

PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the meeting held on Tuesday, 24 May 2016 commencing at 10.00 am and finishing at 11.45 am.

Present:

Voting Members: Councillor Liz Brighthouse OBE – in the Chair
Councillor Sam Coates
Councillor Mark Gray
Councillor Patrick Greene
Councillor Tim Hallchurch MBE (In place of Councillor Stewart Lilly)
Councillor Steve Harrod
Councillor Sandy Lovatt (In place of Councillor Yvonne Constance OBE)
Councillor Charles Mathew
Councillor John Sanders
Councillor Richard Webber (In place of Councillor Jenny Hannaby)

Other Members in Attendance: Councillor Melinda Tilley (for Agenda Item 7)

Officers:

Whole of meeting Sue Whitehead (Corporate Services)

Part of meeting

| Agenda Item | Officer Attending |
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| 7 | Jim Leivers, Director for Children's Services, Lucy Butler, Deputy Director, Children's Social Care YOP, Hannah Farncombe, Deputy Director – Safeguarding, Maria Godfrey, Early Intervention Manager (North) and Nick Graham, Chief Legal Officer |

The Scrutiny Committee considered the matters, reports and recommendations contained or referred to in the agenda for the meeting and agreed as set out below. Copies of the agenda and reports are attached to the signed Minutes.

29/16 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN FOR THE 2016/17 COUNCIL YEAR (Agenda No. 1)

It was proposed, seconded and it was:

RESOLVED: that Councillor Brighthouse be elected as Chairman of the meeting for the 2016/17 Municipal Year.

30/16 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN FOR THE 2016/17 COUNCIL YEAR
(Agenda No. 2)

It was proposed, seconded and it was:

RESOLVED: that Councillor Harrod be elected as Deputy Chairman of the meeting for the 2016/17 Municipal Year.

31/16 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND TEMPORARY APPOINTMENTS
(Agenda No. 3)

Apologies were received from Councillor Constance (Councillor Lovatt substituting), Councillor Hannaby (Councillor Webber substituting) and Councillor Lilly (Councillor Hallchurch substituting).

32/16 MINUTES
(Agenda No. 5)

The Minutes of the meeting held on 12 May 2016 were received for publication on the website and it was agreed that they be submitted to the next meeting for consideration for approval.

33/16 PETITIONS AND PUBLIC ADDRESS
(Agenda No. 6)

The Chairman had agreed a request from Charlie Payne, a local resident to address the meeting.

Charlie Payne spoke against the proposals as the final part in a smokescreen that would see funding for preventative services used for mainstream services. She referred to the protest outside County Hall prior to the meeting that represented 19,000 under 5's and she highlighted the impact the loss of children's centres would have on those children, on mothers and on families. Ms Payne argued that there was too few open access sessions arranged in mitigation of the loss of the Centres. She also argued against the use of librarians to provide similar support as that provided by trained staff in the existing centres.

34/16 SUPPORT FOR CONTINUING DELIVERY OF EARLY INTERVENTION SERVICES
(Agenda No. 7)

The 2016/17 budget and Medium Term Financial Plan agreed by Council in February 2016 made a number of financial changes to the Children, Education and Families Directorate. Included in this was the decision to remove a proposed reduction of £2

million from the Early Intervention/Children's Centres budget line from 2017/18 (reference CEF 12, Section 4.2, agenda item 9). In addition, £1 million one-off funding had been set aside as part of the £4m transition fund agreed by Council in February 2016, in order to assist communities to develop proposals for children's centres that will not receive longer term funding from the Council.

The retained £2 million is to be targeted at the continuing delivery of early intervention services and preventative services.

In light of the previous decisions described above, Performance Scrutiny Committee had before them a report to Cabinet that focussed on proposals for the £2 million retained within the Early Intervention budget. The Performance Scrutiny Committee considered the report in order for their views to be taken into consideration in Cabinet's discussion and decision. Jim Leivers, Director for Children's Services, Lucy Butler, Deputy Director, Children's Social Care YOP, Hannah Farncombe, Deputy Director – Safeguarding and Maria Godfrey, Early Intervention Manager (North), together with Councillor Melinda Tilley, Cabinet Member for Children, Education & Families attended to respond to questions from the Committee. Nick Graham, Chief Legal Officer attended to give advice on the legal process and to explain that it was appropriate for Cabinet to be taking the decisions on this matter rather than proposals being referred back to full Council.

Following lengthy questioning and discussion the following points were agreed for referral to Cabinet:

- 1) The Committee considered a number of issues connected to provision in rural areas. They highlighted the roles of the mobile bus service, libraries and the local & community support teams.
 - Members supported efforts already underway to investigate opportunities provided by the integrated supported transport project;
 - In response to concerns raised about the use of library staff to provide support currently available in children's centres the Committee noted that this was part of an ongoing conversation and would necessitate appropriate support and training.
- 2) The Local & Community Support Staff would be key in implementing the proposals successfully as they would be vital in taking forward the current conversations with the 42 community led centres and the libraries.
- 3) The Committee considered the issue of stigma and noted that the proposals included plans for some universal access to continue in Council run facilities but also through community led provision in the outreach centres and where available in community led centres. Again the conversation with the community and community engagement were vital. Officers responded positively to the need for local advisory groups to continue.
- 4) Health provision including midwifery, post-natal sessions and health visitors was an important aspect that could be provided in any facility and would avoid the possibility of perceived stigma.

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- 5) Concerns were raised about the additional spending on the two new shared centres and the need to be very clear about the additional benefit they added in areas that already had provision.
- 6) Monitoring of these proposals as they developed should be undertaken by the Scrutiny Committee.

Councillor Gray further proposed, and it was seconded by Councillor Godden that £0.5m be taken out of the proposals and shared among the children’s centres. On being put to a vote by a show of hands this proposal was lost by 3 votes for to 8 against.

..... in the Chair

Date of signing 2016