

Statement: Cllr Sally Davis, Chair EYCY Panel

The Call-in stated:

This decision is called-in on the grounds that the Cabinet has failed to respond adequately to either the recommendations of the EYCY PDS Panel or the recommendations contained in the Minority Report.

Specifically:

The Cabinet has not answered the questions raised by the EYCY PDS Panel including which services will be provided under the proposed new model, who will run the various Children's Centres and to whom these services will be available;

The Cabinet has not formulated any response either to the recommendations of the Early Years, Children and Youth PDS Panel or to the Minority Report

The Cabinet has provided no timetable for formulating such a response; and

The Cabinet has given no indication about whether it is prepared to reconsider its overall budget to identify alternative areas of saving, as recommended by both the EYCY PDS Panel and the Minority Report.

The reason it was upheld was because Panel members felt that although the October Cabinet noted the EYCP PDS Panel report & the minority reported they had not given details as to when recommendations would be implemented.

As a Panel we were criticized by some Cabinet members for not coming up with more detailed recommendations & perhaps I should have emphasized all the work we had undertaken to get to the stage to produce a report.

The Panel felt they had given Cabinet recommendations which could be pursued, Cllr Romero said it would give them options to investigate further, she was well aware of the work undertaken in the time we had & realized we could not have come up with fully worked options.

Unfortunately it did not seem as if all Cabinet members appreciated all the research which had taken place & the simple noting of the report without actually giving time frames for action or how services might be delivered in the future did not give Panel members the confidence that the recommendations would be addressed.

At the Call in meeting Panel members were given a Cabinet Response Table which did give some dates but this was not discussed at the October Cabinet meeting. However, we only saw this as our meeting progressed & although Cllr Romero felt sure her colleagues agreed with the Response Table a majority voted to uphold the call in & refer it back to Cabinet to enable you to show your support for the decision response & to highlight areas which you

could focus on &/or take further bearing in mind some of the reservations expressed in the original Panel recommendations.

In summary, we heard some reassuring words from Cllr Romero at the call-in meeting, but felt the whole Cabinet needed to be given an opportunity to consider these matters.

This is clearly an issue of great concern to many residents and councillors. We have been told by Officers that the model proposed could be 'scaled up or down' depending upon the resources available. Cllr Romero has previously stated that she will be trying to persuade her Cabinet colleagues of the need to redirect more resources to Children's Centres in their budget proposals. I am sure that it would be welcomed if the Cabinet were able tonight to give a clearer commitment to finding this additional resources for the next budget, and give an indication of the level of funding which may be found.

I therefore look forward to seeing how this issue will be dealt with by Cabinet tonight, and hope that our call in reasons will be taken seriously.

Cllr Sally Davis (Chair of EYCP PDS Panel)