

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee

held on Monday, 15th January, 2018 at Committee Suite 1 & 2, Westfields,
Middlewich Road, Sandbach CW11 1HZ

PRESENT

Councillor Rhoda Bailey (Chairman)

Councillors M Beanland, B Burkhill, D Flude, M Grant and J Nicholas

In attendance

Councillor J Saunders – Portfolio Holder for Children and Families

J Forster - Director of Education and 14-19 Skills

N Moorhouse - Director of Children's Social Care and Deputy DCS

M Palethorpe - Executive Director of People

T Ryan - Director of Children's Prevention & Support

34 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M Deakin, G Merry and S Pochin.

35 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting held on 27 November 2017.

RESOLVED

That the minutes be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

36 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest

37 WHIPPING DECLARATIONS

There were no whipping declarations

38 PUBLIC SPEAKING/OPEN SESSION

There were no members of the public present wishing to speak

39 CHILDREN & FAMILIES BUDGET PROPOSALS 2018-21

The Committee considered the Pre-Budget Consultation 2018/21 relating to Children and Families, specifically outcome 3 (People have the life skills and education they need in order to thrive) and outcome 5 (People live and well for longer) of the Council's Corporate Plan.

The relevant directors gave an overview of the key proposals in the budget book relating to the responsibilities covered by the Committee. Proposals to vary the budget focused on:

- Transport – parental subsidy for Available walking Routes phase 2 (revenue investment)
- Children and Families Transport Policy review (revenue saving)
- Reduction in Children's commissioned services (revenue saving)
- Review of service provision for children with disabilities (revenue saving)
- Care placements(revenue investment)
- Revised interagency income budget (revenue investment)
- Housing related accommodation and support facilities (revenue investment)
- Children and families staffing gap (revenue budget)
- Childcare Sufficiency programme (capital investment)
- End of early intervention short term funding allocation (revenue saving)
- Children and Families Transport (revenue investment)

In regard to care placements, it was noted that the provider had not delivered on the contract and therefore the contract would be going back out to market in due course.

In regard to the Care Sufficiency Programme, it was noted that there were some instances of problems with placements for two year olds, it was agreed that this would be added to the work programme for a future meeting.

It was noted that the Prevention and Support Service was being redesigned to improve the offer and bring the service under one umbrella. Members agreed that an update on the restructure of the service would be brought back to the Committee.

In regard to the proposals to charge schools for non statutory activities carried out by the Safeguarding Children in Educational Settings Team, it was acknowledged that small schools did not have a large budget and that schools were already affected by the poor take up of pupil premium and changes to the benefits system. It was agreed that a fair system would need to be achieved, possibly by charging per pupil. The Committee agreed to receive a report back on this in due course.

Following detailed consideration of the Children and Families Budget proposals 2018-21, the Committee agreed that it had no formal comments to submit to Cabinet.

RESOLVED

1. That the Pre-Budget Consultation 2018/21 relating to Children and Families be received.
2. That no formal comments be submitted to Cabinet.

40 TRAVEL UPDATE

Further to the meeting held on 27 November 2017, the Committee received an update on the Children and Families Strategic Transport Review, which detailed the strategic priorities and workstreams, including:

- An update on phase 1 and 2 of the available walking routes to school.
- Education Travel Policies
- Consultation summary and the 11 proposals
- New proposals following the consultation
- Discussion points

The proposals would now be submitted to Cabinet in March 2018 and a progress report would be brought back to the Committee later in the year

RESOLVED

That a progress report be brought back to the Committee in due course.

41 FORWARD PLAN

Consideration was given to the areas of the forward plan which fell within the remit of the Committee.

RESOLVED

That the forward plan be received.

42 WORK PROGRAMME

Consideration was given to the work programme.

RESOLVED

That the following items be added to the work programme:

- Contract for beds in residential unit relating to respite care
- Supported child care for 2 year olds
- Restructure of family support service
- Impact of redesign of benefits on pupil premium

The meeting commenced at 10.30 am and concluded at 1.00 pm

Councillor Rhoda Bailey (Chairman)

