

CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE

MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD

14th November 2017

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

Present:

Councillor: Alan Clark (In the Chair)

Councillors: Brenda Harrison, Marjorie James, John Lauderdale, Shane Moore and George Morris.

Co-opted members:

Jo Heaton, C of E Diocesan Representative

Mark Tilling, Secondary Schools Headteacher Representative

Alan Chapman, Special Schools Headteacher Representative

Healthwatch representatives: Evelyn Leck and Ruby Marshall.

Young people's representative:

Callum Reed

Officers: Sally Robinson, Director, Children's and Joint Commissioning Services
Danielle Swainston, Assistant Director, Children's Services
Mark Patton, Assistant Director, Education, Learning and Skills 0-19
Steve Hilton, Senior Public Relations Officer
Amanda Whitaker, Democratic Services Team

48. Apologies for Absence

David Turner, Primary Schools Headteacher Representative

49. Declarations of Interest

Whilst no specific declarations of interests were made, a number of Committee members advised that they had interests as declared at previous meetings of the Committee.

50. Minutes of the meeting held on 17 October 2017

Received.

A Member highlighted that at the October meeting of the Committee, the

Assistant Director, Education had confirmed verbally that the additional Council funding of £100k provided for the Priority Schools Building Programme – Phase 1 for Barnard Grove Primary School - had been included within the area calculations submitted in the report considered to the Committee (minute 28 of the meeting of the Committee held on 12th September 2017 refers). Following disappointment expressed that the verbal update had not been confirmed in writing, the Assistant Director undertook to confirm by e mail, to the Member, the update reported verbally at the previous meeting. The Assistant Director indicated also that he was content to meet with the Member, following the meeting, to discuss other issues raised in the meeting regarding issues of concern, including repairs, at Barnard Grove Primary School.

51. School Admission Arrangements for 2019-20 (*Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services*)

Type of decision

Key decision, test (ii) applies. Forward Plan reference number 068/18 CAS

Purpose of report

To consider and agree the proposed admission arrangements for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools in Hartlepool for 2019/20 academic year.

Issue(s) for consideration

It was reported that all admission authorities were required to set admission arrangements annually. Where changes were proposed to admission arrangements, the admission authority had to first consult on those arrangements. If there were no changes proposed they only needed to be consulted on at least every 7 years. There were no changes proposed to the current admission arrangements for Community and Voluntary Controlled schools that required public consultation.

The published admission number for each Community and Voluntary Controlled School was detailed in appendix 1 to the report which Committee was requested to approve. The admission numbers for Voluntary Aided, Foundation Schools and Academies were included for information.

The admission arrangements including the over-subscription criteria in respect of Community and Voluntary Controlled schools, for which no changes were proposed, were set out in appendix 2 to the report.

The coordinated Admission Schemes for primary schools and secondary schools for 2019/20 would be formulated and published on the Authority's

website by 1 January 2018, in accordance with the 2014 Schools Admissions Code.

Decision

1. That in respect of Community and Voluntary Controlled schools admission arrangements for 2019/20 the admission numbers as set out in Appendix 1 to the report be approved.
2. That in respect of Community and Voluntary Controlled schools admission arrangements for 2019/20 the current admission arrangements as set out in Appendix 2 to the report be approved.

The Chair highlighted that the above decisions were agreed unanimously.

52. Departmental Annual Procurement Report – Children's Services Committee *(Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services)*

Type of decision

Non Key

Purpose of report

To advise the Committee of contractual activities where the annual value of the anticipated contract exceeds £60,000 for goods and services or £100,000 for works.

Issue(s) for consideration

The report provided information on existing contracts for Children's Services and enabled the Committee to provide input to the strategic direction for the future delivery of these services. This enabled Members to consider potential changes to the service specification, or potential alternative delivery models, where there is a robust business case. In order to achieve these objectives the Department had produced a Departmental Annual Procurement Report (DAPR) for Members to review. The DAPR was divided into four Appendices as detailed in the report. Each appendix consisted of two parts which were detailed in terms of the procurement processes for contracts commencing prior to 1 September 2018 and those procurement processes for contracts commencing on or after 1 September 2018.

