

**EDUCATION, CHILDREN AND FAMILIES BUDGET AND PERFORMANCE  
MONITORING SUB-COMMITTEE**

Minutes of the meeting held at 7.00 pm on 27 March 2018

**Present:**

Councillor Neil Reddin FCCA (Chairman)  
Councillor Nicky Dykes (Vice-Chairman)  
Councillors Alan Collins, Mary Cooke and Angela Wilkins

Emmanuel Arbenser

**Also Present:**

Councillor Tom Philpott, Executive Support Assistant to the  
Portfolio Holder for Education, Children and Families

**48 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Bennett and Councillor Fortune.

**49 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The Chairman declared a pecuniary interest in respect of Item 12a: Gateway 0: Commissioning Options for Transport Provision In Children's And Adult's Services and left the meeting during consideration of this item. The Vice-Chairman acted as Chairman for consideration of this item.

There were no further declarations of interest.

**50 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ATTENDING THE MEETING**

No questions had been received from members of the public.

**51 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 17 JANUARY 2018 AND MATTERS OUTSTANDING**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> January 2018 be agreed.

## **52 PRE DECISION SCRUTINY OF PORTFOLIO HOLDER DECISIONS**

The Sub-Committee considered the following reports where the Education, Children and Families Portfolio Holder was recommended to take a decision.

### **a BUDGET MONITORING 2017/18 Report ED18054**

The Sub-Committee considered a report setting out the budget monitoring position for the Education, Children and Families Portfolio for 2017/18, based on expenditure to the end of December 2017.

The Schools' Budget was predicted to underspend by £210k during 2017/18, which would be added to the £1.6m underspend carried forward from 2016/17. The Non-Schools' budget was projected to overspend by £874k as a result of overspends across a range of services within the Education and Social Care Divisions, including in-house nurseries, placements for children looked after and costs to support care leavers. This had been offset by underspends by some services including Special Educational Needs and Inclusion and Court-ordered Care Proceedings, as well as through additional funding from the Bromley Clinical Commissioning Group and Public Health. Work was underway to recruit permanent staff to the Children's Social Care Service which was expected to reduce cost pressures related to staffing. It was requested that funds held in contingency be released comprising £15k of Education Services Grant required to offset costs from the conversion of a school to academy status, £141k of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeker Children Grant to offset the costs of looking after these children, and £51k South London Connexions Consortium Balance which was the Local Authority's share of the residual balance of funds from the South London Connexions Consortium which would be used to offset costs in Children's Services.

In considering the report, in relation to Children Looked After and Care Leavers, the Chairman queried how the Staying Put Grant generated costs. The Head of ECHS Finance reported that this was due to young people being able to stay with their foster carer for an extended period of time and the resulting costs. It was recognised that remaining with a foster carer was more cost effective than leaving care however no specific piece of work had been done around whether Staying Put had generated any savings.

A Member highlighted the need to better utilise the building assets owned by the Council. Specific reference was made to the need to provide more courses at Blenheim Nursery which the Member felt was currently under utilised

The Sub-Committee considered the increased costs associated with locum staff. A Member highlighted the need for the Council to be flexible in its working practices and to also identify the reasons why some social workers chose to remain with agencies. The Head of ECHS Finance reported that

there had been an intensive recruitment drive within Children's Social Care and the number of agency staff had significantly reduced. It was agreed that a report concerning Recruitment and Retention in Children's Social Care should be provided to the Sub-Committee in the new municipal year.

The Sub-Committee further noted that there had been a £716k overspend in Fostering Services (Independent Fostering Agencies). The Head of ECHS Finance reported that this overspend was a result of more foster carers from independent agencies being used by the Local Authority due to increases in demand for foster placements. A Member queried whether many foster carers had left Bromley as a result of the cuts made to allowances and it was noted that this information would need to be provided by the Director of Children's Social Care. Members noted that the cuts to allowances had been made to bring Bromley in line with other Local Authorities.

The Sub-Committee noted that the Local Authority was required to produce an Annual Children Looked After Sufficiency Statement. This gave a sense of the type of provision the Local Authority needed. It was agreed that that Annual Sufficiency Statement should be considered by the Sub-Committee in the new municipal year.

**RESOLVED that the Portfolio Holder be recommended to:**

- 1) Note the latest projected overspend of £874k forecast on the controllable budget for 2017/18 based on information as at December 2017;**
- 2) Note the full year effect of cost pressures of £891k for the Education, Children and Families Portfolio budget for 2018/19;**
- 3) Agree the release of £207k held in contingency relating to Education Services Grant, Unaccompanied Asylum Seeker Children Grant and South London Connexions Consortium Balance;**
- 4) Note the comments of the Department in Section 9 of Report ED18054; and,**
- 5) Approve the Education, Children and Families Portfolio Budget Monitoring Report 2017/18.**

**b CAPITAL PROGRAMME MONITORING - 3RD QUARTER  
2017/18 & CAPITAL STRATEGY 2018 TO 2022  
Report FSD18027**

On 7<sup>th</sup> February 2018, the Council's Executive received the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarterly capital monitoring report for 2017/18 and agreed a revised Capital Programme for the five year period 2017/18 to 2021/22.

