

CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE AGENDA



Tuesday 3rd September 2013

at 4.00 pm

in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Hartlepool

MEMBERS: CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE

Councillors Atkinson, Fleet, Griffin, Hill, James, Lauderdale and Simmons

Co-opted Members: Sacha Paul Bedding and Michael Lee

Six Young People's Representatives

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

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

3. **MINUTES**

3.1 To receive the minutes of the meeting held on 30 July 2013 (*previously circulated*).

4. **BUDGET AND POLICY FRAMEWORK ITEMS**

4.1 Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) 2014/15 Savings Proposal –
Assistant Director (Children's Services)

5. **KEY DECISIONS**

No items



6. OTHER ITEMS REQUIRING DECISION

- 6.1 Six Monthly Monitoring of Agreed Scrutiny Recommendations – *Scrutiny Manager*
- 6.2 Commissioning of Early Intervention Services – *Assistant Director, Children's Services*
- 6.3 Hartlepool School Admission Arrangements for 2015/16 – *Assistant Director, Education*
- 6.4 Scoping Exercise - Changes to Catchment Area (Admission Zones) – *Assistant Director, Education*

7. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

- 7.1 Safeguarding Children in Hartlepool – *Assistant Director, Children's Services*
- 7.2 Quarter 1 – Financial Management Report – *Assistant Director (Children's) Child and Adult Services and Chief Finance Officer*

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT

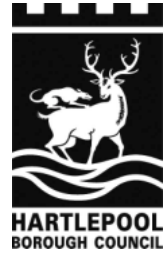
ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

Date of next meeting – Tuesday 1 October 2013 at 4.00 pm in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Hartlepool



CHILDRENS SERVICES COMMITTEE

3rd September 2013



Report of: Assistant Director (Children's Services)

Subject: MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY (MTFS)
2014/15 SAVINGS PROPOSAL

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

Budget and Policy Framework decision.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 The purpose of the report is to enable Members to consider the initial 2014/15 savings proposals relating to the Committees remit and to feedback comments to the Finance and Policy Committee.

3. BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW OF COUNCILS FINANCIAL POSITION

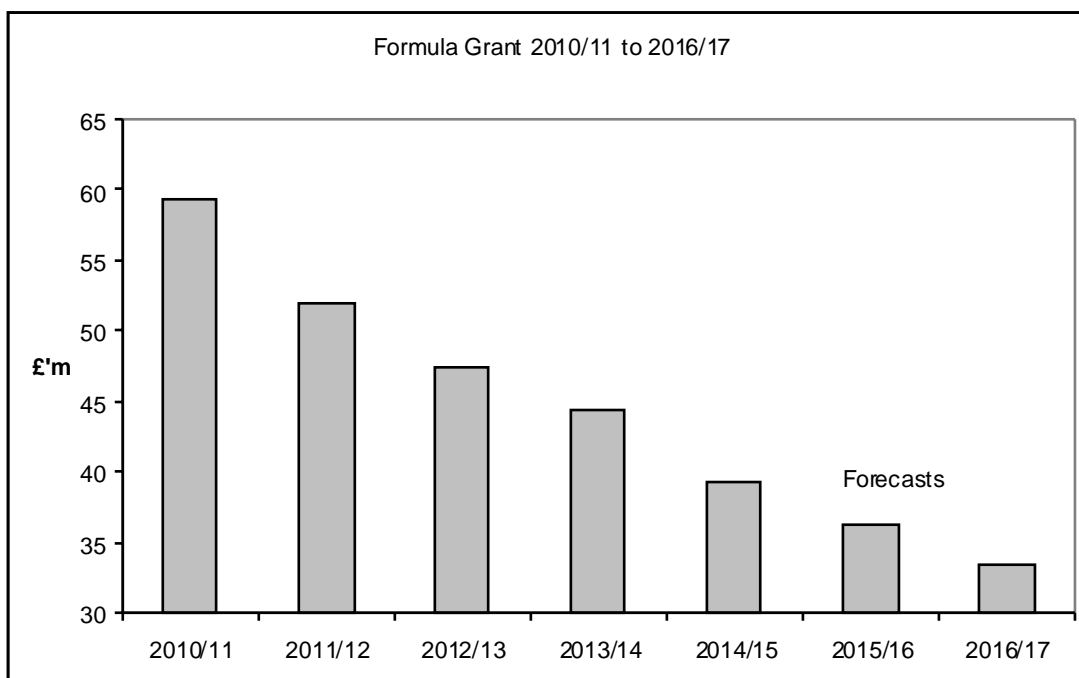
3.1 Detailed budget reports were submitted to the Finance and Policy Committee on 31st May 2013 and 2nd August 2013 to enable Members to begin to develop detailed budget proposals for 2014/15. These proposals will be referred to full Council in February 2014 to enable the 2014/15 Budget and Council Tax to be approved.

3.2 The report to the Finance and Policy Committee on 2nd August 2013 provided an update on the latest position and covered the following areas:

- Background and Government Spending Plans 2014/15 Onwards;
- One-off resources available to manage risks and / or support Council priorities;
- General Fund Revenue Budget 2014/15 to 2016/17;
- Strategy for bridging 2014/15 budget deficit;
- Council Tax 2014/15 to 2016/17;
- Impact of 2014/15 budget proposals on 2015/16 and 2016/17 forecast deficits;
- Review of Reserves;
- Reductions in other grant funding;
- Strategy for managing capital risks; and
- Conclusion and recommendations.

3.3 In summary the Finance and Policy Committee report provided an update of the previous MTFS report submitted to full Council in February 2013, which provided a comprehensive assessment of the financial challenges and risks facing the Council over the 4 years commencing 2013/14. In summary the report advised Members that the Council is facing the most challenging financial position since becoming a unitary authority in 1996, which reflects:

- The scale of Government cuts in core General Fund grants confirmed for 2013/14 and 2014/15. It is anticipated these cuts will continue in the following two years. The June 2013 Spending Review announcement confirmed the overall level of cuts for 2015/16 and further details are provided later in the report. The previously forecast grant cuts are summarised below and it should be noted the 2015/16 and 2016/17 forecast will be updated when more information on the impact of the recent Spending Review announcement on individual Councils is known;



- The abolition of the national Council Tax Benefit system and the transfer of financial responsibility for Council Tax Support to individual Councils, with a 10% national funding cut. The actual cut for Hartlepool was around 13% when account is taken of actual support previously provided under the former national Council Tax Benefit scheme. There is a risk further grant cuts are made in this area in future years if the Government determines to implement further cuts in the Welfare Budget. In addition, the Government's decision to mainstream this grant and include it within the core revenue grant from 2014/15 increases financial risk for areas serving more deprived communities, including Hartlepool, as reductions in core revenue grant have historically had a disproportionate impact on these areas;

- The implementation of the Business Rates Retention system, which will transfer significant financial risks to individual Councils. Under the new system a 'safety net' system will operate which will require individual Councils to fund the first 7.5% of in-year reductions in business rates from their own resources. Additional Government support will only be paid for shortfalls above this threshold. For Hartlepool this equates to an annual risk of around **£1.9 million** in 2014/15 and future years. This is a significant risk for Hartlepool owing to the potential impact of in-year reductions in the business rates paid by the Power Station, which contributes **17%** of the total Business Rates collected by the Council;
- Individual Councils face potential costs relating to 50% of back-dated Business Rates appeals. The Government has set aside some funding for this issue nationally, although it is not yet clear if this will be sufficient at an individual authority level. This is also a significant risk for the Council as the Power Station has a number of outstanding appeals and further information is provided later in the report;

3.4 In relation to the 2014/15 budget the report advised Members that the Council faces a gross budget deficit of **£8.524m**. The gross budget deficit can be reduced to **£4.594m** without impacting on services through a combination of permanent budget savings and one-off factors as summarised below:

Revised budget deficit 2014/15

	£'000	£'000
Budget Deficit reported February 2013		8,524
Public Health Funding		(500)
Full Year ICT saving (includes potential rental income)		(500)
Initial Changes in Planning assumptions (includes budget reductions from continuing 1% public sector pay gap, saving from senior management restructure, lower energy increases and lower Employers Pension contributions)		(1,797)
Net Budget Gap 2014/15		5,727
One-off funding (funded from uncommitted one-off resources and will be sustainable at this level for 3 years. Thereafter, this will need to be replaced by identifying additional savings of £1m in 2017/18).	(1,000)	
Use of residual balance of 'Savings implementation reserve'	(133)	
Total use of one-off funding		(1,133)
Permanent budget cuts to be implemented 2014/15		4,594

3.5 The Finance and Policy Committee report also detailed departmental savings proposals with a total value of **£4.376m**.

- 3.6 Assuming the proposed departmental savings are implemented there is a net unfunded deficit for 2014/15 of **£0.218m**. At this stage it is anticipated that this amount can be bridged from the 2014/15 New Homes Bonus which will be payable for 7 years commencing 2014/15. This income is not yet guaranteed and will depend on the share of the national New Homes Bonus funding the Council receives, although at this stage this is a reasonable planning assumption. It should be noted that this proposal will mean that in 2014/15 total support for the core revenue budget from the New Homes Bonus will be £1.4m.
- 3.7 As reported previously the New Homes Bonus is funded by top slicing the national funding for Local Authorities. Whilst it is forecast the Council will receive a total New Homes Bonus payment of £1.4m in 2014/15, this needs to be seen in the context of the permanent cut in the Council's core grant which in 2014/15 is forecast to be £20m (34%) less than it was in 2010/11.
- 3.8 Assuming Members approve the proposals detailed in the previous paragraphs for addressing the 2014/15 budget deficit the Council will still face significant budget deficits in 2015/16 and 2016/17. Over the period of the current MTFS it is forecast that the Council will have to make permanent budget cuts of around **£16.2m**, as follows:
- 2014/15 net deficit £4.6m;
 - 2015/16 revised deficit £6.3m;
 - 2016/17 revised deficit £5.3m.
 - Total forecast deficit £16.2m
- 3.9 The revised deficit is less than the initial forecast prepared in February 2013 of £19.4m and the reduction reflects the benefits of the revised planning assumptions and available one-off resources to support the budget over the next three years. The use of the one-off resources over the next three years is not a permanent solution and defers an additional budget deficit of £1m until 2017/18.

4. SPECIFIC ISSUES TO BE CONSIDERED BY THIS COMMITTEE

- 4.1 The Finance and Policy Committee considered details of proposed departmental budget savings and budget pressures for 2014/15 and determined to refer these proposals to the relevant Policy Committees for consideration and comments back to Finance and Policy Committee on 19 September 2013. Accordingly the following details are attached for Members consideration:
- 2014/15 proposed savings – Appendix A
 - 2014/15 budget pressures – Appendix B
- 4.2 This report concentrates on the cuts to the Council's core funding over the next three years. However, as Members will be aware from previous reports the Council will also need to manage cuts in other grant regimes, such as the Early Intervention Grant.

- 4.3 Owing to the pressure on the Core General Fund budget it will not be possible to mitigate the impact of these cuts from the core budget. Therefore, services will need to be scaled back to the level of the reduced grant. Details will be reported to Members when grant allocations are announced.
- 4.4 In relation to the Early Intervention Grant for 2014/15 information regarding the cut has previously been provided. A detailed strategy is being developed, which includes the use of underspends in this area in previous years being allocated to phase this reduction over a slightly longer period. Details of the proposed strategy for managing the Early Intervention Grant cut will be reported to this Committee on 1 October 2013 and will then be considered by the Finance and Policy Committee on the 18 October 2013.
- 4.5 Use of the earmarked EIG underspend from previous years to phase the reductions over a longer period will mean that any one off redundancy and early retirement costs will need to be funded from the corporate reserve included in the MTFS for redundancy and early retirement costs over the next 3 years.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 It is recommended that Members consider the 2014/15 proposed savings and budget pressures and comment back to Finance and Policy Committee on 19 September 2013.

6. CONTACT OFFICER

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Division / Area	Savings	Brief description of change	Risk
	14/15 £'000		

Education			
Services to 11-19 Cohort	122	Reconfiguration of staffing arrangements and changes in how services are delivered to this cohort	A
Educational Psychology	50	Reduction in LA contribution	A
Resources and Support Services	150	Review and reconfiguration of delivery of business support across department	A
Performance and Achievement	40	Reconfiguration of staffing arrangements and changes in how services are delivered.	A
Performance and Achievement	125	Review school transport including denominational transport provision and consideration of alternative service delivery arrangements.	R
Total	487		
Children's Services			
Workforce development	50	Reduction of central training budget and consolidating various sections budgets for supporting workforce development and focusing on priority requirements.	G
Divisional management team	107	Reconfiguration of divisional management structures.	A
Resource team	30	Remove funding to support edge of care activity	G
Resource team	30	Delete vacant post likely to arise during 2013/14 due to worker qualifying and taking up SW post	G
LSCB	10	Review support arrangements for Hartlepool Safeguarding Children Board.	A
Youth Service	40	Review of Youth Service and reduce commitment from base budget by 10%	A
Total	267	Note – proposals for savings are not made in YOS and EIG (at more significant level) due to cuts expected in these service areas. £1.5m to be removed from EIG, revised funding formula expected in YOS which will require cuts to be made separately, notice of budget cuts always received very late.	

