

# **CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE**

## **MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD**

12 JULY 2016

The meeting commenced at 4.00 pm in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool

**Present:**

Councillor: Alan Clark (In the Chair)

Councillors: Paul Beck, Ged Hall, Lesley Hamilton, Brenda Harrison,  
John Lauderdale and Shane Moore.

Co-opted members:

David Turner, Primary Head Representative

Young people's representatives:

Daniel Measor, Joshua Scott, Callum Reed, and Lauren Howells.

Also present: Evelyn Leck, Hartlepool Healthwatch

Officers:

Sally Robinson, Director of Child and Adult Services  
Danielle Swainston, Assistant Director, Children's Services  
Mark Patton, Assistant Director, Education, Learning and Skills 0-19  
Jane Young, Head of Service, South Locality Early Help and Social Care  
Zoe McKenna, One Stop Shop Manager  
Louise Allen, Inclusion Coordinator  
Helen White, Participation Manager  
Rebecca Hunter, Participation Worker  
David Cosgrove, Democratic Services Officer

### **7. Apologies for Absence**

Julie Cordiner, C of E Diocesan Representative,  
Michael Lee, RC Diocesan Representative,  
Mark Tilling, Secondary Head Representative.

### **8. Declarations of Interest**

Councillors Beck, Hall and Harrison and Mr Turner declared interests as school governors.

## **9. Minutes of the meeting held on 14 June 2016**

Confirmed.

## **10. Proportion of Young People Not In Education, Employment or Training (NEET) *(Director of Child and Adult Services)***

### **Type of decision**

For information.

### **Purpose of report**

To provide a context in terms of the local authority's responsibilities to support young people as they reach the end of statutory secondary education, i.e. the end of Year 11.

To provide an update on progress in relation to reducing the number of young people who are Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) compared to regional and national performance. In addition, commentary regarding a number of related other key measures were included.

To provide an update on service delivery and capacity in Hartlepool.

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

The One Stop Shop Manager reported that from 2015 young people had been required to continue in education or training until at least the end of the academic year in which they turn 18 years old. Therefore, pupils who started Year 11 or below in September 2015 would now need to continue in learning until at least their 18th birthday. This did not necessarily mean staying in school; young people had a choice about how they continued in education or training post-16, which could be through:

- full-time study in a school, college or with a training provider
- full-time work or volunteering combined with part-time education or training
- an apprenticeship.

The Education and Skills Act 2008 also placed additional duties on local authorities in relation to the Raising of the Participation Age:

- promoting the effective participation of all 16- and 17-year-old residents in their authority, and
- making arrangements to identify young people resident in their area who are not participating.

The Act also transferred the statutory responsibility for securing access to independent and impartial advice and guidance for all students in Years 7-13 from local authorities to schools and colleges.

The report set out in detail the comparative figures for Hartlepool against performance in the Tees Valley, the North East and England for –

- young people (academic years 12, 13 & 14) not in education, employment or training and whose activity is not known;
- comparative figures for those “Not Knowns”;
- The numbers of Hartlepool young people Not in Education, Employment or Training and Not Known by academic age;
- The number of young people NEET by academic age and Hartlepool school attended;
- The number of young people NEET analysed by cause;
- The number of young people with learning difficulties or disabilities that were recorded as NEET or Not Known;
- Hartlepool's RPA (Raising of the Participation Age) data over the last three years;

The One Stop Shop Manager highlighted that the data clearly showed that Hartlepool had made significant progress in reducing young people who are NEET and Not Known across all cohorts with the exception of the Year 12 Not Known cohort, which is the only area to show an increase. Hartlepool's rate of reduction in NEET and Not known was also significantly greater than both the national and regional average.

Hartlepool performed well in terms of Raising the Participation Age for 16- and 17-year-olds. Hartlepool was the 17th highest performing authority in the country in this measure. This improvement could be attributed the focus of the local authority's One Stop Shop team being on those aged 17+ as opposed to those aged 16 who are more likely to make a successful transition after leaving Year 11.

