

AGENDA

Meeting: Children's Select Committee
Place: The Kennet Room - County Hall, Trowbridge BA14 8JN
Date: Tuesday 17 April 2018
Time: 10.30 am

Please direct any enquiries on this Agenda to Roger Bishton, of Democratic Services, County Hall, Bythesea Road, Trowbridge, direct line 01225 713035 or email roger.bishton@wiltshire.gov.uk

Press enquiries to Communications on direct lines (01225) 713114/713115.

This Agenda and all the documents referred to within it are available on the Council's website at www.wiltshire.gov.uk

Pre-meeting information briefing

There will be a briefing session starting at 9.30am, immediately before the meeting which will focus on **Childhood Obesity**.

Membership:

Cllr Mary Champion
Cllr Anna Cuthbert
Cllr Andrew Davis
Cllr Christopher Devine
Cllr Mary Douglas
Cllr Sue Evans
Cllr David Halik

Cllr Deborah Halik
Cllr Jon Hubbard (Chairman)
Cllr Chris Hurst
Cllr Jacqui Lay (Vice-Chairman)
Cllr Hayley Spencer
Cllr Roy While

Substitutes:

Cllr Pat Aves
Cllr Clare Cape
Cllr Trevor Carbin
Cllr Ernie Clark
Cllr Stewart Dobson

Cllr Nick Fogg MBE
Cllr Peter Fuller
Cllr Russell Hawker
Cllr Jim Lynch
Cllr James Sheppard

Non-Elected Voting Members:

Dr Mike Thompson

Clifton Diocesan RC Representative

Non-Elected Non-Voting Members:

Tracy Cornelius
Miss Sarah Busby
John Hawkins
Mr Paul Daniel

Primary Head Teacher Representative
Secondary Head Teacher Representative
School Teacher Representative
Further Education Representative

Recording and Broadcasting Information

Wiltshire Council may record this meeting for live and/or subsequent broadcast on the Council's website at <http://www.wiltshire.public-i.tv>. At the start of the meeting, the Chairman will confirm if all or part of the meeting is being recorded. The images and sound recordings may also be used for training purposes within the Council.

By entering the meeting room you are consenting to being recorded and to the use of those images and recordings for broadcasting and/or training purposes.

The meeting may also be recorded by the press or members of the public.

Any person or organisation choosing to film, record or broadcast any meeting of the Council, its Cabinet or committees is responsible for any claims or other liability resulting from them so doing and by choosing to film, record or broadcast proceedings they accept that they are required to indemnify the Council, its members and officers in relation to any such claims or liabilities.

Details of the Council's Guidance on the Recording and Webcasting of Meetings is available on request.

Parking

To find car parks by area follow [this link](#). The three Wiltshire Council Hubs where most meetings will be held are as follows:

County Hall, Trowbridge
Bourne Hill, Salisbury
Monkton Park, Chippenham

County Hall and Monkton Park have some limited visitor parking. Please note for meetings at County Hall you will need to log your car's registration details upon your arrival in reception using the tablet provided. If you may be attending a meeting for more than 2 hours, please provide your registration details to the Democratic Services Officer, who will arrange for your stay to be extended.

Public Participation

Please see the agenda list on following pages for details of deadlines for submission of questions and statements for this meeting.

For extended details on meeting procedure, submission and scope of questions and other matters, please consult [Part 4 of the council's constitution](#).

The full constitution can be found at [this link](#).

For assistance on these and other matters please contact the officer named above for details

AGENDA

PART I

Items to be considered while the meeting is open to the public

1 **Apologies**

2 **Minutes of the Previous Meeting** (*Pages 7 - 14*)

To approve and sign the minutes of the previous meeting held on 6 February 2018. (Copy attached).

3 **Declarations of Interest**

To receive any declarations of disclosable interests or dispensations granted by the Standards Committee.

4 **Chairman's Announcements**

5 **Public Participation**

The Council welcomes contributions from members of the public.

Statements

If you would like to make a statement at this meeting on any item on this agenda, please register to do so at least 10 minutes prior to the meeting. Up to 3 speakers are permitted to speak for up to 3 minutes each on any agenda item. Please contact the officer named on the front of the agenda for any further clarification.

Questions

To receive any questions from members of the public or members of the Council received in accordance with the constitution.

Those wishing to ask questions are required to give notice of any such questions in writing to the officer named on the front of this agenda no later than 5pm on **Tuesday 10 April 2018** in order to be guaranteed of a written response. In order to receive a verbal response questions must be submitted no later than 5pm on **Thursday 12 April 2018**. Please contact the officer named on the front of this agenda for further advice. Questions may be asked without notice if the Chairman decides that the matter is urgent.

Details of any questions received will be circulated to Committee members prior to the meeting and made available at the meeting and on the Council's website.

6 **Family and Children's Transformation (FACT) - Phase One Assessment**
(Pages 15 - 24)

The Support and Safeguarding Service was launched on the 2nd October 2017, alongside a new single front door to Wiltshire Families and Children's Service, marking the completion of phase 1 of the Children's Services Integration Project.

A report was presented to this committee on 14th March 2017 outlined the service aims and objectives, following this an update was requested following the completion of phase 1. A report is included in this agenda for the Children's Select Committee which provides an overview of the first 6 months of operation.

The committee is asked to discuss and comment on the update regarding the progress made to date and to consider requesting a further progress update in six months' time (marking 12 months since launch of the new service).

7 **DfE Changes - Update from Department for Education** (Pages 25 - 30)

A report by Terence Herbert, Corporate Director, is attached presenting an update on developments relating to children's services arising from the Department for Education.

8 **Task Group Updates** (Pages 31 - 44)

A report by the Senior Scrutiny Officers providing an update on Task Group Activity since the last meeting is attached.

9 **Forward Work Programme** (Pages 45 - 48)

The Committee is asked to note the attached document showing the relevant items from the overview and scrutiny forward work programme plus relevant items on the current Cabinet work programme.

10 **Date of Next Meeting**

To note that the next scheduled meeting is due to be held on Tuesday 19 June 2018 at County Hall, Trowbridge, starting at 10.30am.

11 **Urgent Items**

Any other items of business which the Chairman agrees to consider as a matter of urgency.

PART II

Items during whose consideration it is recommended that the public should be excluded because of the likelihood that exempt information would be disclosed

None

CHILDREN'S SELECT COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE CHILDREN'S SELECT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 6 FEBRUARY 2018 AT THE KENNET ROOM - COUNTY HALL, TROWBRIDGE BA14 8JN.

Present:

Cllr Mary Champion, Cllr Anna Cuthbert, Cllr Christopher Devine, Cllr Mary Douglas, Cllr Sue Evans, Cllr David Halik, Cllr Deborah Halik, Cllr Jon Hubbard (Chairman), Cllr Chris Hurst, Cllr Jacqui Lay (Vice-Chairman), Cllr Hayley Spencer, Cllr Roy White, Dr M Thompson, John Hawkins and Cllr James Sheppard (Substitute)

Also Present:

Cllr Trevor Carbin, Cllr Pauline Church, Cllr Jane Davies, Cllr Laura Mayes and Cllr Philip Whalley.

87 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from:-

Cllr Andrew Davis, who was substituted by Cllr James Sheppard
Miss Sarah Busby
Miss Tracy Cornelius

88 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

Resolved:

To confirm and sign the minutes of the previous meeting held on 19 December 2017.

89 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest made at the meeting.

90 Chairman's Announcements

(a) Cabinet Items

On 30 January 2018 Cabinet considered the following items:-

- School Admissions Policies 2019/20
Lead Officer: Debbie Clare
- School Capital Programme 2018-2021 Report
Lead Officer: Clare Medland – The Chairman informed the meeting that Ms Medland would shortly be leaving the employment of the Council to take up a position with Gloucestershire County Council. The Chairman and Members requested that their best wishes be conveyed to Ms Medland, together with their thanks for the considerable contributions that she had made particularly regarding school places.
- Wiltshire Council Adoption Service: 2017 Q1-2 6 Month Report
Lead Officer: Matthew Turner

On 27 March 2018 Cabinet would be considering the following items:-

- Outdoor Education (Part 11 Report)
Lead Officer: Alan Stubbersfield
- Special School Provision in Wiltshire
Lead Officer: Susan Tanner

(b) Budget Scrutiny Timetable

- Overview & Scrutiny Management Committee – Monday 5 February
- Cabinet budget meeting – Tuesday 6 February (am)
- Overview & Scrutiny Management Committee to consider the opposition budget Friday 9 February
- Council to consider and decide the budget – Tuesday 20 February

91 Public Participation

No questions had been received from councillors or members of the public.