Child and Adult Services Pressure	Value of Budget pressure £'000
<p><u>Looked After Children</u> Pressure of placements for looked after children remains, this has been funded from a specific reserve which will have been fully committed by the end of 2013/14. The pressure largely relates to placements for adolescents and those requiring specialist placements. In last year the implementation of the edge of care service has been successful in reducing the number of adolescents who become looked after by around 40%. This has ensured that during 2012/13 the number of looked after children has not increased. Nevertheless, there remains a high number of children looked after, the costs of which exceed the budget by approximately £400k. The service is opening a children's home which will reduce the need for residential placements from the independent sector, budget will need to be transferred to meet the costs of providing a Children's Home.</p>	400

CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE

3 September 2013



Report of: Scrutiny Manager

Subject: SIX MONTHLY MONITORING OF AGREED
SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATIONS

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

This is a non Key Decision

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

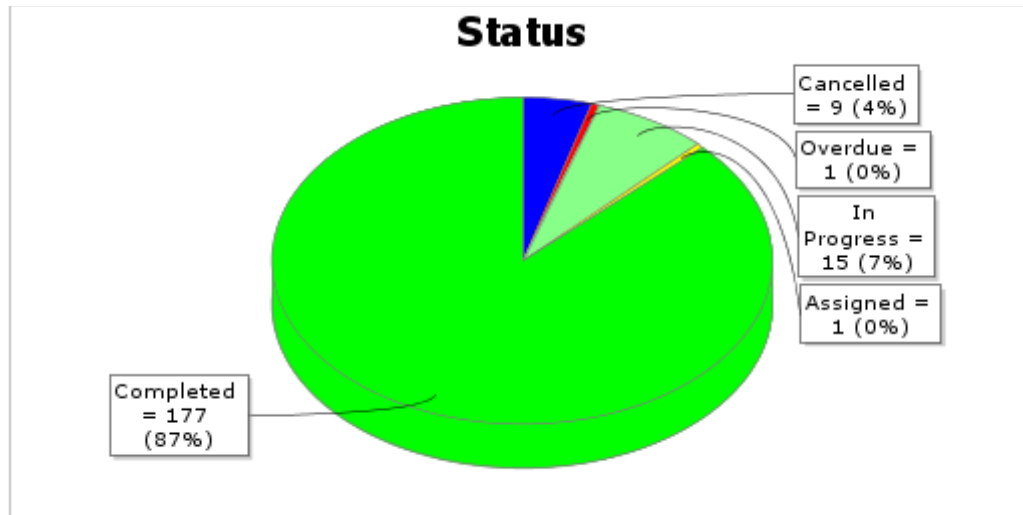
2.1 To provide Members with the six monthly progress made on the delivery of scrutiny recommendations that fall within the remit of this Committee.

3. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3.1 This report provides details of progress made against the investigations undertaken by the previous Children's Services Scrutiny Forum. These recommendations now fall within the remit of the Children's Services Committee. **Chart 1** (overleaf) provides a detailed explanation of progress made against each scrutiny recommendation since the last six monthly monitoring report was presented to the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum in February 2013.

Children's Services Scrutiny Forum - All

Generated on: 15 August 2013



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/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/i i/2 Ensure that all partners use effective assessment processes based on the Common Assessment Framework.	John Robinson	30-Sep-2011	31-Mar-2013	22-Apr-2013 eCAF system developed and is now live and training is currently ongoing with council staff. eCAF training will be a regular part of the annual training programme. 11-Jan-2013 Ecaf will go live in February 2013 with the Prevention	100% Completed		




Recommendation	Action	Assigned To	Original Due Date	Due Date	Note	Progress
					Service Piloting the system in Hartlepool. Steering group currently developing a roll out of the system. Some major challenges exist but these are being tackled by partners.	

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/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	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.	Elisa Arnold	31-Mar-2012	31-Mar-2012	02-May-2012 There week long event in February bringing the importance of eSafety to the attention of the public was successful with parents, children and other members of the public engaged in the Artz shop in the local shopping centre. The Hartlepool Charter, Strategy and Standards were adopted by the 3 neighbouring Safeguarding Children Boards in the fourth quarter of the year. 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.	100% Completed





Year 2011/12
Investigation The Provision of Support and Services to Looked After Children / Young People


Recommendation	Action	Assigned To	Original Due Date	Due Date	Note	Progress
SCR-CS/14b That the Council extends joint working and liaises with a range of housing	SCR-CS/14b/i Continue to spot purchase supported lodgings provision delivered in the town	Ian Merritt; Jane Young	30-Sep-2012	31-Mar-2013	09-Aug-2013 Policies and procedures in place, management of the provision within safeguarding assessment support services.	100% Completed

Recommendation	Action	Assigned To	Original Due Date	Due Date	Note	Progress	
providers in order to provide a breadth of accommodation for young people including supported accommodation, floating support, single person accommodation & home from Uni					24-Apr-2013 As below.		
SCR-CS/14b That the Council extends joint working and liaises with a range of housing providers in order to provide a breadth of accommodation for young people including supported accommodation, floating support, single person accommodation & home from Uni	SCR-CS/14b/i ii Work collaboratively with Housing Hartlepool, Housing Services Team and other housing providers to increase provision for young people including delivery of floating support, Foyer Service and single person accommodation	Ian Merritt; Jane Young	30-Sep-2012	31-Mar-2013	09-Aug-2013 Tees Valley housing association (Blakelock provision) is now open. 24-Apr-2013 Formal Review of Gainford House completed, Anna Court planned.		
SCR-CS/14c That the Council ensures that all looked after young people are equipped with the skills required for adulthood and independent living and extends care provision beyond the age of 18 for anyone not wishing to live independently at 18	SCR-CS/14c/i Develop provision of supported accommodation for young people which includes preparation for adulthood work	Jane Young	30-Sep-2012	31-Mar-2013	02-Apr-2013 Refurbishment of Blakelock ongoing , young people should move in by May 2013. 10-Jan-2013 Tendering process is complete, new provider refurbishing Blakelock, should open April 2013.		
SCR-CS/14c That the Council ensures that all looked after young people are equipped with the skills required for adulthood and independent living and	SCR-CS/14c/i ii Ensure individual transition to adulthood plans are integrated into Pathway Plans	Jane Young	30-Sep-2012	31-Mar-2013	02-Apr-2013 Training for social workers complete. 10-Jan-2013 Reviews ongoing, further training planned for social workers around planning.		

6.1

Recommendation	Action	Assigned To	Original Due Date	Due Date	Note	Progress		
extends care provision beyond the age of 18 for anyone not wishing to live independently at 18								
SCR-CS/14d That the Council, as part of the redeployment process, highlights to staff the option of becoming foster carers and explores the option of offering a 'career foster care' scheme to the staff at risk of redundancy, with the necessary skills	SCR-CS/14d/i	Provide briefing sessions for all managers around the opportunities to foster	Jane Young	31-Jul-2012	31-Oct-2012	02-Apr-2013 Drop In information sessions have been completed for all staff.	100% Completed	
						10-Jan-2013 Workload demands have delayed the implementation of this action.		
SCR-CS/14d That the Council, as part of the redeployment process, highlights to staff the option of becoming foster carers and explores the option of offering a 'career foster care' scheme to the staff at risk of redundancy, with the necessary skills	SCR-CS/14d/ii	Career foster care will be explored and report presented to portfolio holder meeting	Jane Young	31-Jul-2012	31-Oct-2012	09-Aug-2013 Career foster care scheme will be facilitated within the current payments scheme.	100% Completed	
						02-Apr-2013 Options are been considered and a risk analysis of the viability been undertaken.		
SCR-CS/14i That the Council ensures that a clear set of criteria is in place so that placements are appropriate to meet the needs of the child or young person including involveing the child or young person in the planning processes for all placements	SCR-CS/14i/ii	Children and young people should be supported to attend placement planning meetings and the meeting chaired in a manner that facilitates a child's participation	Jane Young	30-Sep-2012	30-Sep-2012	09-Aug-2013 Working group established with children in care council plans are in place and will be monitored and reviewed throughout this process.	100% Completed	
						02-Apr-2013 Work continuing between young people and Independent reviewing officers to review the process.		

Recommendation	Action	Assigned To	Original Due Date	Due Date	Note	Progress			
SCR-CS/14j That the Council and partner agencies outline in their service plans what they can and will do for looked after children and young people and continues to develop a multi agency approach	SCR-CS/14j/i	Briefing to be delivered to Shadow Health and Well Being Board, Local Safeguarding Children Board and Council Managers on Corporate Parent responsibility and all service areas to be asked to detail in their services plans how they fulfil these responsibilities	Jane Young	31-Aug-2012	31-Dec-2012	09-Aug-2013 Briefings completed. 11-Apr-2013 Plans are in place to attend boards at the earliest opportunity	 100% Completed		
SCR-CS/14k That the Council develops and implements a scheme similar to the 'bring a gift' initiative, whereby partner organisations across all Council activities are asked to donate a gift in kind (for example, cinema tickets) for a looked after child	SCR-CS/14k/i	Briefing to be delivered to Shadow Health and Wellbeing Board, Local Safeguarding Managers on corporate parent responsibility and all service areas to be asked what they can contribute	Jane Young	31-Jul-2012	31-Dec-2012	09-Aug-2013 Briefings completed. 11-Apr-2013 Plans are in place to attend boards at the earliest opportunity	 100% Completed		
SCR-CS/14k That the Council develops and implements a scheme similar to the 'bring a gift' initiative, whereby partner organisations across all Council activities are asked to donate a gift in kind (for example, cinema tickets) for a looked after child	SCR-CS/14k/i ii	Report on proposed scheme for HBC to be presented to Portfolio Holder and Corporate Parent Forum for ratification	Jane Young	31-Jul-2012	31-Dec-2012	09-Aug-2013 The scheme is been initiated and will be monitored through Corporate Parenting Forum and the Children's Strategic Partnership. 11-Apr-2013 Proposed scheme will be presented once presentations have been completed	 100% Completed		
SCR-CS/14l That the Council explores the development of innovative ways of providing early intervention services to hard to reach children	SCR-CS/14l/i	Development and implementation of Troubled Families Strategy	Sally Robinson	30-Jun-2012	30-Jun-2012	05-Apr-2013 Moving to service delivery model for Troubled families and anticipated that the team will be fully operational by end May 2013. Year 2 attachment fee bid has been submitted and during 2013/14 a further 145 families are to be	 100% Completed		




Recommendation	Action	Assigned To	Original Due Date	Due Date	Note	Progress
and young people to avoid children and young people becoming looked after					<p>engaged. Lead responsibility has moved into Child and Adults Services whilst retaining a strong community safety strand and joint ownership between the departments. Delivery of Troubled families initiative will continue in 2013/14 and be updated and reported. Evaluation of Edge of Care service has been completed and is in draft form. Report will be presented to future Children's Policy Committee.</p> <p>14-Jan-2013 First cohort of families identified for initiative. Service delivery model determined and agreed by SHP and Cabinet. Posts remain in recruitment. Edge of care team now fully operational and being successful in supporting families to prevent children coming into care unnecessarily.</p>	
SCR-CS/14m That the Council ensures that any meetings in relation to the personal circumstances of a looked after child or young person are held out of school hours to maintain confidentiality	SCR-CS/14m /iii Children and young people to deliver their views presentation to designated teachers forum	Maureen McEnaney; Jane Young	31-Jul-2012	31-Dec-2012	<p>02-Apr-2013 Presentation completed February 2013.</p> <p>15-Jan-2013 The last designated teachers meeting due in October 12 was cancelled so presentation rescheduled to 28th feb 2013</p>	 100% Completed






Year 2012/13
Investigation JSNA - Emotional and Mental Wellbeing

Recommendation	Action	Assigned To	Original Due Date	Due Date	Note	Progress
SCR-CS/16c Departmental budget consultation proposals	SCR-CS/16c Directors and Assistant Directors to be notified of this recommendation and asked	Sally Robinson	31-Dec-2013	31-Dec-2013	01-Jul-2013 All Directors and Assistant Directors have been notified of this recommendation to	 100% Completed

Recommendation	Action	Assigned To	Original Due Date	Due Date	Note	Progress
provide Members with information in relation to the potential wider implications of proposals and details of the less visible impact these options may have on children and young people.	to consider the implications of proposals and its impact on the emotional health and wellbeing of children				take into consideration in planning future budget proposals.	