There has also been a significant increase in the number of young people accessing apprenticeships this year.

Draft destination measure data showed that those young people eligible for free school meals or identified as pupil premium, had poorer progression outcomes compared with other children when it comes to Key Stage 4 and 5. Fewer of these children sustain participation in a 6th form college, rather choosing to attend Further Education provision and were less likely to progress to a top third university or Russell Group university compared to other children.

Hartlepool had higher levels of sustained participation in Higher Education than the national and regional average. However, we had fewer young people from the town sustaining participation at a top third or Russell Group university compared to national and regional figures.

The Chair welcomed the report and congratulated all the staff involved in ensuring as many Hartlepool young people were in work or education as possible.

A Member questioned the signposting of young people to the jobs and careers available within the local jobs market. The One Stop Shop Manager stated that that type of guidance was given but its effectiveness relied on accurate information coming in from local businesses. Young people were also guided towards the national careers service.

The Vice-Chair questioned the numbers of apprenticeships in the town. The Council and local colleges supported the majority of these and the Member questioned how many were being supported in local industry. The One Stop Shop Manager indicated that the number of apprenticeships had increased and 3.6% of the total number of young people included within the report statistics were in apprenticeships. That figure did need to grow and much of that was down to getting the message out to young people that an apprenticeship was a viable and valuable alternative for them.

There was concern expressed at the availability of information at school level. The One Stop Shop Manager commented that there was support in sharing the information but that this needed to be more embedded within schools.

Members were also concerned at the availability of permanent job placements at the end of apprenticeships and the support in place for those apprentices whose employer may have failed before they had completed their apprenticeship. The One Stop Shop Manager commented that there was a role for parents and families to support those that may not have a permanent job after an apprenticeship in encouraging them to go for further apprentice opportunities. In terms of companies who failed and their apprentices, the officer stated that the service had experience of this recently and had managed to find new placements for the majority affected.

Concern was expressed at the availability of free computer access to those young people who may not have this at home when they needed to access information on apprenticeships and courses. The One Stop Shop Manager stated that there were a number of venues available with free internet access for young people across the town.

## **Decision**

1. That Hartlepool's strong performance in many of these measures in relation to regional and national benchmarks be noted.
2. That a further report, early in the autumn term of 2016, be submitted outlining how the areas for improvement would be

moved forwards, and how the risks would be mitigated.

3. That an annual performance summary be submitted to Committee each year once regional and national comparators were available.

## **11. Hartlepool Child and Family Poverty Strategy 2016 – 2020** *(Director of Child and Adult Services)*

### **Type of decision**

Budget and Policy Framework.

### **Purpose of report**

To consult members of the Children's Services Committee on the Child and Family Poverty Strategy and to make any recommendations on changes to the strategy.

Finance and Policy Committee would receive a final draft of the Child and Family Poverty that would include any recommendations from the Children's Services Committee at its meeting on 5 September 2016. Full Council would be asked to ratify the strategy in October 2016.

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

The Assistant Director, Children's Services reported that the Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016 repealed much of the Child Poverty Act and redefined poverty with a focus on work and educational attainment. The government's latest child poverty strategy was for the period 2014 - 2017. In this they set out their intentions to support families into work and increase their earnings, to improve living standards and to prevent poor children becoming poor adults through raising of educational attainment. The goal to end child poverty by 2020 remains their commitment, however, the way they measure this has changed.

The indicator most widely used to measure poverty and to assess progress on 2020 target is:

*"Relative poverty: each household's income, adjusted for family size, is compared to median income. Those with less than 60 per cent of median income are classified as poor. The measure is broadly used by many countries and the European Union. In the UK this information is taken from the Households Below Average Income (HBAI) survey."*

The new Welfare Reform and Work Act had retained the relative poverty measurement and included new reporting obligations:-

- Children living in workless households
- Children living in long – term workless households
- Educational attainment of children at end of Key Stage 4

- Educational attainment of disadvantaged children at end of Key Stage 4

The overall level of child poverty in Hartlepool is currently 31% (Child Poverty Commission, 2015).

