

**CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICE OVERVIEW AND
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
23 JANUARY 2012**

MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2012/13 TO 2015/16

MINUTE EXTRACT

Medium Term Financial Strategy 2012/13 - 2015/16.

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Children and Young People's Service and the Director of Corporate Resources on the proposed Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) for the period 2012/13 to 2015/16 as it related to the Children and Young People's Service (CYPS). A copy of the report marked B is filed with these minutes.

The Chairman welcomed to the meeting the Cabinet Lead Member for Children and Young People, Mr I. D. Ould CC, and the Cabinet Support Member, Mr Hart, who were attending for this item.

The following points arose from discussion and questions:

General

The Committee was advised that:

- (i) The Future of the Children and Young People's Service (CYPS) paper, that had been considered by Cabinet at its meeting on 20 December, was currently subject to consultation, the outcomes of which would be reported to the Committee in March and May.
- (ii) The assumption underlying the Budget that 80% of schools would become academies by April 2013 was based on current trends. CYPS was responding to the requirements set out nationally and, in doing so, was advising schools on options available to them. Decisions as to whether to proceed to academy status were a matter for individual school governing bodies.
- (iii) The Director had not been asked to change the advice currently provided to schools following recent statements by the Leader of the Council.
- (iv) With regard to the Department for Education's (DfE) proposal to reduce funding to the Local Authority by c. £150 per pupil transferring to an academy, the concerns now expressed about the impact on the County Council's Budget were

acknowledged. The Committee was reminded that the Scrutiny Commissioners had indicated that the Commission would consider the Authority's responses to the Government's consultations on Revenue Support Grant for 2012/13 and the calculation and recovery arrangements for the Academies Funding Transfer for 2011/12 and 2012/13 (as set out Appendices F and G to the report to Cabinet, Provisional Medium Term Financial Strategy 2012/13 – 2015/16, dated 17 January 2012).

Growth

- (v) The Committee welcomed the proposals for increased funding to be put into looking after the increasing numbers of children in care. In particular, it welcomed the additional investment in early intervention aimed at preventing children coming into care and the recent investment aimed at increasing the number of foster care placements available to the Authority.

Savings

- (vi) Some concern was expressed that the savings arising from the Departmental restructure, which amounted to £3.9m over the MTFs period, would not be achieved entirely by efficiencies but might result in service reductions. The Committee noted the Director would be bringing detailed reports to future meetings on the Departmental restructure, which would identify the impacts both on staff and services.
- (vii) With regard to the possibility of income generation through trading with academies, the Committee was advised that the County Council already provided services on a traded basis to all schools. Academies would be free to choose whether they wished to purchase services from the County Council or an alternative provider. A brochure setting out the services the Council could provide to schools was being finalised.
- (viii) The Arts in Education Service would be moving to a traded service with no subsidy from the County Council. A report on the Service, including the proposed bid to the Arts Council for Leicestershire to be a Music Hub utilising Abingdon House as a base, would be brought to a future meeting of the Committee.

Specific Grants

- (ix) The Committee was advised that the Early Intervention Grant (EIG), was only confirmed until the end of March 2013. The £5m set aside as a contingency last year had not been fully utilised, given the uncertainty around the future of the EIG.

Connexions

- (x) The Committee had no comments on the proposals relating to Connexions.

Schools

- (xi) The Committee noted there had been no increase for the second year in the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). The Committee indicated it would wish to invite the Chair of the Schools Forum to a future meeting to discuss the DSG.
- (xii) With regard to the Pupil Premium, the Committee was advised the historic information on pupils eligible for free school meals would be supplied by the DfE; however, individual schools were checking their own records to verify the figures.
- (xiii) The Committee noted the actions proposed in Appendix C in relation to the overspend on the DSG 2011/12 to bring this Budget back into balance.

Special Educational Needs (SEN)

- (xiv) The Committee noted and welcomed the five priorities outlined in paragraph 33 aimed at reducing the level of SEN spend. The Committee indicated it would wish to consider the detailed proposals for each of these projects alongside the Report of Scrutiny Review Panel on SEN.

Reshaping the Children and Young People's Service

- (xv) The Committee noted that detailed reports would be submitted to its meetings on 5 March and 2 May on the outcomes of the consultations currently underway. The outcome of the consultation on the Outdoor Residential Learning Service would also be submitted to a future meeting.

Capital Programme

- (xvi) The Committee welcomed the funding for the new Charnwood Area Special School and noted that work on site would start in early 2013.
- (xvii) The Committee requested information on how the £11.676m set aside for school accommodation would be allocated. [A list of the projects is appended to these minutes.]
- (xviii) With regard to academies and, in particular, decisions by governing bodies to change their age range, the Committee was advised that this would not necessarily be funded by the

Local Authority. Where secondary schools changed their age ranges (as proposed in Shepshed and Loughborough), officers would be working with the primary schools affected to ensure the educational needs of those children remaining an extra year at the school were catered for.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the report and information now provided be noted;
- (b) That the comments of the Committee be forwarded to the Scrutiny Commission for consideration at its meeting on 1 February 2012.

Capital Programme – School Accommodation Projects 2012/13

- Braunstone, Kingsway Primary School
- Enderby, Danemill Primary School
- Market Harborough, Farndon Fields Primary School
- Mountsorrell Christ Church and St Peter's Church of England Primary School
- Stoney Stanton, Manorfield Church of England Primary
- Ullesthorpe Primary
- Braunstone, Millfield Community School and Centre
- Braunstone, Ravenhurst Primary School
- Bringhurst Primary School
- Earl Shilton, Townlands
- Kibworth Church of England Primary School
- Loughborough Primary Schools – Sites to be identified
- Loughborough Stonebow
- Market Harborough Ridgeway
- Leicester Forest East Stafford Leys Primary School
- Swannington Primary School
- Woodhouse Eaves, Maplewell Hall
- Schools Access Initiative
- OFSTED and Safeguarding Issues
- Building Demolition