



# Rutland County Council

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## **RECORD OF DECISIONS AT A MEETING OF THE CABINET**

**Tuesday, 21st November, 2017 at 9.30 am**

**Decisions Published on Thursday 23 November 2017**

**Decisions will be implemented on 1 December 2017 unless the Call-in Procedure as outlined in Procedure Rule 206 is invoked.**

**PRESENT:** Mr T Mathias  
Mr O Hemsley  
Mr R Foster  
Mr A Walters  
Mr D Wilby  
Mr G Brown

<b>OFFICERS</b>	Mr M Andrews	Deputy Director for People
<b>PRESENT:</b>	Mrs H Briggs	Chief Executive
	Mrs D Brown	Director for Places
	Mr S Della Rocca	Assistant Director – Finance
	Mrs D Mogg	Director for Resources
	Mrs N Taylor	Acting Corporate Support Team Manager

### **392 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence.

### **393 ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE CHAIRMAN AND/OR HEAD OF THE PAID SERVICE**

The Leader, Mr Mathias, took the opportunity to welcome Mr Gordon Brown to Cabinet in his new role as Portfolio Holder for Sport & Recreation, Culture and the Environment.

### **394 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were received.

### **395 RECORD OF DECISIONS**

The Record of Decisions made by Cabinet on 17<sup>th</sup> October 2017, copies of which had been previously circulated were confirmed by Cabinet.

### 396 ITEMS RAISED BY SCRUTINY

The Chairman had not been formally notified of any items raised by Scrutiny.

### 397 QUARTER 2 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORT

Report No. 193/2017 from the Chief Executive was received.

The Portfolio Holder, Mr Mathias, introduced the report, the purpose of which was to provide Cabinet with strategic oversight of the Council's performance for the second quarter of 2017/18 in delivering the Council's Corporate Plan Aims and Objectives; as Members were accountable for the delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan and this monitoring information reported on progress and highlighted any key challenges.

Mr Mathias confirmed that Councillor Gale Waller had raised several questions regarding this report and the Quarter 2 Finance Report and that answers to these questions would be appended to the minutes.

During discussion the following points were raised:

- i. The Performance Report was still scheduled to be considered by two further Scrutiny Panels; Children and Young People on 23 November 2017 and Adults and Health on 30 November 2017.

### DECISION

1. Cabinet **NOTED** the overall position in relation to performance for the second quarter of 2017/18 and the actions being taken to address areas of underperformance.

#### Reasons for decision

1. *At the end of Quarter 2, 91% of indicators measured were on or above target. 9% of indicators were below target and main areas of concern had been highlighted in the report and the remedial action being undertaken to improve performance had been identified.*
2. *Overall performance based on activity in the second quarter of 2017/18 was satisfactory.*

### 398 QUARTER 2 FINANCE MANAGEMENT REPORT

Report No. 191/2017 from the Director for Resources was received.

The Portfolio Holder, Mr Mathias, introduced the report, the purpose of which was to inform Cabinet and all Members of the full year forecast position as at Quarter 2 for 2017/18 and to alert them to issues that may impact on the Medium Term Financial Plan to enable them to maintain sound financial management of the Council's operations.

### DECISION

1. Cabinet **NOTED** the 2017/18 revenue and capital outturn position as at Quarter 2 (Appendix A, section 1 and section 2, to Report No. 191/2017).

2. Cabinet **APPROVED** the use of £80k from the Invest to Save reserve to fund Green Waste costs (as requested in Appendix A para 1.7.3 to Report No. 191/2017) to be repaid over a 3 year period and £20k from the Legal reserve (as requested in Appendix A para 1.7.4 to Report No. 191/2017).
3. Cabinet **NOTED** the proposed transfers from earmarked reserves as shown in the table in Appendix A, para 1.7 to Report No, 191/2017 (to be finalised and agreed in the 2017/18 outturn).
4. Cabinet **APPROVED** the removal of the £594k funding for OEP capital investment from the capital programme pending further proposals.
5. Cabinet **NOTED** the changes to the Approved Capital Programme as outlined in Appendix A para 2.2.1 to Report No. 191/2017.