Appended to the report were details of procurement processes either underway or forthcoming which had Members' interests recorded against

them together with information on those contracts. Those appendices 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)(paragraph 3).

A report had been presented to the Finance and Policy Committee in September which set out all contracts across the council. Members had highlighted concerns about the CAMHS (LAC) contract and the service currently being provided and had asked for further consideration by Children's Services Committee. A review was currently being undertaken in relation to the support provided to Looked After Children in relation to their emotional wellbeing. Options were being considered and these would be presented to Children's Services Committee once an options appraisal had been completed. The Committee referred to concerns regarding the current service and expressed support for the review which was being undertaken.

Decision

The Committee noted the contents of the appendices to the report.

53. Educational Outcomes for Children Looked After *(Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services)*

Type of decision

Non Key

Purpose of report

To provide indicative performance information in relation to the educational outcomes for Children Looked After (CLA) for the school year 2016-17.

Issue(s) for consideration

The report provided an update of the educational outcomes of looked after children monitored through the Virtual School for 2016-17. There were in total 289 looked after children with 189 who attended school in Hartlepool. There were also 82 children who were looked after by other local authorities and lived in Hartlepool. Of these children, 38 attended Hartlepool schools. The Committee discussed issues arising from the report which included information relating to school attendance, exclusions, attainment on entry to care and academic progress in terms of indicative outcomes.

It was proposed that the Virtual School continue to monitor pupil progress and target resources to support pupils to make above expected progress and provide a range of opportunities via Pupil Premium Plus to support the academic achievement of children looked after.

Members discussed the report in detail. There was recognition of the range of issues arising from the report. The Committee welcomed the direction of travel outlined by Officers and paid tribute to the Virtual School Team, with particular reference to the Virtual School Head Teacher. Whilst assured by updates provided by Officers, it was considered that it would be beneficial for future reports to include additional information in terms of statistics including a breakdown according to gender and spread across schools. It was suggested that a future report would be potentially useful relating to outcomes post education for Looked After Children.

With regard to a suggestion that the views of Looked After Children be sought in terms of what is working well and potential barriers, the role of the Corporate Parenting Forum was highlighted. The Chair added that it was his mission to ensure the voices of Young People are at the heart of the Council's decision making process. It was noted that only the elected Members of this Committee were members of the Forum. It was suggested that it could be an option for a meeting of the Forum to be held once/twice year when all co-opted/additional members of this Committee could be invited also for consideration of an identified topic.

Decision

- (i) The following proposals were approved:-
 - (a) continue to monitor pupil progress and target resources to support pupils to make above expected progress.
 - (b) provide a range of opportunities via Pupil Premium Plus to support the academic achievement of children looked after.
- (ii) That consideration be given to extending the membership of the Corporate Parent Forum, to include all co-opted/additional members of this Committee, on the basis suggested at the meeting.

54. The Future of Space 2 Learn (*Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services*)

Type of decision

Non Key

Purpose of report

To provide Members with an update on the future of Space 2 Learn and

to seek endorsement of the proposed action.

Issue(s) for consideration

The report provided an update on the future of Space 2 Learn which had opened in September 2010. The build had been funded using Locally Coordinated Voluntary Aided Programme and Schools Devolved Capital. A five year lease had been granted to the Council to manage and maintain the building. This lease agreement had expired but the Council continued to manage and maintain the building. All costs associated with managing and staffing the building had been funded by Schools' Forum; at a cost of approximately £100,000 per annum.