The Sub-Committee considered the changes to the Capital Programme for the Education, Children and Families Portfolio which included the re-phasing of a number of schemes totalling £2.8M into 2018/19 to reflect revised estimates of when expenditure on the Education, Children and Families schemes was likely to be incurred. An additional £15k in Section 106 receipts had recently been approved by the Council's Executive for the Education, Children and Families Portfolio which had a total uncommitted balance of 788K as at February 2018. During the annual review of the Capital Programme no bids had been submitted in respect of any new capital schemes within the Education, Children and Families Portfolio. Two post-completion reports were due to be reported on schemes at Clare House and Edgebury Primary Schools before the end of the 2018/19 monitoring cycle.

**RESOLVED that the Portfolio Holder be recommended to confirm the revised Capital Programme agreed by the Council's Executive on 7<sup>th</sup> February 2018.**

**53 AN OVERVIEW OF PERFORMANCE IN EARLY YEARS, KS1, KS2, GCSE AND A LEVEL  
Report CSD18074**

The Sub-Committee considered a report providing an overview of education outcomes for children attending Bromley schools for the 2016/17 academic year.

Children in Bromley consistently achieved well and made good progress at school. It was important to ensure that schools and the Local Authority were ambitious for children and, therefore, the report ranked performance in Bromley against the top ten local authorities at a national level for education performance. There remained a gap between the attainment and progress of children from disadvantaged groups and their peers and narrowing those gaps would remain a focus for schools and the Local Authority.

In response to a question from the Chairman, the Interim Director of Education confirmed that the small number of schools judged to require improvement were a focus for the Local Authority and the Department had so far this year reviewed progress with one school and provided a package of support for another. Levels of engagement were good and Head Teachers were keen to accept support and challenge. The Local Authority was initially working with schools where the data suggested the biggest challenge existed. Within Bromley the mechanism for monitoring improvement and providing evidence for school challenge was the analysis of data. The Interim Director of Education stressed that every contact with schools had to count and that the Local Authority needed to be smarter about how information was shared across the Council.

In response to a question from the Chairman, the Interim Director of Education confirmed that the Local Authority did not yet have a framework for which set out expectations for SEN support in mainstream schools and other educational settings. Although schools were required to publish their local offer, these could often be generic and therefore parents did not know what to expect. There was a need for

Bromley to clearly set out expectations from mainstream schools in terms of SEN.

The Sub-Committee noted that the SEND Governance Board was responsible for overseeing and monitoring the priorities document arising from the SEN review. As the report had been published it was agreed that it would be circulated to the Sub-Committee following the meeting.

**RESOLVED that the report and recommendation be noted and endorsed.**

**54            PERFORMANCE REPORTING - CHILDREN'S SERVICES**  
**Report ED18053**

The Sub-Committee considered a report presenting a proposed set of performance indicators to be used to monitor children's services from the 2018/19 municipal year.

At its meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> January 2018, the Sub-Committee received a draft of a new performance management framework document in respect of children's services which identified the specific responsibilities of the Education, Children and Families Select Committee and its Budget and Performance Sub-Committee as 'receiving reports on performance, asking challenging questions about areas of underperformance, and making recommendations accordingly to the Executive'. Following consideration of this report, the Sub-Committee agreed that the Budget and Performance Sub-Committee would receive a regular update on a suite of performance measures in respect of children's services to act as a regular 'health check' on key areas of service delivery and enable scrutiny and enquiry from elected members, and that this suite of indicators should be updated on an annual basis.

The Assistant Director for Strategy, Performance and Business Support tabled the final Performance Management Framework for Children's Services.

The Sub-Committee noted that the final "basket" of 39 performance indicators would provide the Sub-Committee with a broad oversight of performance.

In considering the indicators the Chairman noted that it would be helpful for the Sub-Committee to have an extra year of comparative data to enable Members to identify any emerging trends.

It was agreed that information surrounding the number of foster carers entering and the number leaving the service (the net gain) would be included in the management commentary.

**RESOLVED that:**

- 1) The proposed performance measures be used for regular reporting from the 2018/19 municipal year; and,**

**2) That these performance measures be reviewed on an annual basis.**

**55 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Members of the Sub-Committee thanked the Chairman for the “calm and serene” way in which he had chaired the Sub-Committee for the year.

The Chairman thanked officers, past and present, for their work and support over the previous four years.

**RESOLVED that the issues raised be noted.**

**56 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 AS AMENDED BY THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) (VARIATION) ORDER 2006 AND THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000**

**RESOLVED that the press and public be excluded during consideration of the items of business listed below as it was likely in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that if members of the press and public were present, there would be disclosure to them of exempt information.**

**57 EXEMPT MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 17 JANUARY 2018**

A Member queried whether there was a need, now that the contract had been let, for the item to remain in Part 2. It was agreed that advice would be sought from the Monitoring Officer.

**RESOLVED that the Exempt (Part 2) minutes of the meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> January 2018 be agreed.**

**58 PRE DECISION SCRUTINY OF PART 2 EXECUTIVE DECISIONS**

The Sub-Committee considered the following Part 2 reports on the agenda for the meeting of the Executive due to be held on 28<sup>th</sup> March 2018.

**a GATEWAY 0: COMMISSIONING OPTIONS FOR TRANSPORT PROVISION IN CHILDREN'S AND ADULT'S SERVICES**

The Sub-Committee considered the report and supported the recommendations.

The Meeting ended at 7.50 pm

Chairman