

Notice of public

Decision Session - Cabinet Member for Education, Children and Young People's Services

To: Councillor Looker (Cabinet Member)

Date: Wednesday, 10 July 2013

Time: 3.30 pm

Venue: The Thornton Room - Ground Floor, West Offices

AGENDA

Members are reminded that, should they wish to call in any item on this agenda, notice must be given to Democracy Support Group by **4.00pm on Friday 12 July 2013**. Items that are called in will be considered by the Corporate and Scrutiny Management Committee.

Written representations in respect of items on this agenda should be submitted to Democratic Services by **5.00pm on Monday 8 July 2013**.

1. Declarations of Interest

At this point Members are asked to declare:

- Any personal interests not included on the Register of Interests
- Any prejudicial interests or
- Any disclosable pecuniary interests

which they may have in respect of business on this agenda.

2. Minutes

(Pages 3 - 6)

To approve and sign the minutes of the Decision Session held on 27 February 2013.

3. Public Participation

At this point in the meeting, members of the public who have registered their wish to speak at the meeting may do so. The deadline for registering is **5.00pm on Tuesday 9 July 2013**.

4. Alternative services to those currently (Pages 7 - 14) provided by the Toy Bus

This report asks the Cabinet Member to consider alternative services to those currently provided by the Toy Bus.

5. Urgent Business

Any other business which the Cabinet Member considers urgent under the Local Government Act 1972.

Written Representation

Attached is written representation received following the agenda publication and a paper that was tabled at the meeting responding to the issues raised.

Democracy Officer:

Name: Jayne Carr

Contact Details:

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- Registering to speak
- Written Representations
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Scrutiny Committees

The purpose of all scrutiny and ad-hoc scrutiny committees appointed by the Council is to:

- Monitor the performance and effectiveness of services;
- Review existing policies and assist in the development of new ones, as necessary; and
- Monitor best value continuous service improvement plans

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City of York Council

Committee Minutes

MEETING	DECISION SESSION - CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION, CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES
DATE	27 FEBRUARY 2013
PRESENT	COUNCILLOR LOOKER (CABINET MEMBER)

16. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Cabinet Member was asked to declare any personal interests not included on the Register of Interests, any prejudicial interests or any disclosable pecuniary interests she may have in the business on the agenda. None were declared.

17. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Decision Session held on 5 February 2013 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

18. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION/OTHER SPEAKERS

It was reported that there had been no registrations to speak from members of the public but that Councillor Warters had registered to speak in respect of agenda item 4 – The Future of the Derwent Schools Federation and Osbaldwick Primary School.

Councillor Warters stated that he had been asked by residents to speak on their behalf at the meeting. He raised the following points:

- The timing of the meeting was inconvenient for many parents who worked or who had to collect children from school.
- An assurance was sought that the proposal was not the first stage in closing one of the sites. He expressed concern that the projections in respect of pupil numbers were too optimistic and did not take account of the amount of student accommodation in that area. Residents were concerned that this may lead to the eventual closure of the Osbaldwick site.

- Concerns had been expressed that there had been no agenda or minutes in respect of the consultation meetings that had been held.
- Requests had been made that consideration be given to providing free sweatshirts to all pupils and not just those transferring from Derwent. This would ensure that all pupils began on an equal footing.
- Could consideration be given to the extension of a 20mph zone along Osbaldwick Lane?

19. THE FUTURE OF THE DERWENT SCHOOLS FEDERATION AND OSBALDWICK PRIMARY SCHOOL

The Cabinet Member considered a report that provided details of the responses to the recent public consultation concerning the proposals to close Derwent Schools and to expand Osbaldwick School in order to create a two form of entry school, using both the existing sites.

The consultation document had noted that, in addition to closing Derwent and expanding Osbaldwick, four other options had been considered with the governing bodies of both schools. These options were:

- Close Derwent and transfer the pupils to other schools in the area.
- Close both Derwent and Osbaldwick and then create a new school.
- Federate Derwent with Osbaldwick under one Head Teacher and one Governing Body.
- Apply to the Government for Derwent to become a sponsored Academy.

An additional response that had been received from the Governing Body of Tang Hall Primary School was read out at the meeting. The Cabinet Member noted the response and the points raised.

Referring to the issues raised under item 3 (minute 18 refers), the following comments were made:

- The point raised regarding the timing of the meeting was accepted. The final decision on the proposal would, however, be made at a Cabinet meeting which would commence at 5.30pm.