The Committee was advised that in 2016, the Schools' Forum had questioned the value for money that S2L delivered to all schools. It was acknowledged that all schools in Hartlepool could access the facilities and expertise, but that a decreasing fraction of all schools did. Schools felt it would be better if S2L offered some kind of service level agreement that individual schools could buy into. This would then mean that those schools who needed the facility could buy back the service. After much debate and discussion, Schools Forum made the decision to grant two further academic years of funding to S2L to cover the school years 2016-17 and 2017-8. It was hoped that during this time, an appropriate funding model could be developed with schools which was sustainable. Schools Forum confirmed this decision in September 2017. It had not been possible to produce a sustainable service funding model in partnership with schools. Therefore, S2L will cease to operate on 31 August 2018. The staff and all stakeholder partners, including the Church of England diocese, are aware of this. As the building lease had expired, the Council would hand the building back to St Hild's school and the Church of England diocese before 31 August 2018. The school and the diocese would be responsible for determining the future use of the building.

In September, Schools' Forum had considered a number of options for the assets contained within S2L, in particular the equipment inside the building. It was felt that some of this equipment could enhance the emerging offer at the newly developing Centre for Excellence in Creative Arts (CECA), also on the 'St Hild's campus'. Schools' Forum agreed at a meeting on 21 September 2017 that the equipment within S2L will be transferred over to CECA once S2L has ceased to operate at the end of the formal school year (July 2018). This will allow for the most valued elements of the S2L offer to continue at a charge to interested schools. This would also enable the equipment loan scheme that some schools utilise at present to be continued for some time.

Following presentation of the report, for purpose of clarity, Councillor James highlighted that she had been a full voting member of the Building Schools for the Future Steering Group.

Committee Members expressed regret at the situation set out in the

report. Following concerns expressed regarding the accuracy of recent media coverage relating to the report, the Senior Public Relations Officer undertook to clarify the situation to the media.

Decision

- a) The Committee noted the contents of this report.
- b) The Committee noted the decision by schools to cease funding S2L after 31 August 2018.
- c) The Committee endorsed the decision by Schools' Forum to transfer relevant internal assets from S2L to the adjacent CECA.

55. To Nominate Local Authority Representatives to Serve on School Governing Bodies *(Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services)*

Type of decision

Non-Key

Purpose of report

To update Members 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 exist.

Issue(s) for consideration

A schedule was submitted with the report setting out details of vacancies which currently exist, together with applications received. The individual applications were set out in a confidential appendix to the report which 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 Local Authority nomination be forwarded for consideration by the governing body of Rossmere Primary School

The Chair advised that the above decision was agreed unanimously

56. Transfer of School Budgets 2018/19 (*Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services*)

Type of decision

Non-Key

Purpose of report

To seek the Committee's approval to make a disapplication request to the Secretary of State for Education.

Issue(s) for consideration

The report highlighted that the Council is responsible for providing support to children in schools and young people age up to 25 years with Special Educational Needs. This support is funded from the High Needs Block of funding. In the financial years 2013/14 to 2016/17, expenditure on these support services had been less than the available funding. Therefore, the Schools Forum had agreed that £0.550m from the High Needs Block should be transferred to the Schools Block. This decision required annual approval by the Forum.

It was noted that as part of a base lining exercise for the introduction of the National Funding Formula, the Education Skills and Funding Agency 'based lined' this annual transfer by permanently assigning the £0.550m funding to the Schools Block. However, this decision had failed to recognise that demand, and therefore expenditure, on High Needs support had increased in the current year and would exceed the available recurring budget. In 2017/18 this overspend could be funded from an existing risk reserve but this is not sustainable in 2018/19 or beyond.

To address the High Needs Block recurring budget pressure, School Forum and local authority officers had reviewed this position. After consultation with all schools, the Schools Forum voted at its meeting on the 1 November 2017 to transfer the historic £0.550m back from Schools Block to the High Needs Block for 2018/19. As the £0.550m exceeded 0.5% of the Schools Block, the local authority had to apply to the Secretary of State for Education for disapplication before 30 November 2017 to implement the decision of the Schools Forum. The decision of the Schools Forum enables the Council to determine the per pupil rates paid to individual schools/providers for the children and young people they are educating and supporting in their school or educational setting.

