

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

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

held on Friday, 20th January, 2017 at Committee Suite 1,2 & 3, Westfields,
Middlewich Road, Sandbach CW11 1HZ

PRESENT

Councillor Rhoda Bailey (Chairman)

Councillors B Burkhill, B Dooley, I Faseyi, D Flude, M Grant, G Merry,
A Moran, G Baxendale, M Beanland and S Edgar

In attendance

Councillor L Durham – Portfolio Holder

J Forster - Director of Education and 14-19 Skills

N Moorhouse - Director of Children's Social Care

T Ryan - Director of Children's Prevention & Support

56 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M Deakin, M Grant, J Macrae, S Pochin and J Saunders.

57 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting held on 19 December 2016.

RESOLVED

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

58 WHIPPING DECLARATIONS

There were no whipping declarations

59 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

In the interest of openness Councillor M Beanland declared that he was a School Business Manager and Councillor G Merry and D Flude declared that they were school governors.

60 PUBLIC SPEAKING/OPEN SESSION

There were no members of the public present wishing to speak.

61 BUDGET CONSULTATION 2017-2020

The Committee considered the Pre-Budget Consultation 2017/20 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:

- Childrens Services Transport Policy review
- Realignment of children's services funding streams and review of policy around charges and exemptions in relation to Children's Social Care.
- Redesign of short break provision for children with disabilities.
- Creating efficiencies in children's commissioned services
- Early help and prevention management review
- Transitional funding
- Capital investment to cater for school expansions
- End of early intervention short term funding allocation
- Reducing agency spend
- Growth bid cared for children and care leavers (revenue investment)
- Complex Dependency Programme (revenue investment)
- Watermill House (revenue Investment)
- Sub-regional collaborations

Members suggested that the budget was not easy to understand and should be written in plain English to enable the public to fully understand what they are being consulted on.

The review of Children's Services Transport Policy would involve making the service more efficient. Some elements of the policy would need to be aligned to statutory responsibilities and other areas required tightening. It was agreed that there needed to be a thorough consultation process on any proposals and that the consultation must be written in plain English and be meaningful. The contracts with taxi companies and TSS should also be fully scrutinised in detail.

With regard to the realignment of Childrens Services funding streams, it was suggested that schools should provide out of school clubs in house and this would generate income.

With regard to reducing agency spend, the Committee thanked N Moorhouse and his team for all their hard work in relation to the recruitment and retention of Social Workers and Social Care Assessors.

RESOLVED

1. That the action plan and proposals for the Children's Services School Transport Review be brought to future meetings of the Committee.
2. That the report be received.

62 **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

63 **WORK PROGRAMME**

Consideration was given to the work programme

RESOLVED

That the work programme be approved.

The meeting commenced at 2.00 pm and concluded at 4.00 pm

Councillor Rhoda Bailey (Chairman)