

CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE

MINUTES AND DECISION RECORD

15 March 2022

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

Present:

Councillor: Jim Lindridge (In the Chair)

Councillors: Tom Cassidy, Christopher Groves, Brenda Harrison and Shane Moore

Also Present: Councillor Sue Little

Co-opted Members:

David Turner, Primary Head Representative

Jo Heaton, C of E Diocese Representative

Officers:

Sally Robinson, Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services

Amanda Whitehead, Assistant Director, Education

Danielle Swainston, Assistant Director, Joint Commissioning Services

Sandra Shears, Head of Finance (Corporate and Schools)

Julie Reed, Pupil Place Planning, Admissions & Capital Manager

Julian Heward, Senior Communications and Marketing Officer

Denise Wimpenny, Principal Democratic Services Officer

57. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Moss Boddy, Tim Fleming, Joanne Wilson, RC Diocesan Representative, Zoe Westley, Special School Head Representative and Mark Tilling, Secondary Head Representative.

58. Declarations of Interest

None.

59. Minutes of the meeting held on 15 February 2022

Received.

60. Dedicated Schools Grant – Early Years Block 2022/23

(Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services)

Type of decision

Key tests (i) and (ii) apply – Forward Plan Reference CJCS 118/21

Purpose of report

To present the indicative Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) funding allocation in relation to the Early Years Funding for 2022/23 and propose the Early Years National Funding Formula (EYNFF) that sets hourly rates for providers for 2022/23.

Issue(s) for consideration

The Committee was referred to the 2022/23 funding allocation for the Early Years Block, shown in a table included in the report which had been announced in December 2021. Following consultation with providers and the Schools' Forum in relation to three to four year old provision, an increase of 17p per hour to the existing formula was proposed with 16p of the increase being applied to the base rate and the remaining 1p to centrally retained budgets, details of which were set out in the report.

In relation to the proposed hourly rate structure 2022/23 for two year old provision and the Government's announcement that hourly rate funding increases be passed to providers, it was proposed that the previous 16p increase be retained and the new hourly rate funding increase for 202/23 of 21p be passed directly to providers.

In response to queries raised arising from the report, clarification was provided in relation to take-up arrangements and participation rates.

The following decision was agreed with no dissent.

Decision

- (i) The contents of this report and the outcomes from the consultation with providers and Schools' Forum were noted.
- (ii) The recommendation of the Schools' Forum to centrally retain funding of 5% was noted.
- (iii) That the hourly rate funding formula for three to four year old provision for 2022/23, as show in the table at paragraph 5.3, passing the increase of 16p onto providers through the hourly rate formula be approved.

- (iv) That the hourly rate funding formula for two year old provision for 2022/23, as outlined at paragraph 7.2, passing the increase of 21p onto providers through the hourly rate be approved.

61. 2022/23 Schools' Capital Works Programme *(Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services)*

Type of decision

Key Decision – Tests (i) and (ii) apply – Forward Plan Ref CJCS 123/21.

Purpose of report

The purpose of this report is to seek approval to the 2022/23 Schools' Capital Works Programme, as detailed in confidential **APPENDIX A**, in order to progress the design and detailed costing exercise in time for the majority of projects to be carried out during the summer holiday period. **This item contains 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).**

Issue(s) for consideration

The report provided background information in relation to capital funding allocations. At the time of writing the report, capital funding allocations for 2022/23 had not been communicated to the Local Authority. Approval was sought for the schemes proposed in confidential Appendix A. **This item (Appendix A) 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).**

The Committee was referred to Table 1 which outlined the total funding available of £877,400 for works and Table 2 which detailed the total cost of schemes and contingency proposed of £877,000 of which Members' approval was sought.

The Committee raised a number of queries arising from the report. Clarification was provided in relation to the funding allocation process and it was noted that the proposed works in schools converting to academy status would proceed, details of which were provided.

The following decision was agreed with no dissent.

Decision

- (i) The Committee approved the schedule of 2022/23 capital works programme as summarised in confidential APPENDIX A, subject to the LA agreeing contributions from schools towards individual schemes in line with the shared funding principles established by the Schools Forum. **These items contain 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.**
- (ii) That the Director of Children's & Joint Commissioning Services, in consultation with the Chair of this Committee, be given dispensation and discretion to authorise works where an emergency (eg risk of school closure) or a significant health and safety risk is exposed;
- (iii) That the Director of Children's & Joint Commissioning Services, in consultation with the Chair of this Committee, be given dispensation and discretion to add or remove a project(s) as a result of an increase or decrease in the 2022/23 SCA funding allocation;

62. To Nominate A Local Authority Representative to Serve on the Governing Body of Fens 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 position at Fens Primary School.

