

CHILDREN'S SERVICES

A record of decisions made by the Executive Cabinet Member with responsibility for Children's Services, Looked after Children, Safeguarding for Children and Young People, Schools and Early Years:-

MONDAY, 27th JUNE, 2022

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

Councillor Galloway	- Executive Cabinet Member – Children's Services
Councillor McKeon	- Major Opposition Spokesperson
Councillor McGeown	- Minor Opposition Spokesperson
Councillor Sanders	- Minor Opposition Spokesperson
Councillor Wright	- Minor Opposition Spokesperson
Councillor Fletcher	- Minor Opposition Spokesperson
Councillor Newall	- Minor Opposition Spokesperson

Officers

Ms B. Brown	- Director of Children's Services
Mr P. Rankin	- Deputy Director of Children's Services
Ms G. Whitehead	- Assistant Director of Children's Services – Inclusive Education and Learning
Mr I. Walker	- Assistant Director – Social Care and Early Help
Ms T. Minshull	- Assistant Director – Commissioning and Integration
Ms L. Butcher	- Head of Finance
Mrs S. Bailey	- Principal Democratic Services Officer

1. MONITORING OF EXECUTIVE CABINET MEMBER DECISIONS

The Borough Solicitor submitted a report which provided an update on decisions taken at previous meetings of the Executive Cabinet Member.

The Executive Cabinet Member NOTED the report.

2. CHILDREN'S SERVICES PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORT QUARTER 4 2021/22

The Director of Children's Services submitted a report which provided the latest available 2021/22 performance information for the Department of Children's Services.

The report provided a summary of the performance of the Children's Services Department during Quarter 4 of 2021-22 and outlined the Department's performance against the priorities of the Corporate Plan and related key performance indicators.

The Executive Cabinet Member NOTED the report.

3. DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN'S FINANCIAL MONITORING 2021/22 FINAL OUTTURN REPORT

The Director of Children's Services submitted a report which provides information relating to the financial position for the Children's Services Department for the 2021/22 financial year.

With regard to Revenue Expenditure, the revenue outturn position for the Local Authority block was expected to be in line with budget for 2021/22.

Revenue expenditure for the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) was to be £1.624m greater than the grant available.

The original Capital Programme approved at Council in February, 2021 totalled £17.573m. Expenditure at 31st March, 2022 was £8.449m.

Reserves were expected to be £34.162m at 31st March, 2022. Of the £34.162m reserves, £24.568m related to capital monies held for future work on schools and -£0.829m related to schools' balances and other DSG reserves. The remaining £10.423m was Children' Services Revenue Reserves.

The Executive Cabinet Member NOTED –

- (i) The financial position of the portfolio at 31st March 2022, the changes within the Capital Programme and the Revenue Budget changes in year, as now detailed; and APPROVED -**
- (ii) The delegation of authority to the Director of Children to call off on the framework(s) for the Capital Programme, as detailed in section 3 of the report now submitted.**

CONFIDENTIAL ITEM

The background papers and report in relation to the following item were considered confidential as defined in paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and that it be deemed that, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in their exemption outweighs the public interest in their disclosure.

4. PUPIL AND STUDENT SERVICES TEAM REVIEW

The Director of Children's Services submitted a report which sought approval to increase the staffing establishment of the Pupil and Student Services Team in response to increased statutory responsibilities for managing school admissions and the intention for local authorities to co-ordinate in-year admissions for all schools within their area.

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The report provided details of the current structure of the Pupil and Student Services Team and outlined proposals to increase the establishment by two new permanent posts, as follows:

- 1FTE School Admissions Officer (Grade E) – to help support the team to ensure the statutory timescales for in year admissions are complied with and provide support with the reception and secondary transfer group allocations; and
- 1FTE School Admissions Co-ordinator (Grade G) – to take on the operational co-ordination of the Team and oversee the day-to-day processes and work allocations and manage the Lead Administrator and deputise for the Head of Service as required.

The posts would provide capacity and create resilience within the service structure and costs would be met from the Dedicated Services Grant.

The Executive Cabinet Member APPROVED –

The creation of two new posts within the Pupil and Student Services Team, on the basis detailed in the report now submitted.

5. SEND RESTRUCTURE

The Director of Children's Services submitted a report which sought approval for proposals to restructure to the SENDAS team to ensure that the council can meet existing and future statutory responsibilities.

The report advised that the recently published DfE SEND Green Paper "SEND Review: Right Support, Right Place, Right Time" set out further reforms to the SEND system nationally. The resources supporting SEND in Bolton required review to ensure the Council continued to meet statutory duties now and in the future.

In this regard, the report outlined proposals to increase the capacity of the SEND Team as follows:

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- 2 x SENDAS officers (Grade H). These posts will focus on transition from Early Years and transition to Post 16 provision.
- 4 x Assistant SENDAS officers (Grade E). These new posts would provide additional capacity across the service.
- 1 x SENDAS Business Manager (Grade F). The new post would ensure processes within the Team were operating effectively and changes needed to meet future statutory requirements are implemented.
- 1 x Deputy Head of SEND (Grade K). To assist in developing SEND strategies to manage demand and meet the needs of developing SEND reforms. This post will also line manage the newly created Business Manager post.

Details of the existing and proposed structures were provided in the report together with associated costs and timescales. It was intended to fund the proposals from various external grants, including for the first year Virtual School and Contain Outbreak Management Fund.

The Executive Cabinet Member APPROVED –

The changes to the SEND Service structure, on the basis detailed in the report now submitted.

6. HARVEY NURSERY – PROPOSED NEXT STEPS

Further to Minute 14 of the meeting of the Executive Cabinet Member held on 14th September, 2021, and the Budget Council meeting in February, 2022, the Director of Children's Services submitted a report which;

- set out the results of consultation on proposals to review Harvey Nursery;
- shared the recommendations of the Harvey Nursery Collaborative Working Group; and
- sought approval to implement the final proposals.

The Executive Cabinet Member APPROVED -

- (i) The final proposals detailed in the report now submitted, having due regard to the consultation feedback and the Equality Impact Assessment;**
- (ii) The closure of Harvey Nursery in response to ongoing budget pressures at the end of the Academic Year August, 2022; and**
- (iii) Subject to the approval of the Head of Paid Service, the delegation of the implementation of the closure, including details of redundancy arrangements, to the Chief Executive and Director of Children's Services.**