

CHILDREN'S SERVICES

A record of decisions made by the Executive Member with responsibility for Children's Services on:-

TUESDAY, 11TH DECEMBER, 2007

following consideration of the matters detailed below in the presence of:-

Councillor Mrs Thomas	Executive Member for Children's Services
Councillor A. Wilkinson	Major Opposition Spokesperson
Councillor Mrs Swarbrick	Minor Opposition Spokesperson
Ms. M. Asquith	Director of Children's Services
Mr S. Arnfield	Director of Corporate Resources
Ms C. Davies	Head of Finance
Ms A. Gorton	Extended Schools Remodelling Adviser
Mr T. Sinkinson	Strategic Services Manager
Ms J. Thompson	Assistant Director, Positive Contribution
Miss K. Treadwell	Democratic Services Officer

45. MONITORING OF EXECUTIVE MEMBER DECISIONS

The Director of Legal and Democratic Services submitted a report which contained information related to decisions taken at previous Executive Member meetings.

The Executive Member NOTED progress on the decisions previously taken as detailed in the Appendix to these minutes.

46. CONTACTPOINT IMPLEMENTATION

The Director of Children's Services submitted a report which updated the Executive Member of the progress made with regard to the implementation of Contact Point.

By way of background information, the report advised that the National Child Index had been re-named Contact Point. Contact Point was a computer system which was being developed by the Department for Children Schools and Families. The system would hold basic details about all children and young people aged 0 to 18 in England.

The report advised that Contact Point would not hold any case or assessment related information, such as personal details, educational attainment and medical records. Contact Point would be the means by which practitioners would be able to find out whether any other practitioners were involved with a child and so enable them to work together more effectively to meet the needs of children and families.

The report stated that Bolton had been chosen as one of 17 Local Authorities in the North West to be early adopters of Contact Point which would replace the Bolton Child Index in 2008. Bolton had been granted £246,000 in 2006/07 for the implementation of Contact Point and similar funding was expected for 2008/09.

The project resource required to implement Contact Point was being met within the Integrated Working Processes Project as Contact Point was one of the wider part of tools and processes to enable practitioners to work together and share information. This process would enable improved outcomes for children and young people.

The Executive Member NOTED the report.

47. EXTENDED SERVICES SMALL CAPITAL PROJECT FUNDING

The Director of Children's Services submitted a report which sought the Executive Member's approval for the

recommendations of the Children's Centre and Extended Services Project Board.

By way of background information, the report advised that the Government's vision of ensuring that all children had access to a variety of activities beyond the school day by 2010 had been supported by additional revenue and capital funding. The capital element of the funding available amounted to £815,000 for financial years 2006-2008.

The extended services development workshops enabled partners to identify gaps in provision and develop action plans to satisfy these needs. This included submitting proposals for either revenue or capital funding.

The report stated that due to no proposals being forthcoming for capital funding the consideration of two years funding together had been decided upon. Several criteria had been developed to enable schools and their partners to bid for the capital element of funding which was detailed within the report.

All received bids had been considered by the Children's Centre and extended Services Project Board and were attached at Appendix one. As the total value of the projects submitted exceeded the total amount of funding available, the Board were asked to review projects against the extended services core offer and Children's Services priorities to identify projects that were to receive funding in this year. The successful bids and the amount recommended to be given to each was detailed at Appendix one to the report.

The Executive Member APPROVED –

The recommendations of the Children's Centre and Extended Services Project Board as detailed at Appendix One to the report.

48. CHILDREN'S SERVICES PORTFOLIO REVENUE AND CAPITAL MONTH SIX MONITORING REPORT, 2007/08

The Director of Children's Services submitted a report which informed the Executive Member of the revenue and capital financial position for the second quarter (month six) of the 2007/08 financial year.

The Executive Member NOTED the report.

49. QUARTER TWO, PERFORMANCE DASHBOARD, 2007/08

The Director of Children's Services submitted a report which updated the Executive Member on performance in key areas of the Children's Services Department as at the end of the second quarter of the current financial year.

The Executive Member NOTED the report.

50. CHILDREN'S SERVICES PORTFOLIO INITIAL STRATEGIC BUDGET OPTIONS 2008/09

The Director of Children's Services submitted a report which informed the Executive Member of the Strategic Budget Options in respect of the Children's Services portfolio for 2008/09.

The report advised that the initial strategic budget options for Children's Services had been prepared based on:-

- the full passporting of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) to the Children's Services Portfolio; and
- cashable savings of 4% being sought in respect of the non schools element of the Children's Services portfolio.

The report advised that, at this stage in the year, it was difficult to predict the likely level of resources available to departments. In terms of schools budgets, the recent DCSF announcements indicated that the DSG would increase by 4.4% in 2008/09.

The report went on to state that the majority of standards fund grant allocation had been announced and Bolton had received an increase of 5.9% for 2008/09 compared to the current year.

The report advised that the Department would be required to generate savings equal to 4% of the non-schools budget, this represented £1.7 million savings requirement against a budget of just over £43 million.

The report stated that a number of budget considerations had been identified, together with a range of strategic policy options for 2008/09. Inflationary, superannuation pressures and capital debt costs amounted to £6.9 million across the whole portfolio. In addition, the Department had to identify efficiencies for the base budget as, previously, the Department had identified funding of £1.4 million to support the financial position in 2007/08 but this had only been available for one year.

The report advised that, in order to fund these pressures the Department was currently undertaking work to identify cashable savings. Some of the processes adopted by the Department included analysis of the potential to generate efficiencies through business process re-engineering; benchmarking exercises to indicate areas of higher than average spend to be investigated; value for money reviews and maximising the use of external funding. The potential savings identified included:-

	£
Agency Placements	50,000
Integrated Youth Offer Review	500,000
Early Start and Children's Social Care	157,500
Finance Unit	20,000
Departmental Management Realignment and Capacity Building	135,000

Children's Trust	59,800
Children's Services Departmental	250,000
Expenditure Reductions	
Music Service	103,000
Education Social Work Service	91,200
Behaviour Support	60,000
Schools Centrally Held Contingency	100,000
Schools Centrally Held Maternity Costs	65,900
Total Local Authority Department Savings:	1,172,300

The impact of the savings target of 4%, the identified budget pressures and one off savings from 2006/07 resulted in a total savings requirement of £ 3.385 million. It was explained that the external grant regime increases, outlined below, which totalled £2,213,600 together with the potential savings identified above, would enable this total saving to be met:-

	£
Children's Fund	376,000
Review and Mainstreaming of Early Start	300,000
Choice Advisor Grant/ Children Missing Education	20,000
Early Years (extended services grant)	339,000
Early Years (quality and assurance)	167,000
Early Years (Marketing)	150,000

Early Years (Realignment of staffing costs)	343,000
Extended Services Sustainability	443,600
Schools ICT Support	50,000
ISA	25,000
Total External Funding Alignment:	2,213,600

The report advised that whilst available funding would be insufficient to meet all the demands and options in the centrally held schools block, there would be some funding available for growth within the delegated schools block. The report advised that increase in spend within the centrally held block was limited. However, this limit might be breached by the Authority with agreement of the Schools Forum in order to support activities which were supporting schools in their delivery.

Appended to the report were full details and figures for the resource options.

The Executive Member for Children's Services NOTED the budget options and APPROVED: -

Consultation with Schools and the Schools Forum with regard to the strategic budget options, now detailed.