The Draft Child and Family Poverty Strategy 2016 – 2020 had been developed with partners and a copy of the draft was submitted with the report. There was the risk that the actions set out in the strategy would not have the impact needed on the child poverty level due to external economic factors. However, it was important that the council continued to aspire to the eradication of child poverty and regularly review the action plan to understand progress. Progress on the strategy would, therefore, be reported to Children's Services Committee on an annual basis.

If poverty levels continued to rise then potentially more families would require support from the Local Authority. The impact of the next round of Welfare Reform was expected to further increase demands on services. Members had allocated reserve funding for Child and Family Poverty. The commitment of this additional funding could support system change to prevent children and young people being affected by poverty in the longer term.

The Chair welcomed the report and commented that there were many families in Hartlepool struggling to make ends meet. It was hoped that with the new Prime Minister and government there would be a change in their approach to family poverty. Members supported the Chair's comments and considered that the need for foodbanks was a modern disgrace. The public still required education, however, so they understood that people who received help from the foodbanks had been fully assessed and met strict criteria and were not the 'scroungers' popular belief made them out to be. The Committee discussed the issue at some length expressing their grave concerns at the levels of poverty in the town.

The Assistant Director indicated that the strategy could include reference to the need for greater public awareness/education. There had been some positive support and articles in the Hartlepool Mail recently and the Assistant Director indicated that she would look to further discussions with the Editor as to how this could be moved forward. Members expressed their willingness to support this information/education approach through their own ward newsletters etc.

## **Decision**

1. That the draft Child and Family Poverty Strategy be endorsed.
2. That the inclusion of reference to the need for additional public awareness/education be included in the report submitted to the

Finance and Policy Committee in line with the comments made by Members.

**12. Youth Justice Strategic Plan 2016/ 2017** (*Director of Child and Adult Services*)

**Type of decision**

Budget and Policy Framework.

**Purpose of report**

To consult with members of the Children's Services Committee on the Youth Justice Strategic Plan for 2016-2017.

Finance and Policy Committee would receive a final draft of the Youth Justice Strategic Plan that would include any recommendations from the Children's Services Committee at its meeting on 5 September 2016. Full Council would be asked to ratify the plan on October 2016. The Strategic Plan would also be submitted to the National Youth Justice Board.

**Issue(s) for consideration**

The Head of Service reported that there was a statutory requirement for all Youth Offending Services to annually prepare a local Youth Justice Plan for submission to the national Youth Justice Board. The annual Youth Justice Plan provided an overview of how the Youth Offending Service, the Youth Offending Strategic Management Board and wider partnership ensured that the service had sufficient resources and infrastructure to deliver youth justice services in its area in line with the requirements of the National Standards for Youth Justice Services.

The strategic plan identified key risks to future delivery; these were:

- The unpredictability associated with secure remand episodes and secure remand length had the potential to place significant financial pressure on the Youth Justice Service and the broader Local Authority.
- There had been a national review of Youth Justice Services commissioned by the Secretary of State for Justice Sir Michael Gove being undertaken by Mr Charlie Taylor. The outcomes of the review were expected within the next month, it was, however, anticipated that there would be far reaching reforms that would be introduced within this financial year.
- Implementation of Asset Plus was a significant practice change in relation to the core business within the team, it was important that the service continued to support staff through training, coaching and oversight to ensure high standard of assessment and planning.

The Head of Service highlighted that there had been a significant reduction in grant from the Youth Justice Board and from partner agencies for 2016/17. The settlement notification had not been confirmed until April 2016; consequently it had been difficult to plan for 2016/17. However, provision had been made to balance the budget for 2016/17 in anticipation of a reduction in funding pending a service review. It was expected that further budget reductions would take place over the forthcoming years.

The Chair noted the risks in relation to remand costs and questioned what level of costs applied. The Director of Child and Adult Services stated that secure remand costs for young people was around £5000 per week per individual. There was some grant available from the Youth Justice Board but this was limited and did not come anywhere near meeting the costs that could be placed on the local authority. There was also a concern that the current review may devolve down further these responsibilities to local authorities.

