

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE AND HEALTH CABINET COMMITTEE

MINUTES of a meeting of the Children's Social Care and Health Cabinet Committee held in the Council Chamber, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Monday, 16 January 2017.

PRESENT: Mrs J Whittle (Chairman), Mrs A D Allen, MBE (Vice-Chairman), Mrs P Brivio, Mrs P T Cole, Mrs M Elenor, Mrs S Howes, Mr G Lymer, Mr M J Northey, Mr A Terry (Substitute for Mr B Neaves) and Mr M J Vye

ALSO PRESENT: Mr P J Oakford

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr A Ireland (Corporate Director Social Care, Health and Wellbeing), Mr A Scott-Clark (Director of Public Health), Mr P Segurola (Director of Specialist Children's Services) and Ms Jemma West (Democratic Services Officer)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

197. Apologies and Substitutes

(Item A2)

Apologies for absence had been received from Mrs Dagger and Mr Neaves. Mr Terry attended the meeting as a substitute Member for Mr Neaves.

198. Declarations of Interest by Members in items on the Agenda

(Item A3)

There were no declarations of interest.

199. Supported Accommodation in a Family Environment Service for Older Children in Care and Care Leavers (SAiFE) (Supported Lodgings) (15/00010) and Housing Related Support for Young People at Risk (HRS) (16/00150)

(Item B1)

Mrs K Sharp, Head of Public Health Commissioning Mrs K Mills, Commissioning Manager (Specialist Children's Services Care Leavers), were in attendance for this item.

1. Mrs Sharp introduced the report which set out contractual matters relating to contract awards for both the delivery of Supported Accommodation in a Family Environment, and also Housing Related Support for Young People at Risk.
2. Mrs Sharp then responded to the questions of the Committee Members, and made points including the following:
 - A review is being undertaken to ensure that the process was now robust enough to ensure that contracts did not require retrospective approval.

- An audit would be taking place which would provide Committee Members with assurance that there were no more contracts outstanding.
 - The purpose of the contract was to ensure a smooth transition for those reaching the age of 18.
 - Dover Young Person's Service and Dover Housing Support Services were two separate contracts. Further information could be provided around this. *(Following the meeting, further information was provided to the Member setting out the differences between the two projects).*
3. Mr Ireland then added the following points:
- There had been an error, which was why the Committee's approval was now being sought.
 - In terms of legal costs, the vast majority were cases where there were individual family proceedings in court. Consultation on contractual matters was a small proportion of the totality of the cost.
4. Mr Segurola then added the following points:
- KCC Policy was not to put 16 or 17 year olds in to bed and breakfasts. Sometimes, this happened as an emergency temporary measure for those over the age of 18.
5. RESOLVED that the decision proposed to be taken by the Cabinet Member for Specialist Children's Services, as set out below, be endorsed.
- a) To award a new contract to deliver Supported Accommodation in a Family Environment (SAiFE) for Kent's Older Children in Care, Care Leavers and vulnerable young people.
 - b) To re-award 24 short term interim contracts which deliver a total of 465 Housing Related Support units for Young People at Risk from 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018 and award a retrospective contract for the period up to 31 March 2017.
 - c) To delegate authority to the Corporate Director of Social Care, Health and Wellbeing, or other nominated officer, to undertake the necessary actions to implement the decisions.

200. Care Leavers Service

(Item C1)

(Naintara Khosla, Assistant Director, Corporate Parenting, was in attendance for this item).

1. Mr Segurola introduced the report which reviewed the Care Leaving Service in light of the significant increase in Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) who began arriving in July 2015 and became looked after by the Council and are now reaching 18 years of age and transitioning into the 18 plus Care Leaving Service. The review has been undertaken to ensure there are appropriate resources allocated to meet this increased need and manageable workloads for staff with sufficient management capacity to oversee the casework.

2. Mr Segurola then responded to questions of the Committee Members and made points including the following:
 - A substantial amount of work had been put into analysis of numbers of UASC. Pressure of cases was variable, but due to the dispersal scheme, and the situation in France, the numbers arriving in Kent had reduced significantly since July 2016.
 - The pathway needed to be overseen by a qualified social worker. There were also a number of solicitors active in seeking cases against authorities around UASC, in terms of age assessment, support and education.
 - The figure of 61 missing UASC was solely for Kent. This was a substantial challenge, where arrivals would declare they were under 18, but would disappear before there was a chance for assessment. KCC worked closely with Police to identify their whereabouts, but in many cases it was likely it was actually adults who disappeared, due to contacts in relation to work. All cases were risk assessed and if there were concerns in relation to trafficking, the response was measured proportionately to ensure every step was taken to identify whereabouts and safeguard young people.

