

Performance Scrutiny Committee People 23 Jan 2018 at 10am

Conclusions and Comments:

Comments to Cabinet on following Proposals:

EDU181902 - Consolidation of the Educational Psychology, Additional Learning Needs, and Specific Learning Needs Teams into a 'Inclusion Enrichment Team'

The Committee felt that there was insufficient evidence in this business case to fully understand how the savings would be achieved. The Committee received explanation from the Head of Service as to how this would work in practice; however this level of detail should have been included within the business case, so that the public have an understanding of the potential impact of the proposal.

Highlight the risk of this proposal:

- This proposal will increase the pressure placed on schools without any additional funding or resources, and will likely have a negative impact on the young people needing to use this support.
- Move to a cluster approach - unclear how the clusters will operate, and how the resources will be allocated to each cluster, which makes it difficult to fully understand the impact of the proposal.
- Indication from the officers was that the face to face contact with pupils will decrease and the proposal looks to empower the school based staff to take over this role. There is a risk that too much is being expected of the teaching staff to provide effective oversight of all of the potentially complex issues for that individual child, whilst managing the needs of the whole class.
- This presents a risk to young people who could potentially be missed if the impact of this proposal is a reduction in service. This would have an impact on their opportunity to engage within work and training.

The Committee acknowledges the mitigation outlined to provide training to support the teachers and schools to enable school based staff can support their pupils in their own learning environments. However, the Committee concerned that this mitigation may not fully address the risk for the following reasons:

- Concerned about the capacity of the remaining staff within the clusters to provide training for schools on a large scale;
- As its unclear how the cluster approach will operate – therefore it's also unclear whether there is capacity within these clusters to deliver this training.
- Unclear who within the new team will be responsible for training, and the timescale of when the training will be provided to the schools.
- The time that this will take to roll out the training could mean that there is a substantial gap in provision in the short term.

The Committee recommends that if this proposal is approved, that the implementation of this is carefully monitored, and that this is reported to the Performance Scrutiny Committee – People on a regular basis, with detailed information in the impact on these young people.

EDU181904 - Re-modelling of the Pupil Referral Unit

The Committee felt that this saving was not accurately set out in the business case. The Head of Service provided additional information, the Committee agreed that this should have been included in the business case to inform the public of the potential impact, risks and mitigations in place.

Highlighting the risks of this proposal:

Performance Scrutiny Committee People 23 Jan 2018 at 10am

Conclusions and Comments:

- The proposal will increase pressure on schools without any additional funding or resources and could have a negative impact on the young people accessing the PRU in its current state.
- The staff and teachers are being asked to undertake additional roles and responsibilities, which might impact on their health and wellbeing. As well as their ability to provide a continued high quality service to all the young people.
- The young people who would normally receive additional support from the PRU, are now at risk of losing this support, increasing the likelihood of them dropping out of education and becoming NEET (Not in Education Employment or Training).
- The detail about satellite provisions was missing from the business case, as was their impact on the communities where they are based.
- The impact on the young people in mainstream school when the young people from the PRU are placed in a mainstream environment.

The Committee welcomed the mitigations outlined in the proposal, but were concerned that the mitigations were not enough. They explained that there might be an accumulative affect from increasing the numbers of young people in need of support, and the transition period of the Educational Psychologists and ALN team training and upskilling the teachers and school staff.

The Members felt that the claim of a saving of £485k was misleading. The net saving claim of £485k is incorrect as this money is being moved into the Individual Schools Budget to fund the SEBD School. This proposal will make no financial saving.

CFS181901 - Review of Oakland Short Break Service

The Committee had concerns about the impact of this proposal on disabled children and their families, based on the information presented in the business case. The Head of Service provided context to the review and additional information on alternative provision that would be explored to ensure that the needs of the children and their families are met. Information on this alternative private and third sector provision should be included within the business case to enable the public to fully understand the impact of this proposal as it gives a context to the proposed review.

