

Education, Children and Families Policy Committee

Meeting held 31 January 2023

PRESENT: Councillors Dawn Dale (Chair), Brian Holmshaw (Deputy Chair), Colin Ross (Group Spokesperson), Mary Lea, Mick Rooney, Peter Garbutt and Ann Whitaker.

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1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

1.1 Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Gail Smith.

2. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

2.1 No items were identified where resolutions may be moved to exclude the press and public.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

3.1 No declarations of interest were received.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

4.1 Councillor Brian Holmshaw raised the issue of the Corporate Opportunities Register item not being added to the Work Programme, as mentioned previously. Andrew Jones stated this would be added to the next meeting's agenda.

5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS

5.1 No petitions had been received and no questions from members of the public were asked at the meeting.

6. WORK PROGRAMME

6.1 The Committee received the Committee's Work Programme for consideration and discussion. The aim of the Work Programme is to show all known, substantive agenda items for forthcoming meetings of the Committee, to enable this Committee, other committees, officers, partners and the public to plan their work with and for the Committee. Changes since the Committee's last meeting, including any new items, had been made in consultation with the Co-Chairs, Deputy Chair and Group Spokesperson, via their regular pre-meetings, and these were set out at the beginning of Appendix A of the report. It was highlighted that the Committee had begun to consider items which would be included on agendas

from March 2023 onwards.

6.2 It was noted that

6.3 **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:** That the Committee's work programme, as set out in Appendix 1, be agreed, including the additions and amendments identified in Part 1, and with the addition of a report on the Opportunities Register pertaining to Education, Children and Families services being added to the work programme for submission at the next or subsequent meetings of the Committee.

7. **SCHOOL ADMISSION ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE 2024/25 ACADEMIC YEAR**

7.1 John Bigley was in attendance to present a report on School Admission arrangements for the 24/25 academic year.

7.2 **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:** That the Education, Children and Families Policy Committee approve: -

- The oversubscription criteria for Community and Voluntary Controlled Schools for 2024/25 (including for external Sixth Forms)
- Proposed Admission Numbers for 2024/25
- The statutory Primary and Secondary co-ordinated admission schemes for 2024/25

7.3 **Reasons for Decision**

7.3.1 The recommendation to approve the proposed admission arrangements for 2024/25 will ensure that the Authority carries out its statutory duty to consult and determine its admission arrangements for the 2024/25 academic year, including:

1. The oversubscription criteria (Including external Sixth Forms)
2. The proposed Admission Numbers
3. The statutory Primary and Secondary co-ordinated admission schemes.

7.4 **Alternatives Considered and Rejected**

7.4.1 The Admissions Review was a City-wide consultation which asked whether the current admission arrangements were still supported and were still fit for purpose. There continues to be a high level of support for the current arrangements and the current arrangements continue to deliver a high level of preferences met.

For the 2022 intakes for example a total of 92.9% were offered their first preference primary schools compared to a national average 92.2% and 86.96% offered a preferred secondary school compared to a national average of 83.3%

8. **BUDGET MONITORING REPORT – MONTH 8**

8.1 Jane Wilby, Head of Accounting, presented the Budget Monitoring Report for Month 8.

8.2 **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:** That the Education, Children and Families Policy Committee:-

Note the Council's financial position as at the end of November 2022 (month 8).

8.3 **Reasons for Decision**

This paper is to bring the committee up to date with the Council's current financial position as at Month 8 2022/23

8.4 **Alternatives Considered and Rejected**

8.4.1 The Council is required to both set a balance budget and to ensure that in-year income and expenditure are balanced. No other alternatives were considered.

9. **ALL PHASE MAINSTREAM COMMISSIONING PLAN FOR THE 2024/25 ACADEMIC YEAR**

9.1 Sam Martin, Head of Commissioning – Vulnerable People, presented a report on the headlines of the All Phase commissioning plan.

9.2 **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:** That the Education, Children and Families Policy Committee:

- 1) Notes the content of the Mainstream Commissioning Plan 2023-2026 and associated Action Plans, including the Vision, Values, Principles and our approach to sufficiency planning.
- 2) Notes the intention to share the draft plan with key stakeholders and other interested parties via a consultation in the Spring 2023 and endorses the plan for this purpose.
- 3) Advise how Committee members wish to be engaged in the Spring Consultation process e.g. workshop/focus group etc.

