

CHILDREN'S SELECT COMMITTEE

DRAFT MINUTES OF THE CHILDREN'S SELECT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 29 APRIL 2014 AT KENNET ROOM - COUNTY HALL, TROWBRIDGE BA14 8JN.

Present:

Cllr Pat Aves, Ken Brough, Cllr Mary Champion, Cllr Sue Evans, Cllr Jon Hubbard (Chairman), Cllr Simon Jacobs, Cllr Jacqui Lay (Vice Chairman), Cllr Bill Moss, Cllr Helen Osborn, Dr M Thompson and Cllr Philip Whalley

Also Present:

Cllr Richard Gamble, Cllr Simon Killane, Cllr Howard Marshall and Cllr Laura Mayes

28 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Mr Ken Brough, Miss Sarah Busby, Cllr Mary Douglas, Mr John Hawkins, Mr Kaylum House, Cllr Chris Hurst, Cllr George Jeans, Cllr Alan MacRae, Cllr Sheila Parker, Cllr Pip Ridout, Cllr Ricky Rogers and Mrs Lynne Swainston.

The Chairman informed the meeting of the recent very sudden death of Cllr Chris Hurst's father. Members joined the Chairman in requesting the Democratic Services Officer to write to Cllr Hurst extending the Committee's condolences at this very sad time.

29 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

Resolved:

To approve and sign the minutes of the previous meeting held on 25 March 2014 as a true record.

30 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest made at the meeting.

31 Chairman's Announcements

There were no Chairman's announcements.

32 **Public Participation**

There were no members of the public present or councillors' questions.

33 **Final Report of the Positive Leisure-time Activities for Young People Task Group**

Consideration was given to a report which presented the conclusions and recommendations of the Positive Leisure Time Activities for Young People Task Group.

In introducing the report, the Chairman paid tribute to the intensive work carried out by members of the task group which included Kaylum House, the Committee's children & young people's representative. He reminded the Committee that on 21 January 2014 Cabinet considered a part 2 report proposing that it reviewed how it met its statutory duty to secure young people aged 13-19 access to sufficient positive leisure-time activities that improved their wellbeing, and sufficient facilities for such activities. The report set out a range of options, with a provisional recommendation to develop a community led approach, subject to formal consultation. This originally included saving £500k from the youth services budget, but following a resolution at Full Council on 4 February, the required savings were reduced to £250k.

The report stated that the proposals should be robustly scrutinised by the Children's Select Committee. On 28 January the Committee established a task group to respond to the consultation. All non-executive members were invited to express an interest in sitting on the task group and membership was selected as far as possible to achieve a geographical and political balance.

The task group met on six occasions and received written and verbal evidence from elected members, senior officers, youth workers, voluntary and community sector youth groups and young people. It also obtained additional evidence by attending various youth groups throughout the County.

Because the task group's job was to respond to the consultation, it focused on considering the pros and cons of each of the four options proposed to Cabinet. The task group was largely in agreement with the report to Cabinet in concluding that there were significant flaws in Options A, B and C.

Because Option D – a community-led approach – was put forward as the preferred option, the task group placed more emphasis on considering this. However, the task group had significant concerns about the preferred option - Option D – in its current form.

The Committee noted the task group's views that Option D in its current form could lead to:

1. An overall reduction in the provision of positive leisure time activities for young people due to a) the loss of open-access youth work, and b) the swallowing-up of the proposed new area board funding for youth activities
2. A less coherent offer of positive activities that did not meet the needs of all young people in Wiltshire, particularly those from vulnerable groups;
3. A reduction in capacity for developing new YAGs, supporting existing YAGs and a consequent reduction in young people's ability to shape the services in their communities;
4. A significant negative impact on those VCS youth groups that currently relied on the support and advice of the Integrated Youth Service to operate effectively;
5. A reduction in young people's ability to access supportive relationships with trained youth workers;
6. A reduction in the preventative work currently being done by youth workers and a consequent increase in later interventions once the young person had reached a higher level of need, with the potential for significant long-term impacts on the young person, their community and the public purse.

Having concluded that the task group had significant concerns about all four of the options proposed to Cabinet, it decided to develop a further option called Option D+. This indicative service model was developed in order to demonstrate that the task group's concerns could be addressed while still making the necessary savings from the budgets in scope. Option D+ would provide a named youth worker for every community area, retain youth support worker resource for providing help to the most vulnerable young people and

working with young people with learning difficulties and disabilities. The model would also create youth worker apprenticeship opportunities for nine young people and would still leave £365,100 to be allocated to area boards to spend on positive leisure time activities for young people in their community areas.

The task group considered that Option D+ demonstrated that the necessary budget savings could be achieved whilst still

- retaining an effective council youth service that undertook preventative youth work and coordinated and commissioned youth work across the community areas.
- developing the voluntary and community sector's role and enhancing local accountability by devolving a significant amount of money to area boards for spending solely on youth work provision.
- creating employment and training opportunities for apprentice youth workers.

In answer to Members' questions, it was stressed that, under the indicative model, although youth groups would not have their own dedicated professional youth worker, the provision of a fully trained youth worker would be available when needed for advice from within their community area. This arrangement would also mean that area boards would have money available for youth schemes which was not available at present.

Resolved:

- 1. To endorse the task group's report and refer it to Cabinet as the Children's Select Committee's response to the consultation on positive leisure time activities for young people, with the report being included in the Cabinet agenda papers when it takes its final decision on 15th May 2014, subject to the following amendment to the task group's recommendation 5:**

"The Cabinet considers adopting the principals behind Option D+ (set out in Appendix 2), which is an indicative delivery model that achieves the necessary savings from the budgets in scope and addresses the weaknesses of Option D set out under Recommendation 4."

2. To receive a written response from the Cabinet Member for Children's Services at the Committee's next meeting on 3rd June 2014.

34 **Urgent Items**

There were no items of urgent business.

35 **Date of Next Meeting**

Resolved:

To note that the next scheduled meeting would be held on Tuesday 3 June 2014, to be held in the Kennet Room at County Hall, Trowbridge, starting at 10.30am.

(Duration of meeting: 2.00 - 3.05 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

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