stockton. Does Hartlepool offer this?

**ANSWER: All foster families receive a free Active card which gives reduced rate admission to leisure and swimming facilities of the council. In addition the sports development team deliver day and residential activities for children looked after on a weekend and during school holidays.**

**In collaboration with Pony World, children looked after can receive reduced introduction rates to experienced horse riding.**

#### 7.4 (b)

This would help promote health (swimming baths for younger kids or gym membership for older kids). It could promote education (Maritime Experience etc.) Could Hartlepool partner with Stockton and share facilities? (Splash is better than Mill House but Maritime Experience is better than Preston Park Museum). Could each party waver costs to carers and families?

**ANSWER: Along with 9 other local authorities in the North East region, Hartlepool participates in the MAX card scheme which offers children in care and their carers free or reduced admission to regional attractions including museums, castles and in 2010 theatre tickets (this includes Maritime Museum). The aim of the MAX card scheme is to increase access to culture for children and young people and is managed by the North East Museums Hub. The Hub is also promoting TECH Max Generation 2012 for its member local authorities which aims to promote a cultural Olympiad. TECH Max will provide funding for 12 projects across the North East region led by children looked after.**

**Certainly scope for Hartlepool and Stockton to collaborate to mutual benefit with reciprocal access to one another's provision and this can be further explored.**

We have also spoken to a few foster carers when on trips out and they asked if they could have discount as they were carers for foster children and were told if they come next time with i.d. then this would be looked at. I know we recently went to lightwater valley with my kids, the foster babies and others. It cost us nothing for the babies but its an expensive day out if you have older foster children. Our agency is going to supply us with id cards.

**ANSWER: Hartlepool foster carers are issued ID cards identifying them as foster carers for the Council.**

During the summer holidays our agency Reach Out Care arranged a day out each week to the beach, Wynyard Park, Splash etc social workers and support workers attended and everybody met other carers and all the kids played together. Does Hartlepool do this?

**ANSWER: Reach Out Care is an independent fostering agency that provides a range of services, from the local authority position we deliver weekend and holiday activities for children, provide funding to the foster care association to support the delivery of activities for foster carers and their children/fostered children. During the summer holiday the local authority take some children on residential break and a fostering allowance is paid to carers for holidays.**

Stockton also had an awards day at Preston Park for looked after kids and they received certificates for outstanding progress etc. again not sure if Hartlepool does this?

**ANSWER:** *HBC has the annual 'Celebrating Success' night where children receive awards as well as the summer barbeque and annual Christmas party.*

I realise Hartlepool may already do the things I mentioned above but now I work with foster kids I have become quite passionate about their cause.

Comments / views from a co-opted Member of the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum:-

What I would like to comment on is that it is all very well attracting new Foster Carers, but what work is being done to match children/young people to the right foster families?

**ANSWER:** *Part of the fostering assessment process is to identify the skills and quality of the carers taking into account their own family situation and throughout the training and assessment, social workers are able to build positive relationships with fostering families and provide a good assessment of their capacity to meet individual needs of children. This information alongside the assessments of children form the initial basis of a match. For children placed permanently in foster care the current carers of the children are involved in seeking the appropriate match as well as the social work applying matching considerations to match children to carers. An assessment report is completed and presented to fostering panel and the agency decision maker before a placement is made. Child Appreciation Days are held to assist and prepare prospective carers for the placement.*

What real support is there for foster carers when things don't go so well and the carers are not trained to deal with the emotions/tantrums and even violence of a child/YP?

**ANSWER:** *Hartlepool foster carers have access to a 24 hour telephone support service where they can call for advice, guidance and assistance. The Emergency Duty Team provide out of hours support on an evening and weekends. Every child has an allocated social worker and every foster carer has an allocated supervising social worker. Foster carers are provided a full programme of training and development which aims to prepare them for the challenges they may face in the role of foster carer. Furthermore, where appropriate foster carers through the social worker have access to the child and adolescent mental health service where therapists will work directly to support carers as well as children and the*

***Placement Support team provide support and respite within the home. There is a monthly Fostering Support Group where foster carers can seek peer support and also request session are held focussing on specific issues if required.***

Fairly recent news items indicate that far too many families are taking children and YP into their homes WITHOUT the appropriate training, vetting and support needed. Is this being addressed in Hartlepool?

***ANSWER: Yes, all carers receive a comprehensive programme of training, preparation and assessment in line with the national regulations and minimum standards prior to being approved and once approved are inducted into the fostering role.***

I personally feel that childless couples who seek to become foster carers can have no idea what they may be letting themselves in for. I have two children and despite being 10 years older than my sibling, changing his nappy and babysitting him, I still found it extremely difficult to cope with all of the changes to our lives, marriage, et al. I am in the fortunate position of knowing the background of my children and being responsible from the onset for their upbringing. Foster carers don't have that luxury. I'm not sure how much of a bond they are able to make, especially if they have to hand the children/YP back to their families. I imagine it to be really tough, but very rewarding when things work out well.

Foster care is important and I fully support the notion of offering children and YP the opportunity to be looked after in a caring home environment, rather than a care home. But, I wonder if YP develop a false sense of what life is like with other families when carers have to abide by so many (necessary) rules/guidelines.

How can carers cope with this? These are some of the issues, how can carers be supported?

**SOCIAL AND HEALTH CARE PORTFOLIO  
REPORT TO PORTFOLIO HOLDER  
1 October 2002**



**Report of:** Director of Social Services

**Subject:** Re-provision of Residential Children Care Services  
(Flint Walk)

## **SUMMARY**

### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

To present proposals on the re-provision of residential child care services, presently provided at Flint Walk.

### **2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS**

Options of the re-provision of residential child care services are presented along with proposals for consultation.

### **3. RELEVANCE TO PORTFOLIO MEMBER**

Service is within Portfolio Member's responsibility.

### **4. TYPE OF DECISION**

Key Decision

### **5. DECISION MAKING ROUTE**

Refer for overview and scrutiny.

### **6. DECISION(S) REQUIRED**

6.1 To agree in principal the need to reconfigure existing residential provision at Flint Walk Children's Home.

6.2 To agree to detailed work being carried out on options 3 and 4 in the attached report.

- 6.3 To agree to consult formally on the options with staff, young people and their carers and local residents.
- 6.4 To refer for overview and scrutiny.

**Report of:** Director of Social Services

**Subject:** RE-PROVISION OF RESIDENTIAL CHILD CARE SERVICES.

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## **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To present proposals on the re-provision of residential child care services, presently provided at Flint Walk Children's Home, to seek the Portfolio Member's approval to consult on the basis of the proposals and to refer the matter for overview and scrutiny.

## **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 For children and young people in public care, a range of care options are provided to meet their needs. The Care Strategy (reported to SSB on 19<sup>th</sup> June 2000) detailed how this provision was to be made. Residential provision was to be made through Flint Walk Children's Home (short break care services for children with a disability are provided through Exmoor Grove, and are not part of the consideration of this report). It was agreed that this Unit would become a mixed unit for young people aged 11years + and provide planned care of approximately 12/18 months duration, where the plan is to return home or preparation for independent living. This development took place following agreement at the Social Services Board on 19<sup>th</sup> June 2000. It was also agreed at the meeting that consideration would be given to finding an alternative venue for Flint Walk Children's Home
- 2.2 At that time there were a number of concerns about the provision at Flint Walk from local residents due to the levels of disruption experienced by them and a meeting was held with them by the Director of Social Services and the Chair of the then Social Services Board (10 July 2000). It was indicated at this meeting that consideration would be given to finding an alternative premise, but that this would take time.
- 2.3 Efforts have been made since then to identify a suitable alternative and at an affordable cost. Although a number of options have been considered, it has not so far proved possible to identify such a resource.
- 2.4 Following the changes made in June 2000, the level of disturbance and disruption in the community has lessened. There have been two complaints logged with the department since then about Flint Walk. A number of issues though have been dealt with at an informal level through staff talking directly with local residents.



### 3. PRESENT POSITION

#### 3.1 Use of Flint Walk

- 3.1.1 The present provision has been reviewed in terms of whether the size and purpose of the unit is appropriate to the department's needs. With only having one large children's home it means that inevitably there is a wide mix of young people who will be resident. Over the last two years the mix has included young people of 12/13 years of age and at the start of their comprehensive school career, through to young people, 16+ who have left school and are working.
- 3.1.2 The experiences of the staff are that the wide range of age and developmental needs creates considerable difficulties in terms of management style, provision of events/outings and general interaction between the young people.
- 3.1.3 Over the last two years, the number of residents has varied between 2 and 4 at any one point in time. In most cases it has proved possible to plan a placement at Flint Walk prior to admission. Careful consideration has always been given to the mix and this has resulted in some young people not being placed in the unit. On a number of occasions this has resulted in the need to purchase a more expensive placement through the independent sector.
- 3.1.4 With the introduction of National Care Standards, a review took place of the existing provision at Flint Walk. Although the basic structure would meet these standards, it was calculated that £25K would be needed to improve the internal décor and provision in order to fully meet the standards. It was also noted that the internal layout and access would not meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act and that it was uneconomical to carry out the work, given the age and present condition of the building.

#### 3.2 Option appraisal.

A number of options are presented, though at this stage more work is needed on some of these in order for detailed consideration to take place.

##### 3.2.1 Option 1.

To maintain existing provision.

Pros; limited disruption to young people in residence. It is likely that there would need to be a period when they moved out in order to complete all the necessary internal works. It is an existing unit, so there would be no need for new planning permissions to be sought

Cons; Cost of refurbishment (25K), plus the building would still not meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act. A commitment has been given to local residents to seek a move of premises. The size of the building does not meet present needs.

### 3.2.2 Option 2.

Move to similar sized provision elsewhere in the town

Pros; Apart from the costs of a new building, move etc, it is likely that staffing costs would remain the same.

Cons; difficulties in finding appropriate accommodation or land and the need to gain planning permission. This has already been explored and there has been no viable alternative found. Evidence from young people suggests that continuing with a large unit does not adequately meet the needs of young people across the age spread of 11years +. As under option 1. A similar sized unit does not adequately meet present needs.

### 3.2.3 Option 3.

Develop two smaller units for up to 2/3 young people, with a possible third, single occupancy unit if needed.

Pros; proposal would meet present needs, Having 2 or 3 smaller units would allow greater choice for young people and more possibilities of getting the mix right. For example, one unit could specialise in supporting young people where the immediate or short-term plan is to move to semi-independent living. A second unit could specialise in the younger age range, where the emphasis is more likely to be on planned return home or move to longer-term carers. With smaller units, integration into local communities would be easier. Identification of properties would also be easier as it would involve 3 to 4 bedroom properties.