9.3 **Reasons for Decision**

9.3.1 The Commissioning Plan will ensure that the Local Authority meets its statutory duties under the Education Act to provide sufficient school places, promote Page 8 Page 9 of 9 parental choice, diversity and fair access. Consultation on our Commissioning Plan for 2023-2026 is an important stage in the policymaking process. In the first instance it allows the evidence base to be built, secondly, it ensures transparency in the process, and thirdly it gives our stakeholders understanding and ownership of the ultimate outcomes.

9.4 **Alternatives Considered and Rejected**

9.4.1 No alternative options have been considered.

10. ALTERNATIVE PROVISION REVIEW

10.1 Candi Lawson, Strategic Commissioning Manager and Tim Armstrong, Head of Access and Inclusion, were in attendance to present the Alternative Provision Review.

10.2 **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:** That the Education, Children and Families Policy Committee:

- Endorse the strategic intent to develop and implement appropriate changes to the citywide model of Alternative Provision in line with further consultation with schools, providers, parents, and young people.
- Approve the commission of a new framework for providers to deliver alternative provision services for use by Sheffield schools and services within the children's services portfolio, as set out in this Report.
- Endorses that, in developing the new framework, work is undertaken to develop models of greater sustainability for providers on the framework and costs that support the appropriate placement of children on the framework.

10.3 Reasons for Decision

10.3.1 We are recommending that the Local Authority supports the further development of a citywide Alternative Provision model as this will create a clear strategy that delivers consistent and quality provision for which the LA has oversight.

10.3.2 The approach will enable the LA to develop the quality of provision and ensure that it is integrated to wider practice to support inclusion within the city. It will ensure that the LA is able to meet its statutory duties to arrange alternative provision in school or elsewhere under section 19 of the Education Act 1996.

10.3.3 It is recommended that the framework is procured as part of our work to ensure sufficient suitable provision is developed within the city.

10.4 Alternatives Considered and Rejected

10.4.1 Consideration has been given to remain with the current fractured Alternative Provision model. This has been rejected as it lacks a clear plan and direction and does not fit with local and national ambitions.

10.4.2 Consideration has been given to removing the AP framework, allowing schools to individually develop any offer they wish to utilise directly with providers. This has been rejected as it creates greater risk of poor practice. The lack of regulated provision within the city means that we continue to need a framework of provision to reduce risk of exclusion and provide appropriate interventions.

11. ALTERNATIVE PROVISION FREE SCHOOL BIDS

11.1 Candi Lawson, Strategic Commissioning Manager, gave an overview of the Alternative Provision Free School Bids report.

11.2 **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:** That the Education, Children and Families Policy Committee:

- Approve that the Local Authority will support the submission of two bids for an Alternative Provision Free School, by Brigantia and Minerva respectively.
- Endorse the principle of funding any abnormal site costs resulting from a successful bid from the High Needs Capital Allocation.

11.3 **Reasons for Decision**

11.3.1 We are recommending that the Local Authority supports and contributes to two bids to the Department for Education's Alternative Provision round as this is an excellent opportunity for Sheffield to develop provision in the city. If successful, this would provide the capital costs to build a new provision that may not otherwise be possible.

11.3.2 Ultimately this is an opportunity to expand and build on our approach to Alternative Provision to meet the needs of our most vulnerable children and young people.

11.4 **Alternatives Considered and Rejected**

11.4.1 **No bid:** The alternative would be for Sheffield not to put a bid into the Department for Education. This would minimise any risks but would remove the opportunity to receive funding for a capital build and initial base running costs of a provision.

12. **REGULATION AND OFSTED INSPECTION OF SUPPORTED ACCOMODATION FOR 16- AND 17-YEAR-OLDS IN CARE**

12.1 Joe Horobin provided a briefing on the proposal for the future regulation of supported accommodation for 16- and 17-year-olds in care.

12.2 **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:** That the Education, Children and Families Policy Committee notes the information provided in the report on the forthcoming regulations, standards and inspection of supported accommodation for 16- and 17-year-olds in care.

13. **CORPORATE PARENTING STRATEGY**

13.1 Becky Towle provided the Committee with an update on the Corporate Parenting Strategy.

13.2 **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:** That the Education, Children and Families Policy Committee notes the information provided on the Corporate Parenting Strategy.

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