

STOCKTON-ON-TEES BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET RECOMMENDATIONS

PROFORMA

Cabinet Meeting16th June 2011

1. Title of Item/Report

Task and Finish Review of the impact of the Introduction of the Early Intervention Grant

2. Record of the Decision

Cabinet considered a report that provided an update on the progress of a Review on the impact of the introduction of the Early Intervention Grant (EIG) and the challenges associated with the 25% cut in annual funding. The report also sought approval to implement a number of stages of the review. Members were reminded that it had considered a report on this issue, which set out the scope for the review, at its meeting held on 17 March 20011.

Cabinet was provided with background to this issue including the key features of the new grant. It also noted that the review had been split into 3 work streams:

- Integrated Youth Support Services
- Other EIG related services and back office support
- Early Years Services

Details of costs and numbers of staff involved in the 3 work streams were provided. Members were reminded that work on Integrated Youth Support Services were advanced and noted decision Cabinet had already taken in this area.

The "Other EIG related" work-stream was established to look at a small range of front line services which cross age ranges (eg. support for disabled children and parenting intervention programmes) and also to look at the back office functions which support delivery of EIG related services.

The impact of the cut in funding associated with the implementation of the EIG and the coincident cessation of joint management arrangements with the PCT was so significant that it was agreed in March that this work-stream would move swiftly to ensure all possible savings were achieved in back office functions as soon as possible to ensure that

maximum funds were available for front line services. This work had now been completed and the reorganisation of staff was being implemented following a 90 day consultation with staff which ended on 7th June 2011.

Members were provided with a table setting out the proposed savings in this work-stream together with details of how those saving would be achieved.

Attention was particularly drawn to the 41% in back office costs which would be achieved through the removal of 3 posts (Head of Service, Strategy Manager and Commissioning Manager) in the Children and Young Peoples Strategy Service and the removal of the related strategy development budget. The Service would cease to exist from July 2011 and all responsibilities had been reallocated to other Services within CESC.

It was explained that the Early Years work-stream was looking at the provision of early years services within the Borough. Members noted how the Service was provided.

- A central team
- A Children's Centre Team
- the Educational Improvement Service

A list of the 11 Children's Centres delivered through 15 buildings was provided to members together with summary of the services offered in the Centres.

The aim of the review was to try to identify the best approach to accommodate the reduction in funding whilst retaining an absolute commitment to the aim and purpose of Children's Centres. It was proposed therefore that the key principle of the review would be to refocus the Early Years Service to target its delivery to those most in need. This approach would meet the DFE guidance "that Children's Centres should be retained but focused much more effectively on those families who need them most".

To support this aim, work had been undertaken to identify areas of most need within the Borough using a range of measures - deprivation indices, a basket of child-related health indices, Early Years Foundation Stage educational performance data and the projected number of children under 5. A summary of this work was provided. The aim of the work had been to identify areas where Early Years need was concentrated so that work could be targeted in those areas. A more targeted approach to delivery of services would need to be supported by an improved borough-wide support and information system which would

identify and support children with needs in the non-targeted areas of the borough.

It was proposed that if this principle was accepted a consultation document and process would be developed along these lines which would be used to consult widely with service users, stakeholders, partners and the public about the priorities for the service within this context.

It was anticipated that the consultation would take place for 12 weeks up to the middle of October 2011 with the aim of informing a final set of proposals to be considered by Cabinet in late October / November 2011. Following Cabinet consideration these proposals would then be implemented in the final quarter of 2011.

Members noted that Risk Assessments and Equality Impact Assessments had been completed for all of the proposed changes. Copies of the Equality Impact Assessments undertaken were provided to Members.

RESOLVED that

1. the implementation of proposals to reshape front-line EIG related Services as set out in paragraphs 8 to 22 of the report be approved.

2. the principle of greater targeting of Early Years Services in the Borough, to allow for services to be focussed in areas of greatest need, and the development of a Public Consultation Document be approved
The Consultation Document would be brought to Cabinet for approval in July.

3. Cabinet receive a report in November setting out a final set of proposals for the redesign of Early Years Services in the Borough.

3. Reasons for the Decision

To produce efficiencies and improvements in the delivery of services to children, young people and families in order to address the reduction in funding from the PCT and the introduction of the EIG.

4. Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

None

5. Declared (Cabinet Member) Conflicts of Interest

Councillor Coleman declared a personal non prejudicial interest in the item entitled Task and Finish Review of the Impact of the Early Intervention Grant as he was a Governor at Abbey Road School

6. Details of any Dispensations

None

7. Date and Time by which Call In must be executed

Midnight on Friday 24 June 2011

Proper Officer
20 June 2011