

Bath & North East Somerset Council

MEETING:	Early Years Children and Youth Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel
MEETING DATE:	3 rd June 2013
TITLE:	Children's Service budget plans for 2014/15 and 2015/16
WARD:	ALL
AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM	
List of attachments to this report:	
None	

1 THE ISSUE

When the Medium Term Financial Plan and Budget were approved with a three year programme of budget proposals, the panel requested a further report to look more specifically at the budget reductions proposed for 2014/15 and 2015/16.

2 RECOMMENDATION

The Early Years Children and Youth Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel is asked to:-

Discuss and note the proposals which have been agreed through the main Council budget setting process.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 2.1 The Medium Term Financial Plan sets out reductions in the Children's Service budget during the current year and the subsequent two years as follows:
- 2013/14 £0.722m
 - 2014/15 £1.436m
 - 2015/16 £2.187m

Changes for 2013/14 have largely been achieved through management and administrative efficiency savings and reductions in uncommitted commissioning budgets, although there have been some staffing impacts and a few reductions in commissioned services.

This report has no new financial implications; it simply sets out some further detail of the proposed reductions in the latter two years.

3 THE REPORT

- 3.1 The most significant budget reductions included in the Plan for 2014/15 and 2015/16 can be summarised under the following headings:-

- a) Early Years, Children's Centres and Early Help Service
- b) Connexions Service
- c) Commissioned Services
- d) Management Savings
- e) School Improvement and Achievement Service

Each of these is described further below. In addition there are a small number of individual posts, some 'technical' changes in charging arrangements, and slightly increased income targets.

Additional savings targets are anticipated as the council receives further guidance from the DCLG and DFE on its settlement for 2014-15. The council's senior management team will consider whether any further savings will be passed to the departments including People and Communities.

a) Early Years, Children's Centres and Early Help Services (£501,000 in 2014/15 and £1,834,000 in 2015/16)

The reductions in Early Years, Children's Centres and Early Help Services require a whole-service re-structuring and consideration of new models of service delivery to be fully implemented from April 2015. This re-structuring is the subject of a separate detailed Policy Development and Scrutiny Panel process and so is not repeated in this paper.

b) Connexions Service (£480,000 in 2014/15)

Following the transfer of responsibility for careers advice and guidance to schools, we will discontinue the current Connexions Service contract with Learning Partnership West (LPW) and create an 'in house' Integrated 11-19 Young People Preventative Service combining Youth and Connexions Services. This service will maintain the current Youth Service centres and continue the process of becoming more targeted and working more closely with the voluntary sector. The Local Authority will continue to provide access for young to people to a variety of opportunities; will continue to identify (with schools) those young

people most at risk of becoming NEET and track and work with all young people aged 16 to 19 (to 21 for those young people with LDD) who are NEET.

Notice has been given to LPW that the contract will cease on 31st March 2014 and the first stages of consultation with the Youth Service and Connexions staff have begun. Formal consultation papers will be issued in September so that the consultation is completed well before 1st April 2014.

c) Commissioned services (£175,000 in 2014/15)

Provider	Reduction (£k)	Original contract (£k)	Percentage impact	Service impacted
Off The Record	10	53.9	18.5%	Young Carers Support service
Southside Family Project	34.5	586.4	6%	Specialist Family Support service
ZAP, plus small projects	10	10	100%	Anti-bullying work
BAPP/Wansdyke Play Association	33	230	14%	Community Play Rangers
KIDS	20	20	100%	Mentoring disabled young people
BAPP	8	8	100%	Short break/ respite over Christmas for disabled children
Currently the Children's Society/Off The Record but due for review/ re-commission	30	87	34%	Support for participation of children and young people
Family Information Service (internal)	9	9	100%	Removal of identified funding contribution linked to short breaks for disabled children
Commissioning efficiencies	21			Further savings to be identified through streamlining commissioning processes
Total	175.5			

d) Management Savings (£125,000 in 2015/16)

Further management and service re-structure to remove posts as some service areas reduce in size and scope. These reductions come in the latter part of the programme and details have yet to be determined.

e) School Improvement and Achievement Service (£65,000 in 2014/15)

This represents a further reduction in education service capacity as schools become more autonomous and responsible for their own operation and improvement. This is in addition to significant savings in previous years and £35,000 reduction in the current financial year. The service has just completed a formal staff consultation deleting two posts from September 2013, which will deliver the 2013/14 and 2014/15 budget reductions required.

We are continuing to work closely with schools and Teaching Schools to establish new ways of working in the light of national reforms to the education system.

Other items include increased income targets and charging of resources to capital. These items are not significant and it is anticipated that they will not cause any difficulty in achieving them

4 RISK MANAGEMENT

- 4.1 Risk management considerations were covered in the main Budget report to Council in February 2013.

The Service leadership team will be routinely monitoring progress in delivering the required budget reductions to ensure these are on track. The finance team have designed a scorecard to support this. The scorecard will concentrate on the preparation of the most ambitious savings items to ensure that preparations are developed to ensure the savings will be achievable within the timescales set.

5 EQUALITIES

Equalities issues were covered in the main Budget report to Council in February 2013.

The service will continue to consider equalities impacts as more detailed proposals for implementation of the changes are developed.

6 CONSULTATION

- 6.1 In addition to the broad consultation on budget proposals reported in the main Budget report to Council in February 2013 and the detailed process for restructure of Early Years, Children's Centres and Early Help Services, formal staff consultation will be undertaken on relevant proposals at the appropriate point in the process.

7 ISSUES TO CONSIDER IN REACHING THE DECISION

- 7.1 Social Inclusion; Customer Focus; Sustainability; Human Resources; Property; Young People; Human Rights; Corporate; Health & Safety; Impact on Staff; Other Legal Considerations

8 ADVICE SOUGHT

- 8.1 The Council's Monitoring Officer (Divisional Director – Legal and Democratic Services) and Section 151 Officer (Divisional Director - Finance) have had the opportunity to input to this report and have cleared it for publication.

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Background papers	
Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an alternative format	