

# **CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE**

## **MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD**

4 June 2019

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

### **Present:**

Councillor: Leisa Smith (In the Chair)

Councillors: Lesley Hamilton, Brenda Harrison, John Lauderdale, Sue Little, Shane Moore and Barbara Ward

Also Present: Councillors Marjorie James and Ann Marshall

### **Co-opted Members:**

Joanne Wilson, RC Diocese Representative  
Mark Tilling, Secondary Schools Head Representative  
David Turner, Primary Schools Head Representative  
Zoe Westley, Special Schools Head Representative

Healthwatch Representative: Evelyn Leck

Officers: Sally Robinson, Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services  
Danielle Swainston, Assistant Director, Joint Commissioning  
Jane Young, Assistant Director, Children's and Families' Services  
Karen Douglas-Weir, Head of Service for Looked After Children and Care Leavers  
Denise Wimpenny, Principal Democratic Services Officer

## **1. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Jo Heaton, C of E Diocesan Representative.

## **2. Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Barbara Ward declared a personal interest in relation to her work as a Director of Creativity and Wellbeing. Councillor Little declared a prejudicial interest in relation to Minute 6.

## **3. Minutes of the meeting held on 19 March 2019**

Received.

#### **4. Presentation – Introduction to Children's Services** (*Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services*)

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

The Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services provided a detailed and comprehensive presentation in relation to Children's Services. The presentation included background information in terms of the functions of the Children's Services Committee, details of service areas within the department, the current management structure as well as the roles and remits of the various service areas within the Children's and Joint Commissioning Services Department.

The former Chair of the Committee, Councillor Harrison, took the opportunity to express the Committee's thanks to the staff for their hard work and commitment which was reflected in a prestigious award received earlier this year.

##### **Decision**

That the contents of the presentation and comments of the former Chair be noted.

#### **5. Youth Service – Future Delivery Model** (*Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services*)

##### **Type of decision**

Non-key.

##### **Purpose of report**

To seek approval from the Committee for a restructure within the youth service to maximise the available resources and remodel the service to provide an effective local authority youth offer going forward.

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

The report provided background information in relation to the work of the youth service and the importance that provision be reviewed and remodelled in order to be responsive to what young people had confirmed they want and to meet emerging needs. The remodelled offer would continue to provide the range of open access services, as set out in the report, and an enhanced targeted offer to support vulnerable young people.

The remodelling and restructure proposed would impact upon officers working within the youth service and be subject to full formal consultation with staff and trade unions. One post may be at risk of redundancy following staffing consultation. However, steps would be taken to

mitigate this risk through providing voluntary redundancy and redeployment opportunities.

The Chair shared with the Committee the contents of an e-mail that had been received from the Youth and Community Co-ordinator at Wharton Annexe that paragraph 3.2 of the report was misleading which was acknowledged by the Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services. Members debated issues arising from the report and the Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services provided clarification in response to issues raised.

Reference was made to the remodelling proposals and how the youth service was delivered. The secondary schools representative highlighted the need for a more joined up approach with schools in relation to the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme. The difficulties around engaging with hard to reach groups was debated.

A Member commented on the 65% reduction in funding for the youth service over a number of years and the impact as a result. Concerns were raised regarding the key challenges facing youth services given the level of funding cuts to services over a number of years. Whilst the benefits of attaching a youth club to every school was acknowledged, the financial implications of such an arrangement, given the current financial climate, were questioned.

### **Decision**

The Committee approved the remodelling of the Council's Youth Service offer and associated restructure.

**Prior to consideration of the following item of business Councillor Little left the meeting in accordance with her earlier declaration.**

## **6. Children's 5-19 Activities Grant** *(Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services)*

### **Type of decision**

Non key.

### **Purpose of report**

To seek approval from the Committee for the service specification, application form and monitoring information in relation to the children's 5-19 activities grant.

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

The Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services reported on the background to information submitted to previous Committee's when it was agreed that a new 5-19 activities grant initiative for a period of 6 months be approved and the amount to be provided from the Child and

Family Poverty Reserve be limited to a maximum of £50,000 subject to a number of provisions set out in the report.

Members were referred to the service specification, application form and monitoring information in relation to the grant, attached as an Appendix to the report.

In relation to the number of young people accessing provision, a Member commented on the potential for double counting in the event that young people accessed more than one service and queried how this would be monitored and reflected in the monitoring figures. It was suggested that additional information be included on the monitoring form to capture this data which the Director agreed to explore.

Members reiterated concerns expressed at previous meetings that in view of previous funding allocated for the provision of these activities along with the Committee's desire to maximise the impact of the Child and Family Poverty Reserve across the whole town, to a larger and more diverse group of children and young people, no further funding would be granted. The importance of individual organisations providing an exit strategy to manage the non-recurrent nature of this funding was emphasised.

### **Decision**

- (i) That the service specification, application form and monitoring information in relation to the 5-19 activities grant, attached at Appendix 1, be approved.
- (ii) That the suggestion that additional information to be included on the monitoring form be explored.