Reason for Decision

1. *The Quarter 2 position was broadly as expected.*

**399 MID-YEAR REPORT ON TREASURY MANAGEMENT AND PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS 2017/18**

Report No. 189/2017 from the Director for Resources was received.

Mr Della Rocca, Assistant Director – Finance, introduced the report, the purpose of which was to meet the requirements of the regulatory framework of treasury management (Revised 2009) that the Council received a mid-year treasury review report in addition to the forward looking annual treasury strategy and backward looking annual treasury report. The report incorporated the needs of the Prudential Code to ensure adequate monitoring of capital expenditure plans and the Council's prudential indicators (PIs). The treasury strategy and PIs were contained in report 41/2017, which was approved by Council on 14<sup>th</sup> February 2017. The underlying purpose of the report also supported the objective in the revised CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management and the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) Investment Guidance that Members received reports on and adequately scrutinised the treasury management service.

During discussion the following points were raised:

- i. Mr Della Rocca and Mr Mathias had met with Capita Asset Services (advisors to the Council) who advised that the return on investment was good in relation to the investments and that investment periods of no longer than 12 months were still appropriate;
- ii. Mr Mathias noted that the rate of return, though better than the LIBOR rate, could be improved upon if the Council were to alter its approach to investment and a report looking at different options was expected to come to Full Council for consideration as part of the budget setting process;
- iii. Many Local Authorities were looking at new and creative ways of making a return on investments and the Government was currently consulting on this subject, looking to tighten up the regulations. It was expected that there would be a strong response from Local Authorities who were looking at creative ways

- to invest in order to mitigate the effects of funding cuts and would not want to see their options around non-treasury investments restricted; and
- iv. It was requested that the figures in relation to the level of investments at September 2017 and the forecasted balances to the end of the year be presented differently in order to improve clarity.

## **DECISION**

1. Cabinet **NOTED** the contents of Report No. 189/2017.

### Reason for Decision

1. *The report summarised treasury management performance in the year and met the requirements of the revisions to the regulatory framework of treasury management during 2009.*

## **400 MINIMUM REVENUE PROVISION**

### **(KEY DECISION)**

Report No. 192/2017 from the Director for Resources was received.

Mr Della Rocca, Assistant Director – Finance, introduced the report, the purpose of which was to recommend a change to the Minimum Revenue Provision Policy.

Local authorities were required to set aside ‘prudent’ revenue provision for debt repayment (Minimum Revenue Position (MRP)) where they had used borrowing or credit arrangements to finance capital expenditure. The guidance required authorities to publish an annual MRP policy statement outlining how prudent provision was to be made. To be valid, the policy statement must be approved by Council.

During discussion the following points were raised:

- i. The report was asking for a change in policy in relation to previously supported General Fund borrowing so that this borrowing is paid on an equal instalments basis rather than a reducing balance (“regulatory method”) basis;
- ii. The outcome of the currently ongoing Government consultation in this area would not affect the proposals being put forward for the changes to the policy;
- iii. The changes proposed to the MRP policy statement would result in a short term saving and would result in the debt being fully extinguished after 50 years;
- iv. The changes would have a positive effect on the revenue account, but this would not affect the Council’s position regarding government funding. The government funding formula considered levels of deprivation and demand for social care for example, but did not consider the specific financial position of each Council; and
- v. The depreciation method detailed in the 2017/18 Treasury Management Strategy could not be applied to expenditure incurred before 2008 as the historic debt was inherited such a long time ago it would be impossible to identify assets connected to that debt.

## DECISION

1. Cabinet **RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL** that the Minimum Revenue Provision policy be changed so that historic debt was charged on an equal instalment basis to the Revenue Account from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2018.

### Reason for Decision

1. *The equal instalments approach to calculating MRP was arguably more prudent than the 'regulatory method' as it resulted in debt being fully extinguished after 50 years. Under the 'regulatory method' (the current approach), more than £3m of debt remained outstanding after 50 years' time with around half of this figure never being repaid at all. In present value terms, the equal instalments method was also more cost effective than the 'regulatory method' being some £0.2m lower in present value terms.*

## 401 CHILDREN LOOKED AFTER AND CARE LEAVERS STRATEGY 2017-2022

Report No. 199/2017 from the Director for People was received.

