

CHILDREN'S AND COMMUNITY SERVICES PORTFOLIO DECISION RECORD 10 July 2012

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

Present:

Officers: Denise Wimpenny, Principal Democratic Services Officer
Sam Durham, PA to CEMT

7. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillor Cath Hill, Children's and Community Services Portfolio Holder and the Mayor, Stuart Drummond.

8. Adjournment of Meeting

In view of unforeseen circumstances after the statutory notice for the meeting had been given, the Mayor had determined prior to the meeting that the meeting be adjourned and reconvened at 12.00 noon.

The meeting stood adjourned at 10.01 am

**Upon being reconvened on Tuesday 10 July 2012
at 12.00 noon in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool**

Present:

The Mayor, Stuart Drummond

Also Present: Councillor Christopher Simmons

Officers: John Mennear, Assistant Director, (Community Services)
Sally Robinson, Assistant Director, (Prevention, Safeguarding
and Specialist Services)
Ann Turner, Governor Support Officer
Maggie Heaps, Adult Education Co-ordination

Sam Durham, PA to CEMT (Minutes)

9. Adult Education Fees – Academic Year 2012 – 2013

– Adult Education, (Co-ordination Officer)

Type of decision

Key decision, test (ii) apply. Forward plan reference: CAS 124/12

Purpose of report

To consider the level of adult education fees for the academic year 1st August 2012 to 31st July 2013.

Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder

The report was presented by the Adult Education Co-ordination Officer who explained that the Adult Education service delivered provision funded through the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) and other income sources.

The level of funding which the SFA provided for Adult Skills was decided on by the level of income providers received from fees. The following assumptions we made by the SFA in the grants made to Local Authorities for the provision of the SFA funded skills courses. At least 50% of the funding associated with the course was recovered in income fees from learners or employees. There were exemptions to this for specific types of learners and courses where full fee remission was permitted.

The Adult Education Co-ordination officer explained that any significant increase in fees was likely to result in a loss of student numbers. However if the fee income levels didn't match the SFA expectations then this may in future result in reduced funding as targets would not be achieved.

Decision

The Mayor agreed that there should be no increase in fees at this current time.

- i. Vocational and First Steps Learning courses remain at £105 for a 60 hour course and £35 for a 20 hour course;
- ii. PCDL courses remain at £150 for a 60 hour course and £50 for a 20 hour course;
- iii. No course fees should be charged to students entitled under the SFA guidance on remitted fees (except for a one-off administration charge);
- iv. The fee remission policy should continue to follow the SFA guidelines. Courses which are developed to widen participation or in response to specific government initiatives e.g. students with a disability, Asylum seekers and Refugees, Family learning

or community regeneration activities would continue to be given full fee remission. The full policy is given in **Appendix 1**.

- v. The administration charge should remain at current levels i.e. £10 for vocational and First Steps courses and £15 for PCDL courses.
- vi. Courses which are not supported through SFA funding or other income streams will be delivered at the Full Cost rate.

10. Proposed Regular Car Boot Events at Hartlepool's Maritime Experience - Assistant Director, (Community Services)

Type of decision

Non key decision

Purpose of report

To seek approval to accept the offer made by Nobles Promotions Ltd to hold a weekly car boot sale at Hartlepool's Maritime Experience and implement an appropriate contract.

Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder

The report was presented by the Assistant Director, (Community Services) who explained that in September 2011 Cultural Services held a car boot event at Hartlepool's Maritime Experience. Following on from this Nobles Promotions Ltd had visited the site and had made an offer to run a weekly car boot event on the site for a proposed fee.

The Assistant Director, (Community Services) explained that the offer would be on a one year trial basis to test the market.

The Mayor expressed concern in relation to Legal advice previously given to organisations wanting to hold similar events and being refused. Reference was made to the risk implications, financial and legal considerations as set out in the report.

The Mayor explained how conflicting advice may lead to future problems. It was agreed that the Assistant Director, (Community Services) would clarify issues with Legal and verify if a policy will be implemented.