A Member complimented the work of the service and the Anti-Social Behaviour Team who had an excellent record in the community. The Committee discussed the issues around young people, anti-social behaviour and the activities available to young people across the town. There was concern expressed at the apparent lack of parental involvement/control in many anti-social behaviour incidents involving young people, though it was noted by the committee that the vast majority of all anti-social behaviour was caused by adults.

There was concern expressed by those present at the costs of secure remand facilities but the Director stated that these costs were outside of the control of the local authority. If young people were placed in secure remand, after a certain time period, they did become 'looked after' by the local authority and then had access to the same facilities and support that other looked after children had.

### **Decision**

That the draft Youth Justice Plan 2016-2017 as submitted be endorsed.

## **13. Revised Developer Contributions – Early Years and School Infrastructure Plan** (*Director of Child and Adult Services*)

### **Type of decision**

Key Decision – test (ii) applies – Forward Plan Reference No. CAS 048/16.

### **Purpose of report**

The purpose of the report was to seek approval to the revised costs for



Section 106 education developer contributions and to inform Members of the revised formula for primary pupil yields.

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

The Assistant Director, Education, Learning and Skills 0-19 reported that the Early Years and Schools Infrastructure Plan (EYSIP) had been approved by the Committee in February 2015. Within the plan there is a section which stipulated the level of Section 106 contributions housing developers would be expected to provide for education provision. Section 106 contributions allowed planning authorities to enter into a legally-binding agreements with a landowners in association with the granting of a planning applications. Contributions were sought from developments where the Council had identified that there was pressure on school places. These contributions may be discounted if sufficient places were available when the trigger points in developments were reached. When reviewing spare capacity the Local Authority also took into account other developments in the vicinity, and information on projected future pupil numbers.

The Local Authority had recently received up to date National School Delivery Cost Benchmarking information. This information had been compiled in conjunction with the Local Government Association (LGA), Education Funding Agency (EFA), and National Association of Construction Frameworks (NACF) and formally supported and approved by the Infrastructure and Projects Authority, part of the Cabinet Office.

It was proposed that this information be used in future to calculate the Section 106 contributions for education provision. Any contributions secured by S.106 education are only to be used to create additional school places. The EYSIP stated that primary schools should be no more than two form of entry (420 pupils) and secondary schools no more than 1250 pupils. The updated costs per pupil place are:

<b>PRIMARY</b>	£13,755
<b>SECONDARY</b>	£14,102

The cost factor would be published annually by the Council to reflect the average capital cost of creating an additional school place. The most up to date published cost at the point of an application's determination would be used for the purpose of calculating the financial requirement. This update was also timely in light of the consultation underway on the draft Local Plan.

The report also set out in detail revised pupil yield numbers for developments. When a planning application was received an expected pupil yield from the development was calculated, taking consideration of the size of development (number of properties). A local formula had previously been developed, reflecting the number of pupils expected to reside in the dwellings during and beyond completion of the development.

The methodology used to calculate the pupil yields had been revised so that it more closely matched current trends. This had, therefore, increased the projected pupil yields. Tees Valley Unlimited had projected the new figures which were:

17.6 community primary school pupils per 100 houses built.  
3.9 Roman Catholic primary pupils per 100 houses built.  
21.5 primary pupils per 100 houses built.

The figures for secondary school places were yet to be received. The Early Years and School Infrastructure Plan would be updated to reflect the amended figures.

The Assistant Director indicated that in certain circumstances it may be necessary for the Council to deliver infrastructure projects ahead of the related development trigger points to ensure that schools are able to manage the impact or to take advantage of other funding opportunities which may be time limited. Such circumstances are only likely to occur where the infrastructure is intended to manage the cumulative impact of a number of sites.

The forward funding of projects did not remove the obligation from developers to fund the infrastructure that was shown to be necessary to mitigate the impact of their development. The Council will endeavour to make clear the intention to forward fund a project at the point of completion of the legal agreement but reserves the right to adjust the timing of delivery of an agreed education infrastructure project as necessary during the lifetime of the related development.