The Portfolio Holder, Mr Foster, introduced the report, the purpose of which was to seek Cabinet's recommendation to council for approval of the Children Looked After and Care Leaver's Strategy 2017-2022. The Strategy had been developed to ensure the council outlined its expectations and pledges it held for its Children Looked After and Care Leavers; and to outline the Council's expectations as corporate parents. Mr Foster explained that the Strategy would be reviewed annually to ensure it is kept up to date.

During discussion the following points were raised:

- i. Mr Foster asked that where the scores indicating the views of Children and Young People were low, the corresponding narrative should address the actual score and indicate what improvements were being made. Mr Andrews, Deputy Director for People, would address the commentary included in the Strategy in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People (Safeguarding); and
- ii. Mr Walters requested that the statistics included for the National and Local picture should include comparative data.

## DECISION

1. Cabinet **RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL** the approval of the Children Looked After and Care Leavers Strategy 2017-22 (Appendix A to Report No. 199/2017) subject to the changes requested above which would be incorporated into the Strategy in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People (Safeguarding).

### Reasons for Decision

1. *The Children Looked After and Care Leaver Strategy was designed to enable corporate parents to be aware of their role and responsibility in developing and ensuring an outstanding service was delivered.*
2. *The Strategy would be reviewed regularly to ensure that the needs of the children and young people in care were being met.*

## 402 TRANSFORMING CARE CAPITAL GRANT

Report No. 197/2017 from the Director for People was received.

Mr M Andrews, Deputy Director for People, introduced the report, the purpose of which was to seek approval to accept a £394,000 Capital Grant allocated to Rutland County Council by NHS England under Transforming Care. NHS England had announced in May 2017 the availability of a Capital Grant under Transforming Care. Local Authorities could bid to purchase properties within their own borders for people with challenging behaviours.

Mr Andrews reminded Cabinet that the Transforming Care initiative was implemented in response to the recommendations arising from the Winterbourne View Hospital Report to ensure that people with learning disabilities were transferred out of residential hospital settings and instead supported in the community, closer to their homes.

During discussion the following points were raised:

- i. The NHS had not yet released the terms and conditions of the grant, but it was thought that there would be restrictions imposed around the use of the facilities put in place;
- ii. It was likely that there would always be demand from Rutland residents for such placements;
- iii. It was more cost effective to have a cluster model, so that there were more flats and the provision of core staffing who could rotate in accordance with need and capacity. Should the current proposal be successful in terms of cost savings and benefit to the service user, the provision could be expanded in the future, if suitable sites could be identified. Offering the facilities to neighbouring local authorities could also be given consideration;
- iv. It would be necessary to have the right provider if provision in this area was to be expanded and any expansion would need careful management as it was not an easy area to attract employees;
- v. Staff at existing settings worked hard to ensure that other local residents were not adversely affected by living in close proximity to service users with challenging and complex needs; and
- vi. It was clear that inclusion in the community for these service users was vitally important and that the Council was committed to supporting this.

### DECISION

1. Cabinet **APPROVED** the recommendation to accept a £394,000 Capital Grant made available from NHS England to enable people with learning disabilities from Rutland to live in Rutland.
2. Cabinet **APPROVED** the delegation for the acceptance of the terms of conditions of the grant to the Director for People, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care and Health.

#### Reasons for Decision

1. *Acceptance of the grant from NHS England would increase local options for local people, preventing individuals becoming/remaining inpatients or out of county placements.*

2. *Costly packages of support which were out of county and difficult to monitor on a daily basis would be reduced and better supported by close working partnerships, families, assistive technology and specialist in house services.*

**403 ANY ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS**

No items of urgent business had previously been notified to the Chairman.