Cons; need to identify suitable premises across the town and seek the necessary planning permission. Staffing costs would be somewhat higher. More detailed work is taking place on this. There may be a need to identify “responsible managers” for each unit to meet the national care standards. Discussions are taking place with the National Care Standards Commission with regard to this issue.

### 3.2.4 Option 4.

Alternative provision is sought from the independent sector providers, through either provision of buildings or the complete service.

Pros; Some economies of scale may be achieved through involvement of the independent sector. It may be possible to bring in greater experience in the provision of residential care.

Cons; there would be less direct management control of the service. As Hartlepool needs are relatively small, it may be that an independent provider would need to look towards a wider contract with other local boroughs in making a provision.

#### **4. CONSULTATIONS**

- 4.1 At the present time initial discussions have taken place with staff and young people at Flint Walk in order to make them aware that changes are being considered. These processes will need to be formalised in consideration of the various options
- 4.2 With regard to residents, there has been no recent formal consultations with them. The position is still that a commitment has been made to residents that considerations are being made to move the existing provision from its present location. A formal consultation will need to take place.

#### **5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 Work is taking place on costing out the various options and some initial discussions have taken place with the independent sector. Detailed costings will be presented in a later report.

#### **6. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 6.1 Agreement is sought from the Portfolio member to the principal of the need to reconfigure the present provision of in-house residential provision at Flint Walk.
- 6.2 In terms of the options, a decision is also sought over discarding option 1 and option 2 and carrying out more detailed work on options 3 and 4.
- 6.3 Agreement to consult formally on the options with staff, young people and local residents is sought.
- 6.4 It is also proposed that this issue be referred for overview and scrutiny at this stage, due to the public interest issue.

# **SOCIAL AND HEALTH CARE PORTFOLIO**

## **DECISION RECORD**

1st October 2002

### **Present:**

Councillor Cath Hill (Social and Health Care Portfolio Holder)

Officers: Peter Seller, Assistant Director (Children and Families)  
Betty Kirtley, Principal Solicitor  
Joan Wilkins, Principal Democratic Services Officer

## **17. Flint Walk Reprovision** (*Director of Social Services*)

### **Type of decision**

Key

### **Purpose of report**

To outline proposals for the reprovision of residential child care services, presently provided at Flint Walk.

### **Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder**

As part of Hartlepool's Care Strategy, Flint Walk Children's Home had since 2000 been utilised for the provision of mixed residential accommodation for young people aged 11 years + and planned care.

It had been agreed in June 2000 that consideration would be given to the identification of an alternative venue for the home. The need for this had been further highlighted by local residents' concerns regarding the level of disruption around the home. These residents had been given an opportunity to discuss their concerns with the Director of Social Services and Chairman of the Social Services Board following which efforts had been made to identify a suitable alternative, at an affordable cost. Despite these efforts it had not as yet been possible to identify such a resource.

Current provision had been reviewed in terms of whether the size and

## HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE SCRUTINY FORUM REPORT

15 October 2002



**Report of:** Assistant Director of Social Services  
(Children and Families)

**Subject:** Flint Walk Children's Home - Re-provision

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### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To allow the Scrutiny Forum to comment on the proposals for the re-provision of residential services presently provided through Flint Walk Children's Home.

### 2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Attached at **Appendix A** is a report which was submitted to the Health and Social Care Portfolio on 1 October 2002. The report gives details of the background to the need for the Department to consider the re-provision of services at Flint Walk Children's Home.
- 2.2 Also attached at **Appendix B** is a copy of the Care Strategy for Looked After Children, which was presented to the Social Services Board on 19 June 2000. The report gives details of the overall development of services for children and young people in public care.

### 3. ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE SCRUTINY FORUM

- 3.1 Key issues which the Forum may wish to consider are:
- Types of placement provision for children and young people in public care
  - Impact of relocated provision on the community
  - Consultation with neighbours/community on existing provision and any potential new provision

**SOCIAL AND HEALTH CARE PORTFOLIO  
REPORT TO PORTFOLIO HOLDER  
22nd December, 2002**



**Report of:** Director of Social Services

**Subject:** TRANSITIONAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR FLINT WALK

## **SUMMARY**

### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To keep Portfolio Holder up to date with the transitional arrangements in relation to Flint Walk.

### **2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS**

- 2.1 The report outlines the developments since the last report on 29 April 2003 and offers recommendations about the transitional use of Flint Walk.

### **3. RELEVANCE TO PORTFOLIO MEMBER**

- 3.1 Service is within Portfolio Member's responsibility.

### **4. TYPE OF DECISION**

- 4.1 Key Decision

### **5. DECISION MAKING ROUTE**

- 5.1 Refer for overview and scrutiny.

### **6. DECISION(S) REQUIRED**

- 6.1 To agree to no more residents being placed in Flint Walk under its current Statement of Purpose.

- 6.2 To agree to the National Care Standards Commission being notified of that decision.
- 6.3 To agree to the alternative uses of the building being implemented.
- 6.4 To agree to a further report being prepared on proposals for the reprovision of Flint Walk, linked to developments in the foster care service.

**Report of:** Director of Social Services

**Subject:** TRANSITIONAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR FLINT WALK

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## **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To confirm the temporary block on placements at Flint Walk and set out proposals for the use of the building until agreement is reached on alternative residential provision.

## **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 A report was presented to the Social and Health Care Portfolio meeting on 1 October 2002. That report provided the rationale for the need to re-provide services at Flint Walk Children's Home and detailed a range of options for consideration. The decisions made permitted further work to pursue two of the options. That work was done.
- 2.2 A report on the re-provision of Flint Walk Children's Home was presented to the Portfolio holder on 29 April 2003 updating on the process.
- 2.3 A report was presented to DMT on 2 July reporting on the last resident about to leave and making proposals for the use of the building. However, before those proposals were put in place circumstances altered radically and there was need to re-open the Home for a further short period to accommodate two young people for whom no other placement could be found at short notice. NCSC have been in contact with the Department to express concern about this and placed restrictions which effectively prevent a recurrence.
- 2.4 There have been no residents since 27 August 2003.

## **3. DEVELOPMENTS**

- 3.1 Following further consultation with staff, each has been transferred on a temporary basis to the same locations as previously arranged. All staff agreed to those placements. Staff have also been informed that a formal discussion will take place in relation to each of them individually to formalise these temporary arrangements to clarify line management responsibilities and this will be done in conjunction with the relevant Trade Unions. All staff will be retained on the basis that all will be needed to staff the new residential provision.



- 3.2 A new working group headed by the Interim Strategic Manager are re-examining the work that was started in 2000 and taking into account recent trends in placement requirements. The group plan to present an updated Care Strategy in the New Year.
- 3.3 There has been an increase in the number of placements made with Independent Providers due to a combination of young people with specialised needs and a shortage of foster carers approved by this authority. In some cases this has meant that young people have been placed outside Hartlepool.
- 3.4 Since the current staff group is dispersed to other locations, the building is therefore available for use by the Department. Enquiries of the Planning Department concluded that provided there were no alterations made to the building then any of the proposals for temporary use would not require planning permission.

#### **4. PROPOSALS**

- 4.1 That no further placements are made at Flint Walk.
- 4.2 That National Care Standards Commission is notified that no more placements are being made at Flint Walk under the current Statement of Purpose. There may be an application to admit young people at a future time but with an altered Statement of Purpose reflecting the emergency/respite nature of placements that the authority needs to make in Hartlepool. Any re-opening of Flint Walk would require a fresh application to be made to the Commission to register the Home.

#### **4.3 Use of Building**

- 4.3.1 Currently there are 6 part-time Family Resource Workers attached to the Children with Disability team. They share office facilities at Bevan House but do not have individual work places. With the support of their Team Manager, those staff would welcome a transfer to Flint Walk to use some of the office space that is no longer used. None of the service users would visit the property since it does not meet the requirements for the Disability Discrimination Act – not having appropriate access for wheelchair users.
- 4.3.2 Staff of the Young Persons' teams (including Flint Walk staff placed there temporarily) could use the existing facilities for direct work with young people, eg Life Skills work, etc.
- 4.3.3 Staff supporting fostering placements where the young person is presenting particular difficulties could also use the facilities (including the leisure options available there) at weekends and evenings to provide a positive experience for the young person where the environment can be controlled.

- 4.3.4 Facilities for supervised contact with young children is not well developed and Flint Walk may also be a possible venue – given the options for indoor activities than can be undertaken there.
- 4.3.5 There is increasing pressure on venues to hold ad hoc meetings and again Flint Walk may be considered for this function. This would need to be limited to staff employed by the authority to keep the level of demand to a reasonable level.
- 4.4 All of these options could be operated in the building provided that there was an efficient booking system.
- 4.5 The regular use of the building would enhance the security of the building but additional cover has already been implemented on a surveillance basis.

## **5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The establishment costs will continue to operate.
- 5.2 There is additional cost of the additional security.
- 5.3 No significant savings can accrue from the options detailed above. Some modest reduction in overtime payments at Exmoor Grove may occur and should vacancies in the staff group arise posts will be held unfilled for the time being.
- 5.4 There may be an increase in the mileage claims from the Family Resource workers but it is estimated to be minimal.
- 5.5 There may need to be an additional telephone line needed but that cost could be met from Grant revenue in the current year (Children with Disabilities QP grant).
- 5.6 There will need to be some expenditure (£5,000) to bring the water system up to a suitable standard over the next few months regardless of the use of the building.

## **6. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 6.1 To agree to no more residents being placed in Flint Walk under its current Statement of Purpose.
- 6.2 To agree to the National Care Standards Commission being notified of that decision.
- 6.3 To agree to the alternative uses of the building being implemented.

- 6.4 To agree to a further report being prepared on proposals for the reprovision of Flint Walk, linked to developments in the foster care service.

- Consultation and involvement of children/young people and their families who are in receipt of placement services

#### **4. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 4.1 That the views of the Forum are requested and will be fed back to the Health and Social Care Portfolio.
- 4.2 To agree the process for further scrutiny following consultation and the development of more detailed proposals, including financial implications.

purpose of the unit is appropriate for the departments needs. A number of issues had been identified, details of which were outlined in the report, it had also been highlighted that whilst the basic structure of the home would meet National Care Standards 25K would be required in order to fully meet standards. There was also an issue in relation to the financial implications of carrying out the work necessary to bring the home up to the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act.