Year 2012/13
Investigation Closure of Youth Centres and Children's Centres




Recommendation	Action	Assigned To	Original Due Date	Due Date	Note	Progress
SCR-CS/17a The impact of closure of buildings on the community is taken into consideration before any decisions are made	SCR-CS/17a Risk and impact assessment to be completed on environmental social and economic consequences of closure of any buildings	Colin Bolton; Dale Clarke; Albert Williams	30-Sep-2013	30-Sep-2013	12-Aug-2013 We now have confirmation of the properties to be considered. A desktop exercise is being carried out using historical data to produce demolition costs. We are currently on target for completion by the due date. 08-Aug-2013 Awaiting confirmation from both Juliette Ward and John Robinson related to the buildings to be considered. Preparation of security costs, initial works completed.	 100% In Progress
SCR-CS/17b The use of all other buildings such as schools, leisure centres, museums etc. are considered for their ability to offer multi-use community space (as seen in the Seaton Carew example)	SCR-CS/17b An assessment of alternative community multi use venues for service provision to be explored as proposals are developed	John Robinson; Beth Storey	30-Sep-2013	30-Sep-2013	09-Aug-2013 This piece of work will be undertaken as part of the options appraisal for the Early Intervention Grant.	 100% In Progress
SCR-CS/17c The total	SCR- A financial appraisal for each	Dale Clarke;	30-Sep-	30-Sep-	15-Aug-2013 Financial Appraisal	 100% In



Recommendation	Action		Assigned To	Original Due Date	Due Date	Note	Progress		
costs of running and staffing centres is compared to the cost of renting space	CS/17c	location / service change option to be undertaken. Condition and energy performance to be assessed	Jeanette Willis	2013	2013	aspect - This action will be undertaken as part of the extensive review of the Early Intervention Strategy currently underway.		Progress	
SCR-CS/17d Income generation for existing buildings is considered	SCR-CS/17d	Identify and appraise potential income opportunities from service reviews options. A financial appraisal is undertaken for opportunities	John Robinson; Beth Storey	30-Sep-2013	30-Sep-2013	09-Aug-2013 This piece of work will be undertaken as part of the options appraisal for the Early Intervention Grant.		In Progress	
SCR-CS/17e Transport links if buildings are reduced are taken into account	SCR-CS/17e	Undertake transport surveys on options for relocating services	John Robinson; Beth Storey	30-Sep-2013	30-Sep-2013	09-Aug-2013 This piece of work will be undertaken as part of the options appraisal for the Early Intervention Grant.		In Progress	
SCR-CS/17f School use capacity is explored if buildings are closed	SCR-CS/17f	Approach neighbouring / linked schools and colleges for potential transfer / use	Dale Clarke	30-Sep-2013	30-Sep-2013	14-Aug-2013 Consultation to be undertaken with neighbouring organisations in relation to the transfer of the properties by 30th September		Assigned	
SCR-CS/17g Existing buildings (children's centres and youth centres) are used and or adapted to meet both service users needs	SCR-CS/17g	Assess buildings against condition and suitability priorities for users	Colin Bolton	30-Sep-2013	30-Sep-2013	14-Aug-2013 We are carrying out a desktop exercise using data from our previous surveys to assess buildings against condition and suitability priorities for users. We are currently on target for completion by the due date.		In Progress	
SCR-CS/17h That a review is undertaken of the way the 'youth offer' is communicated in Hartlepool, to enable young people to easily identify and attend the clubs activities and services that are available	SCR-CS/17h	Undertake review of the way the 'Youth Offer' is currently communicated in Hartlepool through Young Inspectors	Mark Smith	30-Sep-2013	30-Sep-2013	12-Aug-2013 An inspection specification relating to the way that the local Youth Offer is communicated has been established and will be taken forward in the coming months		In Progress	

Year 2012/13

Investigation JSNA - Emotional and Mental Wellbeing

Recommendation	Action	Assigned To	Original Due Date	Due Date	Note	Progress		
SCR-CS/16a/i The HWBB make representations to the CCG regarding: - (i) the importance of obtaining actual data in relation to the range and types of conditions that young people experience in Hartlepool, rather than prevalence data;	SCR-CS/16a/i The Tees-wide CAMHS Transformation Group is working with Tees, Esk & Wear Valley's NHS Foundation Trust to provide accurate and up to date data on children and young people's emotional and mental health needs.	Ian Merritt; Sally Robinson	31-Dec-2013	31-Dec-2013	13-Aug-2013 CAMHS transformation group is convening a stakeholder event to determine CAMHS strategy in future, this will be underpinned by up to date management information on children and young people's emotional and mental health needs.		In Progress	
SCR-CS/16a/ii The Health and Wellbeing Board make representations to the CCG regarding: - (ii) as part of future commissioning strategies the provision of actual data sets are included as part of the contract.	SCR-CS/16a/i The service is currently developing new pathways which will deliver the data that is required. Managers are due to bring an initial report back to the Transformation Group in July 2013.	Ian Merritt; Sally Robinson	31-Dec-2013	31-Dec-2013	13-Aug-2013 CCG is being asked to take lead responsibility for the local CAMHS partnership and this will report to the Health and Wellbeing Board. Further meeting planned with commissioning support unit in September.		In Progress	
SCR-CS/16b Work is undertaken to investigate the reasons behind young people not attending pre-arranged CAMHS appointments. HBC will work in partnership with TEWV NHS Foundation Trust to map current services and explore alternative models for delivery.	SCR-CS/16b A local CAMHS Partnership is to be re-established led by the Clinical Commissioning Group bringing together those organisations operating within Hartlepool in the field of emotional and mental wellbeing, to consider and address the issues raised by this recommendation.	Ian Merritt; Sally Robinson	31-Dec-2013	31-Dec-2013	13-Aug-2013 Meeting has taken place with providers and commissioning support unit representatives who are working with CCG to lead local partnership. Further meeting planned for September.		In Progress	
SCR-CS/16d The results of the public consultation exercise undertaken by the Forum, be reflected in the Mental and	SCR-CS/16d The JSNA will be updated to reflect new or updated information. It will be the responsibility of the local CAMHS Partnership to ensure that information on JSNA is	Ian Merritt; Sally Robinson	31-Jul-2013	31-Jul-2013	13-Aug-2013 Regular updates are made to JSNA as new information emerges. CAMHS partnership once established will assume responsibility for monitoring effectiveness of information.		Overdue	

Recommendation	Action	Assigned To	Original Due Date	Due Date	Note	Progress		
Behavioural Disorders JSNA entry. The entry should be also be updated to reflect the areas of collaborative working identified.		up to date, reflects local need and views and this is reviewed regularly in light of new and emerging information						
SCR-CS/16e/i HBC works in conjunction with partner organisations to address the issues raised as part of the public consultation exercise by: - (i) increasing awareness of mental wellbeing issues amongst young people, and promotes services.	SCR-CS/16e/i	To be addressed through the Children's Workforce Development Plan in conjunction with Tees, Esk and Wear Valley's NHS Foundation Trust and coordinated through the CAMHS Partnership.	Ian Merritt; Sally Robinson	31-Dec-2013	31-Dec-2013	13-Aug-2013 Partnership once established will address workforce development needs and plan	 0%	In Progress
SCR-CS/16e/ii HBC works in conjunction with partner organisations to address the issues raised as part of the public consultation exercise by (ii) developing mental health training accessible to all who work with children to promote referral processes	SCR-CS/16e/i i	To be addressed through the Children's Workforce Development Plan in conjunction with Tees, Esk and Wear Valley's NHS Foundation Trust and coordinated through the CAMHS Partnership.	Ian Merritt; Sally Robinson	31-Dec-2013	31-Dec-2013	13-Aug-2013 Partnership once established will establish workforce development needs and plan	 0%	In Progress
SCR-CS/16e/iii HBC works in conjunction with partner organisations to address the issues raised as part of the public consultation exercise by increasing	SCR-CS/16e/i ii	Service delivery developments within localities to be progressed through implementation of Early Intervention Strategy and CAMHS Strategy.	Ian Merritt; Sally Robinson	31-Dec-2013	31-Dec-2013	13-Aug-2013 Early intervention strategy is being reviewed, staff from mental health background have been seconded to locality teams to support community based provision and prevention/early intervention work.	 25%	In Progress

Recommendation	Action	Assigned To	Original Due Date	Due Date	Note	Progress		
community based services, and addressing the issues raised by young people attending Dover House.								
SCR-CS/16f A review is undertaken of the Home and Hospital Service provision including a review of the access to and use of the learning platform to support wider access to the curriculum.	SCR-CS/16f A Review will be undertaken to address: · How the provision is delivered and location of service; · Staffing requirements to meet the demand taking into account the number of teaching hours available, the size of teaching groups and the expertise of the teachers. · The learning platform and how this can be maximised to contribute to the achievement outcomes for pupils who attend the provision?	Zoe Westley	31-Dec-2013	31-Dec-2013	15-Jul-2013 Action has been taken to relocate the service and to ensure staffing requirements meet demand.	 100%	In Progress	
SCR-CS/16g Organisations that work with children with emotional and mental wellbeing issues ensure that information is shared effectively, fostering a culture of collaboration with all partners who make up the team around the child.	SCR-CS/16g To be addressed through the local CAMHS Partnership described in Recommendation (b) above.	Ian Merritt; Sally Robinson	31-Dec-2013	31-Dec-2013	13-Aug-2013 Information is being effectively exchanged through the secondment of mental health staff in the locality teams, further options for service integration to be explored.	 25%	In Progress	

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 That Members note progress against the agreed recommendations and explore further where appropriate.

5. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 In order for Members to continue to monitor the progress of Scrutiny recommendations.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

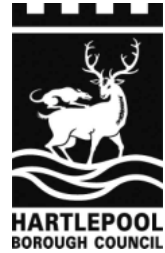
- (a) Report of the Scrutiny Support Officer entitled 'Six Monthly Monitoring of Agreed Children's Services Scrutiny Forum's Recommendations' presented to the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum on 12 February 2013.

6. CONTACT OFFICER

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CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE

03 September 2013



Report of: Assistant Director, Children's Services

Subject: COMMISSIONING OF EARLY INTERVENTION SERVICES

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

Non key decision

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 To seek agreement from Children's Services Committee to extend the contracts for services commissioned under the Early Intervention Strategy for a 6 month period.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 In December 2011, Cabinet approved the Early Intervention Strategy and the commissioning of services to underpin the delivery of the strategy. The Early Intervention Strategy was developed in response to the creation of a new Early Intervention Grant which provided local authorities with greater flexibility and freedom to respond to local need. The strategy built upon the recommendations of the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum investigation into 'Think Family – Preventative and Early Intervention Services' undertaken in 2010 / 2011.

3.2 The Strategy introduced a revised model for service delivery developed using information from a needs analysis and consultation to shape services that are accessible to all, community based, flexible, convenient, and long term if needed. The strategy is based upon a commitment to working in partnership with families to identify, at the earliest opportunity, what services and support they require to transform their lives.

3.3 Through the strategy, a number of services were commissioned from the statutory, community and voluntary sector to provide a range of support services for children, young people and their families. The following services were commissioned and funded through the Early Intervention Grant:

- Children and Young People's Substance Misuse Services:
 - Interventions and support for children referred that are misusing substances;
 - Expertise to workers within the locality teams ensuring interventions are evidenced based and supporting preventative work where children and young people are vulnerable to substance misuse.
 Contract awarded to Hyped.

- Parenting Support Services:
 - Parenting expertise to support locality teams;
 - Universal Parenting Education with a Focus on Targeted Parents;
 - Voluntary Network of Parenting Buddies/Peer Support;
 - Fatherhood/Young Parents;
 - Teenage Parents;
 - Meets statutory Parenting Order Requirements.
 Contract awarded to Action for Children

- Targeted Activities for Children and Young People:

Activities for children and young people, both street and locality based offering:

 - Emotional resilience and emotional literacy;
 - Self esteem, building confidence and peer relationships;
 - Achievement, challenge and aspiration;
 - Diversionary, restorative and fun;
 - Targeted interventions at street level resulting in children and young people attending the centre based service;
 - Centre based youth service provision.
 Contract awarded to consortium of local voluntary organisations led by West View Project which sub contracts with four other voluntary sector providers, Belle View, Manor Residents Association, Headland Future and Wharton Trust.

