

17 September 2015

5. REPORTS OF CABINET

(b) SUMMARY OF DECISIONS TAKEN

Preventing Child Sexual Exploitation Strategy 2015-2017

1. The Cabinet has considered a report on preventing child sexual exploitation (CSE) in Worcestershire and the work led by the Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Board (WSCB) to tackle CSE. The Child Exploitation Strategy has four overarching priorities: prevention and education; recognition and identification; intervention and support, and pursue and disrupt. Agencies in Worcestershire are fairly well ahead on protecting children however there is a need to improve further on prevention and other elements.
2. The Cabinet has noted the work carried out in this area and has fully supported and accepted as its own principles those four points drawn from Louise Casey's report 'Reflections on Child Sexual Exploitation', namely that:
 - (i) CSE is child abuse and is a crime, and our efforts need to be directed towards perpetrators in order to detect, prevent and disrupt that abuse at the earliest stages as well as the prosecution of individual perpetrators;
 - (ii) the victims are children, however they present themselves. They cannot consent to their abuse. There should be no scenarios in which victims are viewed as young women or as making choices;
 - (iii) CSE is squarely a community safety issue and local government working with police and others need to make use of community safety tactics and action to keep children safe. The regulatory and enforcement functions of the local authority are vital in preventing and disrupting CSE and in building intelligence which can help with prosecutions. Those in upper tier authorities and district authorities where responsibilities for children's social care and community safety lie in different tiers, have additional partnership challenges, but these cannot be insurmountable;
 - (iv) local government and the police should not fear seeking out and shining a light on sexual exploitation for fear they may be held to account for what they find. The failure is not in the existence of CSE but in not recognising it and taking appropriate action.

Malvern Vale - Development of a New School Facility

3. The Cabinet has also endorsed the definition of CSE that it is commonly used nationally and which has been adopted by WSCB:

‘The sexual exploitation of children and young people under 18 involves exploitative situations, contexts and relationships where young people (or a third person or persons) receive ‘something’ (e.g. food, accommodation, drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, affection, gifts, money) as a result of performing, and/or others performing on them, sexual activities.

Child sexual exploitation can occur through use of technology without the child’s immediate recognition, for example the persuasion to post sexual images on the internet/mobile phones with no immediate payment or gain. In all cases those exploiting the child/young person have power over them by virtue of their age, gender, intellect, physical strength and/or economic or other resources.’

4. The Cabinet has noted the comments of the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Panel on the Strategy and Action Plan and endorsed the CSE Strategy 2015-2017 and the WSCB Action Plan.

5. Further to the report to Council in February 2015, the Cabinet has considered proposals for the development of a new school facility on the Malvern Vale site. The site was sufficient to accommodate a one form entry (1FE) primary school but there were constraints and limitations. Outline feasibility work had been carried out which presented three options:

- Option 1 - stand-alone 1FE Primary School commissioned by the Council
- Option 2 - expansion of Somers Park Primary School to a 3FE school
- Option 3 - expansion of Northleigh Primary School from a 1.5FE school to a 2FE or 3FE school operating on a split site.

6. After considering all the evidence including the outcomes of the consultation, the financial and budgetary implications, the procurement/commissioning issues and the legal, HR and equality implications, the Cabinet has agreed to support Option 2, the expansion of Somers Park Primary School. This option would expand an already popular and outstanding school and potentially offered best value to the Council.

7. The Cabinet has authorised the Director of Children's Services to progress Option 2 further and implement it as part of the approved Capital Investment Programme in

Public Health Ring-Fenced Grant

meeting the need for pupil places going forward, irrespective of whether a bid to the Education Funding Agency (EFA) is successful, in line with the County Council's policy position of supporting academies, but with the contingency that any successful EFA bid is used to offset the cost to the Council.

8. The Cabinet has considered a report on the Public Health Ring-Fenced Grant (PHRFG) and initial proposals for savings following the Government's announcement that it intends to reduce the national PHRFG by £200m in 2015/16. The implications of this for the Council are that a £3.3m saving in 2015/16 is likely to be necessary. However, given that the majority of PHRFG is committed through contracts requiring notice, and ending or reducing them at short notice may destabilise services and providers, it is planning to manage reductions incrementally and in a measured way. It is intended that savings for 2015/16 will be found from Public Health reserves and additional savings will be made in 2016/17 and 2017/18 to complete repayment of reserves to the value of the overspend in 2015/16.