**At this point in the meeting Councillors James and Marshall left the meeting and Councillor Little returned to the meeting.**

## **7. St David's Walk Children's Home** *(Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services)*

### **Type of decision**

Non-key decision

### **Purpose of report**

To provide an update in relation to the development of St David's Walk Children's Home and present the Statement of Purpose for approval.

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

The report provided the background to the Ofsted decision that St David's Walk Children's Home would need to be registered as a provision in its own right. The requirements of the Care Standards Act 2000 were set out in the report which included the need for a Statement of Purpose,

a copy of which was attached at Appendix 1.

**Decision**

- (i) That the Statement of Purpose be approved.
- (ii) The report was noted.

**8. Amendments to Instruments of Government for: -**

- **Clavering Primary School**
- **Rossmere Primary School**

*(Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services)*

**Type of decision**

Non key.

**Purpose of report**

To seek approval of the Children's Services Committee to amendments to the Instruments of Governance for Clavering Primary School and Rossmere Primary School in accordance with the School Governance (Constitution) (England) Regulations 2012 as amended by the School Governance (Constitution and Federation) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014.

**Issue(s) for consideration**

The Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services reported that the Governing bodies of Clavering Primary School and Rossmere Primary School had recently undertaken a review of their governing bodies in order to increase the capacity within their governing bodies in relation to skills and knowledge of governors. Revised Instruments of Governance for each school were appended to the report.

**Decision**

That the amended Instruments of Governance for Clavering Primary School and Rossmere Primary Schools be approved.

**9. To Nominate a Local Authority Representative to Serve on the Governing Body of Grange Primary School** *(Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services)*

**Type of decision**

Non key.

**Purpose of report**

To consider a nomination for the role of Local Authority Governor at Grange Primary School.

**Issue(s) for consideration**

A schedule was submitted with the report setting out details of a vacancy which existed, together with an application received. The individual application was 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**

The Committee approved the local authority nomination of the applicant as set out in confidential Appendix B in respect of Grange Primary School.

**10. Full Ofsted Inspection of Exmoor Grove Children's Home** *(Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services)*

**Type of decision**

For information.

**Purpose of report**

For Children's Services Committee to note the outcome of a recent full inspection report of Exmoor Grove Children's Home by OFSTED which took place on 6 – 7 November 2018.

**Issue(s) for consideration**

It was reported that the inspection of Exmoor Grove which took place on 6 – 7 November 2018 against the judgments and descriptors outlined in paragraphs 3.3 and 3.4 of the report and the service was judged as outstanding overall. The inspection report was attached at Appendix 1. The inspection made one statutory requirement recommendation and one good practice recommendation as outlined in the report and these had been implemented in accordance with the timescales stipulated.

Admiration was expressed to the staff at Exmoor Grove Children's Home as well as Council staff who had been involved for their hard work and contributions to the positive outcomes that continued to be achieved and requested that the Committee's personal thanks be conveyed.

**Decision**

- (i) The report was noted.
- (ii) That personal thanks, on behalf of the Committee, be conveyed to staff at Exmoor Grove as well as Council staff for their hard work and contributions to the positive outcomes that continued to be achieved.

**11. Full Ofsted Inspection of Stockton Road Children's Home February 2019** *(Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services)*

**Type of decision**

For information.

**Purpose of report**

For Children's Services Committee to note the outcome of a full inspection report of Stockton Road Children's Home by OFSTED which took place on 12 to 13 February 2019.

**Issue(s) for consideration**

It was reported that a full inspection of Stockton Road Children's Home which took place on 12 to 13 February 2019 against the judgments and descriptors outlined in paragraphs 3.3 and 3.4 of the report and the service was judged as good overall. The inspection report was attached at Appendix 1. The inspection made three statutory requirement recommendations and two good practice recommendations as outlined in the report. The statutory requirements had been implemented in accordance with the timescales stipulated and the good practice recommendations had also been progressed.

The Committee welcomed the positive inspection report which demonstrated the hard work and commitment of the staff.

Members went on to discuss the benefits of homes of this type and noted the wide ranging and high levels of care and support that was provided to children and young people. In response to a query raised, clarification was provided regarding the living arrangements as well as the options available to extend provision in relation to facilities of this type should the funding be available to do so.

**Decision**

The report was noted.

**12. Any Other Items which the Chairman Considers are Urgent**

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

**13. Any Other Business – Thanks to Former Chair of Children's Services Committee**

The Leader took the opportunity to place on record his personal thanks and appreciation to the former Chair of this Committee, Councillor Harrison, for her hard work and commitment in her term as Chair and welcomed her back onto the Committee for the ensuing year.

**14. Date and Time of Next Meeting**

It was reported that the next meeting would be held on Tuesday 9 July at 4.00 pm in the Civic Centre.

The meeting concluded at 5.15 pm.

**H MARTIN**

**CHIEF SOLICITOR**

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