The Committee sought clarification regarding whether consideration had been given to alternatives which would not require the approval of the Secretary of State. In response, the rationale for the decision of the Schools Forum was explained to the Committee.

Decision

- (a) The Committee noted the contents of this report.
- (b) The Committee noted the decision by Schools Forum to move £0.550m from the Schools Block to the High Needs Block for 2018/19.
- (c) The Committee agreed to the Council making a disapplication request to the Secretary of State for Education in order to implement the decision of the Schools Forum for the 2018/19 financial year.

57. Supported Accommodation and Outreach Support for Vulnerable Young People – Procurement Outcome *(Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services)*

Type of Decision

For information only.

Purpose of Report

The report informed members of the outcome of the procurement exercise to commission supported accommodation services and support for vulnerable young people.

Issue(s) for consideration

Further to minute 85 of the meeting of the Committee held on 21 March, 2017, the report provided an update on the outcome of the procurement exercise to commission supported accommodation services and support for vulnerable young people. The report set out details of the background, categories of service and procurement process.

The successful providers were detailed in the report as follows:-

Lot	Provider	Size of provision
Lot 1	Sanctuary	10 self contained units, 2 crash pads, 1 self contained flat
Lot 2	Thirteen Group	6 self contained 2 bedroom units
Lot 3	Thirteen Group	Minimum of 2,250 hours of support

It was noted that the new contracts would begin on 24th October 2017 for all services.

The Chair advised the Committee that the Vice Chair and himself would be visiting providers. The Chair agreed to a request from Councillor Moore that he would be included in those visits. It was noted also that Sanctuary was looking to arrange an Open Day. The Committee was advised that when information was available, relating to the Open Day,

details would be circulated to all Committee Members.

Decision

The Committee noted the contract awards for supported accommodation services for vulnerable young people.

58. Children's Hub Update *(Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services)*

Type of Decision

For information only.

Purpose of Report

To provide members with an update on progress of the Children's Hub.

Issue(s) for consideration

The Committee was reminded that the Children's Hub delivers a service on behalf of Hartlepool and Stockton on Tees councils which began operations on June 1st 2016. The Hub was an integrated single point of access across North Tees providing multi-agency triage and assessment of enquiries about children.

It was noted that 60% of the Children's Hub work relates to Stockton and 40% to Hartlepool children. A table set out in the report provided a summary of Hub activity for the period 1st June 2016 to 31st May 2017. Despite increasing demand and more complex enquiries there has been an overall improvement in a number of key areas as set out in the report. The report addressed also quality assurance issues and advised the Committee that North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC) had provided an external view of the Hub in Spring 2017 and whilst it did not audit any individual cases it had provided a positive report on the Hub's progress to date with recommendations for further business improvements. During their review, a number of business improvements had been recommended which were detailed in the report.

In-depth audits of the Hub's handling of enquiries had been undertaken also. On both occasions this had involved a team of local authority Heads of Service/ Service Managers, a senior officer from Cleveland Police, managers from TEWV and the NHS Foundation Trust and education colleagues. A summary of the audit findings was set out in the report. A further audit had been carried out as discussed in the recommendations from North Yorkshire County Council peer review. 60% of Hub activity results in No Further Action (NFA) or Advice and Guidance. There are many reasons for this and a recent audit (August 2017) has identified a number of factors which were also set out in the report together with the next stage of development for the Hub.

Following clarification sought from the Chair regarding the

categorisations adopted by the Hub, the Director provided an assurance that an additional category had been introduced recently to reflect those occasions that only information is sent to the hub without any requirement for action.

Decision

The report was noted.

The meeting concluded at 6.00 p.m.

P J DEVLIN

CHIEF SOLICITOR

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