In view of the issues identified a number of options had been identified for further consideration:

- 1) Maintenance of existing provision
- 2) A move to similar sized provision elsewhere in the town
- 3) Development of two similar units for up to 2/3 young people, with a possible third, single occupancy if needed
- 4) Alternative provision from the independent sector providers, through either provision of buildings or the complete service.

Consultation had been undertaken with staff and young people at Flint Walk with further work to be carried out to formalise consideration of the various options. Work was also currently being carried out regarding costings for the various options including some initial discussions with the independent sector. Further details of costings were to be reported in a later report.

### **Decision**

- i) That the principal of the need to reconfigure the present provision of in-house residential provision at Flint Walk be approved.
- ii) That options 1 and 2, as outlined above, be discarded and more detailed work carried out on options 3 and 4.
- iii) That staff, young people and local residents be formally consulted on each of the options.
- iv) That due to public interest the issue be referred for overview and scrutiny at this stage.

## **18. LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985**

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 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.

19. Children's Homes: Regulation 33/34 Reports (Para 6)

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

**Type of decision**

Non-Key

**Purpose of report**

To outline the Regulation 33/34 (formerly Regulation 22) reports of visits to the Council's two Children's Homes.

**Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder**

Reports of visits to Flint Walk and Exmoor Grove during the month of August 2002 were submitted.

**J A BROWN**

**CHIEF SOLICITOR**

**PUBLICATION DATE: 7<sup>th</sup> October 2002**

# **SOCIAL AND HEALTH CARE PORTFOLIO**

## **DECISION RECORD**

22nd December 2003

### **Present:**

Councillor Cath Hill (Social and Health Care Portfolio Holder)

Officers: Ian McMillan, Assistant Director of Social Services  
Joan Wilkins, Principal Democratic Services Officer

### **36. Transitional Arrangements for Flint Walk** *(Director of Social Services)*

#### **Type of decision**

Key.

#### **Purpose of report**

To seek approval for a temporary block on placements at Flint Walk and outline proposals for the use of the building until an agreement is reached on alternative residential provision.

#### **Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder**

Further to minute number 50 of the meeting held on the 29<sup>th</sup> April 2003, the Director of Social Services outlined the proposal for the re-provision of Flint Walk, including notification of the National Care Standards Commission of the cessation of placements under the current Statement of Purpose. There had however been an increase in the number of placements made with independent providers, due to a number of young people with specialised needs, and a shortage of approved foster carers for this authority, which in some cases had resulted in the need for placements outside Hartlepool. In view of this it was recognised that there may be instances in the future where young people need to be admitted to Flint Walk but with an altered Statement of Purpose to reflect the need for emergency/respite nature of placements. However, to enable this to occur a fresh application would need to be made to the Commission to register the Home.

In relation to the re-provision of the Home consultations had been undertaken with staff and trade unions. Following these consultation's staff, all of whom would be needed to staff the new provision, had agreed to their transfer on a temporary basis to previously arranged locations. These transfers had now been completed with further formal discussions to be undertaken in relation to the formalisation of arrangements, including the clarification of line management responsibilities.

With current staff dispersed to other locations the building was now available for use by the Department and it was proposed that it be utilised to:-

- **Accommodate 6 part-time Family Resource Workers attached to the Children and Disability Team.** These staff members currently share office facilities at Bevan House, but do not have individual working spaces.
- **Accommodate staff from the Young Persons Team, including Flint Walk staff placed there temporarily.** To provide facilities for direct work with young people, e.g. life skills work etc.
- **Accommodate staff supporting foster placements where the young person is presenting particular difficulties.** To provide facilities including leisure options at weekends and evenings in an environment that could be controlled whilst providing a positive experience for young people.
- **Develop facilities for supervised contact with young children (possible option).**
- **Provide a venue for ad-hoc meetings.** This would be time limited to keep the level of demand to a reasonable level.

It was highlighted that all of the proposed options could operate in the building with the provision of an effective booking system and that, although additional cover had already been implemented on a surveillance basis, regular use of the building would enhance security.

### **Decision**

- (i) The cessation of placements in Flint Walk under its current statement of purpose and the notification of the National Care Standards Commission of this decision was approved.
- (ii) The alternative uses for the building, as outlined above, were approved.
- (iii) A further report will be prepared on proposals for the re-provision of Flint Walk, linked to developments in the foster care service, for submission to the Portfolio Holder in due course.



### **37. Extra Care Sheltered Housing Fund** *(Director of Social Services)*

#### **Type of decision**

Non key.

#### **Purpose of report**

To seek consideration of the submission of the bid to the extra care housing fund.

#### **Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder**

In August 2003 local authorities had been advised of the Department of Health's intention to set up an extra care sheltered housing fund. Directors of Social Services were to be invited to submit bids for capital from this fund by the 17<sup>th</sup> November 2003. Work had already been undertaken to identify possible schemes and partners in Hartlepool, however whilst several of the possibilities had been promising all had issues the most serious of which related to the availability of land. This had meant that the November deadline for a bid could not be met.

One possible partner, the Joseph Rowntree Foundation who had already successfully developed extra care schemes elsewhere, had however recently made progress on the acquisition of suitable land for the development of an extra care village. Further work had been undertaken on this proposal with the Hartlepool Primary Trust and North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Trust to enable the submission of a bid for funding to provide 200 units of accommodation (bungalow and flats), with some integrated health and social care services. The bid, as outlined in detail in the report, had been approved by Cabinet on 17th November for submission and should it be successful would provide an opportunity to build on the success of current services to older people. It would also provide a wider range of options to older people to consider when planning retirement.

Although at this stage the bid only required high level detail, further work was to be undertaken over the next two months to develop the proposal and a financial profile for a bud. At this stage a further report was to be brought to Cabinet, with appropriate scrutiny consideration of the fuller implications of the proposal.

#### **Decision**

- (i) Submission of a bid to the Care Sheltered Housing Fund as outlined in the report was approved.

- (ii) Further report was to be brought to Cabinet and, Scrutiny if appropriate, detailing how the scheme would improve both care for older people and cost effectiveness.

### **38. Independent Reviewing Officers - Consultation Response** *(Director of Social Services)*

#### **Type of decision**

Non key.

#### **Purpose of report**

To outline the local authority's proposed response to the Independent Reviewing Officers consultation paper and seek approval for its submission to the Department of Education and Skills.

#### **Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder**

The Children's Act 1989 set out detailed regulations and guidance concerning the planning, and review of planning, for children looked after by local authorities. It had been recommended that child's cases should be chaired by an officer of the local authority at a more senior level than the case social worker in order to create a degree of objectivity and oversight to practice and decision making in monitoring the care plan for the child. The Quality Protects programme had also encouraged the development of the independent reviewing officer role in local authorities.

There was an opportunity with the Adoption and Children Act 2002 to make the appointment of independent reviewing officers a legal requirement. This would remedy the problem of those children who have no adult to act on their behalf and no effective means of initiating a challenge to decision making in respect of the Human Rights Act. If implemented this could lead to Independent Review Officers ultimately referring cases to CAFCASS to make an application to the Court for a judgement as to whether a child's human rights had been breached.

Copies of the draft independent reviewing officers regulations under the Review of Children's Cases Amendment England Regulations 2004 had been circulated in anticipation of the publication of the finalised regulations in the spring of 2004. As part of the consultation process eight consultation questions had been asked. Details of the proposed response from this local authority were outlined at Appendix 1 of the report.

### **Decision**

- (i) The consultation response, as circulated at Appendix 1 of the report, was approved for submission to the Department of Education and Skills.
- (ii) A further report was to be prepared for submission to the Portfolio Holder when the regulations published with a view to meeting the requirements by the authority.

## **39. Review of Advocacy Services for People with a Learning Disability** *(Director of Social Services)*

### **Type of decision**

Non key.

### **Purpose of report**

To present the report and findings of a review of advocacy services requested by the Partnership Board.

### **Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder**

As part of a range of legislation and initiatives the development and uptake of advocacy services to all young service users was being promoted. As part of this review of the advocacy service had been undertaken with the aim of obtaining a picture of current advocacy services available to people with learning disabilities and their carers in Hartlepool. Details of the methodology for the review and its remit were outlined in the report together with a summary of its findings and subsequent recommendations.

The Director of Social Services indicated that an action plan was to be developed in the Learning Disabilities Business Unit reflecting the findings of the review. Also, that a number of areas had been highlighted by the review to improve the overall availability, accessibility and impact of advocacy. This would ensure that people with learning disabilities could make their views heard, have greater opportunities to gain information, be informed of their rights and be consulted about services or make complaints.

### **Decision**

- (i) The report was noted with an action plan to be developed within the Learning Disabilities Business Unit.
- (ii) The identification of funding advocacy services provision as a budget pressure in 2004/5 was noted.

## **40. Supplementary Credit Approvals 2003-05: Hartlepool Arts Studio** *(Director of Social Services)*

### **Type of decision**

Non key.

### **Purpose of report**

To seek approval of a proposal for the development of an arts based project to assist people with mental health problems and the use of the Mental Health Supplementary Credit Approval.

### **Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder**

£19 million had been made available nationally to enable Councils to fund capital projects that assist with the development of comprehensive mental health services for adults. Hartlepool Borough Council had been allocated £71,000 from this fund, with the Hartlepool Arts Studio Project (HAS) identified through consultations with partners as the most appropriate to make use of the available resource.

The project had been developed over several years, with the assistance of an "artist in residence", and aimed to teach, encourage and assist people with mental health problems to learn and develop skills and confidence. It had however, become apparent that the facilities provided in the converted garage at Brooklyn were too small. HAS had now reached a point where acquiring premises was both sensible and achievable and had put together a business case for the use of the £71,379 Supplementary Credit Approval. This case included the assessment of match funding for capital from the European Retail Development and suitable premises had been located and negotiations undertaken for its purchase for a sum in the region of £85,000. This would leave sufficient funds for adaptation of the premises.

### **Decision**

The use of Mental Health Supplementary Credit Approval of £71,379 to assist the Hartlepool Arts Studio Project to purchase premises for the provision of art studios and structured arts activities was approved.

## **41. Member Involvement in Regulation 33 Visits** (*Director of Social Services*)

### **Type of decision**

Non key.

### **Purpose of report**

To seek approval for Member involvement in Regulation 33 Children's Homes Regulations 2001 visits to residential establishments.