- The proposal was not the first stage of a plan to see the closure of the Osbaldwick school site. The Local Authority accepted that there were difficulties in accurately predicting pupil numbers but was confident that the data on which the projections had been made was sound. It was not possible to give a “cast iron guarantee” that the Osbaldwick site would continue, as this would restrict the Governing Body of the school years ahead, nevertheless an assurance could be given that the proposal was not the first step in the closure of the Osbaldwick site.
- There had been an agenda for the public meetings - this comprised of a presentation on the options followed by a question and answer session. All questions and answers had been recorded.
- Issues in respect of uniform were being considered by the Governing Body.
- The request for consideration to be given to the extension of a 20mph zone along Osbaldwick Lane would be discussed with the Cabinet Member for Transport, Planning and Sustainability.

The Cabinet Member stated that she had attended the consultation meetings and generally the comments were positive and some very pertinent questions had been raised and would be taken on board. She stated that whilst she regretted the closure of schools, this proposal would lead to the expansion of a popular and successful primary school. Its leadership was being retained and it would continue to provide high quality education. The arrangement would provide tremendous opportunities to develop a very dynamic school which would benefit the children in the areas of Derwent and Osbaldwick.

- RESOLVED:
- (i) That the feedback and responses received to the consultation document, as detailed in Annexes 2, 3 and 4 of the report, be noted.
 - (ii) That Public Notices be published in accordance with section 15(1) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, to discontinue Derwent Schools Federation from 31 August 2013 followed by a six-week statutory representation period. The notices will include the proposed

expansion of Osbaldwick Primary School, and the changes to catchment area of Tang Hall Primary School described at para 31 above.

- (iii) That, following the representation period, Cabinet be requested to consider any further observations and comments received and decide whether to proceed with the proposals.

REASON: To ensure the provision of high quality and sustainable primary education in the local community.

Councillor J Looker, Chair
[The meeting started at 3.30 pm and finished at 3.50 pm].



**Meeting of the Decision Session –
Cabinet Member for Education,
Children and Young People**

10 July 2013

Report of the Interim Director of Adults, Children and Education

Alternative services to those currently provided by the Toy Bus

Summary

1. The Toy Bus service was originally offered as a saving for the 2014/15 round of budget savings. With the need to also find in-year savings officers explored the possibility of ceasing the provision of this service within this financial year.

Background

2. The Toy Bus has been run by City of York Children's Centres since 2007 and prior to that by the Sure Start local programme (SSLP). Initial funding came from the SSLP budget (which was ring fenced), Street Support and the Early Years Toy Library Grant.
3. The government believes that children's centres should have a clear core purpose, focused on improving the outcomes for young children and their families, with a particular focus on the most disadvantaged families and in order to reduce inequalities in child development and school readiness. This focus is supported by improving parenting aspirations, self esteem and parenting skills with the aims of improving health and life chances for children and their families.
4. After the Early Years, Children's Centres and Extended Services restructure in 2010, the Toy Bus service was reduced from 25 hours per week face-to-face delivery to seven hours per week face-to-face delivery.

Use of the Toy Bus

5. Children’s Centres must focus on outcomes for children especially the most vulnerable. Over the past three years there has been a reduction in families registered with the children’s centre using the toy lending service offered by the Toy Bus. There is little evidence that the service is reaching vulnerable families in any meaningful way.
 - The percentage of families using the Toy Bus service who were registered with the Children’s Centres has dropped from 24.4% in 2010 to 7.7% in 2012.
 - Of the 66% of 0–4 year olds in the most disadvantaged areas that are registered at the Children’s Centres only 7.5% of these used the Toy Bus.

Running costs and financial implications

6. The Toy Bus employs two full time staff. This is a reduction of 2.5fte following the restructure in 2010.
7. The bus was originally stocked with approximately 929 toys at a cost of £22,000.
8. The budget in recent years has been:

Year	Expenditure
2009-10	£82,078
2010-11	£108,742
2011-12	£90,478
2012-13	£96,179

9. The Toy Bus is now seven years old and will need replacing in the near future. The cost of a replacement vehicle would be about £70,000-£80,000. Repair costs are increasing due to the age of the vehicle.

Comparisons

10. In seeking to compare the service that we deliver with that of other local authorities, we have found the following variations but none providing just a mobile toy lending service funded by the LA:

- toy lending/library services offered from Children’s Centres (Surbiton, Harrow, Medlock Vale)
- mobile Children’s Centres (Swansea)
- sensory Playbus (Dorset)
- toy lending service offered through the mobile library (Haringey, Bulkington, North Lanarkshire)
- outsourced private toy bus provider (Oxfordshire).