The Chair welcomed the revised figures. Members were concerned that they had heard of instances when S.106 monies had been 'diverted' away from education and questioned if this revision guaranteed the funds. The Assistant Director stated that there had been inconsistencies. The funds had to be set aside by the developer to be called upon when needed by the local authority. The funds did not always have to fund new schools or school places and it was up to the local authority to call upon the funds. They funds could be used for local infrastructure schemes as well, such as road or footpath schemes that may make it easier to access existing school places.

A Member commented that, as he saw it, the major drawback of the S.106 funding arrangements was that a certain percentage of the development had to be in place before the developer was required to make the contributions. This had led to large scale developments placing significant pressure on local schools before completion. The Assistant Director acknowledged those issues and indicated that much centred on how the risks were managed.

### **Decision**

1. That the revised costs for Section 106 developer contributions as reported be approved.
2. That the revised primary pupil yield figures as reported be noted.

## **14. Suitability Projects – Update** (*Director of Child and Adult Services*)

### **Type of decision**

Key Decision (test (i)/(ii) Forward Plan Reference No. CAS050/16.

### **Purpose of report**

The purpose of the report was to update Children's Services Committee on a scheme which had been approved by Committee on 8 March 2016 but which now required further funding to realise better solutions for the school involved. The report also sought approval for an additional scheme.

Further details relating to the schemes was outlined in Appendix 1 to the report. The appendix contained exempt information under Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972 (as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006) namely, information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information (para. 3).

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

The Assistant Director, Education, Learning and Skills 0-19 reported that at the meeting of 8 March 2016 Members agreed a number of schemes that had been selected for progression by School's Capital Sub Group using Suitability Funding.

One of the schemes approved was for the demolition of mobile classrooms at Rift House Primary School to be replaced by an extension to the main building. The cost approved was based on estimated costs prior to feasibility work being carried out.

Since the submission to the March meeting urgent works at Springwell School had been identified which would allow the school to better manage the intake of pupils with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) in September 2016.

The report set out brief details of the two schemes and the costs associated were contained within the confidential appendix to the report.

### **Decision**

1. That the additional funding for Rift House Primary School identified within the report and the appendix to the report be approved. The appendix contained exempt information under Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972 (as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006) namely, information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information (para. 3).
2. That the funding request for Springwell School identified within the report and the appendix to the report be approved. The appendix contained exempt information under Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972 (as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006) namely, information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information (para. 3).
3. That the Committee notes that further work would be carried out around ASD provision in Hartlepool and how Springwell School could be developed to accommodate future needs.

## **15. Adoption Annual Report 2015/16 and Adoption Agency Statement of Purpose 2016/17** (*Director of Child and Adult Services*)

### **Type of decision**

Non-key decision.

### **Purpose of report**

For Children's Services Committee to note the Annual Report of the Adoption Agency 2015/16; and

For Children's Services Committee to approve the Adoption Agency Statement of Purpose for 2016/17.

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

The Assistant Director, Children's Services reported that it was a requirement of the National Minimum Standards that the service produced a Statement of Purpose for adoption services and reviews these at least annually. It was also a requirement that the executive side of the local authority received six monthly reports detailing the management, outcomes and functioning of the Adoption services. This information was provided within the Annual Report, attached as Appendix 1 to the report. The Statement of Purpose for 2016/17 was set

out in Appendix 2 to the report.

The Assistant Director also updated the Committee on the development of the Tees Valley adoption agency. A full report would be submitted to Committee in the near future. Members noted that Hartlepool had a particularly good record in relation to adoption and were concerned that this could be lost in a wider Tees Valley agency. The Assistant Director reassured Members and indicated that all the Tees Valley authorities had a good track record in relation to adoption and Hartlepool was leading on the work around the potential development of a Tees Valley agency in line with the requirements of central government for larger regional agencies.

### **Decision**

1. That the Adoption Agency Annual Report be noted.
2. That the Statement of Purpose in line with the Adoption National Minimum Standards 2011 be approved.

