

## Wiltshire Council

### Children's Select Committee

15 March 2022

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#### Executive Response to the Report of the Children's Select Committee Standing Task Group – Traded Services

#### Purpose of the report

1. To present the response of the Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education and Skills to the Report of the Children's Select Committee Standing Task Group.

#### Background

2. On 19 January 2022 the Children's Select Committee endorsed the Report of the Task Group on Traded Services.
3. The Committee resolved to refer the following Task Group's recommendations to the relevant Cabinet member for response at the Committee's next meeting on 15 March 2022.
4. The Chair of the Standing Task Group was pleased to report that this had been a very productive meeting and thanked officers and Executive Members for their engagement with the exercise.
5. Members of the task group also wished to highlight the vast progress achieved in the last two years with regards to Traded Services, which they believed reflected the dedication and degree of commitment shown by members of the traded services team and its Head of Service.

#### Executive response to the Task Group's recommendations

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| <b>Recommendation No.1</b>       | For the council to clearly identify the overarching principle and strategic direction for traded services and the "freedom" it might need to achieve this "vision and mission" within the council's rules (for example longer-term financial planning, quicker decision making when proposing amendments to charging system). |                     |              |
| <b>Reason for recommendation</b> | The key issue identified was the need for a strategic identity for traded services, which would provide direction to address many of the issues raised during the meeting.                                                                                                                                                    |                     |              |
| <b>Cabinet member</b>            | Cllr Laura Mayes                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | <b>Lead Officer</b> | Paul Redford |

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| <b>Executive response</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | <b>01/03/2022</b> | ACCEPTED | There is clear intent to deliver income and benefit led outcomes from Traded Services; this is included in the Council's business plan. With a clear vision and mission, underpinned by value and vision statements, the decision making and outcomes will have even more impact going forward. |
| <b>Action</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                   |          | <b>Target date</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| The Head of Service for Traded Services to agree the direction of travel with Members and the Director of Children's Services and the Director of Education and Skills, supported by a service delivery plan to achieve key priorities agreed for the next twelve months.<br>This will be reinforced by a data dashboard to monitor performance covering the key priorities. |                   |          | May 2022<br>(Interim Report due to Children's Select Task Group)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Success criteria</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                   |          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Delivery Service Plan and Data Dashboard to evidence progress made and outcomes achieved.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                   |          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |

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| <b>Recommendation No.2</b>                                                                                                                | For a timeline (or deadline) to be set for the completion of the cost recovery review and for each traded service to identify its key driver and, if possible, for that timeline (or deadline) to be shared with the standing task group.                                             |                     |                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Reason for recommendation</b>                                                                                                          | The task group felt that the cost recovery review and identification of key drivers were crucial for traded services to maintain a sense of direction and to enable it to scrutinise its decision-making in pursuing opportunities (or not), subsidising some services (or not), etc. |                     |                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Cabinet member</b>                                                                                                                     | Cllr Laura Mayes                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | <b>Lead Officer</b> | Paul Redford                                                                                                                          |
| <b>Executive response</b>                                                                                                                 | 4/3/2022                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | ACCEPTED            | The review has started and the Task Group will be updated in May, as part of the interim report, with a full timeline for completion. |
| <b>Action</b>                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                     | <b>Target date</b>                                                                                                                    |
| A full analysis of annual funding budgets will be undertaken to present a balance sheet for all services under the Traded Services offer. |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                     | December 2022                                                                                                                         |
| <b>Success criteria</b>                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                     |                                                                                                                                       |
| Traded Services Balance Sheet for every Traded Service by December 2022.                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                     |                                                                                                                                       |

**Recommendation No.3**

For future reports to include:

