
MEETING	DECISION SESSION - EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES
DATE	11 JANUARY 2011
PRESENT	COUNCILLOR RUNCIMAN (EXECUTIVE MEMBER)

29. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Executive Member was invited to declare at this point in the meeting any personal or prejudicial interests she might have in the business on the agenda. None were declared.

30. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Decision Session held on 14 December 2010 be approved and signed by the Executive Member as a correct record.

31. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

A representative from UNISON spoke in respect of agenda item 4 (minute 32 refers) "Proposals to Establish an Advice, Assessment & Early Intervention Service". He drew attention to a report that had been prepared by UNISON and submitted as written representation to the Executive Member. The report highlighted concerns relating to certain aspects of the proposals, in particular issues around the late inclusion of the Education Welfare Service into its scope. The union representative stated that the late inclusion of this service had left insufficient time for consultation and requested that there be more consultation on the proposals. Attention was drawn to the work that the Education Welfare Officers carried out, including statutory duties in respect of enforcing attendance.

32. PROPOSALS TO ESTABLISH AN ADVICE, ASSESSMENT & EARLY INTERVENTION SERVICE (THE "NEW FRONT DOOR")

The Executive Member received a report that outlined proposals to establish new, integrated arrangements for customer access to services across Children's Social Care and the YorOK partnership of providers, including local schools. The new service had been provisionally titled the Advice, Assessment & Early Intervention (AA&EI) Service. Officers explained that the service had also been referred to as the "new front door", although this title may change as the proposals developed.

Officers gave details of how the new arrangements were intended to provide a single point of contact for professionals and members of the public who had a concern about a child or young person, or who wished to seek advice or information about available services. By bringing together the skills and expertise of the professionals working under the current arrangements, there would be greater opportunities for information sharing and early intervention. This would maximise their impact on vulnerable children and young people.

The written representation that had been received from UNISON, and the points made by the trade union representative were noted. Officers stated that they acknowledged that the inclusion of the Education Welfare Service into the proposals had occurred relatively recently and that there remained more consultation to be carried out.

The Executive Member stated that the proposals to establish an Advice, Assessment and Early Intervention Service were a very important development which sought to strengthen and maximise every opportunity for intervening early and in a joined up way in the lives of children and young people in York. It sought to address issues for those who may be vulnerable or at risk and it was pleasing to note that the principles underlying these developments were agreed.

The Executive Member acknowledged the skills and expertise of the Education Welfare Officers and their contribution to integrated working in York. She stated that, at a time of considerable financial pressures, it was necessary to consider whether sustaining the service in a stand-alone way was either efficient or desirable. It was important that the Education Welfare Service was part of the team of professionals involved in the New Front Door arrangements, as the work that they carried out was part of the whole offer.

Referring to the concerns that had been raised regarding the relatively late decision to directly include many of the roles and functions of the current Education Welfare Service in the new arrangements, the Executive Member stated that she understood that staff were worried about opportunities for consultation and that she had met with union representatives to discuss this in more detail. She was satisfied that, notwithstanding the timescales, the opportunities for discussion and consultation had been significant and were ongoing. The Executive Member encouraged the Education Welfare Officers to make their views known as part of the ongoing consultation.

The Executive Member requested that regular updates be presented to her on the progress of the new Front Door arrangements and she stated that she would give careful consideration to any issues raised.

- RESOLVED: (i) That the outline proposals set out in Annex 1 and Annex 2 of the report be endorsed as a basis for moving forward to final proposals by 31 January 2011.
- (ii) That regular updates be presented to the Executive Member on the “new front door”, including the issues

that had been raised in respect of the Education Welfare Service¹.

REASON: These plans represent an effective and efficient way to improve the delivery of targeted and integrated services to some of York's most vulnerable children and young people.

Action Required

1. Make arrangements for Executive Member to be updated on progress ER

33. CHILDCARE SUFFICIENCY ASSESSMENT 2011 TO 2014 UPDATE AND PROPOSALS FOR ACTION PLANNING

The Executive Member received a report that provided initial findings on the second full Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (CSA).

Officers tabled a document that contained more detailed information on the initial findings of the CSA and drew attention to issues that had been raised in respect of the flexibility and affordability of childcare.

The Executive Member was asked for a decision and feedback on options for developing the CSA into the final assessment document alongside developing an action plan for addressing any identified gaps in childcare provision.

The Executive Member suggested that, in addition to the proposals detailed in paragraph 17 of the report, consideration should be given to including information in the "Your City" and the relevant "Your Ward" newsletters.

The Executive Member thanked officers for the work that they had carried out.

- RESOLVED: (i) That options a to e, as detailed in paragraph 17 of the report, be approved.
- (ii) That, in addition to the options detailed in paragraph 17 of the report, consideration be given to including information in the "Your City" and "Your Ward" publications¹.

- REASONS: (i) To meet a statutory requirement of the local authority.
- (ii) To ensure that there is an open discussion of key messages from the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment and that action planning on a partnership basis is commenced to address identified gaps.

Action Required

1. Implement agreed options to progress to a final assessment of childcare sufficiency NM

34. A COUNCIL 'PLEDGE' TO LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN IN YORK

The Executive Member received a report that presented the work of York's Children in Care Council known as the "Show Me That I Matter" Panel, to develop a council pledge to Looked After Children. The pledge described a series of undertakings by the council about the nature and quality of care Looked After Children in York can expect. The report also set out how York's Strategic Partnership for Looked After Children would ensure that the Pledge was delivered and monitored.

The Executive Member stated that she was delighted to note the maturity and thoroughness of approach that the Looked After Young People had demonstrated when working on the pledge. She was also pleased to note that the Strategic Partnership for Looked After Children group would use the information to inform and shape a refreshed strategic plan to further support improved outcomes for Looked After Children in York.

RESOLVED: That the Pledge to Looked After Children in York be endorsed.

REASON: This is a document that will shape and inform the strategic priorities and work to support improved outcomes for Looked After Children.

Councillor C Runciman – Executive Member
[The meeting started at 4.00 pm and finished at 4.30 pm].