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**The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 10.25 am.**

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## **Additional Questions:**

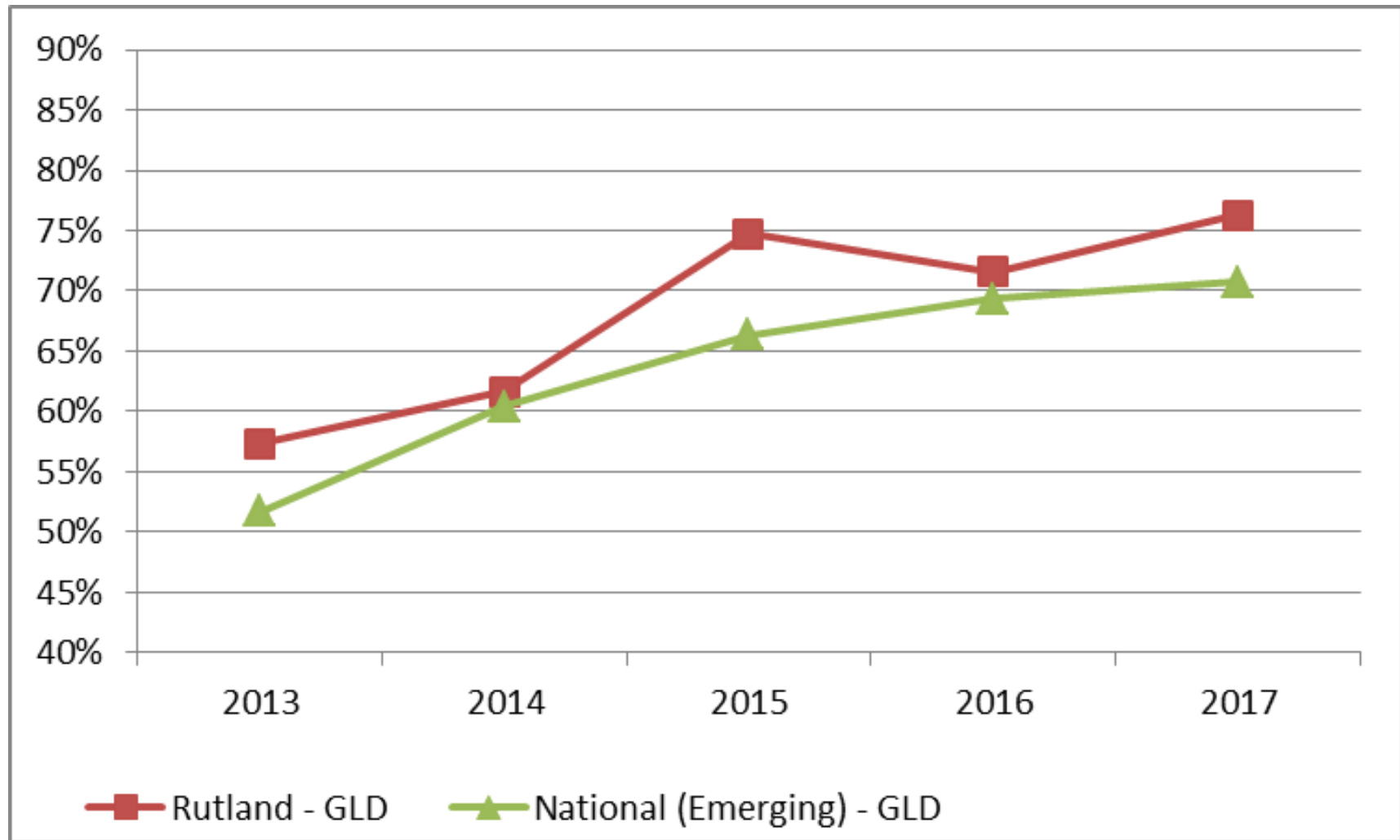
**We were given a data sheet at Council last week which included some huge success stories, particularly in the health and adult social care arena. However, it also raised some questions which I hope you will consider when you look at Q2 data. The questions are:**

- 1. Whilst satisfaction from those using the children's centre is extremely high how many families are there whom we believe would benefit from it but who are not using it?**

The Children Centre service monitors registrations levels and engagement levels. To this end the CC service can report that registrations of eligible families (i.e. children aged 0-5 years and their parents) are at 94% resulting in a high proportion of families receiving information about the service. We have good engagement rates and a high footfall in comparison to the size of cohort (4 to 5 times more) which would indicate a good reach and a large portion of families accessing the service. All families registered are contacted about the service, some may not use it a great deal for example families working full time with children in nursery from an early age. Whilst the service operates a universal offer it also focuses on families with specific needs such as, children open to social care, children with disabilities, children eligible for 2 year funding, and service families and the service will target resources to engage them. We are

confident a large proportion are accessing targeted services (historically above 75%), this has reduced recently due to movements within the MOD and families who were previously engaged have moved out of the area.