- Mentoring:
 - A mentoring programme for children aged 7 - 18, providing support and advice to children and young people to help them make positive choices.
 Contract awarded to Headland Future

- Speech and Language:
 - Speech and Language staff procured from the North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust providing speech and language expertise to the locality teams through the Early Years Pathway.

3.4 In addition to the above services, the Early Intervention Grant also contributes to a corporate contract for Domestic Violence Services. This service is commissioned separately and is out of the scope of this report as the contract is in place until 31/03/15.

- 3.5 Following the tendering process, contracts for the above services were awarded to the successful providers as noted above. Due to the uncertain future of the Early intervention Grant funding stream, contracts were awarded for 18 months, with the option to extend the contract for an additional 18 months by mutual agreement subject to satisfactory performance by the provider, current demand for the service and conditional upon funding being available. The contracts are due to terminate on 30th September 2013.
- 3.6 In September 2012, local authorities were notified of significant cuts to the Early Intervention Grant. For Hartlepool this amounted to £1.6m in the two years 2013/14 and 2014/15. In response to this risk a careful assessment of commitments was adopted and this delivered an under-spend in 2012/13. The underspend has enabled one off funding to temporarily offset the grant cuts in 2013/14 providing a longer lead in time to assess the implications of reducing early intervention services and make informed decisions about how these cuts will be managed.
- 3.7 Officers are working on option appraisals to reduce early intervention services to the level of ongoing funding and this will be presented to the Children's Services Committee for decision on 1 October 2013.
- 3.8 On 19th June 2013, a letter of notice was sent to the providers of the commissioned services. Providers were notified of the Council's intention to terminate the agreement with effect from 30 September 2013. The intention of the 90 days notice was to give providers as long as possible to manage the implications of the contracts terminating.

4. PROPOSALS

- 4.1 In October 2013, Children's Services Committee will decide upon the future delivery of early intervention services to support children, young people and their families. The extent of the funding cuts mean significant reductions will have to be made on the current commitments and a number of services will have to cease. The option appraisal will support Members of the Children's Services Committee to make informed decisions on the priorities for early intervention services going forward and maximizing the available resources, investing in services that improve the outcomes and life chances for children and young people.
- 4.2 In light of the temporary funding available to offset the grant cuts in 2013/14, it is proposed that the notice of termination on contracts is rescinded. This will enable the contracts for services commissioned through the Early Intervention Strategy to be extended for a period of 6 months until Children's Services Committee can determine the longer term priorities. It is proposed that all the contracts are extended until 31/03/14.

- 4.3 Extension of the contracts will mean that children, young people and their families will benefit from a continuity of services for the next 6 months. If the contracts are not extended, the services commissioned under the Early Intervention Strategy, which includes parenting, young people's substance misuse services, activities and mentoring, will cease with effect from 30 September 2013 and a number of children and their families may be left vulnerable.

5. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 5.1 There are financial implications to extending the contracts for early intervention services for 6 months, however these costs can be met through the temporary funding available to support early intervention services during 2013/14 and provision has been made to meet these costs.
- 5.2 The Committee is also advised that a report was submitted to the Audit and Governance Committee on 27th June 2013 on the outcome of an Internal Audit review of Manor Residents Association (MRA), one of the organisations in the consortium delivering this project. This report did not comment on the services delivered by MRA as this was outside the scope of the Internal Audit review. The report did identify a number of issues relating to the adequacy of the arrangements MRA have in place to manage and expend funding received from the Council and concluded that 'no assurance' can be placed on these arrangements. This is the lowest Internal Audit assessment and the report made five key recommendations to address this situation.
- 5.3 The Audit and Governance Committee requested an update report on the implementation of the recommendations to their meeting on 25th September 2013. A further Internal Audit Review has been completed and the update report to be submitted to the Audit and Governance Committee will advise Members that only limited progress has been made on the implementation of the agreed recommendations and on this basis there is no change in the initial 'no assurance' opinion.
- 5.4 On this basis there are two options available to Members in relation to this element of the Targeted Activities for Children and Young People contract:
- **Option 1** – Lead provider to be asked to seek alternative arrangements/providers for the element of the project currently delivered by MRA.

This option removes any financial and reputational risks of continuing to contract with an organisation the Chief Finance Officer and the Head of Audit and Governance have assessed as having financial systems and procedures that have a 'no assurance' Internal Audit opinion.

- **Option 2** – Lead provider to be asked to impose additional financial safeguards on this element of the contract so that contract payments are subject to satisfactory delivery of agreed monthly outcomes and payments are then made by monthly installments.

This option provides an increased level of assurance in relation to the monthly payments made by the Council. However, this option does not address the concerns raised in the Internal Audit reporting and the 'no assurance' opinion given on this organisations financial arrangements.

6. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1 There is provision within the contracts to extend the arrangements for a period of up to 18 months by mutual agreement.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 Children's Services Committee is asked to approve Option 1 as outlined in paragraph 5.4 and ask Lead Provider for the Targeted Activities for Children and Young People contract to seek alternative arrangements/providers for the element of the project currently delivered by MRA.
- 7.2 Subject to 7.1 above, Children's Services Committee is asked to approve the extension of the contracts for services commissioned under the Early Intervention Strategy for a period of 6 months to 31/03/14.

8. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 The extension of the contracts for commissioned services will ensure that children, young people and their families receive continued support through the provision of services as defined in the Early intervention Strategy and do not experience a disruption in support whilst long term decision are made.

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

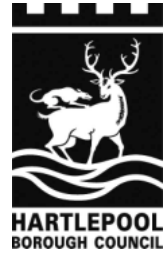
Early Intervention Strategy December 2011

10. CONTACT OFFICER

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CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE

3rd September 2013



Report of: Assistant Director (Education)

Subject: HARTLEPOOL SCHOOL ADMISSION
ARRANGEMENTS FOR 2015/16

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

Non key

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 The Local Authority wish to propose a change to the definition of the distance criteria used for oversubscription in Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools. This change, if approved, would be effective from 2015/16 admissions round.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The oversubscription criteria is only used when a school receives more applications than places available. The distance criteria is used as a tie breaker to distinguish between applications.
- 3.2 It should be noted that schools who are their own admissions authorities are responsible for setting their own admission arrangements.
- 3.3 The proposed change should be consulted on for at least 8 weeks from 1st November 2013 and this report is to seek permission to consult.
- 3.4 The approved admissions policy for entry to community and voluntary controlled primary schools in 2014/15 is as follows:
- Parents/carers are invited to express preferences for up to 3 primary schools in priority order and give reasons for their preferences.

- In the first instance, places will be awarded to those pupils with a statement of special educational needs where the school is named in the statement.
- The remaining places will be awarded in the following priority order:
 - 1) those children who are looked after children and previously looked after children (*previously looked after children are children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they were adopted or became subject to a residence order or special guardianship order*);
 - 2) those children who have brothers or sisters who will be attending the school in September 2014;
 - 3) those children who live in the school's admission zone;
 - 4) those children who are distinguished from the great majority of other applicants whether on medical grounds or by other exceptional circumstances and who would suffer significant hardship if they were unable to attend the school;
 - 5) those children who live closest to the school as determined by the shortest suitable walking distance (measured by the shortest suitable walking route from the (*ordnance survey*) *address point of the child's home address to the main entrance of the school, using the Local Authority's digital measuring system*).

4. PROPOSALS

4.1 The proposed admissions policy for entry to community and voluntary controlled primary schools in 2015/16 is as follows:

4.2 Parents/carers are invited to express preferences for up to 3 primary schools in priority order and give reasons for their preferences.

- In the first instance, places will be awarded to those pupils with a statement of special educational needs where the school is named in the statement.
- The remaining places will be awarded in the following priority order:
 - 1) those children who are looked after children and previously looked after children (*previously looked after children are children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they were adopted or became subject to a residence order or special guardianship order*);

- 2) those children who have brothers or sisters who will be attending the school in September 2015;
- 3) those children who live in the school's admission zone;
- 4) those children who are distinguished from the great majority of other applicants whether on medical grounds or by other exceptional circumstances and who would suffer significant hardship if they were unable to attend the school;
- 5) those children who live closest to the school as determined by a 'straight line' distance measurement; from the (ordnance survey) address point for the child's home to the (ordnance survey) address point of the school (previously used shortest safest walking route).

5. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS

- 5.1 The proposed change to 'straight line' measuring system will be much clearer for parents to understand and will limit the increasing issue of the LA being challenged on the shortest walking route system.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 It is recommended that consultation on 2015/16 admission arrangements (with an end date of December 2013) take place on the basis of seeking views on:
- The oversubscription criteria for community and voluntary controlled primary schools in regard to the proposed change in the method of measuring the distances involved in the 'closest to school' criteria.

7. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 To allow consultation on the slight change in admission arrangements which will result in a much clearer system of measuring distances from home to school for criteria 5 of the admissions criteria and for tie-break purposes.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

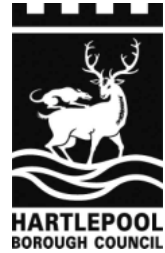
None

9. CONTACT OFFICER

Dean Jackson
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CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE

3rd September 2013



Report of: Assistant Director, Education

Subject: SCOPING EXERCISE - CHANGES TO CATCHMENT AREA (ADMISSION ZONES)

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

Non Key

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is to inform members of the scoping exercise which has been undertaken in respect of the proposed school admissions arrangements for 2014-15 as requested by the Children's Services Portfolio Holder on 26th June 2012.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 In 2012 the Children's and Community Services Portfolio Holder and the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee gave consideration to school admission arrangements and catchment areas (admission zones) in Hartlepool.
- 3.2 On 26th June 2012 the Portfolio Holder reaffirmed the decision taken on 27th March and instructed officers to:
- i) *Implement the wide ranging review as requested by Council; and*
 - ii) *Prepare a scoping report in relation to the practical arrangements and timescale for the full review of catchment areas across Hartlepool.*
- 3.3 This report outlines the practical arrangements, the time scales and anticipated cost should members request the implementation of a full review of Hartlepool schools catchment areas (admission zones).

- 3.4 Further background to the proposed changes to the school admission arrangements for 2015-15 are detailed in **Appendix 1** 'The minutes of the Extraordinary Council Meeting – 14 June 2012'. **Appendix 2** – 'The Children and Community Services Portfolio Decision Record – 26 June 2012'.

4. PROPOSALS

4.1 Scoping Exercise

- 4.1.1 In response to the request from the then Portfolio Holder to carry out a scoping exercise in relation to the practical arrangements and time scales prior to any full review of catchment areas across Hartlepool being completed, local authority officers have consulted with the Department for Education regarding the current criteria.
- 4.1.2 The key points in the guidance are summarised below, including a major change in relation to the timing and frequency for full consultation.
- 4.1.3 All schools must have admission arrangements that clearly set out how children will be admitted, including the criteria that will be applied if there are more applications than places at the school. Admission arrangements are determined by admission authorities.
- 4.1.4 Admission authorities must set ('determine') admission arrangements annually. Where changes are proposed to admission arrangements, the admission authority must first publicly consult on those arrangements. If no changes are made to admission arrangements, they must be consulted on at least every 7 years. Consultation must be for a minimum of 8 weeks and must take place between 1 November and 1 March of the year before those arrangements are to apply. For example, for arrangements which applied to applications made in 2012 for entry in September 2013, consultation had to be completed by 1st March 2012. The consultation period allowed parents, other schools, religious authorities and the local community to raise any concerns about proposed admission arrangements.
- 4.1.5 If a school becomes an academy, the school becomes their own admissions authority and are therefore responsible for setting their own admission arrangements. This could mean that they could change their oversubscription criteria not to include the catchment areas (admissions zones) in their criteria. However academies would be bound by Code of Practice on School Admissions and would have to consult in advance of any changes.
- 4.1.6 Once all arrangements have been determined, arrangements can be objected to and referred to the Schools Adjudicator by 30th June. Any decision of the adjudicator must be acted on by the admission authority and admission arrangements amended accordingly. The local authority will collate and publish all the admission arrangements in the area in a single composite prospectus.

4.1.7 After reviewing the guidance documentation, local authority officers have considered how to implement the practical arrangements and time scale for the full review. This has included planning the number of stages in the consultation process and the number and frequency of meetings. To support the planning process advice has been given from senior officers who conducted the primary capital consultation, which is the most recent exercise which is comparable in scale to the proposed catchment area consultation. This advice would indicate that the full consultation process of catchment areas should be based upon a 3 stage process: Stage 1 consult on proposals, stage 2 review the findings and take the new proposals out to second consultation and stage 3 inform the outcome of the consultation.