3. Mr Ireland then added the following points:
 - It was not possible to calculate numbers with regard to those who go on to higher education. The numbers could be predictable, providing any new arrivals remained within the scope of the dispersal scheme. The levels of UASC in 2015 were much higher, and it was unclear if the service could have coped with these numbers.
 - The build-up for care leavers turning 18 and immediately after was a challenging time, as the young people's immigration status was not clear, and the service needed specialist immigration knowledge to deal with this. Personal advisors did not have this knowledge.

4. Mrs Khosla also added the following points:
 - Recruitment had been challenging, and allocation was prioritised through risk assessments for the young people, but all cases were allocated. Planning for next tranche of service increase would be dealt with by transitioning some workers from children in care services, where the need for under 18's had lessened.
 - The different geographical areas, North, West and South Kent, had met the requirements at the time of setting up. There were four teams two of which were in Dover, and two were at Worrall House.

5. RESOLVED that the proposed structure of the 18plus Care Leaving Service to meet the increasing demand of UASC transitioning into the Service be noted.

201. Budget 2017/18 and Medium Term financial plan
(Item C2)

(Dave Shipton, Head of Financial Strategy, and Michelle Goldsmith, Finance Business Partner, were in attendance for this item).

1. Mr Shipton introduced the report which accompanied the final draft 2017-18 Budget and 2017-20 MTFP, and provided further details on the key assumptions which underpinned the budget proposals and savings relevant to the remit of Children's Social Care and Health Cabinet Committee, and included information from KCC's budget consultation, the Chancellor's Autumn Budget Statement and provisional local government finance settlement.
2. Mr Shipton added that there were around £66 million additional spending requirements, of which £51 million was unavoidable, and £8 million were policy choices. There would also be a £46 million reduction in government funding. This meant that KCC had £112 million to find.
3. Ms Goldsmith then highlighted the service specific areas set out in the budget appendices.
4. Mr Segurola then responded to questions of the Committee Members and made points including the following:
 - There were always potential funding opportunities, and the service consistently scanned for these and put bids in where possible. They were not always successful but the team were certainly pro-active in utilising opportunities.
 - The staffing costs for the leaving care service, without the UASC component, for its citizen children was £1.3million. Demography moneys were being used to increase the amount.
 - There was a benefit from increasing staffing in the leaving care service, in that children could be moved forward to a position of independence sooner, and a return was expected in costs of accommodation as a result of this.
5. Ms Goldsmith also added the following points:
 - The Care Leavers aged 18 and over budget shown in Appendix two of the budget documentation showed that asylum was brought together in one service, and the £8.7 million included staff, as well as costs of accommodation support. The citizen young people care leavers line shown in line 61 showed an internal income which was a recharge to asylum.
 - Row 61 in appendix 2 showed the 16/17 budget position was £2.6, then 17/18 went up to £3 million, to include the demography monies.
 - The minus figures were where proposed savings could be made or there would be an income. Means testing of guardians for allowances would result in savings.
 - In total, the safeguarding spend was £5.8 million, but there was some income that would off-set that. The £6.82 was the recharge to the asylum budget. The £4.39 was a contribution towards the running of the Safeguarding Board.
 - The budget pages relating to Safeguarding only related to Social Care, not education and young people.
 - The budget book and the pages attached to the agenda showed different figures relating to Adults Social Care. Mr Shipton would provide further clarification around this.

- The Children's Public Health Service shown in line 64 of appendix 2 was fully funded by the current ring fenced care grant.
6. Mrs Duggal stated that the co-location of the Health Visitors in the Children's Centres was still in progress, but it was hoped to bring a report about this to the Committee at a later date.
 7. Mr Ireland then added the following points:
 - 0-25 Services were presently being looked at in great depth. Instead of looking at opportunities for efficiencies across social care, health and wellbeing, those opportunities would be looked at across 0-25 as a unity. It was not clear as yet how this would be set out in the report.
 - More efficient commissioning of supported accommodation for young people aged 16 plus was an area KCC could target to create efficiencies and savings. Given the numbers looked at in the previous papers, market power was potentially much greater. Greater coherence in planning locations of accommodation was needed, rather than placing disproportionate numbers in a few locations.
 8. Mr Oakford also added that this budget did not reflect anything to do with the ongoing 0-25 work. That work related to the integration of children's services and better pathways for the most vulnerable young people. Any savings would be a by-product.
 9. RESOLVED that the draft budget and MTFP including responses to consultation and Government announcements, be noted.