92 Pupil Performance in Public Tests and Examinations

Consideration was given to a report on pupil performance in public tests and examinations. The report provided an overview of pupil performance at the end of each key stage using the latest available data. It compared attainment in Wiltshire with national, south west and statistical neighbour performance and where possible performance trends were identified.

It was noted that at the end of the academic year 2016/17 the majority of pupils in Wiltshire were educated in high quality provision with 88% of pupils in good or outstanding schools.

There had been improvements and continuity of high outcomes for pupils on a number of indicators. Rapid and sustained improvement in phonics had now resulted in Wiltshire being in line with comparators. Results in Key Stage 4 continued to be high as were those for A level results in Key Stage 5.

However, there were some specific areas where improvements were required and these had become strategic priorities. Outcomes in primary schools at Key Stages 1 and 2 had not kept pace with improvements elsewhere and Wiltshire was now below the national average. In particular, Maths at Key Stages 1 and 2 continued to be a priority.

The outcomes for vulnerable groups and especially for Disadvantaged Pupils (pupils eligible for additional funding through the pupil premium), continued to be a priority as outcomes in Wiltshire still needed to be improved to match national figures and those of other pupils in the County at all Key stages.

Cllr Laura Mayes drew attention to the action plan at the end of the report. It was noticed that there were plans to raise the overall standards and ensuring that school standards did not decline any further. This would be achieved by:-

- Monitoring school outcomes through the LASER process and the new annual performance assessments to identify and intervene early with underperforming schools.
- Liaising with the Regional Schools Commissioner to challenge underperforming schools.
- Increase the number of outstanding schools with a focus on developing leadership and high-quality teaching to improve outcomes particularly in Key Stages 1 and 2 through liaising with teaching Schools Outstanding Teaching programmes.
- Implement processes designed by the Education Transformation Board to support self-improving, self-sustaining schools in Wiltshire.

There were also plans to raise the achievements for Disadvantaged Learners particularly in Primary Maths.

During discussion, Members expressed the view that further detailed work needed to be undertaken to identify reasons for the sub national standards in Maths in Key Stages 1 and 2, although it was appreciated that work was already being carried out regarding this. It was also noted that Wiltshire was the fourth lowest funded local authority for children's services.

Cllr Mayes noted that it would be useful to arrange a meeting with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Committee to discuss the future monitoring of school performance in Wiltshire.

Resolved:

- (1) To note the contents of the report.**
- (2) To congratulate all learners in Wiltshire on the progress being made, recognising the efforts put in by children, and to thank teachers and officers for their continuing dedicated hard work.**

93 Home Schooled Children

The Committee received a report by the Director, Family and Children's Services in response to a query regarding arrangements for monitoring Elected Home Educated Children.

It was explained that Wiltshire Council had specific responsibilities under the Children Act 2004 and the Education Act 2002 to make arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children that were educated at home. This responsibility was exercised on behalf of the Council by the Support and Safeguarding Service. It was pointed out that these powers did not bestow on local authorities the ability to see and question children subject to elected home education and establish whether they were receiving a suitable education. Powers were restricted to acting in the best interests of the child where there was a concern that the child was suffering from significant harm. This was noted as the test for all such interventions whether the child was electively home educated or otherwise.

During discussion, Members questioned why parents elected to home educate their children; it was pointed out that there were a number of reasons why parents came to this decision in particular the inability to obtain a place at the school of their choice. In a few cases the decision to home educate was to avoid prosecution for unauthorised absences.

It was generally agreed that the current system was not satisfactory, the local authority in many cases being totally unaware of the existence of home educated children. In order that a local authority could monitor the education, physical and emotional wellbeing of children, ideally there should be a requirement for parents to register their children with the local authority so that annual interviews could take place and the children's work monitored.

Members recognised that in the majority of cases parents chose home education for their children for the best of reasons and these children were generally performing well but the challenge lay in those few cases where this was not the case.

After further discussion,

Resolved:

- (1) To acknowledge the arrangements for monitoring elective home educated children in Wiltshire.**
- (2) To request the Chairman to discuss with the Cabinet Member for Children, Education and Skills exactly what concerns should be addressed with the possibility of establishing a Home Education Task Group and to bring back suggestions to the next meeting of this Committee in April for consideration.**

94 Population Growth

The Committee received a report by the Head of Children's Commissioning and Joint Planning which provided an overview of the population growth data sets, which were and would continue to inform commissioning decisions in future years, with a particular example of how this was being used in the Special Schools Provision Project.

It was noted that there were three main contributing factors to the projected number of children who would be living in Wiltshire over the coming nine years, these being:-

- The birth rate
- The housing development plans for Wiltshire
- The military redeployment into Wiltshire.

Resolved:

To note the report.

95 Nursery Places – 30hours Free Entitlement for Working Parents

The Committee received an update report by the Head of Children's Commissioning and Joint Planning on the impact of the increased childcare entitlement from September 2017, as requested in January 2017.

It was noted that the work being carried out was to meet the requirement to make available sufficient childcare in Wiltshire, so far as was reasonably practicable, for working parents, or parents who were studying or training for employment, for children aged 0-14 (or up to 18 for disabled children).

The information and data collected formed an important role in the success of funding applications to the Department for Education to support sufficiency and the sector. Members were pleased to note that in the last year Wiltshire was successful in securing additional Early Years capital funding of £1.4 million to

support areas in Wiltshire in most need of additional Early Years provision. Further funding had been accessed to provide Early Years provision via the Section 106 agreement funding from housing developers. The funding received had contributed to sufficient capacity for Early Years places for children to access both 15 and 30 hours Free Entitlement in most areas of the County.

Resolved:

To note the contents of the report and to thank the officers for the information provided.

96 Final Report of the Children in Care Leavers Rapid Scrutiny Exercise

At the suggestion of the Chairman, and with the agreement of Cllr Christopher Devine as Chairman of the Rapid Scrutiny Exercise,

Resolved:

To defer consideration of the report from the Children in Care Leavers Rapid Scrutiny Exercise until the next meeting in order that some outstanding work could be completed.

97 DfE Changes - Update from Department for Education -

The Committee received an update from Terence Herbert, Corporate Director, on developments relating to children's services arising from the Department for Education from December 2017 to January 2018 as follows:-

- Ministerial reshuffle
- Improving social mobility through education
- Schools causing concern
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges
- Searching, screening and confiscation: guidance for schools
- Careers guidance and access for education and training providers
- Keeping children safe in education: proposed revisions
- Academies update
- Government response to the National Assessment and Accreditation System consultation (NAAS)
- SEND single route to redress national trial – regulations
- Transforming children and young people's mental health provision: a green paper
- Evaluation of the Troubled Families programme: emerging findings
- Update to joint targeted area inspections and arrangements for 2018

Resolved:

To note the update provided.

98 Task Group Updates

The Committee received updates on the activities of the following Task Groups/Boards:-

- SEND School Provision Task Group
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health (CAMHS) Task Group
- Education Transformation Board

Resolved:

- (1) To note the updates on task group activity provided.**
- (2) To endorse that Cllr Clare Cape remains on the Children and Adolescent Mental Health (CAMHS) Task Group and that, during meetings where Oxford Health are in attendance as either a witness or to provide evidence, Cllr Cape acts as an 'observer' and does not participate in discussion towards any recommendations of this Task Group, due to a possible conflict of interest as she currently undertakes some work with Oxford Health as part of her employment.**

99 Forward Work Programme

The Committee received a document showing the relevant items from the Overview & Scrutiny Forward Work Programme.

Cllr Christopher Devine suggested that the officers prepare a short resume of the work currently being undertaken by this Committee.

Resolved:

To note the Forward Work Programme for this Committee.

100 Date of Next Meeting

Resolved:

To note that the next scheduled meeting of this Committee was due to be held on Tuesday 17 April 2018 at County Hall, Trowbridge, starting at 10.30am.

101 Urgent Items

There were no urgent items of business.