Decision

- (i) The Mayor was in agreement with the proposal as an event but sought reassurance over the possible legal challenges to existing markets.
- (ii) The report be deferred pending receipt of clarification on the Legal issues referred to above.

11. School Term and Holiday Dates: School Year 2013/14 - Governor Support Officer

Type of decision

Non-key decision

Purpose of report

To seek agreement of the Portfolio Holder to the pattern of school term and holiday dates for the school year 2013/14 for community and controlled schools in Hartlepool and to seek agreement in recommending those dates to the governing bodies of aided and foundation schools in Hartlepool.

Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder

The Governor Support Officer presented the report on school term and holiday dates for school year 2013/14.

It was reported that as a Local Authority the Council had the responsibility of setting the school term and holiday dates for community and controlled schools in Hartlepool. Traditionally the Local Authority and Governing Bodies of all aided and foundation schools worked together to ensure a consistent pattern across the town in respect of school term and holiday dates, although some variation may occur in the case of Roman Catholic schools.

The Governor Support Officer provided a summary of the school year pattern for 2013/14 which had been recommended by the Local Government Association (LGA).

Decision

- (i) The Mayor approved the schedule of term and holiday dates for 2013/14 for community and controlled schools in Hartlepool, as shown in Appendix 1.
- (ii) That the schedule of term and holiday dates for 2013/14 be recommended to the governing bodies of aided and foundation schools in Hartlepool, as shown in Appendix 1.

12. Rossmere Children's Centre Ofsted Inspection – Head of Access and Strategic Planning

Type of decision

Non key decision – for information only

Purpose of report

To note the inspection report and outcome for Rossmere Children's Centre Ofsted inspection.

Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder

The report was presented by the Assistant Director, (Prevention, Safeguarding and Specialist Services) who provided a summary of the feedback from the Ofsted inspection at Rossmere Children's Centre week beginning 5th March 2012.

The overall outcome for the inspection was good with safeguarding rated as outstanding. The main findings stated:

"The centre is well regarded in the local community and by partners and provides good services, resulting in good and improving outcomes for families in most areas. A typical comment was "the centre has had a massive impact on my family life. You always feel welcome and I now find I'm much better at talking to other people and my child." Outcomes are good and year on year the gap between those who achieve well and others is narrowing."

The Assistant Director, (Prevention, Safeguarding and Specialist Services) explained that an action plan had been developed to address areas for further improvement outlined in section 5.2 of the report.

Decision

The Mayor noted the inspection report and outcome for Rossmere Children's Centre Ofsted inspection.

13. Report on Family Placement Panel Activity - Head of Specialist Services

Type of decision

Non key decision - For information only.

Purpose of report

To inform the Portfolio Holder of the progress and activity of the Hartlepool Adoption and Fostering Panel.

Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder

The report was presented by the Assistant Director, (Prevention, Safeguarding and Specialist Services) who explained that the National Minimum Standards 2011 for both fostering and adoption require quality assurance feedback regarding the quality of the reports presented to the Adoption and Fostering Panels. Written reports were also provided to enable the executive side of the local authority to monitor the management and outcomes of the services.

It was reported that the main priorities for the coming year were the

maintenance of an effective panel. The Family Placement Panel had a crucial role in ensuring the Council met its statutory obligations in relation to the government Action Plan for Adoption: Tackling Delay which was intended to address delay for children within the adoption system and improve outcomes for children.

The Mayor questioned current performance within the area. The Assistant Director, (Prevention, Safeguarding and Specialist Services) explained that a performance report had recently been published highlighting Adoption Scorecards which measured the effectiveness of local authorities in placing children for adoption. These score cards showed Hartlepool as performing exceptionally well.

Decision

The Mayor noted the report of the activities and Council's performance in this area and priorities for action.

The meeting concluded at 12.21 pm.

P J DEVLIN

CHIEF SOLICITOR

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