Consultation

11. City of York Children’s Centres believe in good quality and meaningful consultation ensuring that those involved have the chance to express their views.
12. The consultation exercise ran from 6 May 2013 until 31 May 2013; this was widely advertised in the centres, the Toy Bus and the website. The consultation asked for responses on two options with additional space for comments.

Options

13. **Option 1:** Explore option that toys to be added to the Mobile Library which visits all areas of the city and is open to all families. Other services provided by the mobile library would also be available of course.
14. **Option 2:** Explore option that toys to be used to support parenting and play with the more vulnerable children in York by services who work in York including Children’s Centres.

Public consultation – summary

15. A total of 351 people participated in the consultation.

Option 1 234 (66%)	Option 2 112 (31%)	Both options 5 (1%)
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16. Common themes raised in the additional comments were:
 - keep the Toy Bus and change times/amount charged (32)
 - toys should go to the Children’s Centres (20)
 - give toys to community groups/childminders (13)

- put toys in normal libraries (12)

17. The preferred option and recommendation is Option 1.

Option 1: City of York mobile library includes toys in their lending library	
Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • all families will be able to access the service as this is a mobile service • families will be able to access other services offered by the mobile library • Children’s Centres will gift the remaining Toy Bus toys • no further expenditure would be required on a new vehicle • Toy Bus staff could be redeployed to vacancies in the Children’s Centres to improve capacity there and support the process of reaching vulnerable families • this option is supported by the consultation process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • additional staff (voluntary) would be needed by the mobile library to ensure the washing of toys, checking toy bags contain the correct toys and that they are not broken, sourcing and buying replacement toys, logging toys in and out • funding to replenish the stocks still required • administration of membership and toy lending service still needed

Option 2: The toys are divided between services that deliver services for the most vulnerable families	
Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • effective use of resource to support the delivery of services to the most vulnerable families • reduce expenditure for the council to equip the Contact Centre • support voluntary organisations to deliver services within the city 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • loss of toy lending library facility to universal services • no additional funding from the council to replace stock • not supported by the consultation process

Council Plan

18. Contributes to the two Council Plan priorities of Building Strong Communities and Protecting Vulnerable People.

Implications

Financial

19. Allows the proposed savings identified in the 2014-2015 budget to be met earlier so that in-year savings for 2013-2014 can be achieved.

HR

20. This allows the redeployment of two FTE staff currently employed on the Toy Bus to fill vacancies at the centres. Capacity is currently compromised at the Children's Centres whilst the vacancies stay unfilled. No compulsory redundancies would be required.

Equalities

21. The toy lending service would be available to a larger group of residents as the mobile library stops in more locations. Other services ie lending of books would be available to families therefore widening access.

Information Technology

22. There would be no requirement to invest in a barcode logging system.

Property

23. The use of the depot will no longer be required for the parking of the Toy Bus.

Other implications

24. There are no specific Legal or Crime and Disorder implications arising at this time. The service will still be provided to the current users albeit in a different vehicle.

Risk Management

25. Service risks can be mitigated by providing an alternative service and ensuring communication is robust with all stakeholders. The Children's Centre works successfully in partnership with many agencies already and is confident that the handover of the "lending of toys" part of its service, can be successfully managed to limit disruption to users.

Recommendations

26. The Cabinet Member is asked to approve Option 1: City of York mobile library includes the Children's Centres toys in their lending library.

Reason:

- *all families will be able to access the service through the mobile library which will also offer the services of a experienced colleagues (eg in story-telling)as well as opening up opportunities for families to access other services from the mobile library*
 - *Children's Centres will gift the remaining Toy Bus toys to the Library Service*
 - *no further expenditure would be required on a new vehicle*
 - *Toy Bus staff could be redeployed to existing vacancies in the Children's Centres to improve capacity there and support the process of reaching vulnerable families.*
27. This option is supported by the consultation process and allows the service to make the necessary budget savings in this financial year.
28. If approved by the Cabinet Member the Toy Bus would cease at the end of the summer term as it is not in use in the summer holidays anyway.