Issue(s) for consideration

A schedule was submitted with the report setting out details of a vacancy that existed at Fens Primary School together with details of the application received. One application had been received for the position, as set out in a confidential appendix to the report. **This item 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).** Discussions had taken place between the applicant, Chair of Governors and Head Teacher regarding the skills the applicant could

contribute to the Governing Body. The application was in relation to a position that was currently vacant.

The following decision was agreed with no dissent.

Decision

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

63. Holiday Activities and Food Programme *(Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services)*

Type of decision

Non-key

Purpose of report

To provide the Children's Services Committee with a report on the delivery of the Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) Programme during the summer and Christmas school holidays during 2021 and outline proposals for future delivery of the programme.

Issue(s) for consideration

The Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services presented the report which provided background information in relation to the expansion of the Holiday Activities and Food Programme across England in 2021 as previously reported to Committee in July 2021. The delivery of the HAF programme in Hartlepool was overseen by a Steering Group. The summer school holidays HAF programme was delivered by 34 different providers across Hartlepool and the Christmas programme by 28 providers, details of which were provided. Feedback on the 2021 HAF programme from providers, children and families was very positive.

Given the Government's announcement of further investment, Hartlepool had been awarded a maximum allocation of £595,000 to deliver the programme in 2022/23 and work had commenced on the delivery of the programme. In accordance with the guidance that all local authorities appoint a HAF co-ordinator, recruitment arrangements in Hartlepool were underway.

In the discussion that followed, the Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services responded to issues raised arising from the report. Members spoke in support of the initiative, commenting on the positive feedback and the benefits as a result. The Committee were also pleased to note the high level of engagement and take-up. Emphasis was placed upon the importance of widely publicising the success of the scheme to

encourage wider participation. It was suggested that publication include Hartbeat, local press and television.

The Committee took the opportunity to thank everyone who had contributed to the success of the programme.

Decision

- (i) The Committee noted the detail of the HAF delivery programme for 2021 and future delivery arrangements for 2022/23 and beyond.
- (ii) That the comments of Members, as detailed above, be noted and actioned as appropriate.

64. Ofsted Focused Visit – Care Leavers *(Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services)*

Type of decision

Non-key

Purpose of report

To report the outcome of the Ofsted focused visit to Hartlepool Children's Services, which took place in January 2022.

Issue(s) for consideration

The Committee was advised that a focused visit in relation to the support provided to care leavers in Hartlepool had taken place on 18 and 19 January. Members were referred to a letter from Ofsted, appended to the report, which outlined the findings. The report reflected a strong performing service that supported care leavers well, had continued to deliver a high quality service to care leavers and the number of care leavers engaged in education, employment and training was improving, despite the impact of the pandemic. Whilst the report identified one area for improvement in terms of the voice and influence of care leavers in developing and owning their individual pathway plan, work had commenced in this regard, details of which were provided.

Following presentation of the report, the Chair together with Elected Members welcomed the report and spoke in support of the service acknowledging the care, commitment and skill of the staff teams and

dedication of Foster Carers who had contributed to the positive inspection findings.

Decision

The Committee noted the outcome of the Ofsted focused visit on services to care leavers delivered by Hartlepool Children's Services.

65. 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.

66. Any Other Business – Dedicated Schools Grant - Disapplication Request

Members were referred to a decision taken by this Committee in November to submit a disapplication request to the Secretary of State for Education regarding funding for statutory duties in relation to maintained schools. The Secretary of State had confirmed, on 20 January 2022, that the disapplication request was successful. This was the sixth successive year that the Council's request had been successful, securing just under £270k for the Council.

67. Any Other Business – National Social Work Day

Given that today was National Social Work Day, the Director of Children's and Joint Commissioning Services and Elected Members took the opportunity to express their thanks and acknowledge the work of the Council's Social Work teams in both Children's and Adult Services.

68. Date and Time of Next Meeting

It was reported that the next meeting would be confirmed following the May elections.

The meeting concluded at 4.50 pm

H MARTIN

CHIEF SOLICITOR

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