Within the 'Impact on Citizens' section of the business case, the impact on service users was not sufficiently stated, simply stating that '*support for families with disabled child will be reduced.*' This does not give a full picture of what the impact will be. Within the options considered section of the business case it stated '*for some children there would be a reduction in the offer within their package of care*'. This again does not give a full explanation of what this reduction would be and how the impact will be mitigated.

The Committee received assurances that the families and the children currently using these services would be consulted and their views used to shape the reformed service. This was to happen should the Cabinet adopt this proposal. It was noted that this could be misleading as the decision to reduce this service from 7 days to 5 days service would have already been taken, therefore limiting scope of the input from the families.

Performance Scrutiny Committee People 23 Jan 2018 at 10am

Conclusions and Comments:

CFS181904 - Restructuring of the Funding within Prevention Services

Preventative services is not an area that the Council should be reducing. It is fundamentally against the intention of the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act to act to prevent problems occurring or getting worse, and balancing the short term needs with the need to safeguard against the ability to meet long term needs. The Committee understands the rationale behind this proposal, in that it is not a statutory service and there are limited options to making the necessary savings whilst protecting statutory services.

However, the full impact of reducing this service should be fully understood if the proposal is to be adopted.

The Committee had specific concerns regarding the following:

- Unclear how the savings of £311,000 will be made, other than a direct reduction of staff by 4 FTE. As such, there are concerns about how achievable this proposal will be as there is insufficient information in the business case to assess this.
- Title of the proposal does not accurately cover the nature of the proposal, as the recommended option (option 3) directly reduces the services offered.
- The savings made here will directly increase the other costs in other parts of the Council, most acutely Education and Children's Services. The cost of this has not been factored into the potential savings.
- Although this is not a statutory service, making reductions in this service will impact upon the statutory services budgets, as it will increase the demand for statutory services in the longer term.
- The prevention service is a core element of working with families in such a way to prevent future problems. Concern that reducing this may increase the risk for Children who would previously accessed preventative services, in that they could miss out on early interventions before issues escalate to the level for a children's services referral. Some of the Committee felt that this presented a safeguarding risk.
- No mitigations were outlined for this proposal – the explanation for this was that there was nothing that could be done to mitigate as it was a direct reduction in service.
- Very concerned about the impact that has been outlined in the business case, in particular:
 - *'...a potential restructuring of the Families First Grant could lead to a reduction in opportunities for third sector organisations'* – direct impact on the alternative / complimentary provision from the third sector.
 - *'Preventions, CANs and young Carers all have waiting lists for service so any decrease in funding would increase the gap in provision'* – there is gap in provision already, this proposal would exacerbate this issue.
 - *'Greater number of referrals to children's services'* – direct impact on future budgets of statutory services within Children's Services.
 - *'Reduced capacity in schools for support'* – direct impact on pressures of schools staff.

The combined effect of these would significantly impact upon the lives of the children involved.

Performance Scrutiny Committee People 23 Jan 2018 at 10am

Conclusions and Comments:

Comments to Cabinet Members for following proposals

CFS181902 - Integrated Family Support Team Restructure

There had been significant changes to this proposal since it had been issued for consultation in December. The progress made had caused a dramatic decrease in the number of staff impacted on by the proposal and also the implementation costs that are required to carry out the proposal.

The Committee commented on how the business case was not fit for consultation in its current form and any recommendations made might not accurately represent reality.

It was noted by Members that that no linkage with the Well-being of Future Generations act were included in the business case and this might not be the case as it directly impacts on families and young people.