(Duration of meeting: 2.30 pm - 4.40 pm)

The Officer who has produced these minutes is Roger Bishton, of Democratic Services, direct line 01225 713035, e-mail roger.bishton@wiltshire.gov.uk

Press enquiries to Communications, direct line (01225) 713114/713115

Wiltshire Council

Children's Select Committee

Date: 17th April 2018

Children's Services Integration – Phase 1 Update

Purpose of Report

1. The Support and Safeguarding Service was launched on the 2nd October 2017, alongside a new single front door to Wiltshire Families and Children's Service, marking the completion of phase 1 of the Children's Services integration Project. The purpose of this report is to provide the Children's Select Committee with an overview of the first 6 months of operation, as requested.

Background

2. The report presented to Committee on 14th March 2017 outlined the service aims and objectives and these can be found in [appendix 1](#). The Early Help Service and Safeguarding and Assessment Service and their associated teams (including the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub - MASH) were directly affected by Phase 1.
3. The functions affected by the transformation included core safeguarding, child protection, early years, youth support (including employment, education and training) education and statutory functions relating to children within the Council. These continue to be delivered whilst shifting to a model of earlier intervention, all within the original financial envelope.
4. The following services/functions no longer exist in the same form:
 - Early Help Service
 - Safeguarding and Assessment Service
 - Single Point of contact to the Early Help Service
 - Single Point of Contact for Special Educational Needs and Disability
5. The statutory functions which were undertaken by the above continue to be delivered. The key change is the way in which the services are delivered to children and families.

Main Considerations for the Council

Council Business Plan

6. CSI Phase 1 relates to the Council's business plan by working to:
 - Create stronger communities
 - Protect the vulnerable
 - Deliver innovation

The new Support and Safeguarding Service

7. The Support and Safeguarding Service launched on the 2nd October 2017. The design was in response to research of what works in other Local Authorities, data analysis and feedback from families who told us they wanted:
- Help quicker/earlier.
 - More time with workers and support for longer.
 - Less professionals involved as too many leads to conflicting advice and can be confusing.
 - Professionals who are involved to have a purpose.
 - Help before things get really bad.
 - Support for the whole family, so they are all listened to and supported.
 - Praise for what they have done well so they have a sense of achievement
 - To be kept informed as it's hard to hear something they did not know about in a meeting.
 - To be spoken to and things explained.
 - More than a tick box approach.
 - To be told what is going to happen next.
8. The new service model reflects these by:
- Introducing a new Family Keyworker role - a consistent person working with families to ensure sustained change. The Family Keyworker will hold their own "Support" level cases which may be:
 - on the edge of social care (Child in Need threshold)
 - stepping down from social care but require a period of support to ensure changes are sustained
 - complex early help (CAF) cases that are "stuck"
 - Creating mixed teams of both Family Keyworkers and Social Workers within each area team – with the Family Keyworker maintaining a constant relationship with the child/family during any required step up or step down across the social care threshold.
 - Improving how requests for service come into the Council, what happens to it once accepted for a service and then how families leave the service.
 - Moving to a more holistic, whole family-based approach; launching a new relationship-based model of practice and supporting our staff with a new training and development programme. Relationships are at the heart of good practice and everything we do. The CARE framework is an innovative approach to practice that draws on research and best practice and is underpinned by a psychosocial and relationship based practice model.
 - Developing a "one front door" model to access our services. This includes the cross-cutting work across services and functions and the development of the new online "DART" (Digital Assessment & Referral Tool).
 - Delivering a fully integrated IT system with the potential for electronic co-working with partner agencies (to be explored).
 - Expanding co-location where beneficial (e.g. pilot started in the West team with a drug and alcohol worker from the current provider Turning Point co-located within the team).

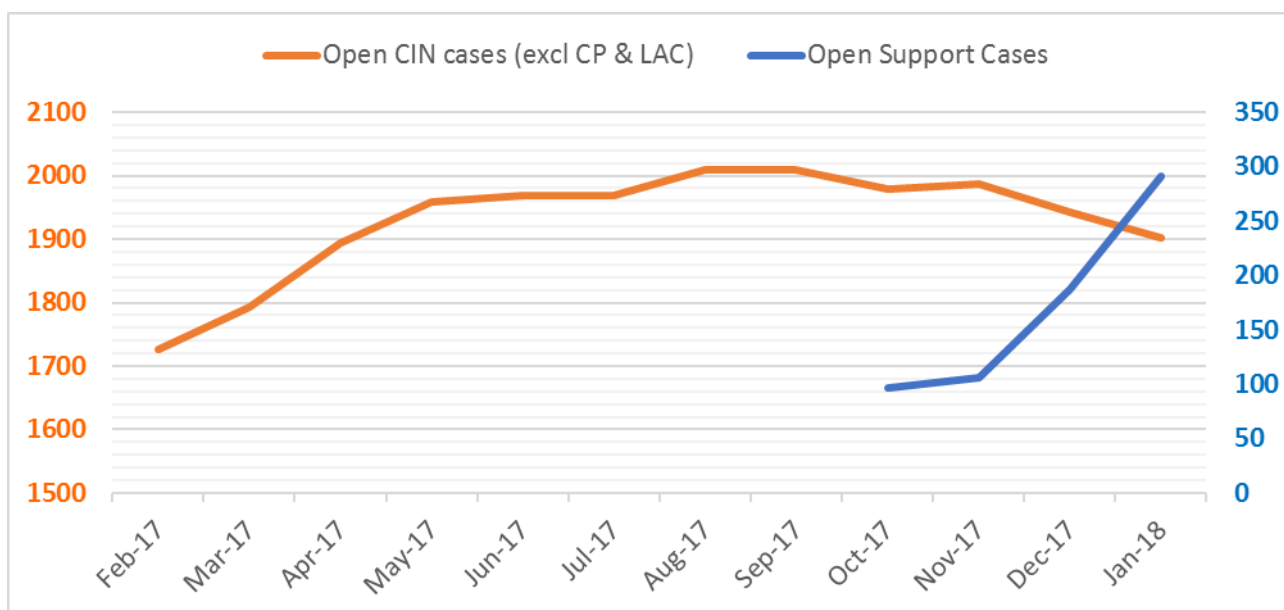
The new Support and Safeguarding Service

Staffing

9. The original total establishment of Social Worker FTEs (full time equivalents) was carried forward to the new service to ensure stability in social work activity.
10. Recruitment of Family Keyworkers has proved easier than the recruitment of experienced Social Workers (for which there is a national shortage). During the last round of recruitment 50 applications were received for the small number of Family Keyworker vacancies currently being held.
11. Co-location with other services and partners has been pursued persistently over the previous months resulting in greater integrated working with domestic abuse, drug and alcohol and child and adolescent mental health teams.

Volumes and activity

12. Given the nature of case work with children and families, six months since launch is too early to fully and confidently measure trends, impact and outcomes. However, some initial feedback is provided to give a flavour of how the changes are beginning to manifest.
13. Early Help staff who transferred into the new service brought their existing case work with them. Their cases are being safely managed to closure and being gradually replaced with new “Support” cases to be worked in the new way.
14. As at the end of January 2018, Family Keyworkers and Senior Family Keyworkers (establishment 49 FTE) were holding 291 open cases (and this will continue to rise); Social Workers, including newly qualified and Aspiring Managers (establishment 88 FTE) were holding 1902 open Child in Need cases. See chart below.



Training, supervision and audit

15. Development and launch of the new service coincided with the development and launch of the new CARE Practice Framework and all staff have been able to access related training. In addition, consistency in supervision practice has occurred through the creation of an Assistant Team Manager post within teams which covers both Support and Social Work activity.
16. Auditing continues as before with additional focus on support activity being built-in where appropriate. Audit and performance measures are being expanded to gain a clearer view across all functions within the service (not just support and social care functions). A CIN Step Down audit in December 2017, for example, identified the following improvements in practice:
 - Primary outcomes achieved were improved family relationships and parent capacity, improved educational outcomes/attendance and health and development needs being met.
 - Child's voice was stronger than findings from previous audit. Child's voice was weak/poor in 3 cases, compared to 13 cases in the previous audit.
 - Proportion of CIN reviews held prior to step-down was strong – 91%
 - Evidence of management oversight has consistently improved – now at 72%.
 - Improvement in the quality of case recording.
 - Lead Professional was identified 75% of the time - improvement.
 - Recording rationale for step-down and clear authorisation comments - strong.
 - CIN work was strong; including frequent contact with the family, consideration of needs of all family members and plans made for on-going support post step-down.
 - Timing of the step-downs was appropriate.

