

BRIGHTON & HOVE CITY COUNCIL
CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE CABINET MEMBER MEETING

4.00pm 5 MARCH 2012

COMMITTEE ROOM 1, HOVE TOWN HALL

MINUTES

Present: Councillor Shanks (Cabinet Member)

Also in attendance: Councillors Marsh and Wealls

PART ONE

29. PROCEDURAL BUSINESS

29(a) Declarations of Interests

29.1 There were none.

29(b) Exclusion of Press and Public

29.2 In accordance with section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 ("the Act"), the Cabinet Member considered whether the press and public should be excluded from the meeting during an item of business on the grounds that it was likely, in view of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the press and public were present during that item, there would be disclosure to them of confidential information (as defined in section 100A(3) of the Act) or exempt information (as defined in section 100I(I) of the Act).

29.3 **RESOLVED** - That the press and public be not excluded from the meeting during consideration of any item on the agenda.

30. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

30.1 **RESOLVED** – That the minutes of the Children & Young People Cabinet Member Meeting held on 20 January 2012 be agreed and signed by the Cabinet Member as a correct record.

31. CABINET MEMBER'S COMMUNICATIONS

31.1 There were none.

32. ITEMS RESERVED FOR DISCUSSION

32.1 **RESOLVED** – That all items be reserved for discussion.

33. PETITIONS

33.1 There were none.

34. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

34.1 There were none.

35. DEPUTATIONS

35.1 There were none.

36. LETTERS FROM COUNCILLORS

36.1 There were none.

37. WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM COUNCILLORS

37.1 There were none.

38. NOTICES OF MOTIONS

38.1 There were none.

39. COMMISSIONING STRATEGY FOR SERVICES FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES: PROGRAMME UPDATE

39.1 The Cabinet Member considered a report of the Strategic Director, People providing a programme update in relation to the commissioning strategy for children with disabilities. The report set out progress on the implementation of that strategy and sought endorsement of the key initiative to pilot individual budgets for short breaks (respite) for children and young people with disabilities who had an assessed need for social care support.

39.2 The report detailed how it was proposed that the pilot would proceed both in the national context and locally. The pilot would seek to assess the levels of social care support and would look at how that could best be delivered within the resources available and also set out what it was hoped to achieve as a result of the pilot and beyond.

39.3 Councillor Marsh sought clarification as to why the pilot was commencing now, the arrangements proposed in instances where there was more than one child with disabilities in the family, how families would be chosen to take place in the pilot and regarding arrangements which would be put into place post 19. Councillor Marsh considered that currently there was a gap in provision for young adults post 19.

39.4 It was explained that the pilot followed from a programme of 6-7 pilots nationally and that a lot of work would be done with individual families as this did represent a radical

approach, in that dependent on the needs of individual families, the level of support could equate to direct financial provision, provision of “virtual” money or a combination of both. Careful consideration would be given to the level of support given to individual families in order to assist them in the best management of the resources provided to them. Work would also be carried out in conjunction with “Amaze” and the Federation of Disabled People. This was a genuine pilot in that it could be subject to amendment based on operational experience, elements of it, or ultimately the scheme itself would not be proceeded with if it was not considered to be the most effective way of delivering these resources. Councillor Marsh was pleased to note that this was a genuine pilot.

39.5 Councillor Wealls sought further clarification regarding operation of the pilot and whether it was outcome led. It was explained that there were no preconceptions regarding this and that different conversations were likely to take place in respect of the needs of individual families and of individual parents too.

39.6 **RESOLVED** – (1) That the Cabinet Member approves the implementation of a pilot for individual budgets for short breaks (respite) for children and young people with disabilities with an assessed need for social care support; and

(2) That the Cabinet Member notes that the pilot will be taken forward through established partnership and joint working arrangements between the Council’s Joint Commissioner, managers and staff in the council’s integrated Child Development and Disability Service, Community and Voluntary Sector organizations, parent carer groups (including the Parent and Carer Council hosted by Amaze), children and young people and other stakeholders.

40. TWO YEAR OLD EARLY EDUCATION ENTITLEMENT

40.1 The Cabinet Member considered a report of the Strategic Director, People detailing the proposed arrangements in respect of early education entitlement for two year olds.