**2. Whilst it is good to see an improvement in the GLD data for foundation/early years to which year does the 76% apply and what is the year on year trend between 2013 and 2017?**



<b>EY FS Profile</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>
<b>No. of Pupils</b>	389	385	395	405	414
<b>Rutland – GLD</b>	57%	62%	75%	72%	76%
<b>National (Emerging) - GLD</b>	52%	60%	66%	69%	71%

**3. Can the school attendance data be explained? Does it refer to authorised or unauthorised absence or both? Are we confident there is a consistency across the county in authorising absence? What is the actual % of absence, and what is Rutland’s target?**

Rutland is the best performing local authority in the country with regards to school absence. It is ranked first (lowest absence) for ‘overall absence’ for primary and secondary schools, and is ranked first in the country for ‘persistent absentees’ at primary and second for secondary (after Isles of Scilly). Data is published annually and the latest available data is for 2015-16. ‘Overall absence’ refers to authorised, plus unauthorised absence. All schools in Rutland follow national guidance in relation to recording of absence. Further information about the definitions used is as follows:

- (1) Number of pupil enrolments in schools in 2015/16. Includes pupils on the school roll for at

least one session who are aged between 5 and 15. Excludes boarders. Some pupils may be counted more than once (if they moved schools during the academic year or are registered in more than one school). See Chapter 2 of Department for Education's "Guide to absence statistics" for more information.

(2) The number of sessions missed due to overall/authorised/unauthorised absence expressed as a percentage of the total number of possible sessions. See Chapter 3 of DfE's "Guide to absence statistics" for more information.

(3) The definition of persistent absence has changed from the 2015/16 academic year. Pupil enrolments missing 10 percent or more of their own possible sessions (due to authorised or unauthorised absence) are classified as persistent absentees. See Chapter 3 of DfE's "Guide to absence statistics" for more information.

(4) Number of persistent absentees expressed as a percentage of the total number of enrolments.

**4. Whilst it is good to see 80% of pupils achieved a 9-4 (old grade C and above) in English and maths, and that this made us the best local authority in the UK on this criterion, what are the progress 8 scores?**

## Progress 8 score 2017

	Progress 8 Score	Progress 8 score in English	Progress 8 score in mathematics
National	-0.0	-0.3	-0.2
East Midlands	-0.11	-0.13	-0.5
Rutland	<b>0.32</b>	<b>0.24</b>	<b>0.51</b>

### 5. To which year does the data on KS2 (top 10 nationally) apply?

2017

**In addition, on para 4.3 of the Q2 performance report, we have unknown destination of 39.6% of our school leavers. Could these young people in fact be NEET (para 4.2)?**

This is now down to 7% and reducing, this is simply a time lag in gaining destination data and recording this prior to the report being produced. We are highly confident this is not the result of children being NEET – we do not record someone as destination verified until we speak to them or their college. Last year Rutland was in the top 10% for low NEET levels in the country and we envisage a similar performance this year.

I think para 6.4 of the Q2 performance report is misleading by saying Rutland's progress 8 score compares favourably against the national figure of 0.0. The national figure is designed to be zero. (<https://schoolsweek.co.uk/school-performance-data-winners-and-losers/>) The only worthwhile comparison would therefore be with similar authorities and at the very least we should be provided with the spread of scores.

We do not have the data for similar authorities. We were referring to the national expectation, but also to the actual national average.

