

Time commenced - 18:00
Time finished - 20:35

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE COMMISSION 1 NOVEMBER 2011

Present: Councillor Bolton (Chair)
Councillors Bailey, Campbell, F Khan (item 39/11 onwards), Leeming
and Whitby, Ian Jennison and Kirit Mistry

In attendance: Councillors Rawson and Williams

35/11 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor F Winter, Alison Brown and Nasreen Iqbal.

36/11 Late Items to be introduced by the Chair

There were no late items.

37/11 Declarations of Interest

Councillor Campbell declared a personal interest in item 39/11 as a member of the NASUWT. Councillor Whitby declared a personal interest in item 39/11 as a foster carer.

38/11 Minutes of the meetings held on 13 September 2011 and 12 October 2011

The minutes of the meetings held on 13 September 2011 and 12 October 2011 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

39/11 Revenue Budget Proposals

The Strategic Director of Resources provided members with outline details of the council's budget position and explained the shape of the budget consultation.

The Strategic Director of Children and Young People detailed areas that the directorate planned to focus on to work more efficiently. These included measures such as reducing bureaucracy, reducing the use of agency staff, considering ways of providing services jointly and considering how best to deploy staff. Other areas of focus included the integrated management of services, integrated support in line with One Derby One Council objectives and recommissioning services to reach the most needy in an effort to narrow the gap.

The Strategic Director stated that the directorate did not feel adequate or satisfactory was good enough, but that it aimed to deliver good quality child protection, child health, universal services and places at city schools.

A number of challenges were outlined. These included education policy changes, schools funding, how to respond to the Allen and Monroe Reviews as well as changes to the Ofsted inspection regime.

The Head of Finance for Children and Young People gave a presentation to the commission. Members were reminded that a £10.6m reduction in spending capacity had been included in the budget for 2011/12. Details were provided of the £7.2m savings proposed for 2012-15 in addition to pressures during that period of £774,000.

Members considered the Revenue Budget savings proposals in detail.

The Strategic Director of Children and Young People confirmed that legislation relating to the transfer of responsibility for careers guidance from the council to schools would come into effect from September 2012. Concerns were expressed over the policy proposals and it was stated that the unions would support any efforts by the council to maintain the service as a sold service to schools.

The Chair expressed concern over the likely impact of savings proposed in relation to children's centres, and stated a particular desire to protect services for the most vulnerable families. The Director of Early Intervention and Integrated Safeguarding confirmed that the department shared this desire. It was explained that the proposals would see a reduction in services to less vulnerable families but that those same services would remain available for the most needy. Members asked about the reduction in subsidy to the 0-3 childcare provisions, and in particular which locations would be affected. The Director stated that the centres being looked at were Ashgate, Becket, Asterdale and West End. Members enquired which centres would be affected by the reduction in opening times at Phases 2 and 3. The Director responded that the Phase 2 proposals were not fully worked up but that Oakwood, Chellaston and South Chaddesden had been proposed at this stage for Phase 3. The Director also confirmed to a separate question that neighbouring centres would be open on different days where possible.

With regard to the review of youth provision, the commission sought information on how this would be shaped. The Director of Early Intervention and Integrated Safeguarding explained that the proposed £200,000 saving was in the context of a £1.2m existing budget. An assurance was provided that young people would be engaged in the review to ensure appropriate decisions were taken.

The commission was informed that the efficiencies within the Youth Offending Service related to management savings, and that one post would be deleted as part of the restructure within Learning and Inclusion referred to in the proposals.

Members asked how the £800,000 saving in transport would be achieved over two years. The Strategic Director of Children and Young People stated that this would involve reviewing the use of taxis and policies surrounding how they were used, in addition to a focus on post-16 transport and procurement. The Cabinet Member for

Children and Young People added that the escort service would also be looked at as part of this review.

The Chair expressed concern that the £2m savings proposed in relation to looked after children was an ambitious target. The Director of Specialist Services agreed that it appeared ambitious but stated that it was achievable. Members sought and were provided with particular detail relating to the cost of caring for looked after children through agency placements as opposed to through existing council foster carers.

Members were informed that the £300,000 saving proposed through efficiencies within the Early Intervention Grant reflected an underspend in 2011/12.

The Commission then considered in detail the budget pressures detailed in the revenue budget consultation document. Members expressed particular concern about the additional burden of £180,000 relating to the transfer of responsibility to the council of young people remanded in custody.

The Head of Finance for Children and Young People detailed a tabled paper that would be considered by the Schools Forum on 3 November 2011. Members were concerned that not enough time had been provided for the content of the report and its appendices to be fully considered.

Resolved:

- 1) To recommend to Council Cabinet that services provided through Children's Centres to the most vulnerable users be protected;**
- 2) To recommend to Council Cabinet that the criteria for free schools meals be promoted to maximise take up.**
- 3) To recommend to Council Cabinet that the commission's concern that the proposed removal of 'urgent need capacity budgets' may need to be covered from corporate reserves in the event of an unforeseeable emergency be noted.**
- 4) That the Chair and Vice Chair be fully briefed on the outcomes of the Schools Forum meeting, particularly those with implications for the revenue budget.**
- 5) That the commission be fully involved in the review of youth services provision.**
- 6) That the commission be kept updated on progress in achieving the proposed savings through the reduction in numbers of Looked After Children.**
- 7) That the commission be kept updated on the take-up of bought services to ensure the sustainability of these services.**

There were no items.

41/11 Forward Plan

The Head of Democratic Services briefed members on the two items relating to the Children and Young People included in the November Forward Plan.

Resolved to note.

42/11 Responses to any reports and enquiries of the commission

There were no items.

43/11 Matters referred by the Council Cabinet

There were no items.

MINUTES END