## **16. Fostering Services Annual Report 2015/16 and Statement of Purpose 2016/17** (*Director of Child and Adult Services*)

### **Type of decision**

Non-key decision.

### **Purpose of report**

For Children's Services Committee to note the Annual Report of the Fostering Service 2015/16.

For Children's Services Committee to approve the Fostering Services Statement of Purpose for 2016/17.

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

The Assistant Director, Children's Services reported that it was a requirement of the National Minimum Standards that the service produced a Statement of Purpose for fostering services and reviewed these at least annually. It was also a requirement that the executive side of the local authority receive three monthly reports detailing the management, outcomes and functioning of the Fostering Services. This information was provided within the annual report attached at Appendix 1 to the report. The Statement of Purpose for 2016/17 was attached at Appendix 2 to the report.

### **Decision**

1. That the Fostering Annual Report be noted.
2. That the Statement of Purpose in line with the Fostering National Minimum Standards 2011 be approved.

## **17. To Nominate Local Authority Representatives to Serve on School Governing Bodies** *(Director of Child and Adult Services)*

### **Type of decision**

Non-key decision.

### **Purpose of report**

To update members of the Children's Services Committee in respect of vacancies that currently exist for local authority representative governors, and to request that members recommend nominees to the governing bodies where vacancies currently exist.

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

The Assistant Director, Education, Learning and Skills 0-19 reported that the requirement that local authority governors were now nominated by the local authority but appointed by the governing body on the basis that the nominee has the skills to contribute to the effective governance and success of the school, and meets any other eligibility criteria they may have set had been the subject of previous reports to Committee.

A schedule at Appendix 1 to the report set out details of vacancies which currently existed and the proposed nominations to those vacancies. The appendix contained exempt information under Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended by the Local Government), (Access to Information), (Variations Order 2006) namely, information relating to any individual (Para 1).

### **Decision**

That the applicants as set out in Appendix 1 to the report, in respect of local authority nominations for consideration by governing bodies where vacancies currently exist be approved as reported. The appendix contained exempt information under Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended by the Local Government), (Access to Information), (Variations Order 2006) namely, information relating to any individual (Para 1).

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

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

### Resignation of Co-opted Member

The Assistant Director, Education, Learning and Skills 0-19 reported that the Church of England Diocesan representative to the Committee, Mrs Julie Cordiner, had submitted her resignation to the Committee as personal circumstances meant she could no longer undertake her duties to the level she would wish to maintain. The Chair requested that the resignation be noted and that a letter on behalf of the Committee be sent to Mrs Cordiner thanking her for her contribution to the Committee and education in Hartlepool.

### Throston School

The Deputy Ceremonial Mayor, Councillor Beck, informed the Committee of an awards event at Throston Primary School relating to a pupil's development of a 'walk to school' badge.

### Extended Pre-School Provision for 3 and 4 year old children

The Assistant Director, Children's Services reported that as Members were aware, the government had announced the extension of pre-school provision for 3 and 4 year old children from 15 hours per week to 30 hours per week. While this posed no significant issues for private child care provision within the town, there were some specific issues relating to school nursery provision. The government had indicated that there would be a limited pot of additional funding which local authorities could bid for in order to assist in meeting the capacity issues that may exist in some schools. The details of the bidding process had only very recently been announced and the deadline for submission of bids was before the next meeting of the Committee, so the Assistant Director sought delegation to the Director of Child and Adult Services in consultation with the Chair of the Committee for the finalisation and submission of an appropriate bid. A report on the bid would be submitted to the September meeting.

### **Decision**

That delegated authority be granted to the Director of Child and Adult

Services to approve the submission of an appropriate bid for funding in consultation with the Chair of Committee as reported.

The Committee noted that the next meeting would be held on Tuesday 13 September 2016 at 4.00 pm in the Civic Centre, Hartlepool.

The meeting concluded at 5.30 pm

**P J DEVLIN**

**CHIEF SOLICITOR**

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