	Progress 8 Score	Progress 8 score in English	Progress 8 score in mathematics
National	-0.0	-0.3	-0.2
East Midlands	-0.11	-0.13	-0.5
Rutland	<b>0.32</b>	<b>0.24</b>	<b>0.51</b>

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## **Quarter 2 Performance and Financial Monitoring: Questions from G. Waller relating to People Directorate**

1. Why are we still comparing ourselves, especially in the people directorate indicators, with the national position and not statistically similar areas? If we were to compare with similar areas would we lose by the comparison?

Data from 2016 shows that Rutland compares very favourably with our statistical neighbours; outperforming them in most areas. We are currently awaiting 2017 data.

2. Why is the progress between KS1 and KS2 showing negative progress in writing? Why is progress for reading and maths described as broadly average compared to the national average when the government website clearly shows Rutland as below national average for maths? (performance report para 6.3)  
<https://www.compare-school-performance.service.gov.uk/schools-by-type?step=phase&region=857&geographic=la&phase=primary>

Progress scores in writing in 2017 showed improvement from that attained in 2016 (2016 -1.3 2017 -0.3). In 2017; just over 50% of schools had positive progress scores. A negative score of one

school of -8.5 (a cohort of just 4 pupils) impacted on the overall LA progress score being just below national average. However improving progress across KS2 is still an area of improvement across the authority and a focus of challenge to all primary schools from the LA.

+0.2 progress score for maths falls in the average band (around 60% of schools nationally). The link Cllr Waller refers to is 2016 data

We, as members, have been raising the issue of Rutland's results at primary school for a number of years and yet improvement doesn't seem to be happening, why?

- Improved Key Stage 1 performance with outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics remaining above the national average in 2017
- An improving trend in Key Stage 2 outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics combined from a very low starting point in 2013 and further decline in 2014. Rutland's results for L4 RWM was below all but one other LA in England in 2014 and is now well above in 2017. Particular improvement is evident in Key Stage 2 mathematics in 2017.
- An improving picture in Key Stage 1-2 progress in all subjects, most particularly writing

The following has been identified as areas that need further improvement:

- Whilst end of Key Stage 1 outcomes have been consistently above the national average, the proportion of pupils achieving at greater depth is below that seen nationally in writing and mathematics indicating that further challenge and support to schools for setting high expectations is a priority for 2017-18.
- Whilst there is a clear upward trend in 2017 Key Stage 2 pupil outcomes for primary aged pupils in Rutland schools, the high outcomes of some schools mask the continued under performance of others. For example, whilst local authority Key Stage 2 attainment at the expected standard was above the national average in all subjects in 2017, six schools were below the national standard in reading and writing and ten schools were below in mathematics.
- Although there is much to be celebrated in the outcomes achieved by children and young people in Rutland schools, there is evidence that there are inconsistencies in the performance of some groups of pupils over time. Owing to the relatively small number of pupils in Rutland schools and approximately 400 pupils in Rutland schools in each school year, data for groups of pupils is aggregated over three or more years to help to identify where there are patterns or trends of underperformance of groups.

3. Why are girls performing 2% worse than the national average at KS2 (para 6.5)?

The gender gap at both Key Stage 2 and 4 is currently narrower than national averages. At Key Stage 2 the gap is 5% compared to 9% nationally (which is a positive measure where smaller is better). Data for girls at KS2, at the expected standard, show girls in Rutland to be significantly above all girls nationally

**Fig A2.1.11 – Attainment by gender – KS2 combined reading, writing and mathematics**

KS2 R,W,M	% Expected Standard			% Achieving a high score		
	All	Boys	Girls	All	Boys	Girls
<b>National</b>	61	57	65	9	7	10
<b>East Mids</b>	58	54	62	8	6	9
<b>Rutland</b>	67	62	72	9	9	8
<b>Difference:</b>	+6	+5	+7	0	+2	-2

*SFR43/2017: National curriculum assessments at key stage 2, 2017 (provisional)*

I think the reference is to those girls achieving a high score which is a key focus area for 2017-18

4. Why is the staff absence rate in People directorate proportionally higher than in other directorates?

Due to the nature of the services people's services usually exhibits a greater sickness level that other areas

in many councils. The level of sickness in the peoples directorate also needs to be put into context of sickness in local government in general. The days lost due to sickness per FTE employee in peoples was 1.83 this compares to an average sickness for single and upper tier authorities of 9.4 days.

