



Rutland County Council

Catmose Oakham Rutland LE15 6HP

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Record of a meeting of the **PEOPLE (CHILDREN) SCRUTINY PANEL** held in the Council Chamber, Catmose, Oakham, at 7.30pm on **Thursday 15 January 2015**

PRESENT: Miss G Waller – (Chairman, in the Chair)
Mr S Asplin
Mr M E Baines
Mrs C J Cartwright
Mr R Clifton
Mr G Conde
Mr J M Lammie
Mr J R Munton

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Mr K Bool Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People

OFFICERS PRESENT: Ms D Greaves Finance Manager - Accounting
Dr T O'Neill Deputy Chief Executive and Director for People
Miss M Gamston Corporate Support Officer

APOLOGIES: Mr P Goringe, Mr A S Walters, Ms Gullan-Whur and Mr Wainwright

627. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Mr Asplin declared that he was employed by the Rutland Learning Trust.

628. PETITIONS, DEPUTATIONS AND QUESTIONS

No Petitions, Deputations and Questions had been received.

629. QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE FROM MEMBERS

No Questions with Notice had been received from Members.

SCRUTINY

630. BUDGET 2015-16, MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN AND CAPITAL PROGRAMME

Report No. 14/2015 from the Director for Resources was received.

The Portfolio Holder, Mr Bool, introduced the report the purpose of which was to present for public consultation the Council's budget proposal for 2015/16 and to inform Members of the estimated position on the Collection Fund at 31 March 2015.

During discussion the following points were noted:

- i) That the proposed budget of £15,401,400 for the People Directorate was integrated across children and adults;
- ii) That the budget reflected a new way of working going forward and was to be realigned along priorities;
- iii) Cost Code 5366: Children's Workforce Development – Members were advised that this was a long term investment in to single support for children for which grant funding had been received. In 2014/15 funds had been transferred to Earmarked Reserves and subsequently spent;
- iv) Cost Code 4709: Floating Support – Housing – funding to support young people in independent living;
- v) Cost Code 5268: Early Intervention Team Staffing – increase related to officer posts having been regarded;
- vi) Cost Code 5272: Short Term Projects – Members were advised that this budget supported low level need support where the cost of activities was less than £1,000;
- vii) Cost Code 5202: Post Oct 2014 Rutland Adult Skills Budget – funded the Adult Learning Service;
- viii) Cost Code 5295: Secondary School Officer – Members were informed the secondary school officer was a 0.6 full time equivalent post offering support to all schools, primary and secondary, to improve performance. During discussion Members queried whether enough funds were being invested in the Learning and Skills Section given the two most recent Ofsted reports and the league standing in primary schools. Members were advised that the budget would require a further £50,000 for a fulltime post. Members agreed that the Chairman, Ms Waller, would inform Cabinet that the Panel had been concerned for a number of years at the falling standards in Rutland schools and welcomed the current strategy; that the Panel was not convinced that the Learning and Skills Section was staffed to fulfil its duties under the 1944 Education Act. The majority of the Panel supported the budget at this stage with a transfer from Reserves when timely to do so.
- ix) Cost Code 4210: Looked After Children – Members were advised that the alteration to this budget was due to Transport being transferred to a different cost code. The Finance Manager – Accounting, Ms Greaves, undertook to clarify by email;
- x) Cost Code 4213: Adoption – the reduction was due to the Reform Grant (a one off payment) being removed from the budget;
- xi) Cost Code 4578: Children's Public Health 5-19 – decrease in budget due to the retendering of the contract;
- xii) Cost Code 4713: Youth Housing – budget included Pinewood. Members were advised that various options were being considered with regard to the use of this facility;

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8.45 pm Mr Bool left the meeting
8.47 pm Mr Bool returned to the meeting

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- xiii) Cost Code 5377: SEN Transport – budget transferred to the Places

Directorate. It was noted that the changes to be made following the recommendations from the Transport Task and Finish Group would come into effect in 2016:

- xiv) Concern was expressed that paragraph 6.12 of Appendix 1 (The Budget 2015-16) Report No.14/2015 [Universal Infant Free School Meals (UIFSM)] stated that it had become increasingly difficult to distribute funding across schools, recognising deprivation and special education needs (SEN) factors at a time of no growth in resource availability.

Agreed:

1. That the Panel noted the content of Report No. 14/2015.
2. That the Chairman would inform Cabinet of the Panel's comments in relation to the Learning and Skills Section.
3. That the Finance Manager – Accounting, Ms Greaves, would clarify by email the alteration to the Looked After Children budget due to Transport budget being transferred.

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The Chairman declared the meeting closed at 9.13 pm

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