### **Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder**

Regulation 33 of the Children's Homes Regulations 2001 requires that the "registered" provider (in this case the Council) visit its children's homes in accordance with the requirements of the regulation. The possibility of elected Members accompanying officers in this task had been discussed at the corporate parent forum on 25th November 2002 with a commitment made that the issue would be pursued.

It was proposed that the scheme should become operational from April 2004 and that an annual rota be devised for Members to accompany officers on planning visits. It is not proposed that Members accompany officers on any unannounced visits and clear guidelines were to be drawn up outlining the roles and responsibilities of officers and Members.

Prior to the implementation of the proposal the following steps however needed to be undertaken:-

- The identification of a small pool of elected Members (approximately 6), with each Member to be required to attend a mandatory preparatory training course.
- Completion of an application for Criminal Records Bureau checks.
- Approval of the pool of elected Members by the Portfolio Holder on an annual basis. It was proposed that, subject to completion of a satisfactory CRB check and attendance at the mandatory training, the

rota for 2004 should consist of:-

Mayor Drummond  
Councillor Griffin  
Councillor Hill  
Councillor Payne  
Councillor Richardson  
Councillor Shaw

### **Decision**

- (i) The scheme as outlined in the report, for Member involvement in planned Regulation 33 Visits was approved.
- (ii) The rota for 2004 as outlined above was approved, subject to completion of a satisfactory CRB check and attendance at the mandatory training.

## **42. Local Government Access to Information Act 1985**

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 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 - 43 Children's Homes: Regulation 33/34 Reports (Para. 6)

## **43. Children's Homes: Regulation 33/34 Reports** *(Director of Social Services) (Para. 6)*

### **Type of decision**

Non key.

### **Purpose of report**

To present the Regulation 33/34 Reports of visits to Children's Homes operated by the Council.

### **Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder**

Reports for the month of August 2003 for Flint Walk and Exmoor Grove were submitted to the Portfolio Holder.

**Decision**

The Regulation 33/34 Reports were noted.

**J A BROWN**

**CHIEF SOLICITOR**

**PUBLICATION DATE: 21ST JANUARY 2004**

## HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE SCRUTINY FORUM REPORT

25 March 2003



**Report of:** Assistant Director, Children and Families  
Social Services Department

**Subject:** Reprovision of Flint Walk Children's Home

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### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To update Forum members on progress with regard plans for reprovision of Flint Walk Children's Home and to feedback on the issues raised at the last Forum meeting.

### 2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 A report was presented to the Social and Health Care Portfolio meeting on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2002. This report provided the rationale for the need to consider the reprovision of residential children care services presently provided through Flint Walk Children's Home and detailed a range of options for consideration.
- 2.2 The decision of the Portfolio Holder was as follows:
- Agreement in principle for the need to reconfigure the existing service
  - Agreement to work being carried out on two options;
    - To develop two smaller units, with a possible third single occupancy unit, through existing resources (Option 3)
    - To develop the above using external providers either for the whole service or in the provision of the buildings (Option 4)
  - Agreement to further consultation with young people, staff and neighbours.
  - To refer to overview and scrutiny.



- 2.3 The initial report was considered by the Social and Health Care Scrutiny Forum on 15<sup>th</sup> October 2002. A number of areas of concern were identified and these are addressed below.
- 2.4 Bringing the Out of Borough placements back to Hartlepool and the financial implications of this.
  - 2.4.1 At the present time, the number of children placed more than 20 miles from Hartlepool is 6 at a cost of approximately £500K. For all of these children the provision is very specific. However it is hoped that through the re-provision of Flint Walk Children's Home it may be possible for one or two of this present group to be provided for within Hartlepool. The greater consequence of the re-provision is to hopefully reduce the need for placements outside of the Borough in the first place.
- 2.5 Semi-independent living and supported homes for 16/17 year olds.
  - 2.5.1 This is presently provided through a contract with Tees Valley Housing Association and through premises at St Paul's Road plus a small number of satellite units. Further work is being done through the Leaving Care Service to develop this further and to provide a wider range of supported accommodation to care leavers. This will be funded through the Quality Protects' Leaving Care Grant.
  - 2.5.2 Reprovision of the Flint Walk services to provide two smaller units, one of which could provide for the older age group, would give the opportunity for improving the support and preparation for young people moving into semi-independent and independent living.
- 2.6 Two separate managers for two smaller units.
  - 2.6.1 Following discussions with the National Care Standards Commission, it is likely that in setting up two separate units that there will have to be a manager for each unit. The issue for the National Care Standards Commission is in terms of proximity of the buildings and commonality of the statement of purpose. Further discussions will take place with the Commission once it is clear what the exact configuration is going to be.
- 2.7 Use of existing staff.
  - 2.7.1 The decision on which option to develop for reprovision of the service has yet to be made. However, under option 3, where two smaller units are developed, it is anticipated that all staff would transfer to the new premises under the same terms and conditions as at present.
  - 2.7.2 If option 4 is pursued, using independent sector providers for the whole service the intention would be to seek the transfer of staff to the new

organisation and all staff would then come under the TUPE arrangements. If the independent sector provision was only the accommodation, then staff would remain employed as at present and in line with option 3.

## 2.8 Education Standards.

2.8.1 This was a general issue raised by members around ensuring good support for children and young people in education. This issue remains a high priority for both the Education and Social Services Department. All children and young people in public care are reviewed and monitored regularly in terms of educational outcomes. There is a joint senior management group between the two departments that is responsible for the oversight of this.

2.8.2 Planning and development of services is promoted and supported through a sub-group of the Children's Planning and Implementation Group.

## 3. PRESENT POSITION

### 3.1 Consultation.

3.1.1 Initial discussions have taken place with staff at Flint Walk, Young people and the immediate neighbours around the proposals to reprovide services.

3.1.2 The views from the staff group were generally positive in terms of the ability to provide a more focussed service. There were some concerns about the implications for them as employees and the need for this to be clear. It has been made clear that the more detailed proposals will be shared and consulted on further, before final decisions are made.

3.1.3 All the neighbours in the immediate vicinity have been contacted and asked for their opinions of the proposed reprovision. There was a limited response, with only two letters being received. General comments have been around concern as to what will happen to the building as and when the children's home moves out. At the present time there are no proposals for the future use of the building and in the immediate future it would remain as local authority stock.

3.1.4 Previous issues from neighbours have been around the level of disruption caused by some of the young people in the children's home. This has reduced and there have been no recent complaints made to the department.

3.1.5 With regard to young people, there was earlier discussion with them about the proposed changes and the views were generally positive.

However the group has changed significantly since then and it is anticipated that further consultations will take place with the present group as proposals are further developed.

### 3.2 Option 3

3.2.1 At the present point in time it has not been possible to identify suitable premises from within existing local authority stock. This option will continue to be explored while other options are considered.

### 3.3 Option 4

3.3.1 Expressions of interest have been sought from existing Housing providers for the provision of the building element of the reprovided services.

3.3.2 A process has also been carried out with regard to the overall provision of the service from the independent sector, seeking initial costings for evaluation purposes.

3.3.3 The initial information from this is that it is likely that the provision of the whole service through the independent sector would be considerably more costly than provision of the service by the local authority and using an independent sector provider for the accommodation element. Decisions on this issue will need to be addressed through the Social and Health Care Portfolio meeting.

### 3.4 Financial Risk/Considerations

3.4.1 Further work on the financial risk is being undertaking following agreement of the budget for the next financial year. It is anticipated that the costs of the re-provision of services will be greater than the present budget for Flint Walk. However the re-provided services will see an increase in bed capacity from 5 to 6 places. It will be proposed that the increased costs will be met out of use of the Leaving Care Grant, for that element which covers young people 16+, and through reduction in the use of the present Agency Placement budget. The Agency Placement budget is used for specialist placement of children both within the borough and outside. With the re-provided services it is anticipated that the longer-term demand on out of borough placements will reduce.

## 4. **NEXT STEPS**

4.1 Further consideration will be given to the cost of the proposed developments and the present budget for Flint Walk. Financial risk of the proposals will then be assessed.

4.2 A report will be made to the next Health and Social Care Portfolio meeting with recommendations on option approval.

## **5. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 5.1 The Health and Social Care Scrutiny Forum to receive the report and comment on the developments to date.

**SOCIAL AND HEALTH CARE PORTFOLIO  
REPORT TO PORTFOLIO HOLDER  
29<sup>th</sup> April, 2003.**



**Report of:** Director of Social Services

**Subject:** Re-provision of Flint Walk Children's Home

## **SUMMARY**

### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To present the Portfolio Holder the outcomes of the consultation around proposals for reconfiguring services at Flint Walk Children's Home and more detailed information on the agreed options under consideration.
- 1.2 To seek the Portfolio Holder's decision with regard to the preferred option.

### **2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS**

- 2.1 The report provides details on the consultations with young people at Flint Walk Children's Home, the staff group and neighbours to Flint Walk. It also provides detailed consideration of the options for re-provision, including financial risk issues.

### **3. RELEVANCE TO PORTFOLIO MEMBER**

- 3.1 Service is within the Portfolio member's responsibility.

### **4. TYPE OF DECISION**

- 4.1 Key Decision

### **5. DECISION MAKING ROUTE**

- 5.1 Social and Health Care Portfolio

### **6. DECISION(S) REQUIRED**

- 6.1 To agree preferred option in principle.

# **SOCIAL AND HEALTH CARE PORTFOLIO**

## **DECISION RECORD**

29<sup>th</sup> April, 2003

### **Present:**

Councillor Cath Hill (Social and Health Care Portfolio Holder)

Officers: Ian McMillan, Senior Assistant/Deputy Director of Social Services  
Peter Seller, Assistant Director of Social Services (Children & Families)  
David Cosgrove, Principal Democratic Services Officer

### **50. Re-provision of Flint Walk Children's Home** (*Director of Social Services*)

#### **Type of decision**

Key (Test (ii) applies)

#### **Purpose of report**

To report the outcomes of the consultation around the proposals for reconfiguring services at Flint Walk Children's Home and more detailed information on the agreed options under consideration.

#### **Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder**

The rationale for the need for the re-provision of services at Flint Walk Children's Home and a detailed range of options for consideration was presented to the Portfolio Holder on 1<sup>st</sup> October, 2002. This matter has been further considered by the Health and Social Care Scrutiny Forum on 15<sup>th</sup> October, 2002 and 25<sup>th</sup> March, 2003 and the reports and minutes of those meetings were submitted as appendices. A report on the initial discussions undertaken with staff, young people and the immediate neighbours around the proposals to re-provide services was outlined in the report.

