

**CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
8 NOVEMBER 2010**

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**MID YEAR SAVINGS AND IMPACTS FOR SCHOOLS**

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**SUMMARY REPORT**

**Purpose of the Report**

1. The purpose of the report is to provide Members with information in mid-year budget cuts it was necessary to make and the on-going effects for schools.

**Summary**

2. Due to the need to make savings as a result of in-year grant reductions, the Council was obliged to reconsider its medium term financial plan. July Cabinet agreed spending reductions in the 2010-11 revenue budget totalling £1.213million, of which £539,000 related to Children's Services.
3. This report provides Members with the information sent out to schools about service reductions and makes some comment on the impact of the in-year reductions for the Children's Services Department.

**Recommendations**

4. It is recommended that Members receive the report for information.

**Murray Rose, Director of Children's Services**

**Background Papers**

There are no background papers associated with this report

George McQueen : Extension 2847

S17 Crime and Disorder	There are no issues arising directly from this report
Health and Well Being	The discontinuation of the ContactPoint system has implications for safeguarding and the Authority's ability to fund this important area of work.
Carbon Emissions	There are no issues arising directly from this report
Diversity	There are no issues arising directly from this report
Wards Affected	All wards in the Borough
Groups Affected	Pupils aged 2 - 19, their families and communities
Budget and Policy Framework	There are no issues arising directly from this report
Key Decision	No
Urgent Decision	No
One Darlington: Perfectly Placed	
Efficiency	

## MAIN REPORT

### Information and Analysis

5. The Council's Cabinet met on 28 July 2010 and was obliged to make some cuts in the budget previously set for the 2010/11 financial year. The budget cuts were set within the context of the need to make bigger savings of some £22m over the next four years.
6. The Children's Services Department reviewed service levels and considered areas where achievable savings could be found with the least impact on front line services. Reductions of £730k have been made accordingly and schools have been advised of the changes. The reductions are outlined below.
7. Members will be aware that the Schools' Budget is provided through the Dedicated Schools Grant and must be pass-ported directly to schools. It is not possible to make reductions to the DSG and schools' budgets are protected from mid-year reductions. Savings made in central and support services will have an impact for schools, but the impact will vary, depending on each individual school's uptake of available services.
8. ***Schools Commissioning Budget***  
Following the cessation of the School Improvement Teaching and Learning Advisory Service in September 2009, a Commissioning Budget of approximately £712k in total was set up, so that schools could make proposals in respect of managing their own improvement and effectiveness agenda. The school Commissioning Budget will be reduced by £64k in year. This can be taken from resources that have not yet been committed to any school project, so schools with proposals already approved will not be affected by the cut.  
***In Year Saving £64k***
9. ***Extended Schools***  
Each of the 5 clusters of schools in Darlington receives £40k to facilitate extended services work. This amount will be reduced to £20k per cluster.  
***In Year Saving £100k***
10. ***Pupil Referral Unit***  
Consideration of the staffing and management structure of the PRU is on-going and is informed by advice from OfSTED. A Behaviour and Attendance review has recently been carried out. Through changes to commissioning and removing a post from the structure a recurrent saving of £94k can be achieved.  
***In Year Saving £94k***
11. ***14-19 Core Costs***  
The Local Authority inherited responsibilities for children in the 14-19 age group from the Learning & Skills Council in April 2010. Some staff TUPEd across to the Council and some resources were transferred for vacant posts where no TUPE arrangement was possible. One post will remain vacant making a saving of £50k.  
***In Year Saving £50k***
12. ***Children & Families Management Review***  
The Children & Families Service Arm manages fostering and adoption services and is responsible for children's homes, specialist placements and safeguarding. The Service Arm also manages the Identification and Assessment process for SEN and the Psychological

Service. One middle management post will be deleted from the structure and a redundancy process will be initiated.

***In Year Saving £20k***

13. ***ContactPoint***

ContactPoint is the national database developed to improve information sharing about vulnerable children and young people. While a local database must be maintained, ContactPoint is being scaled down. Two posts will be removed from the structure, a redundancy process will be initiated.

***In Year saving £47k***

14. ***School Improvement and Development***

Trends in legislation point to increased autonomy for schools and a transfer of responsibility for them to manage their own development and monitor their effectiveness. A reduction in service levels is called for and two Lead Officer posts will be removed from the structure.

***In Year Saving £67k***

15. ***Ethnic Minority & Traveller Service***

Two members of staff are leaving at the end of the academic year. The service will be restructured to achieve a saving of £30k.

***In Year Saving £30k***

16. ***Home to School Transport (Concessionary Rides)***

Mechanisms are being investigated to reduce costs, either by running smaller buses, large enough to transport entitled pupils only, or through introducing a charge for non-entitled pupils who ride on school buses. No changes to transport are envisaged for pupils entitled to free transport under the Council's current policy.

***In Year Saving £25k***

17. ***School Crossing Patrols***

Signalised pedestrian crossings have been provided outside some schools in the last year, removing the need for a school crossing patrol officer. No redundancy process is necessary, as staff have been moved in vacancy management.

***In Year Saving £15k***

18. ***Road Safety Education, Training & Publicity***

The number of road safety campaigns in schools will be reduced by half.

***In Year Saving £7k***

19. ***Youth Capital Fund***

This resource is used mainly to provide positive activities for young people and through DOSH, encourage them to commission their own activities. Funding is to be reduced by 50%.

***In Year Saving £32.5k***

20. ***Harnessing Technologies Grant***

This grant has been reduced twice. Nationally £50m was taken to help fund Free schools, but an additional £50m has been taken as savings. This equates to a 50% cut. Schools and the LA use the HTG for broadband connection, e-safety and ICT curriculum support.

***In Year Saving £200k***

21. Schools and officers in the Council have had only half a term of working to these reductions and it is clear, through national media and the publication of the Comprehensive Spending Review in October, that more cuts in public services are required.
22. To date there have been no adverse judgements from OfSTED, there has not been a discernible rise in accidents to pupils and neither have there been any high profile cases linked to safeguarding. Members will be aware though, from other reports presented to this committee that safeguarding is the Department's highest priority and that it has been necessary to increase the size of the officer team managing child protection and safeguarding. Since the closure of the ContactPoint system, the Authority has had to make local arrangements for collating and sharing information on children living in the Borough.
23. The reduction in funding for behaviour support is being managed within the framework of greater cooperation and shared decision-making with schools. Behaviour and Attendance remains an area requiring sustained input if the educational opportunities of the most vulnerable pupils are to be protected.
24. Further reports on changes brought about by the need to re-design services to meet with new financial models will be presented to this Committee in future.