Management oversight of performance

17. Mechanisms for performance management remain and have been extended to cover Support activity. This includes fortnightly Performance and Outcomes Group Meetings (reviewing open cases and potential for drift by team), Stop the Clock sessions (reflective practice team sessions), Support and Safeguarding Managers Meetings (reviewing practice and performance themes across all teams and sharing best practice), Annual Service Reviews (including 6 monthly interim reviews by the teams) and a new overarching whole service Performance and Outcomes Board.

Feedback on service changes

18. Creating better and more consistent methods for gaining regular feedback from children and families being supported by the new service are being discussed as part of a wider piece of work through the Families and Children's Transformation Programme. This will help us to evidence the distance travelled by a child/family, how they experienced our support and whether they feel we made a difference.
19. Feedback from team managers has been sought and will help form the basis of any required ongoing development:
 - MASH volumes not as high as predicted however there has been a shift in the nature of contacts.

- Ongoing review of support thresholds is helping to ensure the right families are receiving support at the right time.
- New Support and early help activity has provided opportunities for new learning and understanding.
- Senior Family Keyworkers benefiting from increased social work-based supervision; more focused, planned, structured, reflective and oversighted.
- Introduction of practice leads has been helpful.
- Feeling the benefit of being responsible for wider resources and being able to direct them to pick up activities with children/families – some of which would previously have had to have been resourced by social workers (given the absence of control over alternatives).
- Support-level work is non-statutory which allows for more flexible working with children and families.
- Ease of recruiting new Family Keyworkers has meant an influx of new staff bringing fresh ideas and approaches; very low vacancy rate.
- Staff making use of career progression opportunities which did not explicitly exist in the previous structure.
- Family Keyworkers and Social Workers co-working cases is working well – offering learning opportunities for both and ensuring continuity for the family.
- Family Keyworker casework is more focused and purposeful now packages are not based on patterns of fixed 6-month interventions.

Continuous development

20. The Families and Children's Service is committed to continuous development and truly integrated working and has embarked on an ambitious transformation programme with our partners to significantly improve outcomes for children and their families in Wiltshire. CSI Phase 2 has been replaced by this Families and Children's Transformation (FACT) programme.
21. The FACT Programme is multi-agency and has leads from the business leading workstreams and projects to deliver whole system change. A variety of FACT project activities will contribute to further improvement of the new service, ensuring it is perfectly placed to offer the best support to our vulnerable children and families – examples of these are:
 - Creating an early support hub space alongside the MASH – to more effectively manage and direct incoming demand requiring earlier intervention and prevention.
 - Refreshing threshold guidance – including creating a new accessible language and approach that is based on responding to needs rather than checking if a 'cliff-edge' threshold has been met.
 - Introducing an integrated IT solution that will provide a holistic view of the child and their family, support good decision making and enable truly joined up working across internal teams and services and, potentially, with partner agencies. New IT will also release capacity to spend with children and families.
 - Developing more robust, effective and consistent local pathways to enable safe, local responses to local needs (without the need to refer to the MASH).
 - Further workforce development and training – including ensuring we have the right roles and functions across the system, the workforce is sufficient and staff are equipped and confident with common core skills and a shared practice framework.

- Continuing to pursue co-location with partners where there is evidence this will deliver a better, quicker service to children and families.
- Developing effective mechanisms for co-production with children and families – not only hearing their voice but truly engaging them in service and practice design.
- Developing a partnership outcomes and performance framework which makes the important measurable rather than the measurable important - evidencing the difference we make for our children and families in Wiltshire, informing service development and contributing to a shared purpose across our partnerships.

Impact and Outcomes

22. As stated previously, given the nature of case work, six months since launch is too early to fully and confidently measure trends, impact and outcomes. In addition, further co-production with children and families will assist in identifying what is important to be measured and this, in turn, will further refine the partnership outcomes and performance framework being developed. A more detailed review of impact and outcomes will be undertaken as part of ongoing performance monitoring through the new Performance and Outcomes Board.

Safeguarding Considerations

23. The new service continues to deliver its statutory duties.
24. The new service is focussed on providing a more intensive response to families at an earlier point when needs arise in order to prevent them escalating into statutory services.

Public Health Implications

25. The new service supports the holistic identification of a child and family's needs and an integrated approach to supporting them to achieve positive change – this leads to improved health and wellbeing.

Environmental and Climate Change Considerations

26. None in addition to those reported on 14th March 2017.

Equalities Impact of the Proposal

27. None in addition to those reported on 14th March 2017.

Risk Assessment

28. Risks that may arise if the proposed decision/related work is not taken

None in addition to those reported on 14th March 2017.

29. Risks that may arise if the proposed decision is taken and actions that will be taken to manage these risks

None in addition to those reported on 14th March 2017.

Financial Implications

30. None in addition to those reported on 14th March 2017.

Proposal

31. The Committee is asked to note the progress made to date and recognise the commitment to the further development of performance and outcomes monitoring.
32. For reasons noted in this report the Committee is asked to agree to a further progress update in six months' time (marking 12 months since launch of the new service).

Lucy Townsend
Director

Report Author:

Tamsin Stone, Families and Children's Transformation Programme

20th March 2018

Background Papers

None

Appendices

1. Service Aims and Desired Outcomes
-

Appendix 1

6.1 Service Aims and Desired Outcomes

6.1.1 Service aims:

- Prevent family breakdown
- Prevent escalation to level 3 services

The new service model will enable the authority to:

- Keep families together (prevent children coming into care)
- Ensure families are not put through unnecessary statutory processes
- Proactively identify, target and respond to child and family needs to prevent escalation to more intensive and intrusive services
- Deliver a truly integrated and holistic evidence-based service to children and young people within the context of their wider family and community environment
- Support the right children, young people and their families at the right time with the right provision to enable them to achieve good outcomes
- Discharge all statutory duties
- Ensure unborn babies, children and young people are kept safe from harm
- Deliver improved practice and outcomes leading to a reduction in domestic abuse, and improved support for young parents and engagement with fathers.
- Be assured of all upskilling and training requirements to enable staff to have the right skills mix and confidence to deliver the new service (SEN, education, parenting, behaviour)
- Ensure staff intervene rather than refer on to other services.
- Add value to the child's journey to adulthood; improve the child's journey (transitions and transfer points) and their experience of support
- Reduce the number of children becoming Child in Need, becoming the subject of a Child Protection Plan and/or becoming Looked After
- Grow and sustain a stable and secure Children's Services workforce

6.1.2 Desired outcomes:

What do our families want? (taken from Australian research – reference TASCI Family by Family programme)

- We feel as though we contribute to our community
- We trust other people outside of our family
- We connect to new places, people or services
- We feel less isolated in the community
- We ask for help when we need it
- We seek out new ideas and support for our family
- We see the impact of our decisions on others
- We get on better as a family
- We learn new things about our family
- Our family has new ideas for things to do together

- We say something nice when one of us does something good
- We feel more optimistic about the future
- We think about the future
- Our family set new family goals
- We take time to work on own goals and family goals
- We see what we're good at.
- We feel more confident in our abilities in general
- Each of us feels like an OK person
- We believe that our choices make a difference to things in our family

What do we want Operational Children's Services to feel like for our children, young people and families?

- There is one front door for me to use
- I understand who does what, what forms to fill in or what's going to happen next
- I have a consistent key person to help me to help myself.
- They know what works...
- ...and how to work with me and my family
- They are my fiercest champion; and they challenge me too
- They listen and take action.

6.1.3 Translating that into outcomes:

- Children and families will know where to go for help and receive a more consistent response whichever door they use.
- Children and families will feel listened to and helped by local professionals they are familiar with.
- Children and young people are safe from harm (or the risk of it), are less vulnerable and develop strong emotional resilience and wellbeing.
- Children and young people's circumstances improve as a consequence of the help provided and their need for targeted and specialist services is lessened (or avoided in some cases).
- Children and families experience a seamless service (especially during transition across thresholds, services and during significant life events). The workers have the key skill set to work with the families to address the issues (unless specialist services are required)
- Children, young people and families say that our Children's Services have made a positive difference in their lives.
- Children and families feel motivated to change, are willing to engage and want to improve their circumstances for the future.