*In the executive summary / head of service's summary*

- a. overall vision and mission for traded services as a whole;
- b. risk assessment (based on the swot analysis already undertaken), which could include resource availability / academisation / competitors, etc. Ideally this would be RAG rated and would show trend from one report to the next;
- c. a single gathering of evidence to demonstrate how traded services support the delivery of the council's business plan (rather than for each service's report);
- d. a table showing:
  - i. whether a traded service is statutory / or not (may be both);
  - ii. whether a traded service is "benefit led" (benefits to children / schools) or "financially led";
  - iii. a 1 to 5 scale showing the council's order of priority (e.g. "1 – nice to have – limited risks if not provided", "5 – must have – high risk if not provided")
- e. a table / graphic showing:
  - i. the percentage of schools having purchased any service (product or contract or item) from traded services, ideally showing the split between primary / secondary schools and LA maintained / academy schools / outside of county schools
  - ii. the number of in-county schools (compared to the total number of schools in the county) who have purchased anything from traded services and how many services they have purchased – if possible highlighting the outliers (if this is easily identified through Right Choice); e.g. 150 schools out of 252 in the county have purchased 15,426 services (contract / product / service), which means an average of 103 services purchased per school, however 5 schools purchased over 200 services and 8 schools only purchased 12.
- f. A table or summary of customers "other than schools" engaged with (and by which traded services), i.e. early years setting, childminders, youth groups, as well as "outside of county" customers engaged with.

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|                                         | <p><i>For each service's report</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>g. each service to have identified one main goal for the year ahead and indicate key steps to achieving this;</li> <li>h. a single key driver for each traded service (and if possible for traded services as a whole), e.g. commercial / value added for schools, etc.;</li> <li>i. risk assessments (<i>see b above for details</i>);</li> <li>j. income and expenditure analysis for each service (traded income and traded cost) and whether this meets the expectations for that traded service (i.e. is that traded service expected – or designed - to run at a loss / break even / make a surplus);</li> <li>k. opportunity analysis – for each service to identify the top 5 commercial opportunities, their feasibility and, if appropriate, the steps proposed to take these opportunities forward.</li> </ul> |                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <p><b>Reason for recommendation</b></p> | <p>To consolidate the report to enable adequate scrutiny when it is presented to either the Standing Task Group or Children's Select Committee.</p> <p>It should be noted that this was the first report to be presented to overview and scrutiny, and the task group appreciated the level of information included and recognised the work that had clearly been required to produce such a comprehensive report. It was also accepted that it may take time for some of the elements in this recommendation to be implemented.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <p><b>Cabinet member</b></p>            | <p>Cllr Laura Mayes</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | <p><b>Lead Officer</b></p> | <p>Paul Redford</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <p><b>Executive response</b></p>        | <p>4/3/2022</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | <p>ACCEPTED</p>            | <p>The feedback for report content will be adopted for the November annual report and where data is available to cover each of the points it will be reported. There will be some adaptations made for the May report, to reflect some of the feedback earlier, but not all will be achieved by the time the May report is due. Where data is unavailable for certain requests, the next best data will be presented for consideration to respond to the feedback.</p> |
| <p><b>Action</b></p>                    | <p><b>Target date</b></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |

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| Review of report content and format to make sure it is reflecting the feedback offered on the back of the first Traded Services Report presented in November 2022. | November 2022 |
| <b>Success criteria</b>                                                                                                                                            |               |
| <b>Traded Report May 2022 and Traded Full Year Report November 2022</b>                                                                                            |               |

6. The support, scrutiny and feedback the Children's Services Committee and its Standing Task Group provided have been warmly received by all the Traded teams involved.
7. The January 2022 feedback provided on the Traded Services report will be adopted for reporting going forward, understanding that the November Full Year Report will present the best opportunity to reflect all the changes to the reporting format in line with the recommendations presented.
8. Where data is not available to satisfy the recommendations exactly, substitute data will be presented for the Task Group's consideration.

### **Proposal**

9. To note the executive response to the Report on Traded Services of the **Children's Select Committee Standing Task Group**.

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**Cllr Laura Mayes, Cabinet Member for Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education and Skills**

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