4.2 Implementation

Preparation Phase (September to November)

4.2.1 Councillors to meet with senior local authority officers to discuss the questions to be raised in the consultation exercise and agree the budget, timing and reporting process including meeting the democratic deadlines and timescales. Officers to plan areas to be covered, dates for public consultation and booking of facilities with publication of consultation information.

4.2.2 Data analysis to be completed by admission officer and data manager in relation to future projections on school size, total number of pupils, spare places, projected numbers in the future, percentage of pupils eligible for pupil premium and catchment zone up to and including 2020; informed by the October and later by the January census

4.2.3 Tees Valley Unlimited and Hartlepool Regeneration and Neighbourhoods Department to provide data on proposed housing development to inform pupil planning.

Consultation Phase (November –February)

4.2.4 Publish the details of the consultation in local press.

4.2.5 Carry out a public consultation using the 3 stage process in the key locations North, South and Central Hartlepool.

4.2.6 Carry out a public meeting at each of the community and voluntary primary schools with governing bodies, teacher and parents.

4.2.7 Meet with head teacher and governing bodies of all key stakeholders including all Hartlepool secondary schools, Hartlepool Sixth Form College, Hartlepool College of Further Education, governing bodies of Multi Academy Trust Diocesan representatives and neighbouring local authorities.

Reporting Phase (February–June)

- 4.2.8 Inform members of the findings of the consultation and complete democratic process in respect of any changes to catchment area or school admission numbers.
- 4.2.9 Allow for any objection to be raised with the School Adjudicator and publish the new catchment area and admission criteria.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS.**5.1 What is a catchment zone?**

5.1.1 Under the current legislation a 'catchment zone' is a defined geographical area that serves a particular school. In planning the layout of a catchment zone, the admission authority should try to ensure that the school would normally be able to admit all pupils living in the area that require a place. With falling pupil numbers in recent years most primary schools are able to admit pupils from outside their immediate catchment and pupils with older siblings will continue to receive priority over other non-catchment pupils. Although living in a catchment zone does not guarantee a school place, there is the expectation that children should be able to obtain a place in their local school, if that is what parents prefer.

5.1.2 In preparing a revised catchment area for a school, Department for Education (DfE) School Admission Code of Practice 2012 suggests the following should be taken into consideration:

- A balance of demand against the number of places to ensure, as far as possible, pupils living in an area will be able to secure a place at their local school;
- A close geographical relationship to the school to avoid young people having an unnecessarily long journey or having to travel through another school's catchment zone to reach their own school;
- Avoidance of shared catchment zones where possible;
- Use of recognised geographical boundaries such as main roads or pathways;
- Travel routes to encourage walking, as far as possible avoiding young people having to cross busy roads and mainly pass through residential areas.

6. COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

6.1 To support the scoping exercise officers have examined data to determine if there is need to review the admission criteria and amend catchment area boundaries.

- 6.2 The analysis of the information collected from the Pupil Census Data and Tees Valley Unlimited pupil /household projections indicate that there is currently no oversubscription of community and voluntary aided primary schools in Hartlepool. In 2013 there were 8,558 primary pupil places with 7,634 primary admissions
- 6.3 The data analysis found that in 2013-14 there will be 900 surplus primary places and would suggest that any review of catchment areas should be conducted in conjunction with any increase in pupil number, which will be a consequence of new building projects. The effect of these proposed new building programmes in Hartlepool is expected to impact on pupil numbers in 2019/2020. As these pupils are not yet born, the local authority can only estimate the numbers based upon the expected number of houses. The Children's Services Planning team believes that this will be subject to change, as it is dependant on the economic climate and will particularly affect the wards and catchment area for schools in the south of borough as or if the south extension is realised. Tees Valley Unlimited have considered the historical trends in Hartlepool which indicate that new housing developments in Hartlepool result in movement of existing pupils around the borough with few new pupils joining the cohort from outside of the local authority area.
- 6.4 The school admission numbers based around school capacity demonstrate that there is currently a surplus of primary school places in Hartlepool. However, the data indicates that pupil numbers are expected to increase by approximately 400 pupils in the next 10 years, which will take up some of the spare capacity. As the co-ordinating authority, Hartlepool local authority always attempts to meet the highest ranked parental preference for a school place and meet the first preference whenever possible. Currently surplus places are geographically spread across all areas of Hartlepool, which enables the admission team to make a reasonable offer of a school place, which even in the case of a second preference would rarely be over 2 miles from a pupil's home. In planning school places and catchment areas, the popularity of schools and parental preferences are difficult to predict, these can change on a year by year basis which can put pressure on an individual school. Increased parental requests for admissions to a school are often associated with new housing, improved examination performance, new facilities or a change in the headteacher and are therefore liable to change.
- 6.5 Given the current the number of surplus places, Members will wish to consider if it is appropriate to carry out a full consultation in 2013-14 as the evidence would indicate that this is not currently required. Officers would suggest that the full consultation process covering admission arrangements and catchment areas should be planned to meet the legal requirement of every seven years and in time to meet any possible oversubscription to primary schools in 2019-20.

7 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Given the scale of a full consultation process, officers believe that a realistic time frame for this project would be between 40 and 50 days work over an 11 month period from September to July. The cost of this exercise can only be estimated but a realistic figure based upon the primary capital consultation would indicate that this will cost in the region of £30,000 in either staff time or consultancy fees, with some additional associated printing and facilities cost of approximately £3,000. In addition to the officer leading each of the public consultation meetings, clerical staff will be required to minute the meetings, collate surveys and process written responses from the public. The costing for staff time has been based upon:

- The current cost of education officer salaries which is approximately £400 per day;
- The current cost of senior officer / external consultant salaries which is approximately £600 per day;
- Costs for clerical staff of between £100 to £180 per day.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 That the Chair and members consider the report and make recommendation when and if they would wish to implement a full review of admission procedures and catchment areas in Hartlepool including the approval of the budget to implement a full review.

9 BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

10 CONTACT OFFICER

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EXTRAORDINARY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

14 June 2012

The meeting commenced at 7.00 pm in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool

PRESENT:-

The Chairman (Councillor S Akers-Belcher) presiding:

COUNCILLORS:

Ainslie	C Akers-Belcher	Beck
Brash	Cook	Cranney
Dawkins	Fisher	Fleet
Gibbon	Griffin	Hall
Hargreaves	Hill	James
Lauderdale	A Lilley	G Lilley
Loynes	Dr. Morris	Richardson
Robinson	Shields	Simmons
Sirs	Thompson	Turner
Wells	Wilcox	

Officers: Nicola Bailey, Acting Chief Executive
 Andrew Atkin, Assistant Chief Executive
 Peter Devlin, Chief Solicitor
 Sue Beevers, Admissions, School Place Planning and Support Services Manager
 Peter McIntosh, Head of Planning and Development
 Sally Robinson, Assistant Director (Prevention, Safeguarding and Specialist Services)
 Dave Stubbs, Director of Regeneration & Neighbourhoods
 Joan Stevens, Scrutiny Manager
 Amanda Whitaker, Democratic Services Team Manager

14. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENT MEMBERS

The Mayor and Councillors Jackson, Payne and Tempest.

15. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FROM MEMBERS

The following Councillors declared a personal interest in minute 16:-

Councillors Brash, Cook, Griffin, Hall, Hargreaves, Hill, James, Lauderdale, G Lilley, Dr Morris, Richardson, Robinson, Simmons, Turner, Wells and Wilcox.

16. REFERRAL FROM SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE – CALL-IN OF DECISION

Proposed School Admissions Arrangements for 2013-14

The Chair of Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee presented a report which informed Council of the referral by the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee relating to the 'Call-In of Decision: Proposed School Admissions Arrangements for 2013-14'. The report set out also the timetable for consideration of the referral.

At the meeting of the Children's Services Portfolio, held on 27 March 2012, the Portfolio Holder had approved the proposed oversubscription criteria for community and voluntary aided primary schools which proposed to promote the sibling criteria above school admission zone criteria. Following the decision of the Portfolio Holder, a Call-In Notice had been issued by 3 Members of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee on the 5 April 2012. This notice was accepted by the Deputy Monitoring Officer on the 5 April 2012.

The Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee, at its meeting on the 13 April 2012 had accepted the Call-In and commenced consideration of the issues / concerns raised. The basis of the Call-in being that the decision contravened the principles of decision making in relation to proportionality and reasonableness. The view of the signatories to the notice being that they 'do not believe it to be proportionate or reasonable to put children with siblings already in a school ahead of the majority of children who live within the schools admissions zone'. During the course of discussions, Members were informed that the Portfolio Holder and Department had received a number of emails from parents with positive comments on the decision taken and that the Portfolio Holder was not aware of any adverse comments being received. Members were, however, concerned that:

- A potential situation could arise where children living within an admission zone would be unable to attend their local community school, as places within that school had been taken by siblings of children already attending the school who live outside the admission zone;
- Children who may live opposite a school could be unable to attend the school due to children who live outside the admission zone taking places at that school. This could result in two families travelling outside their admission zone to enable their children to attend school; and
- The full consequences of this decision had not been made clear at the governors' meetings, and parents of children hoping for their child

to attend the school within their admission zone would be disappointed with the decision once the full implications of the decision were known.

Attention was drawn to the importance of local community schools being accessible to the families living within that local community and the Committee decided that the matter should be referred to Council, to enable a town-wide elected Member debate to be undertaken.

An additional report was provided to Council at item 3(b) which gave further information in relation to the decision to assist during the course of discussions. The report set out background information in terms of details of the School Admissions Code ('the Code') and Section 89 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998. The report also set out considerations when drawing up admission arrangements together with details of the formal consultation which had been undertaken including an 8 week statutory consultation period from 1 November to 31 December 2011. Of the 36 responses received during this formal consultation process, 30 respondents had noted or supported a proposal to move the sibling link criteria above the admissions zone criterion. 6 respondents were against this move. On the basis of the formal consultation the Director of Child and Adult Services had recommended that the sibling criteria be raised in the oversubscription criteria to appear above admission zone. By changing the order of the oversubscription criteria to promote the sibling criteria there will only be a small number of children, 1% in 2011 and 1% in 2012 affected. An admission zone child may not attend the nursery (neither may the sibling child) and have no links with the school whatsoever whereas the sibling child would have links via sibling and parents (even though they may not attend nursery) and therefore it could be that the sibling child would be at more of a disadvantage by not getting a place than the admission zone child (and indeed their families).

Responses from Governors had been discussed at the Admissions Forum on 6 February 2012. Responses were also summarised in the report presented to Council. At this time the Admissions Forum were acting in a purely advisory capacity as the new code (1 February 2012) removed the requirement to have admissions forums.

Following the Admissions Forum meeting and at the request of the Portfolio Holder the issue was raised with Primary Heads on 13 March 2012 and after much debate, a 'straw poll' of community and voluntary controlled heads was taken with 6 for and 9 against moving sibling link above admission zone criteria. Not every head teacher from these sectors was present at the meeting. This did not form part of the formal consultation process. It was noted that the final decision on this matter would rest with the Portfolio Holder for Children's Services.

It was highlighted that as Admissions Authority for community and voluntary controlled schools in Hartlepool, the Local Authority had a responsibility to determine admissions arrangements for Hartlepool Schools and to present them to the Secretary of State on 15th April 2012. The Admissions Authority had failed to do that this year in accordance with the statutory requirements,

however the Department for Education (DfE) had been made aware of this and the circumstances surrounding the decision making process. In addition it was a requirement to publish admissions arrangements on the Council's website on 1st May each year. After taking legal advice, proposed arrangements were published but with a note to draw attention to the fact that the arrangements had been 'called in' and the decision to move sibling criteria needed to be confirmed via due process. Any persons aggrieved by the proposed arrangements could appeal to the Office of the Schools Adjudicator by 30 June 2012. In order to mitigate the impact of the Council's failure to determine the admissions arrangements for Hartlepool Schools, a decision as far as practicable before 30 June 2012 was required. Not least to allow for some degree of certainty behind the Council's decision on this issue and to allow anyone aggrieved to lodge an appeal within the prescribed time frame.

An informal meeting had been arranged immediately prior to this Council meeting to allow Chairs of Governors /Head teachers to share their views on the proposed admissions policy with Members of the Council.

During the course of discussions at both the informal and formal Council meeting, views were expressed in relation to the appropriateness and implications of prioritising the award of school places on the basis of either a sibling link or residence in a school admission zone. Support was expressed for both alternatives and attention drawn to the differing challenges facing schools in areas such as Throston, where the building of new homes had placed additional pressure on the availability of school places.