Further the level of sickness in People's has reduced from 1.95 in Q1 to 1.83 in Q2 and the number of people on long term sick have been halved from 8 in Q1 to 4 in Q2.

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## **Quarter 2 2017/18 financial Monitoring Questions from G. Waller**

1. Why (para 2.1.1) were the costs for the outstanding planning claim some 23% higher than the original estimate? Is this a case of deliberately underestimating in order to make the estimate seem more palatable?

The original £68k budget was an estimate. As with any claim, it is difficult to estimate the extent of legal support required as this will depend on various factors. The report outlines the full costs incurred in a transparent way rather than add them to the existing legal budget.

2. (para 2.1.1) Given the significant set up costs for green waste collection (estimated at c £80K: £20k more than originally reported) at what point does the green bin charge begin to have a positive impact on the budget; i.e. that all collection charges are covered by the charge?

The administration costs of £60k per year are as reported in the original Cabinet report. This included the set up costs being spread over the first 5 years of the scheme. This will be achieved paying back the set up costs to the spend to save reserve. Of the £80k, £20k relates primarily to staff costs associated with registering households. Whilst the service begins in April 2018, we have to incur some cost in 17/18 so effectively we are bringing forward the cost from 18/19. The charge

itself will have a positive impact from 18/19 as our MTFP includes the cost of bin collection already but does not include the income. The financial aim of the service is to break even as we are not allowed to make a profit. We anticipate covering over 70% of all our costs for green waste collection (including overheads) in year 1 but this will depend on take up.

3. Why has there been an increase in SEN transport requirements? What has been done to reduce the costs? How many SEN journeys do we pay for which are not used (e.g. taxi arriving at child's home to take child to school but child is not going because of hospital appointment)? How actively do we offer parental mileage for home to school transport for SEN children?

There has been an increase of 3 SEN students requiring transport this academic year but this is not the main cause of the increase. There are 3 individual students who have enhanced needs which has meant we have had to introduce transport options specifically tailored to meet their needs. 1 of the students requires regular heart massage and travels with a heart monitor and vital stats machine. This requires a specialist transport company to provide a medically equipment and a medically trained passenger assistant. The other 2 students have complicated risk assessments relating to their potential to hurt themselves and others so we have had to procure black-cab type



transport by utilising operators recommended by Peterborough City Council.

We continually monitor the contracts that we have and whenever any new/revised transport is required. We attempt to add this to our in-house transport routes first and then existing external contracts if this is not possible. We communicate with the operators of contracts frequently and contribute to the EHCP reviews for students transported. There have been a small number of students where we have been able to challenge the need for a passenger assistant and have been able to reduce subsidy this way by implementing an individual risk assessment and/or specialist equipment instead of paying for a passenger assistant to be present on every journey. We have also made more recommendations in the past year for older students to be considered for travel training to prepare them for independent travel on public transport.

The number of unused journeys is minimal within the area of SEN transport. Mostly this affects the children looked after (CLA) transport area due to the continual change nature of cases. On our in-house routes and all external taxi contracts for SEN, parents and transport teams communicate very effectively with each other to reduce the chances of wasted resources. On the whole, most parents/carers are making calls early enough if students will not be travelling.

Whenever transport cannot be catered for by re-routing existing provision (i.e. at minimal cost), we obtain quotations for new transport and calculate the parental mileage cost to work out the most cost-effective choice. If parental mileage represents best value we offer this to the parents/carers.

4. How are we monitoring the efficacy of the Permanency and Protection service? We are clearly investing in it (it is responsible for a significant overspend in the People Directorate) but how many children has it kept out of care and what is the average expenditure per child/family for this service C/F where a child/family does go into care?

The Protection and Permanency Service is a statutory service that has two key roles. The first is to protect and safeguard children, reducing risk and preventing them escalating into care. The other role is to support children who have been placed in care by the courts.

There has been an over spend in the costs associated with this service these are due to the following:

- The family support fund is overspending due to a number of families requiring additional support in order to reduce the likelihood of the children being taken into care thereby reducing potential costs in the future.