40.1 The Council would have a statutory duty to fund free childcare places for the 20% most disadvantaged two year olds from September 2013. In 2011/12 the Council funded 135 two year olds to attend childcare 10 hours a week 38 weeks a year. that would need to increase to 600 children for 15 hours a week to meet the statutory duty by September 2013. This increase would have significant financial implications. The Government planned to extend the statutory duty to 40% of all two year olds from September 2014. It was anticipated that the level of take up would be around 90%. The childcare had to be with childcare providers registered with Ofsted including childminders who were part of a quality assured group.

40.2 Councillor Marsh referred to the fact that a number of childminders appeared to have some vacancies, whereas there was pressure on nursery places especially in certain parts of the city. Councillor Marsh also referred to the fact that there were also nursery schools attached to schools across the city, asking whether and how this would be factored into the arrangements. It was explained that there was a range of good quality early years provision across the city. There were vacancies with some nurseries and childminders. It was considered that there might be sufficient places across the city but the places were not in the right areas. More places were needed in the most disadvantaged areas of the city and particularly in the east. There were implications for

school nursery classes which would be considered as parents might want their children to stay with the same provider. The main eligibility condition was similar to that for free school meals. The Department for Education were working on a web based checker which would enable local authorities to check which families would be eligible.

40.3 Councillor Wealls sought clarification in relation to the funding to be provided by central government. It was explained that the funding for two year olds was not ring-fenced. For 2011/12 and 12/13 the funding had been included in the Early Intervention Grant. The Government had stated that large amounts of funding had been put into the grant nationally but these amounts were not visible locally because of other funding reductions. The Government had not yet decided on the funding mechanism from April 2013.

40.4 **RESOLVED** - That the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People:

(1) Agrees to the strategy to gradually increase the number of two year olds offered free childcare starting from April 2012 to reach 600 by September 2013 and to increase the hourly rate from £4.85 to £5.00 an hour;

(2) Agrees to sustain existing, good quality voluntary sector childcare providers in areas where additional places will be needed;

(3) Notes the financial risk of the additional revenue funding needed to meet the statutory duties (estimated to be over £1m in 2013/214), and possible capital implications if it is decided to increase provision in certain areas of the city.

41. PROVISION OF FAMILY GROUP CONFERENCES

41.1 The Cabinet Member considered a report of the Strategic Director, People detailing proposals in relation to arrangements for family group conferences.

41.2 It was explained that Family Group Conferences were a concept which had originated in New Zealand where they had been used for many years and latterly, the US, Europe and the UK. They formed an integral part of the decision making process and future planning when a child or young person was in crisis. The term "family" could be defined very broadly to encompass family members and others well known by the child and to the family as well as members of their immediate family. Discussions would take place which would identify issues which needed to be covered by the Plan, following which there would be private family time in order to enable the family to come up with a plan. A partnership approach was adopted which enabled children to be maintained with support within their own families and communities. An effective programme had operated in the City since 2002 and positive outcomes had been achieved. This approach was not appropriate in all cases but had been successful in instances where it could be used as a practical alternative to dealing with matters through the courts, or to a child being placed in care. Approval was sought to enter into a tender process for further provision from October 2012.

41.3 Councillor Marsh sought clarification regarding why this provision was being re-tendered for now and it was explained that previously tendering had been an annual process by setting it for a longer period (2 ½ years), it was hoped that this would build in a greater

degree of stability. Whilst the existing arrangements had worked well, the authority was required to look at what was provided holistically.

41.4 Councillor Wealls sought clarification regarding the role of social workers and other professionals and in terms of the costs associated with provision of this service. It was explained that although social workers were involved, the process was an independent one and as such because the family was pivotal in devising the resultant plan they were not present throughout the whole process. The cost of provision was not large and was cost effective in terms of the outcomes it was able to deliver in instances where consideration of this as an option was appropriate; also there were economies of scale in relation to contracts entered into for a longer period.

41.5 **RESOLVED** - That the Cabinet Member:

(1) Agrees to a tender process to procure provision of Family Group Conferences for the city;

(2) Agrees the contract for Family Group Conferences from September 2012 to end of March 2015 with a break clause in March 2014;

(3) Authorises the Strategic Director, People to approve the award of a contract to the selected provider following completion of the procurement process.

42. NON-PUBLIC MINUTES

42.1 **RESOLVED** – That the Cabinet Member be authorized to sign the non public minutes of the meeting held on 20 January -2012 as a correct record.

The meeting concluded at 5.35pm

Signed

Chair

Dated this

day of