Council recognised that this was an extremely complex issue for which there was no easy solution. On this basis, Council was of the view that it would be unhappy at this time to express a view in relation to the proposed oversubscription criteria for community and voluntary controlled primary schools, without further consultations and detailed exploration of the potential wider implications for schools, parents and children.

Council agreed that the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee should be formally advised of this position and asked to consider the submission of the following response to the Children's and Community Services Portfolio Holder.

- i) That, before any recommendations can be made to the Children's and Community Services Portfolio Holder in relation to the revision of the oversubscription criteria for community and voluntary aided primary schools:
 - A full review must be undertaken to explore the wider implications of proposals, as identified during the course of debate at the Council meeting on the 14 June 2012; and
 - Wider consultations be undertaken with all stakeholders as part of the full review.
- ii) That the results of the wider review and consultation process be reported to Council, to enable the formulation of a view /

recommendation in relation to the oversubscription criteria for community and voluntary aided primary schools, for consideration by the Children's and Community Services Portfolio Holder.

iii) That given the oversubscription issues facing Throston Primary School, a review of the Throston catchment area be explored / reviewed immediately, taking into consideration the knock on effect for other schools.

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 17.4 of the Constitution a recorded vote was taken:-

Those in favour:

Councillors Ainslie, C Akers-Belcher, S Akers-Belcher, Beck, Brash, Cook, Cranney, Dawkins, Fisher, Fleet, Gibbon, Griffin, Hall, Hargreaves, James, Lauderdale, A Lilley, G Lilley, Loynes, Morris, Richardson, Robinson, Shields, Simmons, Sirs, Thompson, Turner, Wells and Wilcox

Those against:

None

Those abstaining:

Councillor Hill

The vote was carried.

The meeting concluded at 7.50 p.m.

CHAIR

CHILDREN'S AND COMMUNITY SERVICES PORTFOLIO DECISION RECORD

Tuesday 26 June 2012

The meeting commenced at 9.00 a.m. in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool

Present:

Councillor Cath Hill (Children's and Community Services Portfolio Holder)

Officers: Sue Beevers, Admissions, School Place Planning and Support Services Manager
 Peter Devlin, Chief Solicitor
 Dean Jackson, Assistant Director (Performance and Achievement)
 Peter McIntosh, Head of Planning and Development
 Sally Robinson, Assistant Director (Prevention, Safeguarding and Specialist Services)
 Joan Stevens, Scrutiny Manager
 Amanda Whitaker, Democratic Services Team Leader

7. **Call-in of Decision: Proposed School Admission Arrangements for 2013-2014** (Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee)

Type of decision

Non-key Decision

Purpose of report

To inform the Portfolio Holder of the outcome of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee's consideration of the 'Call-In' in relation to the Children's Services Portfolio decision taken on the 27 March 2012.

Issue(s) for consideration by Portfolio Holder

The report set out the background and outcome of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee's consideration of the 'Call-In' in relation to the Children's Services Portfolio decision taken on the 27 March 2012.

At the meeting of the Children's Services Portfolio, held on 27 March 2012, the Portfolio Holder had approved the proposed oversubscription criteria for community and voluntary aided primary schools which propose to promote the sibling criteria above school admission zone criteria. Following the decision of the Portfolio Holder, a Call-In Notice had been issued by 3 Members of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee on the 5 April 2012. This notice was accepted by the Deputy Monitoring Officer on the 5 April 2012.

The Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee, at its meeting on the 13 April 2012 had accepted the Call-In and commenced consideration of the issues / concerns raised. The basis of the Call-in being that the decision contravened the principles of decision making in relation to proportionality and reasonableness. The view of the signatories to the notice being that they 'do not believe it to be proportionate or reasonable to put children with siblings already in a school ahead of the majority of children who live within the schools admissions zone'. During the course of discussions, Members were informed that the Portfolio Holder and Department had received a number of emails from parents with positive comments on the decision taken and that the Portfolio Holder was not aware of any adverse comments being received. Members were, however, concerned that:

- A potential situation could arise where children living within an admission zone would be unable to attend their local community school, as places within that school had been taken by siblings of children already attending the school who live outside the admission zone;
- Children who may live opposite a school could be unable to attend the school due to children who live outside the admission zone taking places at that school. This could result in two families travelling outside their admission zone to enable their children to attend school; and
- The full consequences of this decision had not been made clear at the governors' meetings, and parents of children hoping for their child to attend the school within their admission zone would be disappointed with the decision once the full implications of the decision were known.

Attention was drawn to the importance of local community schools being accessible to the families living within that local community and the Committee decided that the matter should be referred to Full Council, to enable a town-wide elected Member debate to be undertaken.

Council on the 14 June 2012 had met to consider the Scrutiny referral, with a separate informal meeting held immediately prior to facilitate a full discussion with representatives from Schools (Head Teachers and School Governors). A copy of the report considered by Council on the 14 July had been circulated.

During the course of discussions at both the informal and formal Council meeting, views had been expressed in relation to the appropriateness and implications of prioritising the award of school places on the basis of either a sibling link or residence in a school admission zone. Support was expressed for both alternatives and attention drawn to the differing challenges facing schools in areas such as Throston, where the building of new homes has placed additional pressure on the availability of school places. Council recognised that this was an extremely complex issue for which there was no easy solution. On this basis, Council was of the view that it would be unhappy at this time to express a view in relation to the proposed oversubscription criteria for community and voluntary controlled primary schools, without further consultations and detailed exploration of the potential wider implications for schools, parents and children. Council agreed that the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee should be formally advised of this position and asked to consider the submission of the following response to the Children's and Community Services Portfolio Holder.

- i) That, before any recommendations can be made to the Children's and Community Services Portfolio Holder in relation to the revision of the oversubscription criteria for community and voluntary aided primary schools:
 - A full review must be undertaken to explore the wider implications of proposals, as identified during the course of debate at the Council meeting on the 14 June 2012; and
 - Wider consultations be undertaken with all stakeholders as part of the full review.
- ii) That the results of the wider review and consultation process be reported to Council, to enable the formulation of a view / recommendation in relation to the oversubscription criteria for community and voluntary aided primary schools, for consideration by the Children's and Community Services Portfolio Holder.
- iii) That given the oversubscription issues facing Throston Primary School, a review of the Throston catchment area be explored / reviewed immediately, taking into consideration the knock on effect for other schools.

In completing the Authority's Call-In procedure, the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee, at its meeting on the 15 June 2012, had accepted that the decision which had been taken contravened the principles of decision making in relation to proportionality and reasonableness. The Committee also received the views / comments expressed by Council and accepted them as the basis for the response to the Children's and Community Services Portfolio Holder.

The Portfolio Holder advised that she had given detailed consideration to the issues which had been highlighted in the report and reiterated the rationale for the decision she had made on 27 March. The Portfolio Holder following careful consideration reaffirmed the decision taken on 27 March for the following reasons:-

- That the decisions had not contravened the principles of decision making
- That it had been made clear to school governors what the implications of the proposed changes would be
- That responses from primary school governors had in the majority been in favour of the original decision
- The practical implications for parents whose children attend different schools
- Potential distress for children whose siblings attend different schools

Whilst accepting that previous practice had been to request school governing bodies note proposed admission arrangements, in order to ensure future clarity it was proposed that as part of future consultations, governing bodies be requested to either agree or not agree to proposals.

The Portfolio Holder considered the following additional recommendations from Council:-

- i) Before any recommendations can be made to the Children's and Community Services Portfolio Holder in relation to the revision of the oversubscription criteria for community and voluntary aided primary schools:
 - A full review must be undertaken to explore the wider implications of proposals, as identified during the course of debate at the Council meeting on the 14 June 2012; and
 - Wider consultations be undertaken with all stakeholders as part of the full review.
- ii) That the results of the wider review and consultation process be reported to Council, to enable the formulation of a view / recommendation in relation to the oversubscription criteria for community and voluntary aided primary schools, for consideration by the Children's and Community Services Portfolio Holder.
- iii) That given the oversubscription issues facing Throston Primary School, a review of the Throston catchment area be explored / reviewed immediately, taking into consideration the knock on effect for other schools.

Concern was expressed regarding the practical implications of undertaking a separate catchment area review for Throston Primary School. However, the Portfolio Holder was mindful of identifying a practical solution for the implementation of Council's recommendations. It was recognised that catchment areas had not been considered for some considerable time. Therefore, the Portfolio Holder requested that in addition the review requested by Council (i above), a full review of all catchment areas be undertaken. In order to facilitate this, it was considered appropriate for a scoping report to be undertaken and presented back to the Portfolio Holder. In addition, that an update report be presented to Council following consideration of that report by the Portfolio Holder.

Decision

The Portfolio Holder reaffirmed the decision taken on 27 March and instructed Officers to:-

- (i) implement the wide ranging review as requested by Council; and
- (ii) prepare a scoping report in relation to the practical arrangements and timescale for the full review of catchment areas across Hartlepool.

The meeting concluded at 10.05 a.m.

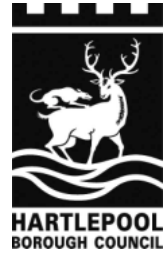
P J DEVLIN

CHIEF SOLICITOR

PUBLICATION DATE: 28 June 2012

CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE

3 September 2013



Report of: Assistant Director, Children's Services

Subject: SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN IN HARTLEPOOL

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

For information.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 To present to Children's Services Committee information on the workload of children's social work teams in providing service to children in need in Hartlepool including those in need of protection and children looked after.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 There is a clear expectation from Government that Elected Members are routinely and regularly informed of the workload of children's social care services. Children's Services Committee has highlighted it would wish to receive this information on a quarterly basis to ensure the Council is fulfilling its statutory responsibilities.
- 3.2 This report relates to the activity within the first quarter of 2013/14. The data in this report is taken from the activity in children's social care throughout the period from April 2013 to June 2013. The information is taken from the Integrated Children's System (ICS), the electronic social care record, children's services legal department and the Complaints Officer.