9. The Cabinet has noted the conditions and current expenditure of the PHRFG including the anticipated reduction in 2015/16. It has approved the initial proposals for savings in the PHRFG in the following areas:

- older people's recovery services
- targeted prevention services for adults
- universal prevention services for adults
- prevention services for children
- strategic functions.

On this basis the Director of Adult Services and Health has been requested to initiate discussions with partners and providers of services and undertake consultations and Equality Impact Screenings or full Equality Impact Assessments as necessary.

10. A detailed review of all prevention spend will be undertaken so as to prioritise future spend on those areas where effectiveness can be best evidenced. The Cabinet has delegated a final decision for each service to the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Health and Well-being in discussion with the Director of Adult Services and Health and in the context of the discussions and review highlighted above.

11. The Cabinet has considered the latest refresh of the Corporate and Transformation Risk Registers. Risk Management is an integral part of corporate governance and can be used as a tool which can assist the Council in meeting its key outcomes. The Corporate and Transformation Risk Registers provide a mechanism for the collation and reporting of the strategic risks that could impact on the delivery of corporate objectives.

Corporate Risk Update

Balanced Scorecard - FutureFit Performance Update

12. Most of the risks have remained at the same level, three have reduced in risk and one - in relation to Children's Social Care delivering savings - has increased. The Cabinet has approved the latest refresh of the Corporate and Transformation Risk Registers and noted the red risks and mitigating actions.

13. The Cabinet has considered an overview of performance for the Corporate Balanced Scorecard Quarter 4 (2014/15). The report contained the key headline indicators for Cabinet to monitor. Overall it is an improving picture of performance with 19 green indicators in Quarter 4 compared to 17 in Quarter 3 and the same number of red indicators. The Overview and Scrutiny Panels will also review the data.

14. The Cabinet has noted the good progress in the performance of the 19 Balanced Scorecard indicators that are RAG-rated as green and the performance of the 12 indicators that are RAG-rated red. It has also considered the detailed performance report for the three Balanced Scorecard indicators that are RAG-rated red and where performance deteriorated in Quarter 4 2014/15, and the actions taken to improve performance and detail provided for two indicators that are RAG-rated green and which demonstrated positive progress in Quarter 4 2014/15.

Resources Report

FutureFit Programme Update

15. The Council has delivered almost £100m in savings and efficiencies since it started its BOLD/FutureFit programme. At the end of May 2015, £17.3m of the £27.2m target for 2015/16 has been either delivered or confirmed as on target. The majority of the remaining target has been rated as Amber in terms of risk of delivery. The Council continues to focus on delivering the remainder of the savings and efficiencies plan to take overall savings over the £125m mark since 2010/11.

Revenue Budget Monitoring 2015/16 Outturn Forecast as at 31 May 2015

16. The Cabinet was informed at its July meeting that the overall financial pressure forecast for 2015/16 was circa £5.5m or 1.7% of the authorised cash limited budget. All avenues to reduce this forecast financial pressure are being explored to support delivery of services in 2015/16 within the authorised cash limited budget of £326m. The most significant area of financial pressure continues to be the Children's Services Directorate within the Looked After Children's placement budget.

Capital Programme Budget Monitoring: 2014/15 Actual Expenditure as at 31 May 2015

17. The Council's Capital Budget for 2015/16 totals £174.9m after rolling forward £28.3m from the last financial year. The actual capital expenditure at Month 2 (31 May 2015) is £2.1m or 1.2% of the budget which is as expected with no significant issues arising.

Annual Statutory Financial Statements 2014/15

18. The Council's external auditors, Grant Thornton, have indicated that they will give an unqualified audit opinion on the 2014/15 Financial Statements subject to no matters arising from the public inspection period. This will enable the Council to move forward quickly in full confidence on the financial position for 2014/15 and support financial planning for future years.

Mr A I Hardman
Chairman

Contact Points

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Background Papers

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Head of Legal and Democratic Services) the following are the background papers relating to the subject matter of this item:

Agenda and background papers for the meeting of the Cabinet held on 16 July 2015.