This page is intentionally left blank

DfE Changes – Update February 2018 – March 2018

Consultation outcome on Eligibility for free school meals and the early years pupil premium under Universal Credit

1. The DfE has published the outcome of a recent consultation on eligibility for free school meals and the early years pupil premium under Universal Credit. The consultation proposed to introduce an annual net earnings threshold of £7,400, which would typically equate to an overall household income of between £18,000 and £24,000 once benefits income is taken into account. Protection was also proposed for those families who would otherwise have lost eligibility because of this change, and those who become eligible during the rollout of Universal Credit.
2. The government response to the consultation on free early years entitlement for 2 year olds under Universal Credit has been included as part of the response to this consultation. The 2 year old [consultation](#) proposed an annual net earnings threshold of £15,400, which would typically equate to an income of between £24,000 and £32,000 once benefits income is taken into account.
3. The government response has been to take forward the proposed new criteria for free school meals, the early years pupil premium, and the free early years entitlement for 2 year olds, laying regulations in parliament that will bring the proposed thresholds into force in April 2018.
4. The full government response which consolidates both consultations can be found [here](#).
Specific guidance about free school meals and transitional protection arrangements for them under Universal Credit can be found [here](#).

Review of school exclusions

5. The DfE's social mobility [action plan](#), which came out at the end of last year, included details of an externally-led review of exclusions. It has been confirmed that Edward Timpson, the former Minister for Children and Families, will lead this review, the terms of reference of which can be found [here](#).
6. A call for evidence has been launched and will remain open until 6 May 2018. This does not contain any specific proposals at this early stage of the review. Full details can be found [here](#).

Alternative provision

7. This policy paper sets out the government's vision for alternative provision (AP) and outlines reforms to raise standards and improve outcomes for all children in AP. The paper can be accessed [here](#).
8. The government has also introduced an Alternative Provision Innovation Fund - a £4 million grant funding programme launched to support innovative practices that aims to deliver better outcomes for children in alternative provision. Details of the fund can be found [here](#).

Academies Update

9. Number in Wiltshire at the end of March 2018:

Sponsored academies	22
Non-sponsored converter academies	69

10. New academies in this period:

Larkhill Primary School
Great Wishford CofE Primary School

Review of post-18 education

11. The Prime Minister has pledged to look at ways to ensure more people have a genuine choice of high quality technical and academic options. The review's terms of reference are available [here](#). The review is expected to be published early in 2019.

SEND Tribunal: Single Route of Redress National Trial

12. Guidance on the single route of redress national trial, which begins on 3 April 2018, has been published and can be accessed [here](#). The two-year national trial extends the powers of the First-tier Tribunal (SEND) to make non-binding recommendations on the health and social care aspects of Education, Health and Care Plans, in addition to the educational aspects.
13. The guidance sets out the extended powers and duties in the [Special Educational Needs and Disability \(First-tier Tribunal Recommendations Power\) Regulations 2017](#), and explains how the appeal process will work, what happens if recommendations are not followed and the support available for commissioners and families. A toolkit providing a number of resources has been created [here](#).

Implementation of Children and Social Work Act 2017 Sections 1-7

14. Sections 1 to 7 of the [Children and Social Work Act 2017](#) (the Act) made changes to the legislative framework for looked after and previously looked after children, and care leavers. Following public consultation, the DfE has published guidance to assist LAs and other agencies in implementing these elements of the Act.

15. Sections 1 to 3 of the Act introduced: corporate parenting principles to which LAs must have regard when exercising their functions in relation to looked after children and care leavers; a requirement to consult on and publish a local offer for care leavers; and extended eligibility for support from a personal adviser to all care leavers up to the age of 25. These new duties will come in to force from April 2018.
16. The DfE has published the following statutory guidance to help implement these changes:
- [Applying corporate parenting principles to looked-after children and care leavers](#) - To help LAs implement the corporate parenting principles
 - [Local Offer for care leavers guidance](#) - To guide LAs on consulting on, and publishing in one place, the statutory entitlements and other discretionary support available to care leavers
 - [Extending Personal Adviser support to all care leavers to age 25](#) - To help LAs implement the extended duty for Personal Adviser support to be made available to all care leavers up to age 25, if they want such support.
17. In relation to the above, the DfE have also published:
- [The Government's response to the consultation on the earlier drafts of the above statutory guidance](#)
 - [The New Burdens assessment on the extension of the Personal Adviser duty.](#)
18. Sections 4 to 7 of the Act expand the role of Virtual School Heads (VSH) and designated teachers to include certain previously looked after children (those who left care through adoption, special guardianship or child arrangement orders or were adopted from state care outside England and Wales). The new duties for VSH and designated teachers will come in to force from September 2018.
19. The DfE has published the following statutory guidance aimed at local authorities, schools and school governing bodies to help them implement these changes:
- Revised statutory guidance on [Promoting Education of Looked after Children](#)
 - Revised statutory guidance on the [Roles and Responsibilities of the Designated Teacher for looked-after and previously looked after children](#)
 - [The Government response to consultation on draft statutory guidance on Promoting Education of Looked after Children and Roles and Responsibilities the Designated Teacher.](#)

Working Together consultation response

20. The DfE has published the outcome of its recent consultation on proposed updates to the Working Together (WT) statutory guidance. Over 700 responses were received during this exercise and these will inform further work on WT, particularly in relation to the new sections which underpin the

reforms to multiagency safeguarding arrangements under the Children and Social Work Act (2017).

21. The updates will be debated and voted on by both Houses of Parliament in the Spring. Local areas will have twelve months from the date of commencement to develop and publish their arrangements, and a further three months to implement them in full. The full outcome can be accessed [here](#).

Consultation on Social Work England

22. The Department for Education has launched a consultation on the legal framework underpinning the new professional regulator for social workers in England, Social Work England.
23. The new regulator will undertake core regulatory functions including: setting standards; holding the professional register; approving initial education and training courses for social workers; and running a 'fitness to practise' system. The consultation seeks views on: the proposed approach to creating a modern, proportionate regulatory framework; the specific approach taken in each of the regulatory areas; possible oversight procedures for regulatory rules; and, the likely impacts of the proposed changes.
24. The consultation ran from 08 February to 21 March 2018. Details can be found [here](#).

Improvement standards for child and family social workers

25. The government has published their response to the consultation regarding the knowledge and skills statements (KSS). The full report can be accessed [here](#).
26. Given the positive response to the consultation, the Secretary of State for Education has decided to determine the KSS for child and family social work practitioners and practice supervisors as the post-qualifying improvement standards. The updated KSS guidance can be found [here](#).

Review of children in need

27. The DfE has published information on the government's policy to support children in need and build the evidence base on how to improve their educational outcomes.
28. The *Children in need of help and protection: call for evidence* asks what professionals across education, children's social care, health and other specialist services are doing to improve the educational outcomes of children in need. The consultation is open until 1 June 2018 and can be found [here](#).

Plans to tackle child abuse

29. Further to the Home Office and DfE joint consultation, 'Reporting and acting on child abuse and neglect', which proposed changes to the law included mandatory reporting of any concern relating to child abuse by practitioners,

and a duty to act (whereby individuals could face professional or criminal sanctions for failing to take appropriate action where child abuse was known or suspected), not being supported, the government has set out new plans to strengthen information sharing between police, social workers and healthcare professionals to tackle child abuse and neglect, and to improve joint working and decision-making. Outline plans can be found [here](#).

TERENCE HERBERT
Corporate Director

Report author: Nicola McCann, EY Information and Co-ordination Manager,
Children's Services. 29/03/2018

Largely taken from the DfE website content 01 February to 29 March 2018.

This page is intentionally left blank

Wiltshire Council

Children's Select Committee

17 April 2018

Task Group Update

Purpose

To provide an update on recent task group activity and propose any decisions requiring Committee approval.

1. Child and Adolescent Mental Health (CAMHS) Task Group

Membership:

Cllr Phil Alford (Chairman)
Cllr Clare Cape
Cllr Gordon King
Cllr Hayley Spencer
Cllr Fred Westmoreland

Supporting Officer: Natalie Heritage

Terms of Reference:

That the CAMHS Task Group:

- a) Consider the governance arrangements for the recommissioned CAHMS service;
- b) Explore and understand the new CAHMS model in comparison to the existing model and consider the evidence base for any changes. Then where appropriate, make recommendations to support its implementation and effectiveness;
- c) Look at existing data and ensure that the new model's performance will be robustly monitored and benchmarked against this by the council, partners and by the proposed future scrutiny exercise;
- d) Consider access and referral points within the new CAHMS model and, as appropriate, make recommendations to maximise take-up by children and young people in need of support;
- e) Explore where CAMHS sits within the overall landscape of children and young people's mental health and, within this, consider whether prevention services are effective

Recent Activity

The CAMHS Task Group met on 28 March for an independent knowledge-building session with the Scrutiny Officer on the re-commissioned CAMHS model. The Task Group considered the Local Transformation Plan (LTP) and the

other information which had helped to inform the re-commissioned CAMH service. Discussion was had around how this information relates to the Group's Terms of Reference and the members successfully made a comprehensive list of what they believe the aims and objectives of the re-commissioned CAMHS model to be.