The two principal options that had been pursued further by Officers following the initial meeting in October were the development of two smaller units for up

to 2/3 young people, with a possible single occupancy unit if needed and an alternative provision along the same lines but sought from the independent sector through either provision of buildings or the complete service. It was highlighted that the re-provision of the services internally had been examined in detailed, but appropriate accommodation had not been identified. Following this investigation, the preferred route would be for an independent housing provider to provide the accommodation, to be staffed by the Local Authority. An initial examination of the potential costs of such a provision from the independent sector had been undertaken together with an initial examination of the required staffing and non-staffing budgets to facilitate the new service. These showed that in a full year there would be a potential budget shortfall in excess of £153,000. If the re-provisioning of Flint Walk was undertaken this year there would not be a full year effect, with a likelihood being a maximum of a three month effect which could be funded through the Quality Protects Grant, including the Leaving Care Grant. However, the full year effect would then become a budget pressure for 2004/05.

The potential provision of a single occupancy unit had been identified in the report to the Portfolio Holder on 1<sup>st</sup> October, 2002. This would provide a registered Children's Home that could be used on an emergency basis or for a young person whose needs were such that shared accommodation was inappropriate. It was proposed that at this stage the development of a single occupancy unit be held until the two units providing 2/3 places were established and further evaluation took place on subsequent need.

### **Decision**

- (i) That the development in principle of the re-provision plans on the basis of option 4 (alternative provision, in line with option 3, is sought from the independent sector providers, through either provision of buildings or the complete service) through seeking the involvement of a Housing provider for the buildings element.
- (ii) That formal consultation with staff and Union representatives on the basis of the above decision be approved.
- (iii) That further report on a more detailed consideration of the long term financial risks and the procurement process be submitted to the Portfolio member.
- (iv) That a further report following evaluation of need in terms of the development of a single occupancy unit be submitted to the Portfolio member.

## **51. Durham and Tees Valley Strategic Health Authority Proposed Continuing Care Policy** *(Director of Social Services)*

### **Type of decision**

Non key

### **Purpose of report**

To present the draft Continuing Care Policy for consideration and approval of a response to the Strategic Health Authority.

### **Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder**

The Strategic Health Authority Continuing Care Policy would provide the eligibility framework for decisions relating to services that would be provided and funded by the NHS. It was essential that people receiving services were not disadvantaged by a Policy that was too restrictive leading to people made to pay for services that should be the responsibility of the NHS. The Policy should also provide an acceptable framework for partnership working with NHS agencies in Hartlepool. The Durham and Tees Valley Strategic Health Authority had developed a Policy Statement which was broadly in line with current Government policy. However, the national policies had recently been criticised by the Health Service Ombudsman who had recommended that new national guidance be issued. The Ombudsman had received a significant number of complaints in the past two years from the public, all expressing concern that they had been asked to pay for care that should have been provided free by the NHS. In responding to those complaints the Ombudsman had indicated that patients and relatives were often given inadequate information about how decisions were reached and the financial implications of those decisions and that eligibility criteria varied widely across the country, were often opaque and at time too restrictive, and were based on poorly constructed guidance from the Department of Health. The Ombudsman had, therefore, also requested that Health Authorities examine earlier decisions to determine whether these were lawful and in line with the guidance.

A summary of the Policy Statement issued by the Durham and Tees Valley Strategic Health Authority was outlined in the report and it was highlighted that as this was in line with current Government policies it was unlikely to resolve any of the criticisms issued by the Health Service Ombudsman.

The report went on to outline the key issues for Hartlepool residents and the Local Authority as to whether the new arrangements would lead to a shift in what care was free at the point of demand. Officers of the Social Services Department and the Hartlepool Primary Care Trust were working towards the



local understandings required to make the policy transparent, easier to understand and fair. Until this work was completed the impact in Hartlepool was not possible to describe in any detail. It was too early to conclude whether any people would shift from being full funded by the NHS or from being means tested by the Social Services Department. The implications of the Ombudsman report would have to be worked through whilst establishing local transparent approaches to eligibility.

### **Decision**

- (i) That the proposed Continuing Care Policy be noted and that the Strategic Health Authority be informed that overall the Policy provides an acceptable framework based on current Government guidance. However, the Health Service Ombudsman indicates that this guidance is not transparent and is not a good basis for fair, logical and consistent decision making.
- (ii) That whilst able to endorse the Policy as a framework, the Council is only able to do so with significant reservations and would be seeking further local clarification as to how the Policy will affect people in Hartlepool.
- (iii) That the following minor amendment to the drafting of Section 4.4.1 of the Continuing Care eligibility criteria be suggested:-

“the second bullet point, page 18, ninth line should be amended to include the words “merely incidental and ancillary to the provision of accommodation” to replace the words “incidental to the provision of accommodation”.”

**J A BROWN**

**CHIEF SOLICITOR**

**PUBLICATION DATE: 29th APRIL 2003**

- 6.2 To agree formal consultation with staff and Union representatives.
- 6.3 To agree to receive a further report on more detailed consideration of the long term financial risks and the procurement process
- 6.4 To agree to receive a further report following further assessment of the need for a single occupancy unit.

**Report of:** Director of Social Services

**Subject:** Re-provision of Flint Walk Children's Home

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## **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1. To present the outcomes of consultation around the re-provision proposals on Flint Walk Children's Home and the detailed consideration of the options.
- 1.2. To seek Portfolio Member's decision with regard to the preferred option

## **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 A previous report was presented to the Social and Health Care Portfolio meeting on 1<sup>st</sup> October, 2002. This report provided the rationale for the need to re-provide services at Flint Walk Children's Home and detailed a range of options for consideration.
- 2.2 The decision of the Portfolio Holder was;
  - Agreement in principal for the need to reconfigure the existing service
  - Agreement to work being carried out on two options;
    - to develop two smaller units, with a possible third single occupancy unit, through existing resources
    - to develop the above using external providers either for the whole service or in the provision of the buildings.
  - Agreement to further consultation with young people, staff and neighbours.
  - To refer to overview and scrutiny.

## **3. SCRUTINY PROCESS**

- 3.1 Previous reports have been considered by the Health and Social Care Scrutiny Forum on 15<sup>th</sup> October, 2002 and 25<sup>th</sup> March, 2003. These reports are attached at appendix 1 for information. The Forum has considered a number of issues around the principal and the process of the re-provision of services all of which have been addressed in the reports. The Forum also wished to see this report prior to presentation at the Portfolio meeting and a verbal update on any issues raised will be given at this meeting.

#### 4. CONSULTATION PROCESS

- 4.1 Initial discussions have taken place with staff at Flint Walk, Young people and the immediate neighbours around the proposals to re-provide services.
- 4.2 The views from the staff group were generally positive in terms of the ability to provide a more focussed service. There were some concerns about the implications for them as employees and the need for this to be clear. It has been made clear that the more detailed proposals will be shared and consulted on further, before final decisions are made.
- 4.3 All the neighbours in the immediate vicinity have been contacted and asked for their opinions of the proposed reprovision. There was a limited response, with only two letters being received. General comments have been around concern as to what will happen to the building as and when the children's home moves out. At the present time there are no proposals for the future use of the building and in the immediate future it would remain as local authority stock.
- 4.4 Previous issues from neighbours have been around the level of disruption caused by some of the young people in the children's home. At the present time this is reduced and there have been no recent complaints made to the department.
- 4.5 With regard to young people, there was earlier discussion with them about the proposed changes and the views were generally positive. However the group has changed significantly since then and it is anticipated that further consultations will take place with the present group as proposals are further developed.

#### 5. **OPTION 3 (develop two smaller units for up to 2/3 young people, with a possible single occupancy unit if needed.)**

- 5.1 At the present point in time it has not been possible to identify suitable premises from within existing local authority stock. This option will continue to be explored while other options are considered.

#### 6. **OPTION 4 (Alternative provision, in line with option 3, is sought from the independent sector providers, through either provision of buildings or the complete service)**

- 6.1 Initial expression of interest was sought last year, for the provision of the building element of re-provision. The information from one housing provider was as follows;

Provision of 2 units, each with 4 bedrooms and able to provide for up to 3 young people - £53,000.

- 6.2 This was based on buying and conversion of existing buildings. A new build option was reckoned to be in the region of £40,000 - £47,000.
- 6.3 This option would provide the accommodation to National Care Standards Commission minimum standards and would be maintained by the Housing provider.
- 6.4 A process was also carried out with regard to the overall provision of the service from the independent sector, seeking initial costings for evaluation purposes. Attached at appendix 2 is a summary of the responses received. As can be seen, these are quite varied, going from just over £500,000 to over £1million for the provision of 2 units providing 2/3 places. The responses were from a range of national providers each with a track record of the provision of this type of care.

## 7. Summary of existing budgets and proposed 2 unit scheme(2/3 places)

- 7.1. Details of existing staffing and non-staffing budgets for Flint Walk for 2003/04 and budgets required for the proposed 2 unit development are attached at appendix 3. Below is a summary of this information;

|                        | Existing       | Required       | Difference     |
|------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| <b>Staffing Budget</b> | <b>211,536</b> | <b>320,692</b> | <b>109,156</b> |
| <b>Non-staffing</b>    | <b>12,200</b>  | <b>15,654</b>  | <b>3,454</b>   |
| <b>Premises</b>        | <b>12,340</b>  | <b>53,000</b>  | <b>40,660</b>  |
|                        | <b>236,076</b> | <b>389,346</b> | <b>153,270</b> |

- 7.2. Potential budget shortfall (full year) £153,270
- 7.3. It is anticipated that in this financial year, there would not be a full year effect, the likelihood being nearer a maximum of a 3 month effect.
- 7.4 It is proposed that the shortfall in this financial year could be found through the Quality Protects Grant, including the Leaving Care Grant. Funding of part of the re-provided service fits within the criteria for the use of the Leaving Care Grant and could be built into the proposed spending plans for the Grants. In 2004/5 the full year effect pressure would need to be addressed in the budget build process. The Quality Protects Grant regime finishes at the end of 2003/4 and will transfer into mainstream budgets. The budget shortfall for 2004/5 would need to be identified as a budget pressure for next year.
- 7.5 Given the 2 star rating of the Department, it will be possible to carried forward up to 25% of the above grants into next year which will allow some flexibility at year end and into the next financial year.

