

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

16 May, 2016

PRESENT - Councillor C. Taylor (in the Chair); Councillors Crudass, Crumbie, Curry, L. Hughes, Mills, Storr, Tostevin and Wright. (9)

NON-STATUTORY CO-OPTees – Ms S. Miah, Community Representative. (1)

APOLOGIES – Councillor Lister and Kelly; Ms. Regan, Ms Woodcock, Mrs. Harrison.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE – Councillor C. Hughes. (1)

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE – Allison Hill, Democratic Officer. (1)

CYP42. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST – There were no declarations of interest reported at the meeting.

CYP43. MEDIUM-TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2016/17 TO 2019/20 – The Committee met to consider its response to the proposals contained within the Medium-Term Financial Plan which were within its remit.

Reference was made to the various meetings of this Scrutiny Committee which had been held to discuss the proposals contained within the core offer, the Impact Assessment Forms and the Futures Fund.

Reference was also made to the remodelling of the Early Help Service into one single service and Members expressed their concern with the current lack of detail in the redesign, including confirmation from partners to deliver the proposed Early Help Pathway, which will include services offered by the local authority and other agencies and partners, including both statutory and voluntary agencies. Therefore, Members did not feel that they were currently in a position to make any formal decision on the re-modelling of the Early Help Service without further information and consultation.

Particular reference was made to the proposal in the Medium Term Financial Plan to cease the work with disabled children and their families in the 0-3 age group making a saving of approximately £65.228 (CYP3/Hu5 refers)

Members were in agreement that it was imperative to retain this service for disabled children and families as it is a service critical to the future wellbeing of these children and their families.

Particular reference was also made to the cumulative impacts of some of the proposals across the same individuals or groups of individuals and it was reported that further work in relation to that cumulative impact would be undertaken by the Chairs and Vice-Chairs of this Scrutiny Committee, the

Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee and the Health and Partnerships Scrutiny Committee and reported to the Efficiency and Resources Scrutiny Committee.

RESOLVED – That the following views and comments be forwarded to the Efficiency and Resources Scrutiny Committee as this Scrutiny Committee's majority response to the proposals contained within the Medium-Term Financial Plan 2016/17 to 2019/20 which are within its remit :-

(a) that the thanks of this Scrutiny Committee be extended to all the Officers who have supported and provided information to enable it to make an informed recommendation on those proposals, contained within the Medium-Term Financial Plan 2016/17 to 2019/20, which are within its remit.

(b) in relation to the Core Offer, this Scrutiny Committee notes the review of services which has been undertaken to ascertain which services the Council must provide by law, the cost of those services and to what level they should be delivered using a risk based approach and supports the findings of that review (with the caveat that the core budget for Performance/Project Management of £35,000 is split between children and adults), however, it is particularly concerned about :-

(i) the reduced grant for Staying Put and the future budget pressure on the Leaving Care Service for Looked After Children;

(ii) the loss of early support for disabled children aged 0-3 years and Members agreed that this service should be retained. The performance of the service should be scrutinised to ensure that it is working to maximum effectiveness. In the long term this service should be financed by looking for efficiency savings in other areas of Children and Young Peoples services.

(iii) the lack of detail currently available in the redesign of the Early Help Service and therefore Members were not in a position to make any formal decision without further information and consultation.

(iv) the potential impact of the significant reduction in the anti-social behaviour services and the impact on the Youth Offending Services.

(v) the future of school improvement taking into account the governments White Paper proposals relating to Education.

(vi) school transport costs and proposed that a reduction target be set for the level of saving to be achieved.

(c) in relation to the Impact Assessment Forms, the Scrutiny Committee regrettably accepts the proposals and information contained therein however, :-

(i) it is particularly concerned about the cumulative impact of the proposed reductions on particular groups of individuals across a range of services, some of whom are the most vulnerable in society and disproportionately on those from deprived wards within the Borough and notes that further work is currently being undertaken to map those groups and the potential impact and will be looked at across this Scrutiny Committee, the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee and the Health and Partnerships Scrutiny Committee; and

(ii) it is particularly concerned about the closure of the children's centres and the future impact on the Council that this may incur.

(iii) it is particularly concerned about future contributions to the youth offending services by the reduction in anti-social behaviour services and the potential increase in anti-social behaviour and offending from the removal of the early intervention services.

(d) in relation to the one-off Investment of £100,000 for the Voluntary Sector Development Fund, we support this investment to develop new initiatives with the Voluntary Sector in particular in respect of support to vulnerable children.

(NOTE – The minority view of the Scrutiny Committee was to defer any recommendations until all of the Scrutiny Committees have completed their investigations).