The meeting concluded with the Task Group feeling more confident of where CAMHS sits within Wiltshire's overall Mental Health Strategy (effectively the LTP) and what the improvements to children and young people's mental health outcomes are expected to be with the re-commissioned service.

Ahead of their May meeting, the Task Group also drafted three pages of questions to be put to James Fortune - Lead Commissioner at the Council and Michelle Maguire from Oxford Health. These questions are intended to enable the Task Group to better understand the evidence base for amendments that have been made to the CAMH service, as a part of the re-commissioned model, and how the new service will be robustly monitored and benchmarked against by the Council and its partners.

Finally, it is important to note that it was resolved at [6 February 2018](#) CSC that Cllr Cape act as an observer and not participate in discussion or recommendations made where Oxford Health are either in attendance or providing evidence. However, after further consideration of Cllr Cape's role with Oxford Health, it is regarded that she would not be prejudiced in any way – both in her employment and as a task group member. Thus, it is felt that the mention of Cllr Cape's work with Oxford Health is purely in the interests of transparency and should not limit her role within the CAMHS task group.

Cllr Hayley Spencer has stepped down from the task group and the Chairman has taken the decision not to replace her membership; as the group have already covered a lot of ground.

Proposal:

That Children's Select Committee endorse that:

- i. Cllr Clare Cape remains on the CAMHS task group as a full member**
- ii. The CAMHS Task Group continues as a 4-membership task group, as Cllr Hayley Spencer has stepped down from the group.**

2. SEND School Provision Task Group

Membership:

Cllr Jon Hubbard (Chair)
Cllr James Sheppard
Mr John Hawkins
Ms Jen Jones

Supporting Officer: Adam Brown

Terms of reference:

1. To consider the future provision of SEND education for Wiltshire's children and young people in the context of the challenges outlined in the "Wood Report"/WASSPP report (May 2017).
2. To receive evidence from:
 - a. Wiltshire Council officers;
 - b. Wiltshire schools;
 - c. Parents/guardians of children with SEND.

Recent activity:

Since the last meeting of Children's Select the task group has met with Wiltshire Council officers to receive information on their consideration of the proposals from the SEND schools. The task group also held the following meetings:

- On 19th February the task group met the Head and Deputy Head Teachers of Springfields Academy to discuss the future provision of SEND education.
- On 23rd February received a detailed briefing at Downlands School regarding the combined SEND school proposal submitted by them.
- On 28th February the task group met again with Wiltshire Council officers to receive information regarding their responses to the proposals from the combined SEND school proposal.

The task group is now in the process of compiling its final report and requesting further information to submit its report alongside the SEND School Provision item to be received by Cabinet on 15th May 2018.

3. Children in Care Leavers Rapid Scrutiny Exercise

Membership:

Cllr Chris Devine (lead)
Cllr George Jeans
Cllr Melody Thompson
Cllr Mary Champion

Supporting Officer: Adam Brown

Recent Activity:

The rapid scrutiny will be meeting on one more occasion to consider further information on the Care Leaver's Local Offer. Their report will be presented to this committee in June.

4. Traded Services for Schools and Outdoor Education Task Group

Membership:

Mr John Hawkins (Chairman)
Cllr Trevor Carbin
Cllr Anna Cuthbert
Cllr Jon Hubbard
Cllr Tony Jackson

Supporting Officer: Marie Gondlach

Recent Activity:

The interim report of this task group regarding Outdoor Education was considered by Cabinet on 27th March and Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee on 10th April. It is included in this agenda for reference.

Proposals

- 1. To note the update on task group activity provided.**
-

Report author: Adam Brown, Senior Scrutiny Officer; Natalie Heritage, Senior Scrutiny Officer

Report of the Traded Services for Schools Task Group on Outdoor Education

Purpose

1. To present the findings of the Traded Services for Schools Task Group regarding the review of Outdoor Education undertaken by the Council and the evidence presented to Cabinet.
2. It should be noted that this report has been written to be included with a Part II Cabinet report and, as such, included information which was provided confidentially. Therefore, this report should be reviewed before it is made public.

Background

3. During the 13 June 2017 meeting of the Children's Select Committee, Cllr Laura Mayes, Cabinet Member for Children, Education and Skills asked if the Committee would consider looking into Traded Services for Schools.
4. Two Rapid Scrutiny exercises were undertaken on 13 September and 18 October 2017. The findings from these two meetings were respectively reported to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Select Committee on 26 September 2017 (access report [here](#)) and Children's Select Committee on 31 October 2017 (access report [here](#)).
5. The committees agreed the establishment and commencement of the Traded Services for Schools Task Group (thereafter referred to as "the task group"), to complete its work within 9 months, and asked the members of the task group to perform a separate scrutiny exercise looking at Outdoor Education.

Membership

6. The opportunity to take part in the Rapid Scrutiny exercise was offered to all non-executive members of the council. The membership of the two Rapid Scrutiny exercises transferred to the task group:

Mr John Hawkins, Chairman of the Task Group
Cllr Trevor Carbin
Cllr Anna Cuthbert
Cllr Jon Hubbard
Cllr Tony Jackson

7. Prior to the start of the task group Cllr Anna Cuthbert had to resign her membership of the task group due to conflicting work commitments. Members of the task group wished to thank Cllr Anna Cuthbert for her valuable contribution to the Rapid Scrutiny exercise she had chaired.

Terms of Reference

8. The following terms of reference were agreed by the task group at its inaugural meeting on 7 February 2018, and will be presented to Children’s Select Committee on 17 April 2018 for approval:

I. To review the proposed developments for traded services to schools, considering the outcomes of the service review of traded services (commenced in October 2016), with a particular focus on the following areas:

- a) The model for the centralised trading unit and the proposed traded services team structure and appointments to ensure sustainability and quality of service;
- b) The cost of services that are currently provided against projected costs to ensure value for money;
- c) The plans for marketing to ensure continuous take-up;
- d) The current policy;
- e) How traded services will be future-proofed.

II. To review and comment on the Cabinet report regarding the proposals for the future of outdoor education in Wiltshire, with particular focus on the evidence-based analysis that led to the options presented within the report. Comments from the task group will be presented to Cabinet at the same meeting at which the report is considered (currently scheduled for 27 March 2018).

Evidence gathering

9. The task group met on 7 February 2018 to consider the draft report of the findings of the traded services’ review of Outdoor Education, to be presented to Cabinet on 27 March 2018.
10. The task group resolved to undertake site visits of the two council-owned outdoor education centres, and consequently visited Braeside and Oxenwood (thereafter named “the centres”) on 27 February 2018.
11. The task group is grateful to the following witnesses who contributed to its review of Outdoor Education:

Keith Browning	Centre Manager, Braeside Education & Conference Centre
Nick Cave	Interim Traded Services Director
David Clarke	Head of School Effectiveness Commissioning, Performance and School Effectiveness
Tom Davies	Deputy Centre Manager, Oxenwood
Cllr Laura Mayes	Cabinet Member for Children, Education and Skills
Yousaf Mirza	Head of Education, Braeside Education & Conference Centre

Mal Munday	Head of Service, Support and Safeguarding, Early Help
Ed Plank	Centre Manager, Oxenwood
Alan Stubbersfield	Interim Director Education & Skills AM, Education and Skills
Cllr Philip Whalley	Portfolio Holder for Education and Skills
Elizabeth Williams	Head of Finance Care, Finance & Procurement

12. The Task Group also considered the evidence and information provided for the two Rapid Scrutiny exercises, as well as the reports presenting the findings for the two meetings. The task group would also like to thank the following witnesses who contributed to these exercises:

Grant Davis	Strategic Financial Support Manager.
Michael Hudson	Associate Director for Finance

Key findings regarding the draft Cabinet report

13. The meeting of the task group on 7 February 2018 was focused on the report to be presented to Cabinet on 27 March 2018.