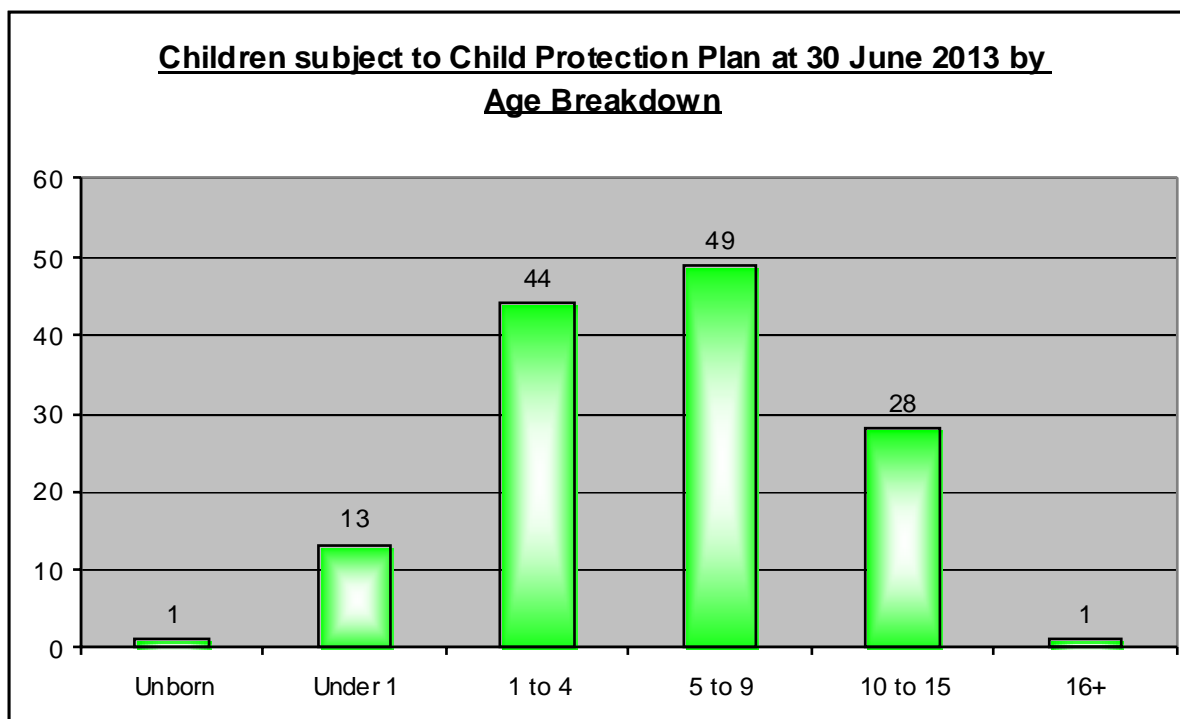
4. REFERRAL AND ASSESSMENT

- 4.1 Throughout the period of April to June 2013 there were 1245 contacts made to the First Contact and Support Hub from either members of the public, other professionals or organisations. From that number 298 contacts progressed to a referral to the Safeguarding, Assessment and Support Unit for a Child in Need Assessment or a Child Protection Enquiry under Section 47 of the 1989 Children Act.
- 4.2 The First Contact and Support Hub replaced the Duty Team in April 2013 and has been specifically set up to provide a single point of access to children's services and ensure there are robust and timely mechanisms in place to respond to contacts. The Table at **Appendix 1** demonstrates how, over time, the contact to referral conversion rate has increased. In quarter April to June 2009 the average contact to referral rate was 16% and by April to June 2013 this has increased to 24%.
- 4.3 Re-referral rates can be used as one of the measures as to the effectiveness of services provided to a family. Officers recognise the value of this information and have, over the last twelve months, been working hard to identify and subsequently address factors associated with the re-referrals for services. In April 2013 from the 90 referrals 12 had previously had an assessment, from the 108 referrals received in May, 25 had previously had an assessment and from the 100 referral received in June, 19 had previously had an assessment. Whilst the numerical data is extremely informative this can not be relied upon in its entirety and we need to also understand factors which have a correlation to the previous referral, the families willingness or not to accept services and also the length of time that has elapsed between each referral.
- 4.3 Throughout the 1st quarter abuse and neglect continues to account for the highest number of referrals received into the department closely followed by family dysfunction.
- 4.5 From April to June 2013 the service has completed 218 Initial Assessments, 72 of these were not completed within the stipulated timescale of 10 working days which equates to 64.6% completed within timescales.
- 4.6 In the first quarter there has been a decline in the number of core assessments being completed in timescales. From April 2013 to June 2013 101 Core Assessments were completed and 36 were out of timescales resulting in an overall percentage of 62% completed in timescales. In the same period in the previous year (April 2012- June 2012) 97 core assessments were complete and 12 assessments were out of timescales equating to an overall 87% of assessment completed within timescales in that year..

- 4.7 The revised *Working Together to Safeguard Children* came into effect on 15th April 2013. A major change to the statutory guidance is the removal of the 10 day initial and the 35 day core assessment timescales which are to be replaced by a single assessment. The concept central to this change is that an assessment should be proportionate to the issues outlined in the referral and identified at the initial home visit through consultation with the family and the line manager. In order to achieve this, greater emphasis and planning is required from the outset. It is anticipated that the changes will eradicate the 'start again' assessment syndrome which is most prevalent when cases transfer to different teams. Taking this into account officers have reviewed the processes in place within the Safeguarding, Assessment and Support Unit and identified that the current system where assessments are undertaken within the Initial Response Team and then transferred up to the longer term teams could be particularly vulnerable to 'start again syndrome'. In light of this, officers are in the process of planning how best to configure the teams and exploring the option of disbanding the two Initial Response Teams in favour of the model where there are 6 social work teams, each taking turn to pick up cases at the referral point and taking them through to their conclusion.
- 4.8 The service completed 49 Section 47 enquiries from April through to June 2013 and 7 of these were outside the 10 day timescale. A Section 47 enquiry is initiated when there are reasonable grounds to suspect a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. In all of these cases there is an immediate response and the child, who is deemed at risk, is seen and spoken to without delay. The enquiry will involve an assessment of the child's needs and the ability of those caring for the child to meet his or her needs. The purpose of this investigation is to decide whether Children's Services should take any action under the statutory powers available to them to safeguard and promote the child's welfare.
- 4.9 There were no unallocated cases in the service over the quarter. Once a referral is received by the Initial Response Team it is always allocated promptly within 24 to 48 hours. Similarly when a child is assessed as requiring services and is transferred to the Safeguarding, Assessment and Support Teams, a social worker is identified and the case is allocated without delay. Prompt allocation of cases is an important test of the effectiveness of local safeguarding arrangements.

5. CHILD PROTECTION

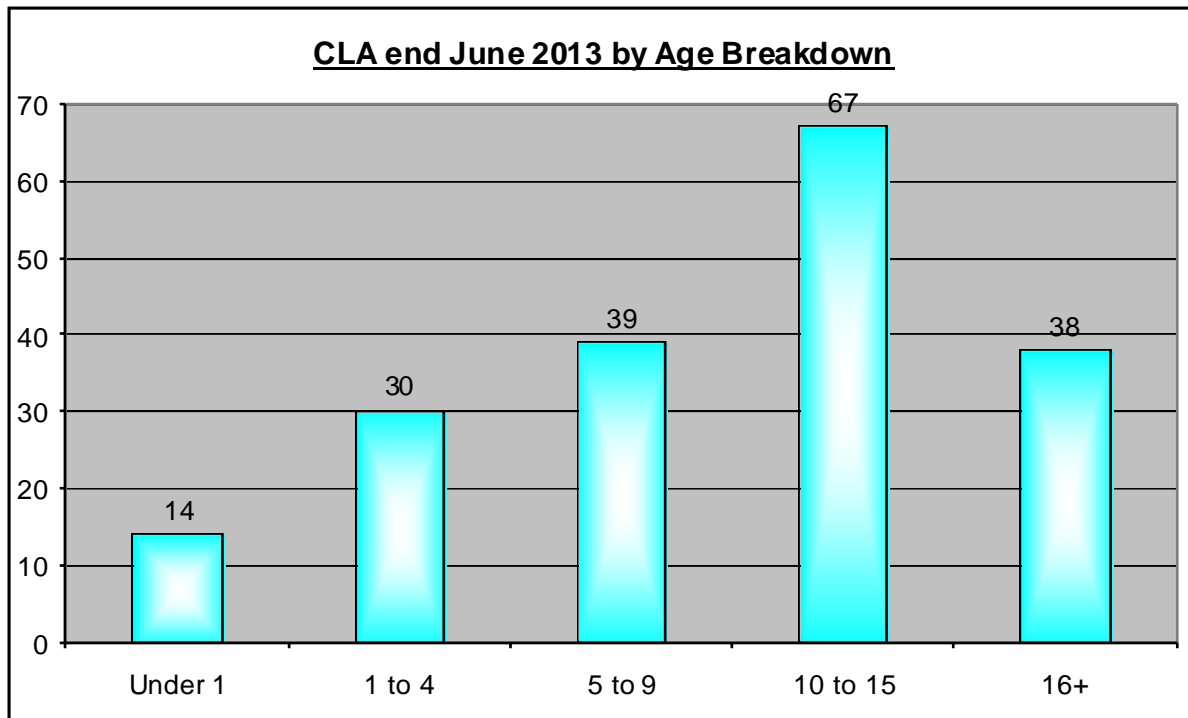
- 5.1 The total number of children who were subject to a child protection plan at 30 June 2013 is 136. The graph below demonstrates the age bracket of children subject to child protection plans.



- 5.2 Neglect continues to account for the highest proportion of child protection plans in Hartlepool. At 30 June 2013 108 children were subject to a protection plan due to the risk of neglect, physical abuse accounted for 12 children, whilst emotional abuse accounted for 12 children and the remaining 4 children were subject to a child protection plan due to risk of sexual abuse.
- 5.3 It is pleasing to report that during the 1st quarter of the year there were no children who became subject to a child protection plan for a second or subsequent time. Nevertheless, the service will continue to monitor this area and have in place a system whereby the Conference Chair completes an audit following each conference they chair where a child has become subject to a repeat plan. This ensures there is close scrutiny and challenge and performance is closely monitored.

6. LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN

- 6.1 At the end of June 2013 there were 188 looked after children. Of those children, the local authority shared parental responsibility for 92 children by virtue of a Care Order Section 31 of the 1989 Children Act, 22 children were the subject of Interim Care Orders and 64 children were voluntary accommodated Section 20 of the 1989 Children Act following a request or the agreement of their parent or carers. One young person was remanded to the care of the Local Authority as part of a Youth Offending Court disposal and 9 children were receiving short break care. Eight children were subject to Placement Orders, either enabling the Local Authority to begin the search for adoptive carers or were already placed with their adoptive carers.



- 6.2 The graph above demonstrates the age range of children in care in Hartlepool as recorded at the end of June 2013. As can be seen the highest age which accounts for 67 children and young people relates to those in the age bracket of 10 to 15 years. The second highest bracket relates to children aged 5 to 9 years closely followed by young people over the age of 16 years.
- 6.3 Of the children 188 looked after as at 30 June 2013, 158 are placed in foster care. The remaining 30 children and young people are placed in residential care or education, with parents or another person with parental responsibility, placed for adoption or living independently.
- 6.4 The reforms to the Family Court Justice System continue to provide unprecedented challenges in terms of time scales and financial implications for local authorities. The changes to the eligibility criteria for legal aid is having an impact on families and staff are dealing with increasing requests from family members to assist with funding applications for Residence Orders to secure the care of children.
- 6.5 The social work teams are making good progress in completing robust pre proceedings work which involves assessments of the parents in order to meet the demanding timescales set by the Family Justice Review. Whilst staff are making progress in terms of the completion of pre-proceedings work involving alternative family members, it is recognised improvements could be made to timeliness by undertaking assessments of family members in parallel to assessments of parents and this is something that will be a focus for service development going forward.

- 6.6 Despite the challenging times it is pleasing to report that two of the social workers within the unit have been commended by senior management and the Judiciary for bringing to a conclusion an emotive case involving 4 small children, whilst at all times demonstrating sensitivity to the parents but with a clear focus on the needs of the children.
- 6.7 At the end of the quarter there were 12 active care cases relating to 23 children. From April to June 2013 the service issued 7 new applications to the family court, 6 of these relating to care proceedings and 1 relating to the revocation of a Care Order. During the aforementioned period 14 cases were concluded relating to 20 children.

7. CHILDREN IN NEED

- 7.1 The total population of under 18's living in Hartlepool is currently 20500. As from the 30 June 2013 there were 1076 children and young people receiving support from children's social care as either children in need, (including those in need of protection) or looked after. The graph at **Appendix 2** highlights the breakdown of services for children within the Borough.

8. WORKFORCE/WORKLOAD

- 8.1 All children receiving services from children's social care are allocated to a qualified social worker. There has been some staff movement within children's services and vacancies have been filled by qualifying social workers. The service has a robust Assessed and Supported Year in Employment (ASYE) arrangement in place which is a national requirement and the smaller social work teams in Hartlepool ensures that the ASYE social workers are appropriately supported by their managers.
- 8.2 The demand for services continues to increase and as a consequence social workers' caseloads have risen which is being closely monitored.
- 8.3 There has been an increase in social workers on sick leave during the first quarter. This has been an accumulation of planned absence for medical procedures, bereavement and unexpected illness. There are robust and supportive mechanisms in place to manage long term sickness absence and assist the social workers with the return to work. Consecutive periods of short term absence are identified by Human Resources and managed by the team manager in accordance with the Council's Attendance Management Policy.
- 8.4 There is currently one social worker on maternity leave who is due to return in September 2013.

9. COMMENTS, COMPLAINTS AND COMPLIMENTS

- 9.1 There have been one compliment and two complaints received by the service during April through to June 2013. Both complaints were resolved at stage one of the Complaints and Representations Procedure.
- 9.2 Of the 4 complaints ongoing from the last quarter:
- 2 complaints progressed from Stage 1 to Stage 2 and remains ongoing at Stage 2;
 - 2 complaints that progressed from Stage 1 to Stage 2 in the last reporting period were withdrawn at Stage 2 when the complainants did not engage with the process despite several attempts made by officers to contact them.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 That the Children's Services Committee notes the contents of this report of activity within children's social care.

11. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 11.1 It is part of the Children's Services Committee's role to ensure the effective discharge of the Authority's statutory children's services functions. The Children's Services Committee has a responsibility to ensure there is a clear focus on safeguarding and that coordinated action is in place to safeguard vulnerable children.

12. CONTACT OFFICER

Wendy Rudd, Head of the Safeguarding, Assessment and Support Unit
Child and Adult Services
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Email: wendy.rudd@hartlepool.gov.uk

CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE REPORT



Report of: Assistant Director (Children's) Child and Adult Services
and Chief Finance Officer

Subject: QUARTER 1 – FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT REPORT

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

For Information.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1 The purpose of the report is to inform Members of 2013/14 forecast General Fund budget outturn for the Child and Adult Services department and specific details for the services this Committee is responsible for.

3. BACKGROUND AND REPORTING ARRANGEMENTS 2013/14

3.1 The availability and reporting of accurate and up to date financial information will become increasingly important as future budget cuts are implemented and one-off resources are used up.