**8. Single occupancy unit.**

- 8.1. Proposals at this stage have centred on the development of 2 units for 2/3 young people and this remains the priority. However the need for a single occupancy unit has previously been identified (Health and Social Care Portfolio report of 1<sup>st</sup> October, 2002). This would provide a registered children's home that could be used on an emergency basis or for a young person whose needs were such that any shared accommodation was inappropriate.
- 8.2. The costs of a single occupancy unit would be very similar, in terms of staffing, to those of a 2/3 person unit, though potentially less costly in terms of the building.
- 8.3. It is proposed at this stage that development of a single occupancy unit is held until the 2 units providing 2/3 places are established and further evaluation takes place on subsequent need.

**9. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 9.1 Portfolio member to agree to the development in principle of the re-provision plans on the basis of option 4 through seeking the involvement of a Housing provider for the buildings element.
- 9.2. Portfolio member to agree to formal consultation with staff and Union representatives on the basis of the decision at 9.1 above.
- 9.3. Portfolio member to agree to a further report on more detailed consideration of the long term financial risks and the procurement process.
- 9.4. Portfolio member to receive a further report following evaluation of need in terms of the development of a single occupancy unit.

## CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM

17 January 2012



**Report of:** Scrutiny Support Officer

**Subject:** SIX MONTHLY MONITORING OF AGREED  
CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM'S  
RECOMMENDATIONS

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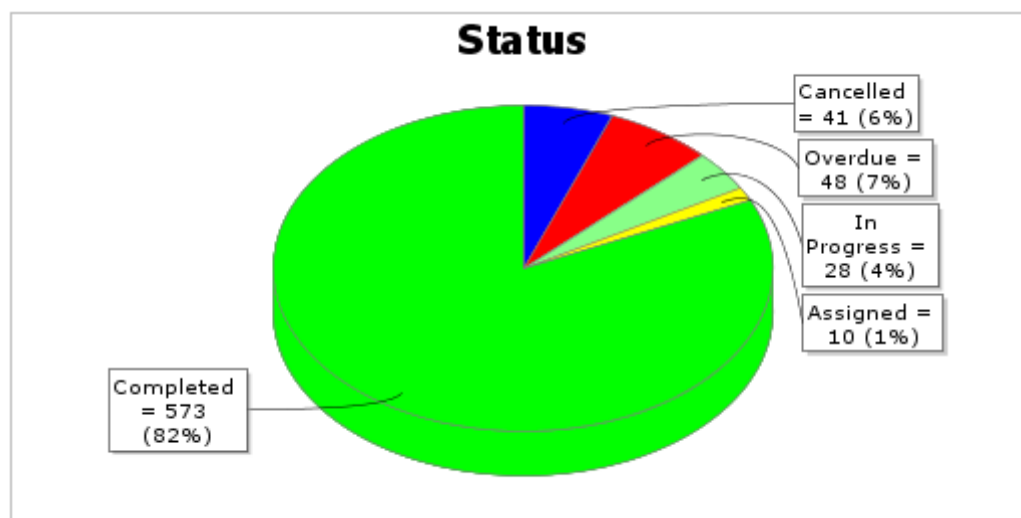
### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide Members with the six monthly progress made on the delivery of the agreed scrutiny recommendations of this Forum.

### 2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 In November 2007 the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee approved the introduction of the Scrutiny Monitoring Database, an electronic database, to monitor the delivery of agreed scrutiny recommendations since the 2005/06 Municipal Year.
- 2.2 In March 2010 Scrutiny Chairs noted and agreed for the movement of the Scrutiny Monitoring Database into the Covalent, which is the Council's Performance Management System. Members are asked to note that during May 2011 all call-in's and referrals since the 2005/06 Municipal Year were added to Covalent, therefore, although actions may have been completed as far back as 2005/06 they will appear in Appendix A.
- 2.3 In accordance with the agreed procedure, this report provides for Members details of progress made against each of the investigations undertaken by the Forum. **Chart1** overleaf is the overall progress made by all scrutiny forums since 2005 and **Appendix A** provides a detailed explanation of progress made against each scrutiny recommendation agreed by this Forum since the last six monthly monitoring report presented in September 2011.

Chart1: Progress made by all Scrutiny Investigations Undertaken since 2005



### 3. RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 3.1 That Members:-

- (a) Note progress against the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum's agreed recommendations, since the 2005/06 Municipal Year, and explore further where appropriate; and
- (b) Retain **Appendix A** for future reference.

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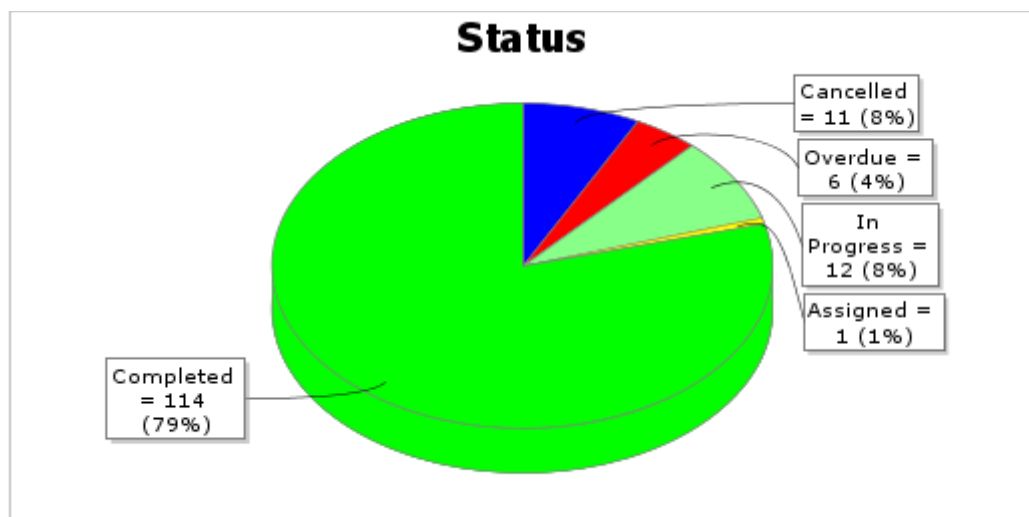
### BACKGROUND PAPERS

No background papers were used in the preparation of this report.



## Children's Services Scrutiny Forum - All

Generated on: 04 January 2012



Year 2009/10

Investigation Targeted and Detached Youth Work Provision in Hartlepool

| Recommendation   | Action      |                                | Assigned To | Original Due Date | Due Date    | Note   | Progress       |
|--|-------------|--------------------------------|-------------|-------------------|-------------|--|----------------|
| SCR-CS/8c There is no 'one size fits all' method of providing services and consideration needs to be given to how services can be provided | SCR-CS/8c/i | Re-assessment of myplace data. | Beth Storey | 30-Sep-2010       | 30-Sep-2011 | 02-Mar-2011 Work on the youth offer to be undertaken due to change in local provision. Work scheduled to be completed by September 2011. | 100% Completed |

| Recommendation  | Action | Assigned To | Original Due Date | Due Date | Note  | Progress |
|---|--------|-------------|-------------------|----------|---|----------|
| for young people to 'chill out' with friends in an environment where they are not moved on by other agencies. |        |             |                   |          | <p>12-Jan-2011 A review of youth work and its geographical spread is/has been conducted in relation to budget implications</p> <p>01-Oct-2010 The new youth work group will also inform this process.</p> <p>08-Jul-2010 A review of youth work provision is taking place as part of the development of the youth offer in Hartlepool</p> |          |

**Year 2010/11**

**Investigation** Youth Involvement / Participation in the Development and Delivery of Council Services Including the Safeguarding of Young People

| Recommendation   | Action   | Assigned To                | Original Due Date | Due Date    | Note   | Progress       |
|--|--|----------------------------|-------------------|-------------|--|----------------|
| SCR-CS/9c Closed sites that can not be commented on or someone to be responsible for the site 24 hours a day. This would include fast and effective takedown procedures! | SCR-CS/9c Approach to be agreed (with policy), but site will not monitored 24 hours a day. | Leigh Keeble; Trevor Smith | 31-May-2011       | 30-Nov-2011 | 03-Jan-2012 Pilot is now completed. A new corporate approach is being introduced which allows for different sections to post to different areas of a corporate representation. For C&AS, staff will be able to direct followers to leisure and entertainment activities. All staff who currently use | 100% Completed |

| Recommendation | Action | Assigned To | Original Due Date | Due Date | Note  | Progress |
|----------------|--------|-------------|-------------------|----------|---|----------|
|                |        |             |                   |          | Facebook have been requested to attend corporate briefing sessions in January 2012.   |          |
|                |        |             |                   |          | 11-Aug-2011 C&AS group has met and has agreed to adopt the corporate approach which will mean the phasing out of current individual sites, towards a corporate single site that will allow multiple contributors across the council (from different areas/depts) to monitor and update responses, as well as keep the site 'fresh looking'. This new approach is being piloted from 1st September 2011. |          |

**Year 2007/08**  
**Investigation** Sustainability of Externally Funded Community Initiatives in Schools

| Recommendation  | Action  | Assigned To | Original Due Date | Due Date    | Note  | Progress                           |
|---|---|-------------|-------------------|-------------|---|------------------------------------|
| SCR-CS/4c That pending the outcome(s) of the joint Steering Group (recommendation | SCR-CS/4c<br>After business plans and financial forecasts have been prepared and agreed with schools it will be possible to identify sustainability | Paula Hunt  | 31-Oct-2008       | 31-Oct-2011 | 09-Mar-2011 Only one school based community facility has immediate sustainability concerns. St John | <div><div></div></div> 30% Overdue |

| Recommendation  | Action   | Assigned To | Original Due Date | Due Date | Note   | Progress |
|---|--|-------------|-------------------|----------|--|----------|
| (a) refers) immediate consideration be given to providing assistance to those schemes that are likely to encounter future sustainability issue. | issues and quantify the level of any subsidies that may be required from the LA in future years. Any bids will then be submitted as part of the Council's annual budget cycle. |             |                   |          | <p>Vianney is currently operating as a deficit, which has been addressed in year.</p> <p>The deficit carried forward from 2009/10 will be offset from the contingency budget of £102,000 held within Children's Services Department. These facilities will become self funding from 2011/12 onwards, or will have to be subsidised by the individual schools budget.</p> <p>21-Apr-2010 Only two school based community facilities have immediate financial sustainability concerns. Brierley Sports Centre is experiencing funding shortfalls due to the school closure - this will be alleviated when Dyke House school decants in September 2010. St John Vianney early years facilities continue to operate at a deficit - this is currently being reviewed with the school and early years manager.</p> |          |

| Recommendation | Action | Assigned To | Original Due Date | Due Date | Note  | Progress |
|----------------|--------|-------------|-------------------|----------|---|----------|
|                |        |             |                   |          | 23-Feb-2010 A contingency provision of up to £100,000 per year was secured by the Children's Services Department as part of its 2009/10 budget submission. This will be made available to subsidise those facilities who have demonstrated that, despite taking all appropriate actions, they are unable to break even financially. Following closure of the 2008/09 accounts no schemes carried forward deficits but there are at least 2 schemes which may require funding this year. |          |