14. It was accepted that this was a draft report and that further information may be added by the time the report was presented to Cabinet. Where appropriate the task group has indicated the information it believed should be included to enable Cabinet to make a fully informed decision based on strong evidence. These were circulated to the report's author and Cabinet Member prior to the publication of the Cabinet's agenda.

15. It should be noted that the report the task group considered **did not include a recommended option for Cabinet or any details of the covenants on the centres.**

16. Following the 7 February 2018 meeting it was noted by members of the task group that the budget papers, in the "Summary of Savings and Income Proposals (page 6 of 10) listed savings of £0.135m through "proposal to be brought to Cabinet to consider review of Outdoor Education Centres", however the budget papers included no further details on how these savings would be achieved.

Overall

17. The costs and risks for each option should be more detailed and presented in a single table, which would make the advantages and risks of each option more apparent.

18. Further details on costs to be included (known costs or estimates) for Options 3 and 4 are listed in paragraphs 24 and 25 of this report.

Option 1: retain and operate

19. The parameters of the modelling should be clearly stated, as the task group was informed that the modelling was "based on 48 weeks per year and excluding weekends".

20. The price increases in the report had been calculated against residential prices only and been modelled on a 10-year return of capital spend only (without interest or finance cost). They did not account for future cost pressures or requirement to generate a surplus. The modelling should take into account the forecasted yearly maintenance costs for the centres, and any other cost pressures, and should also calculate the occupancy and price increase needed to achieve at least cost recovery.

Option 2: transfer centres and / or operations to a third party

21. It was accepted that, as there had not yet been firm interest by a third party in taking on the management of the centres and / or operations, it had not been possible to assess or cost option 2.

22. However, Community First had expressed an interest in Oxenwood with the condition that it was as a Community Asset Transfer.

23. Should there be any confirmed interest from a third party then the potential costs and risks associated with this option should be detailed in the Cabinet report.

Option 3: close both centres

24. The task group concluded that it was crucial for the following information to be included in the Cabinet report:

- a. an estimate of the potential costs, and risks, associated with the covenants on the centres;
- b. costs of redundancies and pensions, especially as the options for re-deployment of the contracted members of staff affected had not yet been fully explored and some of the “Zero Hours Contract” members of staff may be entitled to redundancy due to their length of service.
- c. any other predictable exit costs (e.g. cancelling bookings, etc.).
- d. potential costs and risks (both “physical” and reputational) of closure where the buildings would no longer be used but would remain in the council’s ownership.

Option 4: Close one site only (Oxenwood)

25. The task group felt that the same information should be in the report for this option as for Option 3:

- a. an estimate of the potential costs, and risks, associated with the covenants on the centre;
- b. costs of redundancies and pensions, especially as the options for re-deployment for the contracted members of staff affected had not yet been fully explored and some of the “Zero Hours Contract” members of staff may be entitled to redundancy due to their length of service.
- c. any other predictable exit costs (e.g. cancelling bookings, etc.).

- d. potential costs and risks (both “physical” and reputational) of closure where the building would no longer be used but would remain in the council’s ownership.

Key findings regarding the options proposed within the Cabinet report

26. At the Rapid Scrutiny meeting on 13 September 2017, the draft scope for the service’s review of outdoor education in Wiltshire was presented as follows by the Traded Services team:

“The review should be designed to establish the future of outdoor education in Wiltshire, and as such should be broad in nature to include:

- How outdoor education can best contribute to council aims and specific targets such as increasing educational attainment of “free School Meal” pupils and improving readiness for school by supporting early years provision.
- Review of current utilisation including downtime during school holidays and winter months, actual costs and prices, and capacity for growth.
- Risks and potential learning from private sector competition including service offers, utilisation and benchmarking of costs.
- Research on approach taken by other councils to avoid pitfalls and utilise learning.
- Potential to attract business from a wider market to increase sales through a national marketing strategy.
- Options for different models such as charitable trust, Community Interest Company, partnership, or closing council run facilities and brokering provision from other providers. This will require soft market testing to establish market interest.”

Option 1: retain and operate

27. It was noted that operational profit could be achieved, at least at Braeside for 2017-18, even with the current provisions of activities and accommodation.

28. Based on the evidence from the service’s review of Outdoor Education that the task group received, it could not conclude that the Council had adequately assessed whether this option (retain and operate) could be commercially viable.

29. It was recognised by the task group that there could be a significant cost, especially in officers’ time, in assessing the viability of this option.

30. However, the task group regretted that the Council had not undertaken, or at least established feasibility in terms of cost and officers’ time of undertaking, the research listed below to assess the viability of Option 1 (retain and operate).

a. Staffing analysis:

The task group was informed that the centres had “historically” been aligned to two distinct services within the council, with distinct line management, and operated individually. There were also concerns raised over the sustainability of using “Zero Hours contracts”.

- i. To establish whether efficiency savings could be achieved by realigning the two centres to a single line of management within the council.
 - ii. To explore whether any savings could be realised through the sharing of contracted staff members between the two centres.
 - iii. To analyse the difference in cost should staff be moved from “Zero Hours contracts” to annualised hours contracts.
- b. Market analysis:
 - i. why are the centres used (feedback from **all** current customers), what is it the centres provide / offer which meant they were chosen;
 - ii. survey of “non-schools” customers who had previously booked but did not book in 2017-18; establish why and what (if anything) they are now using;
 - iii. survey of Wiltshire schools not using the centres in 2017-18; why are they not using the centres, what are they using instead, what would make them use the centres. This would also be an “advertising” opportunity of the fact that the centres are suitable for both primary and secondary schools, although it is anticipated that there may be a low return from schools therefore should only be undertaken if the cost was minimal.
 - iv. Researching Unique Selling Points for both centres - not competing with “high thrill” activities but specialising in activities that the sites can support, considering their limitations.
 - v. Further analyse specialising in provision for vulnerable children and young people and any other customers “matching” the centres’ Unique Selling Points. This would include research on cost in terms of training for or recruitment of “specialised” staff members, as well as research in potential partnership with organisations such as the Wiltshire Outdoor Learning Team which specialised in working with young people with challenging behaviour. The task group was aware of the analysis undertaken by Richard Williams in December 2015 to consider the viability of increasing Oxenwood’s booking by 25% for vulnerable children and this should be taken into consideration, bearing in mind it was now 3 years old.
 - vi. Research on approach taken by other councils to provide or support outdoor education to avoid pitfalls and utilise learning.
- c. Advertising analysis:
 - i. Research cost and value of regional and national advertising campaigns.
 - ii. Research cost and value of increased on-line presence: a professionally designed website for the centres, social medias, etc. It was noted that both centres were advertised on “Right Choice for schools” (traded services’ online platform).
 - iii. Research in potential to increase sales by attracting business from a wider market.
- d. Investment analysis:
 - i. What investment(s) in buildings, equipment, staff training, etc. based on the market and advertising analysis would be required to enable the centres to become commercially viable. The investment in buildings would be informed by the condition survey which was carried out on both properties by CIPFA in 2012. The surveys identified capital works required to maintain the buildings in the short, medium and long term, up to a 25-year period.

- ii. The value of the investment would have to be recovered by the centres and would require further modelling of recovery through increase in price and / or occupancy.
 - iii. Establish the cost and work required to regain a Quality Mark accreditation for Oxenwood (“*The Quality Mark for schools was developed in 1996, and updated in 2007, to provide a framework that would promote, support and celebrate the improvement of literacy, language and mathematics, sometimes also referred to as ‘basic’ or ‘functional’ skills*” – source Quality Mark alliance website) and any other accreditation(s) which could increase occupancy by providing nationally recognised assurance of quality.
 - iv. To establish a very clear financial picture for the centres; this would include true cost of the centres (for example maintenance, staffing costs, running costs, capital works, marketing budgets, and breakdown of corporate re-charge).
- e. Land
- i. To further explore the possibility of renting or acquiring land adjacent to the building at Oxenwood to remove the issue of being a split site and children having to cross a road to access the playing field; bearing in mind this could enable the council to rent or sale the land currently used as a playing field. This would also address the issue of “good will” access to nearby woods, which were unavailable during the pheasant shooting season (1 October - 1 February, *source Game and Wildlife Conservation Trust*).
 - ii. To explore options to consolidate or formalise access to adjacent lands and woods at Braeside to guarantee that the activities advertised can be accessed.