CFS181913 - Reduction in expenditure on placement for Looked After Children

The Committee felt that there was not enough information or detail in this business case including:

- Increase in pressure for out of Authority placements in Education. No further information on the extent of this impact.
- *'This proposal will need to link to an invest to save proposal to crease a small amount of capacity within Children's services to first undertake a concentrated review of the current provision'*. The investment required section is then left blank so no further details about the required investment.
- The Proposal states it will reduce the spend on placements – but it doesn't explain how this will be achieved other than through reviewing the service. It is unclear how a figure for savings can be estimated before the review has taken place.
- Proposed savings – how have these been calculated, what number of placements would this reduction represent, and how are you sure this specific number of placements can be reduced before the review has been undertaken.
- In the Risk information – states that *'The risk is simply that because of external demands and increasing complexity in the children being cared for that we will be unable to achieve this saving.'* – no mitigations to explain how this risk will be managed and what the likelihood of this happening.
- Insufficient evidence of the Well-being of Future Generations act being taken into consideration.

The Head of Service provided some explanation on how the savings would be made. To achieve meaningful consultation the additional information should have been included in the business case to give the public access to all of the information.

ACS181903 - Review of the Domiciliary Care Service

The Committees greatest concern was around the lack of mitigations for the contract failing and the impact that this would have on the people who are receiving care. They felt that other mitigations needed were not set out in the business case.

Not enough information and detail was provided in the business case, most importantly included the number of residents that the proposed saving would affect.

Performance Scrutiny Committee People 23 Jan 2018 at 10am

Conclusions and Comments:

Another risk the Members highlighted that was not adequately mitigated in the business case was the continuity to care of the service users and their families.

With all of the missing information the Members agreed that it would be hard for the public to be fairly consulted on this in a productive manner as their responses would not be fully informed and would lack the depth of understanding needed for such a delicate subject.

ACS181904 - Re-provision of Supported Living Service

The Committee supported his proposal but feels that the implementation needs to be sensitively managed to limit the impact on the service users and their families.

ACS181907 - Reduction in Adult Budget

The business case does not provide sufficient information on the impact it will have on service users or what mitigations have been established.

The Committee discussed the lack of Well-being of Future Generation act information in the business case simply stating '*...the Future Generations Act 2014 requires that the City Council makes the right services available at the right time*'. This does not state how this proposal fits in with this, or mention any of the other aspects of the act.

Fees and Charges – Social Services

The Committee commented that the issue of fees and charges not being reviewed or increased for a number of years appears to be an ongoing issue.

The Committee recommends that the Cabinet ensure that each year the service areas undertake a review of the charges to ensure they are accurate each year. This would ensure that the costs area accurate, that the authority is in line with other Authorities and to stop large increases in subsequent years.

Comments upon the Budget process or public engagement to Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee:

The Committee wanted to raise the following overarching issues with the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee for further exploration and discussion:

Business Case Template:

- Not consistent information within the business cases. Most of the business cases needed explanation and further information from officers to fully understanding of the impact of the proposal.
- Concern that this is what is being consulted with the public and the public will not have the benefit of discussing the proposals with lead officers to gain a full understanding. The Council needs to be more transparent and ensure all the relevant information is contained within the Business Cases to ensure robust and meaningful consultation.
- If the public are to be meaningfully engaged they must be provided with clear and understandable information which sets out budget proposals, what they aim to achieve, who and how many it will effect, what the main impacts are, financial implications, if there is a reduction in service – detail as to how that would work in

Performance Scrutiny Committee People 23 Jan 2018 at 10am
Conclusions and Comments:

practise, staffing implications and other figures, detailed mitigations for any risk, detail of alternative provision (such as third sector) to indicate how a reduction in service could be compensated for.

- Level of detail inconsistent between the proposals.
- Risk scores – unclear in the business cases how these are scored – need to be broken down further not just the number but an indication of that this number means.
- Wellbeing of Future Generations box in the Business Plan – not consistently completed. The linkages between the act and the proposals were not always clear.

Wellbeing of Future Generations Act

- It is not clear how these proposals fit into a long term plan – they seem to still be reactive.
- Unclear what the Long term budget strategic direction is for the Council.