**Year 2008/09**

**Investigation** Appropriate Accommodation for Homeless Young People for Whatever Reason

| Recommendation  | Action   | Assigned To | Original Due Date | Due Date    | Note   | Progress  |
|---|--|-------------|-------------------|-------------|--|---|
| SCR-CS/7a/i That supported accommodation providers be encouraged to set up more facilities in the Town. | SCR-CS/7a/i/1<br>Discussions take place as part of the Business Transformation Programme to explore the viability of converting existing Council owned property into appropriate | Jane Young  | 31-Mar-2011       | 30-Apr-2012 | 12-Oct-2011 The Supported Housing review is progressing, in addition, exploration and feasibility assessments are being undertaken |  25% In Progress |

| Recommendation | Action                                    | Assigned To | Original Due Date | Due Date | Note  | Progress |
|----------------|---|-------------|-------------------|----------|---|----------|
|                | supported accommodation for young people. |             |                   |          | with regards to properties that have become available through the Business Transformation programme.  |          |
|                |   |             |                   |          | 24-Aug-2011 The Supported Housing review is progressing, in addition, exploration and feasibility assessments are being undertaken with regards to properties that have become available through the Business Transformation programme. |          |
|                |   |             |                   |          | 08-Jul-2011 A supported housing review is ongoing, we continue to consider all options to improve access to appropriate supported accommodation for young people.   |          |
|                |   |             |                   |          | 10-Mar-2011 No interest from national organisation to progress. Option has been given full consideration to date no suitable properties have been identified.   |          |
|                |   |             |                   |          | 19-Jan-2011 No progress has been possible yet on  |          |

| Recommendation | Action | Assigned To | Original Due Date | Due Date | Note   | Progress |
|----------------|--------|-------------|-------------------|----------|--|----------|
|                |        |             |                   |          | confirming the continuing interest by the national organisation and the overall review of council property has not identified any viable options to pursue. Efforts will continue to be made to increase the range of accommodation required.  |          |
|                |        |             |                   |          | 18-Oct-2010 No progress has been possible yet on confirming the continuing interest by the national organisation and the overall review of council property has not identified any viable options to pursue. Efforts will continue to be made to increase the range of accommodation required. |          |
|                |        |             |                   |          | 09-Apr-2010 A large national organisation have been in discussion with Housing Aid Staff with a view to opening a new supported accommodation facility. However, discussions on finance have not been  |          |

| Recommendation | Action | Assigned To | Original Due Date | Due Date | Note  | Progress |
|----------------|--------|-------------|-------------------|----------|---|----------|
|                |        |             |                   |          | concluded.<br>23-Feb-2010 Despite efforts to attract potential providers, none have so far expressed an interest. It is still too early to identify any possible Council owned property that may become vacant and hence be considered for use as supported accommodation for young people. |          |

**Year 2008/09**  
**Investigation** Hartlepool Borough Council's Foster Care Service

| Recommendation  | Action   | Assigned To       | Original Due Date | Due Date    | Note  | Progress                           |
|---|--|-------------------|-------------------|-------------|---|------------------------------------|
| SCR-CS/6d That the Foster Care Service Section on the Council's website be redesigned to make it a more accessible and comprehensive source of information. | SCR-CS/6d<br>Consultation undertaken with foster carers about what would be required from a web page. Benchmark national best practice examples. Web pages to be updated and redesigned taking above into consideration and seeking advice and guidance on 'what works' from web designers. Work to be undertaken with departmental website representatives in | Jacky Yeaman-Vaas | 01-Jun-2009       | 05-Sep-2011 | 11-Aug-2011 There is now a fostering and adoption microsite linked to the HBC website which provides general information regarding both services. We are also in the process of enabling the foster carers to access the Practice Guidance for social workers which would allow them to electronically access the policies and procedures relating to | <div><div></div></div> 95% Overdue |



| Recommendation | Action  | Assigned To | Original Due Date | Due Date | Note   | Progress |
|----------------|---|-------------|-------------------|----------|--|----------|
|                | <p>conjunction with additional corporate advice to explore ways to promote a short cut link to fostering pages, and upload information packs and application forms.</p> |             |                   |          | <p>fostering. All foster carers are also members of Fostering Network and are able to access their website for information.</p> <p>07-Mar-2011<br/>Progress has been made in identifying people to assist in updating the web pages within the Hartlepool Borough council website which pertain to fostering and adoption. The fostering team will be canvassing the views of the foster carers regarding what they would require of the web pages initially through their support group meeting and then a postal survey</p> <p>04-Oct-2010 Meeting took place with web site provider, &amp; quote obtained, however it was felt that it would be better value for money to create web-site in-house . this is still in progress therefore no consultation has yet taken place with foster carers.</p> <p>23-Feb-2010 Issue identified within</p> |          |

| Recommendation | Action | Assigned To | Original Due Date | Due Date | Note  | Progress |
|----------------|--------|-------------|-------------------|----------|---|----------|
|                |        |             |                   |          | service development plan and work on-going to develop areas identified in action. Hartlepool Borough Council website to be re-launched by end of 2009 and will inform further development of web pages. |          |

Year 2009/10

**Investigation** Targeted and Detached Youth Work Provision in Hartlepool

| Recommendation   | Action  | Assigned To                | Original Due Date | Due Date    | Note   | Progress                          |
|--|---|----------------------------|-------------------|-------------|--|-----------------------------------|
| SCR-CS/8c There is no 'one size fits all' method of providing services and consideration needs to be given to how services can be provided for young people to 'chill out' with friends in an environment where they are not moved on by other agencies. | SCR-CS/8c/ii<br><br>Assessment of generic/youth club/drop in/mobile provision for young people aged 13-19 on a geographical basis including 3rd sector delivery.-Seek to address via prioritisation of areas with gaps in commissioning/partnership work. | Mark Smith;<br>Beth Storey | 31-Mar-2011       | 10-Oct-2011 | <p>12-Oct-2011 Strategic recommendations for the prioritisation of youth provision have been developed through the emerging Early Intervention Strategy and a commissioning process to ensure that gaps in current provision can be filled following approval from Cabinet.</p> <p>02-Mar-2011 Work on youth offer will complete this process by September 2011.</p> <p>24-Jan-2011 Recent savings and efficiencies have</p> | <div>00%</div> <div>Overdue</div> |

| Recommendation | Action | Assigned To | Original Due Date | Due Date | Note   | Progress |
|----------------|--------|-------------|-------------------|----------|--|----------|
|                |        |             |                   |          | <p>necessitated assessment of generic/youth club/drop in/mobile provision for young people aged 13-19 on geographical basis including 3rd sector delivery. Thus far we have been able to protect front line provision.</p> <p>01-Oct-2010 This has been identified as an ongoing function within the youth work group.</p> <p>08-Jul-2010 to be addressed as part of youth offer</p> |          |

**Year 2010/11**

**Investigation** Think Family - Preventative and Early Intervention Services

| Recommendation  | Action   | Assigned To   | Original Due Date | Due Date    | Note  | Progress                              |
|---|--|---------------|-------------------|-------------|---|---------------------------------------|
| SCR-CS/10a/i The Council works with partner organisations / agencies to: (i) Identify families with additional needs as early as possible to ensure that individuals / families receive the help and support that | SCR-CS/10a/i<br>Continue the development of a think family process based on a sound assessment process and clear service pathways. | John Robinson | 31-Mar-2012       | 31-Mar-2012 | 05-Oct-2011 The work on the Common Assessment continues to develop and we are now looking to implement the electronic version ecaf. Implementation target is January 2012. This will give access to a number of partners and should have a major impact | <div>57%</div> <div>In Progress</div> |

| Recommendation   | Action   | Assigned To                                   | Original Due Date | Due Date    | Note  | Progress               |
|--|--|---|-------------------|-------------|---|------------------------|
| meets their specific needs   |  |   |                   |             | <p>on the use of the tool. Think Family continues to form the basis of the development work for the early intervention strategy.</p> <p>08-Jul-2011 The Common Assessment Framework has been identified as an area for development by ofsted and as a consequence a working group has been established to promote its development. This group is currently reporting back to the local children safeguarding board with a range of recommendations.</p> |                        |
| SCR-CS/10a/ii The Council works with partner organisations / agencies to: (ii) Ensure that all services are co-ordinated to avoid gaps in service provision and duplication of services; | SCR-CS/10a/ii/1<br>Continue to develop the "Team Around" model that engages partners in an integrated intervention process targeted directly at meeting identified need. | John Robinson; Mark Smith; Danielle Swainston | 31-Mar-2012       | 31-Mar-2012 | <p>30-Sep-2011 Early Intervention strategy currently being developed which includes the Team Around approach. Consultation currently taking place with partners.</p> <p>06-Jul-2011 Early Intervention strategy currently being developed which includes the Team Around approach.</p>  | <p>50% In Progress</p> |
| SCR-CS/10a/ii The  | SCR- Ensure that all partners  | Paul Kelly; John                              | 30-Sep-2011       | 30-Sep-2011 | 05-Oct-2011 The Ecaf  | <p>56% Overdue</p>     |


| Recommendation   | Action   | Assigned To                                   | Original Due Date | Due Date    | Note  | Progress        |
|--|--|---|-------------------|-------------|---|-----------------|
| Council works with partner organisations / agencies to: (ii) Ensure that all services are co-ordinated to avoid gaps in service provision and duplication of services;   | CS/10a/ii/2 use effective assessment processes based on the Common Assessment Framework.   | Robinson                                      |                   |             | system will be implemented in January 2012. A partnership approach is being taken to this that will facilitate take up across a range of organisations.   |                 |
|  |  |   |                   |             | 08-Jul-2011 The Common Assessment Framework has been identified as an area for development by ofsted and as a consequence a working group has been established to promote its development. This group is currently reporting back to the local children safeguarding board with a range of recommendations. |                 |
| SCR-CS/10a/iii The Council works with partner organisations / agencies to: (iii) Develop stronger partnership arrangements to ensure that all organisations / agencies are signposting individuals / families to the appropriate | SCR-CS/10a/iii Build prevention services based on the development of clear inter related pathways that link services and are easy for families and other stakeholders to navigate. | John Robinson; Mark Smith; Danielle Swainston | 31-Mar-2012       | 31-Mar-2012 | 30-Sep-2011 Developing early intervention strategy involving all partners - pathways being developed and tested as part of the process. Consultation currently taking place.  | 50% In Progress |
|  |  |   |                   |             | 06-Jul-2011 Developing early intervention strategy involving all partners - pathways being  |                 |