Option 2: transfer centres and / or operations to a third party

31. The task group was informed that initial discussions had been held with **a small number** of private sector organisations to explore the possibility of sale or partnership and that feedback to date had indicated that, due to the limited bed capacity at both sites, private sector companies view both Oxenwood and Braeside as commercially unviable within their business model.
32. The task group was also informed that discussions had been held with charitable organisations regarding the possibilities of these organisations taking on the sites and Community First had been the only organisation to have expressed an interest in the Oxenwood site, though only as a potential Community Asset Transfer.
33. The task group appreciated that some of these options presented a financial risk as the council would still be liable for capital costs associated with the centres.
34. However, the task group was informed that members of staff at the centres were interested in pursuing the option of a Community Interest Company or similar set-up which could enable them to run the centres without subsidies from the council.

Option 3: close both centres

35. It was accepted that the provision of Outdoor education was a non-statutory activity, currently corporately subsidised.
36. However, the benefits to children, as detailed in the report, should also be taken into consideration. Some of the benefits identified by the Outdoor education - Aspects of good practice - September 2004 OFSTED report included "*Outdoor education gives depth to the curriculum and makes an important contribution to students' physical, personal and social education*" and "*Students generally make good progress in outdoor education, both at school and outdoor centres. They develop their physical skills in new and challenging situations as well as exercising important social skills such as teamwork and leadership*".
37. The task group was informed that there were alternatives available to Wiltshire Schools, however there was no consultation with Wiltshire Schools currently using the centres to ensure that they would be able to access those alternative (either because of travelling distance, difference of activities on offer or increased cost).
38. Based on the evidence available the task group could not be convinced that a decision to close both centres would not be premature, and could have a higher cost in the immediate future than retaining the centres.
39. The main reason for this was that the task group had not received evidence that due diligence in terms of the true costs, and potential risks, of closure had been undertaken, especially as there were covenants for both centres and there had been no indications that there would be interest in purchasing the centres for a different use (if that were possible given the covenants).
40. Additionally, no alternatives were identified for the relocation of the Able, Gifted and Talented (AG&T) Programme or the off-site services offered by Oxenwood and there were no details given or options listed for the potential redeployment of staff from the centres therefore increasing the risk of redundancy costs.

Option 4: Close one site only (Oxenwood)

41. Having been informed of the limitations faced by Oxenwood, mostly due to the small size of the site (1.4 acres), and consequent difficulties in combining day and residential activities which further limited commercial development, in contrast to the stated opportunities to grow the programme and income at Braeside during the school holiday times, the task group understood the logic for this option.
42. It was noted within the report that this option could enable the transfer of staff, and potentially bookings, from Oxenwood to Braeside, therefore reducing redundancy and exit costs and that the 'off site' activities from Oxenwood could potentially be managed from Braeside, although the latter was not evidenced and could prove problematic in terms of staffing for activities leaders as the centres tend to have similar busy (March to June and September) and quiet periods (August, December and January).
43. The task group reached the same conclusions for this option as it did for Option 3 (closing both centres) in so far as it had not received evidence confirming that the

true costs, and potential risks, of closure had been identified, paragraphs 38 and 39 refer, although this option would not affect the AG&T programme.

Conclusions

44. Based on the evidence it has received so far, the task group cannot conclude that the Council's proposed scope for the outdoor education review (paragraph 26 refers) had been adequately addressed.
45. With regards to the draft Cabinet report it considered on 7 February 2018, the task group concluded that there was insufficient evidence within the draft report for Cabinet to make an evidence-based decision on **any of the four options**. Of course, this situation may have changed when the Cabinet report is finalised.

Recommendations

46. Based on its key findings on the draft Cabinet report, and should this information not be included in the Cabinet report for consideration on 27 March 2018, the task group would recommend, that Cabinet defer its decision until evidence can be presented of due diligence on the covenants and of the true costs of options 3 (close both centres) and 4 (close one centre);
47. Should Cabinet be minded to defer its decision, the task group would recommend that consideration is given to undertaking the following:
 - a. the investigative work listed in paragraph 30 of this report with regards to option 1 (retain and operate);
 - b. research of the cost and viability of members of staff from the centres running the centres as a Community Interest Company or any other suitable set up, without subsidies from the council;
 - c. contacting a higher number of private sector organisations to explore the possibility of sale or partnership.
48. The task group appreciated that there would be a cost to the Council associated with the deferral of a decision by Cabinet on 27 March 2018 and that it could also pressurise achieving the £135,000 savings approved within the 2018-19 budget. This would need to be balanced against the, currently, unknown costs of closure of one or both centre(s).
49. Should Cabinet be minded to approve the closure of one or both centre(s) at its 27 March 2018 meeting, the task group, based on its consideration of the draft Cabinet report on 7 February 2018, and should this information not be included in the finalised report to Cabinet, would therefore recommend that:

Cabinet should ensure that, prior to any closure:

- a. due diligence for the following has been completed and it is evidenced that closure of one or both centre(s) would be a **true saving** to the council:
 - i. ascertain the council's options in terms of disposal, re-use or sale of the sites, especially considering the covenants;

- ii. ascertain the cost of redundancy and the options for redeployment for the staff members;
 - b. the following have been identified to ensure the impact of the closure of the centre(s) is minimalised in the short-term future for current users:
 - i. a suitable provider (venue) for the Able, Gifted and Talented Programme;
 - ii. an alternative venue for the off-site services offered by Oxenwood;
 - c. a council's outdoor education policy has been developed to ensure that access to outdoor education for Wiltshire Schools and their pupils remains available.
-

Mr John Hawkins, Chairman of the Traded Services for School Task Group

Report author: Marie Gondlach, Senior Scrutiny Officer
01225 713 597 marie.gondlach@wiltshire.gov.uk

Appendices

None

Background documents

Agendas and all supporting documents provided for the 13 September and 18 October 2017 Rapid Scrutiny exercises
Agenda and all supporting documents provided for the 7 February 2018 meeting of the task group
OFSTED report - Aspects of good practice - September 2004

Children's Select Committee Forward Work Programme

Last updated 1 MARCH 2018

Children's Select Committee – Current / Active Task Groups			
Task Group	Details of Task Group	Start Date	Final Report Expected
Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)	Link	TBC	TBC
SEND Passenger Transport	TBC	TBC	TBC
SEND School Provision	Link	May 2018	TBC
Strategy and Support Programme for Disadvantaged Learners	TBC	TBC	TBC
Traded Services for Schools	TBC	TBC	TBC

Children's Select Committee - Rapid Scrutiny		
Topic	Details	Date
Child Care Leavers	TBC	April 2018

Children's Select Committee – Forward Work Programme			Last updated 1 MARCH 2018		
Meeting Date	Item	Details / Purpose of Report	Associate Director	Responsible Cabinet Member	Report Author / Lead Officer
19 Jun 2018	Care Leavers Strategy	To receive an update on the success of the Care Leavers Strategy, included housing and apprenticeships.			
19 Jun 2018	Corporate Parenting Panel Annual Report	To receive the annual report.		Cabinet Member for Children, Education and Skills	
19 Jun 2018	Report of the SEND School Provision Task Group			Cabinet Member for Children, Education and Skills	Adam Brown
19 Jun 2018	Wiltshire Council Apprenticeship Strategy	To receive a report on the performance in the first year of the apprenticeship levy, with details of the future plans for maximising the levy against our own workforce strategies, including how this can support care leavers and other disadvantaged groups of young people.		Cabinet Member for Children, Education and Skills	Joanne Pitt (Director - Human Resources and Organisational Development)
19 Jun 2018	Elective Home Education Policy	To receive the draft of Wiltshire's updated policy for Elective Home Education	Lucy Townsend (Director - Family and Children's Services)	Cabinet Member for Children, Education and Skills	Mal Munday

Children's Select Committee – Forward Work Programme			Last updated 1 MARCH 2018		
Meeting Date	Item	Details / purpose of report	Associate Director	Responsible Cabinet Member	Report Author / Lead Officer
4 Sep 2018	Wiltshire Council Apprenticeship Growth Target	To receive details on Wiltshire Council's submission to central government on how we are fulfilling our apprenticeship target.		Cabinet Member for Children, Education and Skills	Joanne Pitt
15 Jan 2019	Nursery Places Update	To receive the annual update on nursery places.	Alan Stubbersfield (Interim Director - Education and Skills)	Cabinet Member for Children, Education and Skills	Susan Tanner

This page is intentionally left blank