

AT A MEETING of the CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SELECT COMMITTEE of the COUNTY COUNCIL held at The Castle, Winchester on Wednesday, 22 January 2014.

**PRESENT**

Chairman:  
p Councillor Ray Bolton

**Councillors:**

p John Bennison	p Warwick Lovegrove
p Ann Briggs	p Martin Lyon
a Rita Burgess	p Andy Moore
p Christopher Carter	p Jackie Porter
p Roz Chadd	p Patricia Stallard
p Criss Connor	p Bruce Tennent
p Marge Harvey	p Malcolm Wade
p Roger Huxstep	a Patricia West
p Jonathan Glen	P Christopher Wood

**Co-opted Members:**

a Rosemary Olivier: Roman Catholic Schools Representative  
p Claire Dodd: Primary School Parent Governor Representative  
p Andrew March: Secondary School Parent Governor Representative  
p Louise Vardy: Special School Parent Governor Representative

**At the invitation of the Chairman:**

p Councillor Peter Edgar – Executive Member for Education  
p Councillor Keith Mans – Executive Lead Member for Children’s Services

22. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillors Rita Burgess and Pat West and their Substitute Member, Councillor Keith Evans.

23. **DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

Members were mindful that where they believed they had a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in any matter considered at the meeting they must declare that interest at the time of the relevant debate and, having regard to the circumstances described in Part 3 Paragraph 1.5 of the County Council’s

Items to be actioned on the Committee’s work programme:

Members' Code of Conduct, leave the meeting while the matter was discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with Paragraph 1.6 of the Code. Furthermore Members were mindful that where they believed they had a Non-Pecuniary interest in a matter being considered at the meeting they considered whether such interest should be declared, and having regard to Part 5, Paragraph 2 of the Code, considered whether it was appropriate to leave the meeting whilst the matter was discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with the Code.

In respect of the Children's Services Revenue Budget 2014/15 (Item 6), below, Councillor Wade declared a non-pecuniary interest as Chairman of the Handy Trust, which received funding from the Council. Councillor Wade spoke and voted thereon.

Regarding the same item, Councillor Porter declared a non-pecuniary interest as both chairman of a pre-school and youth service, which received funding from the County Council.

Also on the same item, Councillor Stallard declared a non-pecuniary interest as she was on the Partnership Board of one of the Children's Centres, referred to in the report.

In addition, Louise Vardy declared a non-pecuniary interest as she had a disabled child and was in receipt of related funding from the County Council.

24. **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Committee, held on 3 October 2013, were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

25. **CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Chairman explained that this was the first meeting held since the sad passing the Vice Chairman, Councillor John West. On behalf of the Committee and officers, the Chairman recorded their thanks to Councillor John West for his contribution to the Committee's work and their condolences to John's family.

The Chairman also welcomed to the meeting Richard Wharton who was the proposed new Church of England Schools Representative, replacing Tony Blackshaw. It was noted that Mr Wharton's co-opted status on the Committee was due to be considered at the next meeting of full Council, to be held on 20 February 2014.

26. **DEPUTATIONS**

The Committee received a deputation from Sharon Smith, on

behalf of the Hampshire Parent/Carer Network regarding the Children's Services Revenue Budget.

In summary, Ms Smith explained that the Parent/Carer Network worked with 2,000 families and 100 other support groups in Hampshire. The Network objected to the proposed savings of between £2.5m-£3.5m to the Children with Disabilities service area, to take effect from April 2015 (set out in Appendix 5 of the report). In particular, Ms Smith objected to how this proposed saving would affect the Short Breaks service. She explained how Short Breaks provided a vital service for parents of disabled children and that probable effect of removing it would result in a greater overall cost for the Council. The new Children and Families Bill required local authorities to publish their "local offer" of services to families with Special Educational Needs, which was likely to further increase demand for Short Breaks. The Bill also required local authorities to provide a personal budget for families to access universal services (such as Short Breaks) privately if they were not provided by the local authority.

The Chairman thanked Ms Smith for her deputation and the Committee took note of her comments during the discussion below.

27. **CHILDREN'S SERVICES REVENUE BUDGET 2014/15**

The Committee received a report (Item 6 in the Minutes Book) and presentation from the Director of Corporate Resources (Corporate Services) and the Director of Children's Services, which outlined the proposed 2014/15 Revenue Budget for the department.

In summary, the presentation outlined the wider budget for the whole Council. This set out the presumption of no increase in the Council Tax precept, reduced government grants and the requirement to draw £25.4m from the Grant Equalisation Reserve.

In considering the more detailed information on the Children's Services budget, Members noted:

- That following the Coalition Government's 2010 Emergency Budget, the Department's own budget would have effectively been reduced by a third by 2015. However, despite this challenge, the latest Ofsted inspection had found Hampshire's Children's Services to be good or outstanding in all 22 of the measured domains.
- The report set out a set of principles to help guide the difficult budgetary and transformational decisions which were required. This included the protection and care of

the county's most vulnerable children; to retain a capacity to lead, challenge and improve local schools; targeted early help to reduce an escalation of need; sold services; and increased efficiencies through partnerships.

- The presentation highlighted the proposed savings set out in Appendix 2 including savings in the children and family contracts, Early Help, and greater contributions from public health and NHS partners. In addition, the presentation highlighted where the increased income was sought through, for example; selling educational psychology, Hampshire Future services and Services for Young Children.
- Members also noted the budgetary effect arising from the increase in the number of children in care.