Contact details

Authors:	Chief Officer responsible for the report:		
Paula Richardson Children's Centre Strategy Manager Adults, Children and Education 07826 859349	Jill Hodges Assistant Director, Education and Skills 01904 554207		
	Kevin Hall Interim Director of Adults, Children and Education 01904 554200		
Specialist Implications Officer(s): Richard Hartle (Finance) – ext 4225 Jo Sheen (HR) – ext 4250	Report Approved	✓	Date 25 June 2013
Wards affected:	All	✓	
For further information please contact the authors of the report			

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The Liberal Democrat Group will like to submit a written representation on Item 4 of Wednesday's agenda:

4. Alternative services to those currently provided by the Toy Bus:

The Liberal Democrat Group's budget amendment in February opposed the decision to end the Toy Bus in 2014/15 and we are now opposed to the current plans to cease the provision within this financial year. We are not convinced that the alternative suggested in this report is adequate.

The report is short on a number of details and leaves various unanswered questions. No overall usage figures are provided, there is no indication of satisfaction levels or feedback from users of the Toy Bus, no detail on any revenue or potential revenue, no detail on the extra cost for the Mobile Library service, and no detail on the need to replace the Toy Bus "in the foreseeable future".

It is telling that the decision to cut the Toy Bus was taken before the public consultation process and users were not given the opportunity to say whether the Toy Bus should continue to be supported. Instead, they were presented with a *fait accompli* and only asked what should replace the Toy Bus.

There is no detail provided as to how the Mobile Library will incorporate a toy-lending service e.g. no layout plans or suggested delivery routes. There is also no commitment in this report that a toy-lending service will continue in the long-term or whether it will continue to serve the current route coverage, which crucially includes outlying villages as well as more populated areas.

The Cabinet Member will be aware that one of the advantages of the Toy Bus is that it provides a specialised and distinct space for children and parents to access toys. The trained staff on-hand are able to provide guidance to children, but also to provide advice to parents. The importance of helping parents to acquire the skills to play with their children and teach their children through play should not be underestimated. It is unclear if the new proposed arrangements would allow for this kind of interaction.

Unless the Cabinet Member addresses the concerns outlined above, it is the intention of the Liberal Democrat Group to formally call-in this decision for further review.

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LIBERAL DEMOCRATS WRITTEN REPRESENTATION**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS RE TOY BUS****1. OVERALL TOY BUS USEAGE FIGURES FOR LAST 3 YEARS****Number of Families Using the Toy Bus**

	No Families Registered	No Families Attended Toy Bus	Percentage Family Usage/Registration
Up to Dec 2010	3444	651	19%
Up to Dec 2011	5680	656	11%
Up to Dec 2012	7299	513	7%

Summary – numbers have decreased. Originally the Toy Bus was intended to support areas of the City when we only had 3 Sure Start Centres. We now have 9 Children Centres

2. FEEDBACK FROM TOY BUS CONSULTATION DOCUMENT

The Toy Bus Consultation took place in May. At the beginning of May there were 24,248 individuals registered with the Children's Centres, 12,062 of these were parents.

356 questionnaires were completed (analysis attached)

Question 3 asked for ideas of use of toy bus toys.

From the 106 responses to Q3 93 ideas were put forward

ANALYSIS OF IDEAS	Responses
Toys should go to the Children's Centres	21
Keep Toy Bus/change times/amount charged	33
Haven't used bus since route changed	5
Share between Option 1 & 2	4

Put in normal libraries	13
Used it when children were younger	1
Give toys to community groups/childminders	14
More publicity needed	2

3. DETAIL ON REVENUE OR POTENTIAL REVENUE SAVINGS

Saving from not having the bus: -

Vehicle	£8,200
Operational Toy Store	£5,300
Reimbursement to School for Toy Store	£1,089
Sale of Bus	£7,000
Saving on Staff (2.5 WTE)	<u>£63,880</u>
Total Savings	<u>£84,380</u>

NB 2 Children's Centre Support Workers are allocated to the Toy Bus – this is 74 hours of staff time per week to support 7 hours of Toy Bus frontline delivery per week.

4. MOBILE SERVICE

The mobile service is under review as we look to buy a new vehicle and we are considering a range of additional services. There is no detail at this stage, but we remain committed to including the toy bus services in that work. Staff will receive additional training if that is needed.

5. DETAIL ON NEED TO REPLACE TOY BUS

In the past 3 ½ years the Toy Bus has cost £26,756 to run this includes fuel, tyres, repairs, running costs and transport charges. Out of this £9,472 was spent on repairs.

The toy bus originally cost £69,900, the vehicle is now seven years old and so an amount needs to be included in any future budget for replacement. The cost of replacement would be approximately £70,000 to £80,000.