3.2 The Finance and Policy Committee will receive regular reports which will provide a comprehensive analysis of departmental and corporate forecast outturns, including an explanation of the significant budget variances. This will enable the Finance and Policy Committee to approve a strategy for addressing the financial issues and challenges facing the Council. The overall reporting timetable for submitting the 2013/14 reports to the Finance and Policy Committee are detailed in the following table:

	Date of Finance and Policy Committee
Financial Position : April 1st - 30th June	23.8.13
Financial Position : April 1st - 31st August	18.10.13
Financial Position : April 1st - 31st October	20.12.13
Financial Position : April 1st - 31st December	14.2.14

- 3.3 The first report submitted to the Finance and Policy Committee on 23rd August 2013 advised Members that there will be an overall underspend in the current year. The report also advised Members that this position reflects action taken by the Corporate Management Team to achieve underspends to help address the significant financial challenges facing the Council over the next few years. The Corporate Management Team will seek to achieve budget underspends through a combination of robust management actions, including;
- holding posts vacant, which will help reduce the number of compulsory redundancies required to balance the 2014/15 budget;
 - achieving planned 2014/15 savings earlier;
 - careful management of budgets to avoid expenditure where this does not have an adverse impact on services; and
 - savings in interest costs by taking advantage of current interest rates structures. As reported previously a comprehensive review of this area has been completed which secured a permanent budget saving of £1m from 2014/15 in interest and loan repayment costs.
- 3.4 The report advised Members that it is currently forecast there will be a total gross managed underspend of between £2.090m to £2.764m. When account is taken of one-off commitments to be funded in the current year and resources earmarked help manage the financial challenges facing the Council over the next three years, as detailed in the updated Medium Term Strategy Report for 2014/15 to 2016/17 considered by the Finance and Policy Committee on 2nd August 2013, there is a net forecast uncommitted underspend at the year end of between £19,000 and £693,000. The range reflects the impact of seasonal and demand led budgets, which are difficult to predict after only three months actual activity. At this stage it is not recommended that this amount is committed until the position is more certain for these areas. In addition, further work is needed to assess the impact of consultation proposals issued by the Government on 25th July 2013 in relation to the 2014/15 and 2015/16 Local Government Settlements and the impact this has on the MTFS forecasts.

4. 2013/14 FORECAST GENERAL FUND OUTTURN – Children's Services Committee

- 4.1 The following table sets out the overall budget position for the Child and Adult Services department budget broken down by Committee, together with a brief comment on the reasons for the forecast outturn.

Budget	Description of Expenditure	June Projected Outturn Adverse/ (Favourable) Worst Case	June Projected Outturn Adverse/ (Favourable) Best Case	Comments
£'000		£'000	£'000	
31,516	Adult Committee	(234)	(234)	Underspend predominantly owing to staffing costs offset by demographic pressures for services
21,210	Child Committee	87	38	Overspend predominantly relates to Children and Families pressures. The range reflects the highly unpredictable and differing care needs within this area.
2,749	Regeneration Committee	90	90	Overspend predominantly linked to shortfall against income projections for Culture and Leisure facilities
55,475	Total Child & Adult	(57)	(106)	

*** The above table includes an amended table to that originally published due to the brackets in the top line being incorrectly placed around 'Adverse'. The reference to (Favourable) is correct.**

4.2 Further details of the specific budget areas this Committee is responsible for are provided in Appendix A.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 It is recommended that Members note the report.

6. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 To update the Members on the Committees forecast 2013/14 General Fund Revenue budget outturn.

7. APPENDICES AVAILABLE ON REQUEST, IN THE MEMBERS LIBRARY AND ON-LINE

Appendix A attached.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

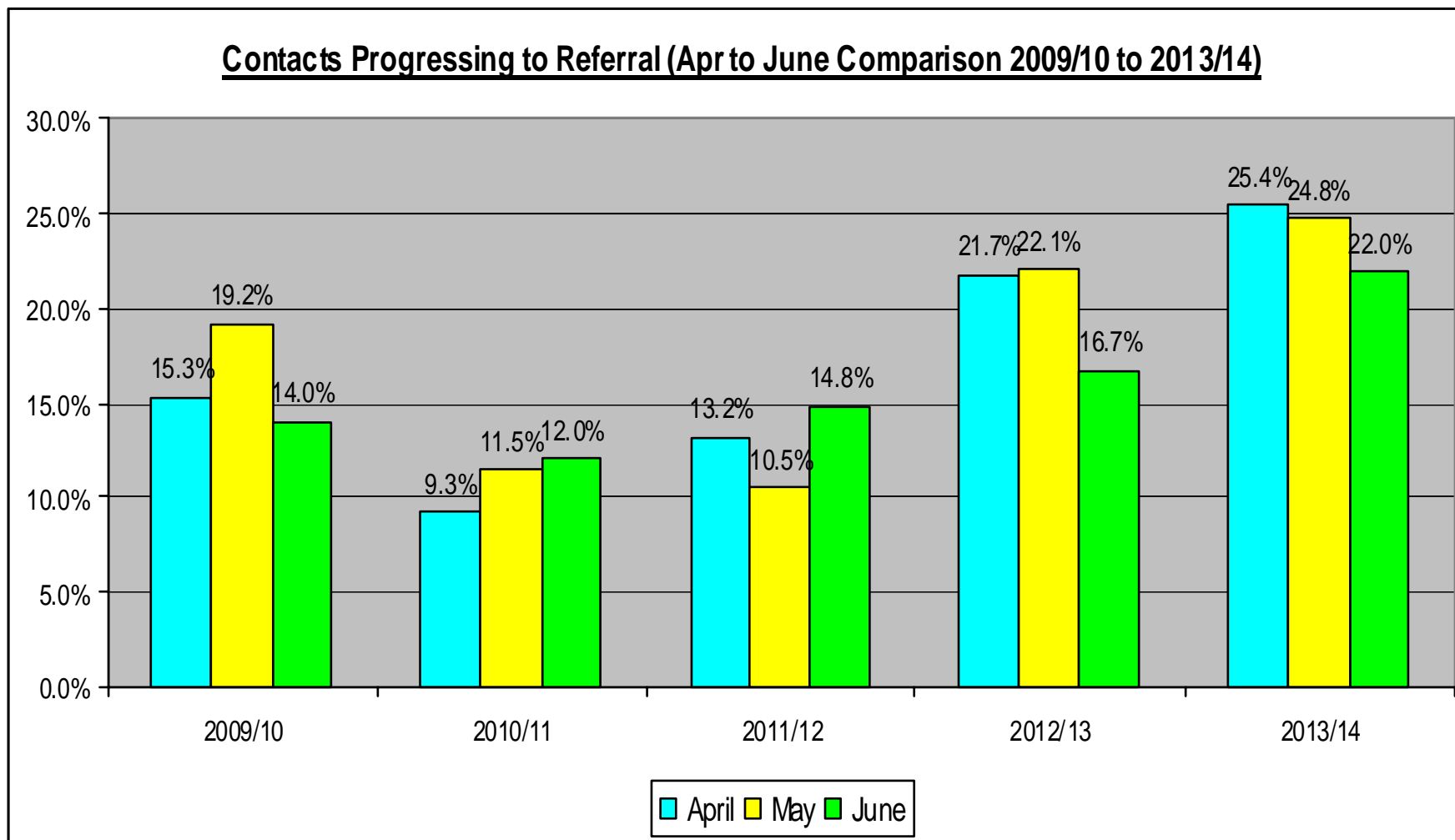
Medium Term Financial Strategy Report referred to Finance and Policy Committee 31st May 2013 and 2nd August 2013.

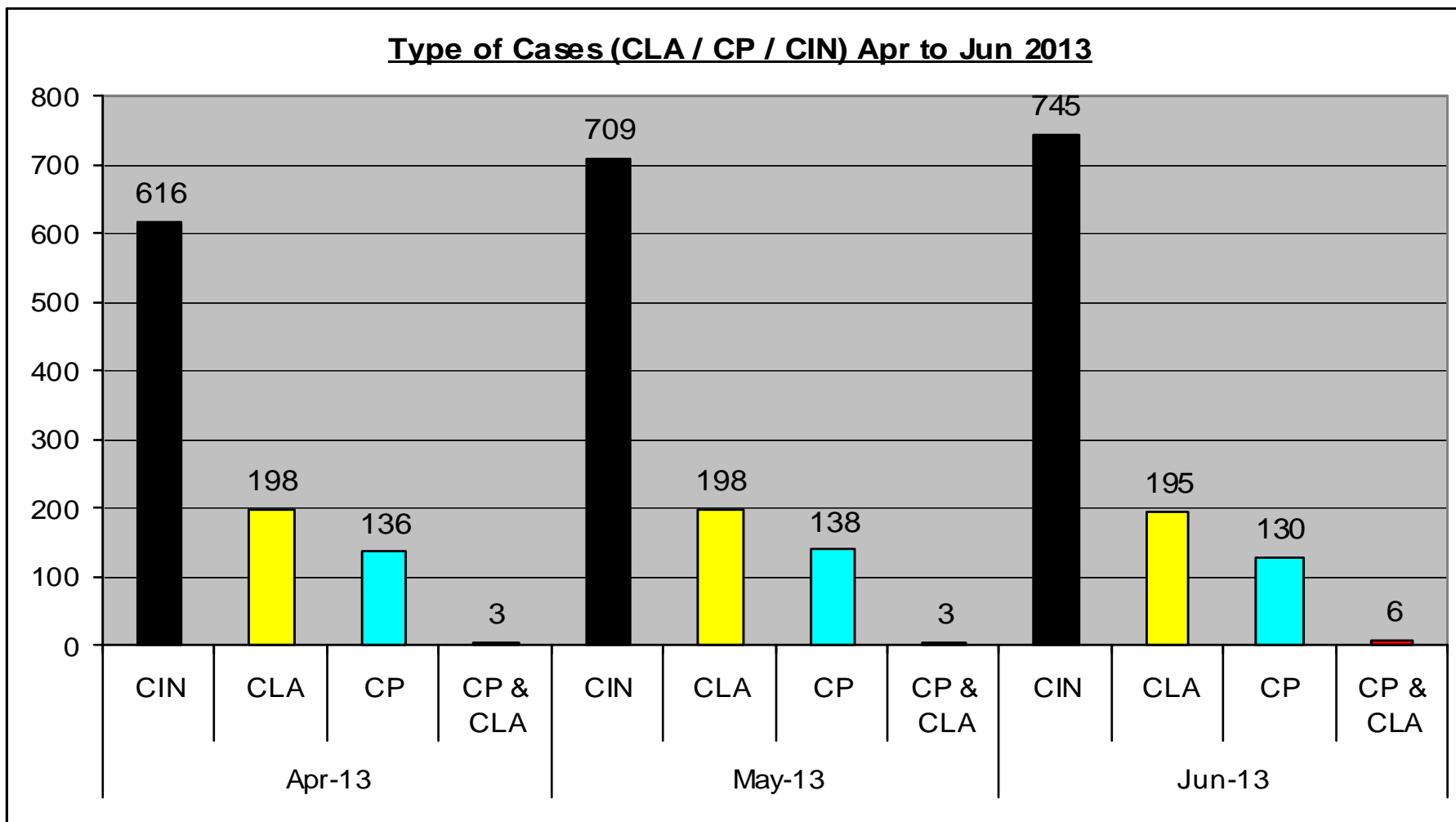
Quarter 1 – Strategic Financial Management Report referred to Finance and Policy Committee 23rd August 2013.

9. CONTACT OFFICER

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CHILD & ADULT SERVICES

7.2 Appendix A

REVENUE FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2013/14 as at 30th June 2013

Overview:

Approved 2013/2014 Budget £'000	Description of Service Area	June		Director's Explanation of Variance
		Projected Outturn Variance - Adverse/ (Favourable) Worst Case £'000	Projected Outturn Variance - Adverse/ (Favourable) Best Case £'000	
Children's Committee				
11,647	Children & Families	106	106	The outturn projection range reflects the highly unpredictable different care needs for Children and Families. The pressure is reduced by 2 high cost, complex cases coming to an end. This area is regularly reviewed to take into account the volatile nature of packages of care around individual children.
6,243	Early Intervention Services	0	0	
57	Information, Sharing & Assessment	0	0	
0	Play & Care	27	27	
462	Youth Offending Service	(76)	(76)	This favourable outturn relates to staffing underspends in this area.
506	Youth Service	0	0	
118	Access to Education	0	(20)	
734	Central Support Services	0	0	
520	Other School Related Expenditure	0	0	
503	Raising Educational Achievement	26	5	Children's Services Software Licence costs are greater than budgeted.
267	Special Educational Needs	0	0	
153	Strategic Management	4	(4)	
21,210	Children's Committee Sub Total	87	38	