| Recommendation   | Action  | Assigned To                                   | Original Due Date | Due Date    | Note   | Progress    |
|--|---|---|-------------------|-------------|--|-------------|
| services   |   |   |                   |             | developed and tested as part of the process.   |             |
| SCR-CS/10b The Council develops and promotes a simplified self – referral route with one point of contact so that individuals / families can refer themselves to a service if needed   | SCR-CS/10b<br><br>Provide an early intervention access point to all families through a number of community based hubs such as Children's Centre's, Schools and third sector buildings.                            | John Robinson; Mark Smith; Danielle Swainston | 30-Sep-2011       | 30-Sep-2011 | 30-Sep-2011 Developing early intervention strategy involving all partners - pathways being developed and tested as part of the process. Consultation currently taking place<br><br>06-Jul-2011 Developing early intervention strategy involving all partners - pathways being developed and tested as part of the process. | 50% Overdue |
| SCR-CS/10c The Council raises awareness of all the Think Family services available by promoting and marketing the services through the media; 'Hartbeat'; schools, nurseries and children's centres; GP surgeries; community centres and libraries | SCR-CS/10c<br><br>A range of branded publicity produced by each service that is part of the early intervention network will be made available to advertise services across the full range of appropriate outlets. | John Robinson                                 | 31-Mar-2012       | 31-Mar-2012 | 05-Oct-2011 The position of this action has not changed and is dependent on the development of new services through the EIG strategy.<br><br>08-Jul-2011 Due to the need to establish new services through the Early Intervention Grant this action will need to be delayed.   | 0% Assigned |
| SCR-CS/10d The Council engages with parents and  | SCR-CS/10d/i<br><br>All services linked to the Think Family initiative will be expected to  | Ian Merritt; John Robinson                    | 30-Sep-2011       | 30-Sep-2011 | 05-Oct-2011 The Early Intervention Strategy is being   | 50% Overdue |

| Recommendation   | Action  | Assigned To   | Original Due Date | Due Date    | Note   | Progress           |
|--|---|---|-------------------|-------------|--|--------------------|
| uses their experience to improve / deliver existing services and help develop new services   | provide evidence of parental involvement through the service specification.   |   |                   |             | based on the feedback that we have had from parents who are service users. It is planned that systems will be put in place for parents to be heavily involved in the development of locality services. The Barnardos project will concentrate on setting up the systems to make this happen. |                    |
|  |   |   |                   |             | 08-Jul-2011 The procurement of the parent participation project is nearly completed and this work will start on August 1st.  |                    |
| SCR-CS/10d The Council engages with parents and uses their experience to improve / deliver existing services and help develop new services | SCR-CS/10d/ii<br>The Children's Fund will provide a one year project to engage with parents and set up a participation process that takes on the learning from the Aiming High programme. | John Robinson                                       | 31-Mar-2012       | 31-Mar-2012 | 05-Oct-2011 Barnardos were successful in this tender process and the action plan is being developed.   | 45%<br>In Progress |
|  |   |   |                   |             | 08-Jul-2011 The procurement of the parent participation project is nearly completed and this work will start on August 1st.  |                    |
| SCR-CS/10e The Council explores options with partner   | SCR-CS/10e<br>Council Officers will work with partners to identify appropriate grants and funding   | John Robinson;<br>Mark Smith;<br>Danielle Swainston | 31-Mar-2012       | 31-Mar-2012 | 05-Oct-2011 Work continues to develop a number of projects that will be available  | 50%<br>In Progress |


| Recommendation  | Action   | Assigned To   | Original Due Date | Due Date    | Note   | Progress        |
|---|--|---------------|-------------------|-------------|--|-----------------|
| organisations / agencies to secure funding for the continuation of services and the development of new services   | streams made available by government and other funders. Although this is in the context of a significantly reduced resource base.  |               |                   |             | to local organisations through a formal tender process. The DWP/ESF project will be implemented in December and Officers have worked to position local partners well in this process.<br><br>08-Jul-2011 At present officers are working with a number of organisations across the "into work" agenda, the citizenship programme and the early intervention grant.                   |                 |
| SCR-CS/10f The Council integrate the Think Family approach into community based services so that families feel comfortable, safe and secure when accessing the services | SCR-CS/10f An early intervention partnership will bring together interested parties to look at the development of a fully integrated early intervention service that is underpinned by the think family philosophy and sound assessment processes. | John Robinson | 31-Mar-2012       | 31-Mar-2012 | 05-Oct-2011 Consultation events are being held for the Early Intervention Strategy that will focus on partnerships with a range of organisations and communities. Once the commissioning issues are agreed there will be a focus on the development of a partnership that supports the service operation, monitoring and strategic direction of the service.<br><br>08-Jul-2011 This | 50% In Progress |




| Recommendation  | Action  | Assigned To   | Original Due Date | Due Date    | Note   | Progress  |
|---|---|---------------|-------------------|-------------|--|---|
|   |   |               |                   |             | work is currently being led by the Early Intervention Grant development group made up of senior children's services officers.  |   |
| SCR-CS/10g The Council, as part of the 2012 / 13 budget process re-examines the allocation of the Early Intervention Grant and the proportion that is allocated to Think Family services. | SCR-CS/10g<br><br>Stakeholders will be given the chance to participate in the rebuilding of Think Family Services and the Early Intervention Grant during 2011/12 that will reflect current learning, current resources and current policy. | Nicola Bailey | 31-Mar-2012       | 31-Mar-2012 | 16-Aug-2011<br>A structured timetable of consultation began on the 11th July 2011 seeking to establish how best the Local Authority could allocate and prioritise resources according to local needs and invest in early intervention to improve outcomes for local children, young people and families, to allow for a series of recommendations to be submitted to Cabinet for decision in October 2011. |  25% In Progress |

#### Year 2010/11

#### Investigation Youth Involvement / Participation in the Development and Delivery of Council Services Including the Safeguarding of Young People

| Recommendation  | Action   | Assigned To                   | Original Due Date | Due Date    | Note   | Progress  |
|---|--|-------------------------------|-------------------|-------------|--|---|
| SCR-CS/9d Employers should have basic legal training. If not don't do it! | SCR-CS/9d<br><br>Training course for a range of council staff completed in Jan 2011, which included explanation of legal | Leigh Keeble;<br>Trevor Smith | 31-May-2011       | 31-Mar-2012 | 11-Aug-2011 A training course delivered to C&AS and R&N staff in Jan 2011. Current |  25% In Progress |

| Recommendation  | Action  | Assigned To | Original Due Date | Due Date    | Note   | Progress   |
|---|---|-------------|-------------------|-------------|--|--|
|   | <p>issues that influence use &amp; development of social media tools.</p> <p>This information to be shared among wider group of staff as use is extended to other areas.</p>                |             |                   |             | <p>planning underway to roll out this approach to a wider group - specifically to the group of people who have been identified across the council who will be regularly updating the relevant social media sites.</p>  |  |
| <p>SCR-CS/9e Education is a good way of ensuring young people are safe when they are online. Ashleigh's rules go some way in to supporting this. This could be advertised when the each department sets up a site</p> | <p>SCR-CS/9e E-safety group in place to ensure children and young people are supported to enjoy the benefits of new technology, and provide guidance and skills to avoid risk and harm.</p> | Jim Murdoch | 31-Mar-2012       | 31-Mar-2012 | <p>04-Jan-2012 The eSafety group are well advanced in planning a major event in February 2012 in relation to the launch of the eSafety Charter and associated standards.</p> <p>30-Sep-2011 An eSafety Charter has been drafted by a group of young people and will be presented to the Board after consultation. A Tees wide eSafety group has been established and will lead to good practice being shared effectively.</p> <p>18-Jul-2011 A new eSafety Strategy and set of associated Standards were accepted by the Board on 12th July 2011. Work on disseminating both will continue</p> | <p> In Progress</p> |

| Recommendation  | Action   | Assigned To                | Original Due Date | Due Date    | Note   | Progress                              |
|---|--|----------------------------|-------------------|-------------|--|---------------------------------------|
|   |  |                            |                   |             | throughout the year.<br>18-Jul-2011 -- enter new status update --  |                                       |
| SCR-CS/9f Take in to consideration examples of good practice. Some Councils may be ahead of others so link with them where possible | SCR-CS/9f Social media group in C&AS has examined good practice and use in other councils and will continue to ensure HBC can learn from more advanced practice elsewhere. | Leigh Keeble; Trevor Smith | 30-Sep-2011       | 31-Mar-2012 | <p>03-Jan-2012 Working with IYSS to look at effective use of Facebook for children and young people. Ashley's rules and link to CEOP are included on all corporate sites.</p> <p>The pilot project developed with the corporate group has now been completed and the new approach to be launched in early 2012. All staff currently involved with Facebook to attend briefing/training sessions being led corporately in January 2012 to ensure a cohesive and safe approach to using Facebook.</p> <p>11-Aug-2011 We have looked at a range of other council sites to examine their approach to the use of social media to interact with the public, including visits to Sunderland and Stockton councils. We</p> | <div>75%</div> <div>In Progress</div> |

| Recommendation   | Action  | Assigned To  | Original Due Date | Due Date    | Note  | Progress   |
|--|---|--------------|-------------------|-------------|---|--|
|  |   |              |                   |             | will continue to look at other sites, particularly aimed at children and young people to better engage with them, including links to the e-safety group to ensure cross fertilisation of ideas generates a better and safer approach.   |  |
| SCR-CS/9g Social networking is not for everyone so other methods of communicating such as posters and leaflets will still need to be in place. | SCR-CS/9g<br>Existing methods of communicating with the public will continue in C&AS as managed through the Development Team. | Leigh Keeble | 31-Mar-2012       | 31-Mar-2012 | 11-Aug-2011 All existing methods of communication with the public will continue to be used, e.g. leaflets, press releases, service user engagement events, Hartlepool Now web site, council web site, surveys, consultations etc. This is ongoing and the core of our public engagement strategy. | <div><div></div><div>75%</div></div> In Progress |