In response to Members' questions, the following was noted:

- The additional support provided to the children of parents that worked in the military services, as their children were more likely to change schools.
- That the Council had relatively few Social Workers employed via agencies.
- That responsibility for nursing in mainstream schools lay with local authority public health.
- The Committee and Executive Members agreed the need to carefully manage outsourced services.
- Whilst the Council-wide proposed 12% savings target would have a particularly significant effect on Children's Services (due to its size and the number of mandatory services it provided), the approach adopted in the report had treated each department equally and fairly.
- That, with the Executive Members, officers had carefully examined every aspect of the budget to minimise the difficult proposed savings set out in the report, and this included examining costs which could be transferred to schools.

These savings included between £2.5m and £3.5m (from a total budget of £19.4m) for Children with Disabilities. This budget included residential and respite care, short breaks, speech and language therapy. In response to questions, the Director explained that majority of this budget related to longer term care and it was hoped that, if this increasing need could be met within Hampshire, this could generate a significant saving and, therefore, reduce the budgetary pressure on

services such as Short Breaks. In addition, officers were not proposing the complete removal of the Short Breaks service, but were investigating the potential for improvements in how the different grant streams (including youth services, short breaks and children's services integrated grants) worked and achieving a better graduation between short breaks, respite care and longer term care.

During debate, Members noted that funding for the Short Breaks Service was included in a new single grants that was an amalgamation of previous grants, which was formed five years ago but with significant reductions in overall funding. At that time, it was anticipated that the Health Services would contribute to the costs of the service, but these funds never came forward. Members also noted that some research appears to show that approximately a third of other local authorities no longer provide Short Breaks services.

At the conclusion of debate, and having taken into account Ms Smith's deputation, the Committee acknowledged the importance of the Short Breaks services and therefore agreed to establish a task and finish group to consider:

- the possible effect of the proposed cut on parents and the children themselves who used the Short Breaks service
- what the effect had been in other Local Authority areas where the service had been removed
- what alternative services were available for families
- and how the service could be delivered more effectively.

Members noted that to feed into the timetable for the 2015/16 Budget, this Group should aim to report to the 20 May 2014 meeting of this Committee.

The Membership of the task and finish group was agreed as: Councillors Bolton (Chairman), Connor, Glen, Harvey, Porter and Wood.

In addition to the above, Members suggested that, given the size and complexity of the budget within this Committee's scrutiny, a specific Members' Briefing session be considered for next year, focusing on the Children's Services budget.

**RESOLVED:**

That it be recommended to the Executive Member that:

- i) That the principles proposed in paragraph 2.16 as the revised policy framework for the budgetary and transformational decisions outlined in the report be agreed.

For: 17

Against: 0  
Abstention: 0

- ii) The firm proposals for savings totalling £6.308 in 2014/15 (as set out in Appendix 1 and 2).

For: 13  
Against: 4  
Abstention: 0

Note: Councillors Lyon, Moore and Wood requested that it be minuted that they did not support this recommendation.

- iii) The revised budget for 2013/14 (as set out in Appendix 3).

For: 17  
Against 0  
Abstention: 0

- iv) The summary budget for 2014/15 (as set out in Appendix 3)

For: 9  
Against: 8  
Abstention: 0

Note: Councillors Lyon, Moore and Wood requested that it be minuted that they did not support this recommendation.

- v) The workforce implications of the proposed budget for 2014/15 (as set out in Appendix 4).

For: 13  
Against: 4  
Abstention: 0

Note: Councillors Lyon, Moore and Wood requested that it be minuted that they did not support this recommendation.

- vi) The key theme areas for further savings as part of the Transforming the Council to 2015 Programme (as set out in Appendix 5) noting that the proposals concerning short breaks for children with disabilities will be subject to further consideration from a task and finish group of the Children and Young People Select Committee (details above).

For: 14  
Against: 3  
Abstention: 0

Note: Councillors Lyon, Moore and Wood requested that

it be minuted that they did not support this recommendation.

28. **CHILDREN'S SERVICES CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2014/15 TO 2015/16**

The Committee received a presentation and report (Item 7 in the minute book) from the Director of Children's Services and the Director of Corporate Resources – Corporate Services which gave the Committee the opportunity to consider the capital programme proposals and make recommendations to the Executive Lead Member for Children's Services.

In response to Members' questions, the Committee noted:

- That the capital programme sought to create sustainable, high quality (and therefore low maintenance) buildings.
- That the programme covered a three year period and was linked to the forecasted numbers of pupils.

During debate, a Member raised a concern regarding the number of new dwellings which in turn created pressures on local schools.

At the conclusion of debate, the Committee welcomed the report and raised no objection to the recommendations for the Executive Member set out in the report.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

29. **EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT IN HAMPSHIRE 2013: RESULTS AND PRIORITIES**

30. **WORK PROGRAMME**

Due to the Committee's detailed consideration of the budget items above, Members agreed to defer both the Educational Attainment and the Work Programme reports to its next meeting, to be held 3 February 2014.

RESOLVED:

That the Educational Attainment and Work Programme reports be deferred to the next meeting.

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Chairman, 20 March 2014