- The Children Looked After is overspending due to an increase in costs associated with parental contact visits for children placed out of county, but placed with family members. The additional cost is while we support these families to obtain a Special Guardianship Order, therefore the long term costs are much reduced.
- Children's Social Care Staffing is forecasting an overspend due to the need to use agency staff to cover vacant posts. However, we are seeing a significant decrease in the use of agency staff and are working hard to recruit to permanent posts (we only have 3 agency staff, 1 covering maternity and 2 covering a vacancy so this has already reduced significantly)

In terms of reducing the number of children entering care we have had 9 children who were in PLO (Public Law Outline), this is where the children have met threshold to be removed but we are doing 'pre-proceedings work. Due to support and work being undertaken by this service in the last three months we have prevented these children entering the care system and they have stepped down to Child Protection as they no longer meet threshold for issuing court proceedings. We have also supported 12 children to remain living at home following proceedings under Supervision Order. Again, this is instead of entering the care system and this ensures future costs of care are significantly reduced. This is the highest number of supervision orders Rutland have seen and demonstrates the

service supporting families to remain together and only using care system as the last resort.

If these children were in care this would take the overall numbers for Rutland up to around 60. Whilst nationally there has been a significant increase in CLA, locally we have not seen to the same level of increase in Rutland due to our service preventing children coming into care.

We currently have 40 children looked after and over the next 6 months there are plans for at least 10 of them to cease being looked after and be living with family on a SGO.

The Protection and Permanency Service has actually only placed 8 children into care in the year so far. Further overall 93 children have been taken off a children in need plan, and 39 children taken off a child protection plan, so far this year after risks were successfully reduced.

The average cost of a child in care is as follows:

	<b><u>Current Actual Unit cost per week</u></b>
<b>Foster Allowances</b>	£193.29
<b>Connected Persons</b>	£211.08
<b>Fostering Fees</b>	£146.15
<b>Independent Fostering</b>	£790.29
<b>Special Guardianship Orders</b>	£165.32
<b>Residential</b>	£3,322.26*

\*Relates to a very small number of very complex placements

5. (Appendix H 7) Why has there been a delay in implementing the Facilities Management Contract? Will there be any saving in 2018/19?

There will be no saving in 18/19 but one anticipated in 19/20.

6. (MTFP Assumptions). What impact will the decision regarding Places structure made by Council on 13/11/17 have on the MTFP?

As per the Council report, the changes could increase the budget by c£120k. Of course, this will depend on the new Director and the structure that is ultimately implemented. Final costs could be lower.

7. (Para 1.3.3 iii) Is the additional spend in school improvement designed to raise attainment in primary schools? (See my questions on Q2 Performance Management)

This is linked to the 2 commissioned projects which span over the two financial years

One, Inclusion Begins in the Classroom, which is to support primary schools in meeting the wider needs of children in mainstream schools, so will support improved achievement. The second, which is the Peer Review Programme, will

strengthen school to school support and challenge which again will support improved achievement.

8. (Para 1.3.3 iv) What is being done to analyse the costs of care packages that will reduce the likelihood of future reports of overspends in children with disabilities (£75k this time)? What has been done to analyse trend data so that we can better predict future need? What has been done to analyse the future needs of children and families currently receiving support to ensure we as a Council are providing support which meets need but is as low cost as possible?

The amount spent on care packages is reported as an overspend as it exceeds the budget. However, in areas such as special educational needs and disability where we are required to respond to a statutory need, an increase in spend above budget (whilst technically classed as an overspend) should be seen in this context. As has been discussed at Scrutiny previously, we are reluctant to increase budgets to give them 'slack' to accommodate potential new cases. We would rather report an 'overspend'.

The cost of care packages is constantly under review across all areas. At Q1 it was reported that an independent consultant on a contingent fee contract confirmed the Council achieved good VFM on placement costs and was able to find only limited savings.

Individual care packages are reviewed on an ongoing weekly basis. In relation to this group, needs rarely reduce over time so the likelihood of an existing client costing less from a needs perspective is very low.

In terms of trends, the number of children receiving support is low and therefore not considered to be helpful for predicting trends.

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