

CHILDREN'S SERVICES

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

MONDAY, 15TH DECEMBER, 2008

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

Councillor Adia	Executive Member for Children's Services
Councillor Ashcroft	Major Opposition Spokesperson
Councillor Mrs Swarbrick	Minor Opposition Spokesperson
Ms. M. Asquith	Director of Children's Services
Mr J. Livesey	Assistant Director, Performance Planning and Resources
Mrs B. Newman	Policy Accountant
Miss K. Treadwell	Democratic Services Officer

41. MONITORING OF EXECUTIVE MEMBER DECISIONS

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

The Executive Member for Children's Services NOTED the progress on decisions previously taken.

42. CHILDREN'S SERVICES STRATEGIC RESOURCE OPTIONS 2009/10 TO 2011

A joint report of the Directors of Children's Services and Corporate Resources was submitted which set out the Strategic Resource Options for the Children's Services Department for 2009/2012.

The report reminded the Executive Member that, the Executive at it's meeting on 27th October, 2008, agreed the following initial financial guidance for 2009/2010 and the following two

years:-

- That services prepare budget options which identified savings of 5% for 2009/2010 and that, wherever possible, the savings should be from efficiencies;
- That for the following two years, savings of at least 3% per annum were likely to be required, and that services take this into account in identifying options for 2009/2010; and
- That in terms of capital, services be requested to draw up proposals for the next three years based upon similar levels of capital funding to that which they received in 2008/2009.

The Executive Member was advised that the base budget for 2008/2009 was £37,429,000, after adjusting for some capital costs and recharges, and this figure was used to calculate the savings target. The savings target of 5% amounted to £1,870,000 and suggested options to meet this target were detailed as follows:-

	Redirections £000	FTE's	Vacant Posts
Efficiencies			
IT savings arising from a mix of staffing efficiencies, procurement savings and new service delivery.	500	6 (Estimated)	4
Four Family Support Senior Practitioner post costs set against Think Family Pathfinder	187	4	4

(posts will be assimilated against SW vacancies on expiry of the Pathfinder).			
Terminate the Family Support element of the Homestart contract.	30		
Delete 4 Education Social Worker posts (Vacancies currently filled with temporary staff)	139	4	4
Restructuring and realignment of staff across Positive Contributions to maximise the use of external funding and achieve efficiencies in service delivery. It is expected that savings will be achieved from more efficient co-ordination of front-line services	400	15	To be identified

together with improved integration of information and data management systems.			
Remodelling within Inclusion and Engagement	50	1	1
Vacancy management/ review of administrative costs	250		
Cash limited budgets – a range of budgets will not be updated for inflation, and costs will be contained.	288		
Other Savings			
Capital savings – debt falling out, and funding IT replacements through revenue	96		
TOTAL (5% target =£1870k, plus £70k 2 additional	<u>1,940</u> =====	<u>30</u> =====	<u>13</u> =====

Social Workers)			
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With regard to demand led growth, it was expected that services would have to meet their own growth and this was currently being quantified within the Department. It mainly related to staffing budgets, where increments formed an upwards pressure on budgets. However, these increased costs would be managed mainly by proactively managing vacancies and recruitment.

The report advised that following a recent audit of workloads, it was considered necessary to increase the number of Child Protection Social Workers in the south part of the Borough. This would cost an additional £70,000 per annum which increased the savings target to £1,940,000.

In terms of the future, members were advised that based on the current financial guidance it was anticipated that savings in the order of 3% might be required in each of the following two years, which would equate to around £1,066,800 in 2010/2011 and a further £1,034,800 in 2011/2012. To achieve this the Department had identified several areas where work would be ongoing, which would enable savings in future years to be achieved. In particular, it had identified a series of Value for Money reviews which should lead to further savings in future years.

The Executive Member NOTED-

(i) The savings target set corporately for the Children's Services Department and the growth identified; and AGREED-

(ii) The budget options and that they be submitted as part of the Corporate Business Planning Process now detailed subject to the receipt of the final guidance.

43. CHILDREN'S SERVICES DRAFT STRATEGIC PLAN 2009/2012

The Director of Children's Services submitted a report which outlined what the Children's Services intended to achieve over the next three years from April, 2009.

The report advised that the purpose of the three year plan was to identify how departments:-

- delivering the Council's priority themes within the Bolton Plan;
- responding to the corporate and departmental Big Issues papers;
- delivering a set of strategic service priorities over the following three years; and
- ensuring financial decisions were rooted in strategy by informing the Strategic Resource Options papers.

The report advised that the department would face a number of key issues over the next three years including the need to improve the Department's performance in a number of areas:

- continuing to improve educational attainment across the Borough particularly for Looked after Children and BME children;
- reducing the number of young people who are Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEETS) and the number of teenage conceptions; and
- understanding and meeting the needs and aspirations of the Looked after Children population within Bolton to narrow the gap between their outcomes and those of other children and young people within the borough.

The report stated that the Department would also have to effectively handle new demand and growth across a range of issues including:-

- improving services to disabled children; particularly focussing on the transition to adulthood;
- the introduction of national minimum allowances for foster carers continues to place a growing demand on resources;
- capacity within senior management of Children's Services as a whole and capacity with the HR function are of particular concern;
- ensuring the effective delivery of Early Start services across the whole borough;
- increasing demand for school places and pupil place planning resulting from raising the population of 0-5 year old children;
- successfully implementing the Early Years Foundation Stage;
- accommodation issues linked to integrated working;
- the implications of implementing Care Matters; and
- transferring post 16 funding from LSC to the Local Authority in 2010.

The report advised that the department had a number of opportunities over the period of the plan:-

- the DCSF Pathfinder pilot;
- the transfer of post 16 funding from LSC to LA in 2010;
- maximising the investment in technological developments i.e. Learning Platform ensuring links to BSF and ICT managed service;
- new Governance arrangements – Trust schools, Academies etc;

- Building Schools for the Future and Primary Capital Programme; and
- strengthening Children's Trusts arrangements.

The Executive Member NOTED the report

**44. CHILDREN'S SERVICES PERFORMANCE
MANAGEMENT DASHBOARD, QUARTER 2, 2008/09**

The Director of Children's Services submitted a report which provided an update on performance at the end of Quarter 2 of the 2008-2009 financial year.

The Executive Member NOTED -

- (i) The report; and AGREED –**
- (ii) The future areas for action.**