

MINUTES OF CABINET MEETING HELD 18 NOVEMBER 2013

PRESENT

Cabinet Members: Councillor Cereste (chair), Councillor Elsey, Councillor Fitzgerald, Councillor Holdich, Councillor North, Councillor Scott, Councillor Seaton and Councillor Walsh.

Cabinet Advisers: Councillor Casey, Councillor Goodwin and Councillor Todd.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Dalton.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

3. MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS HELD 4 NOVEMBER 2013

The minutes of the meeting held on 4 November 2013 were agreed as an accurate record.

STRATEGIC DECISIONS

4. EARLY YEARS SERVICES INCLUDING CHILDREN'S CENTRES

Cabinet received a report seeking its approval to go out to public consultation on a set of proposals on how early years services would be provided in the future including children's centres. It followed a review of the early years services provided by Peterborough City Council and other organisations following changes to Central Government policy on how it funded services and supported families with children aged from birth to five years old.

Councillor Scott introduced the report highlighting the funded childcare available for two-four year olds, removal of ring-fenced funding allocations for children's centres, the need to target services in the most deprived areas of the city, improved support for families and the budget saving contribution that the proposed changes would make.

The Council's Director for Communities' responses to questions included:

- In areas where there would not be a Super Centre Hub, outreach bases would be established or outreach workers will go out to peoples homes or set up groups in the area;
- There would be no cap to the number of three-four year olds who could receive the 15 hours free childcare but there would be a means or income tested qualification for two year olds although there would be no cap on the number of children who could receive this;
- Other Local Authorities were reviewing service delivery and some were already moving to this model of service provision; and
- The current centres were not closing but the services provided may alter and the buildings could be used for a wider variety of activities.

Cabinet considered the report and **RESOLVED** to:

1. Approve the proposals to begin consultation on the proposed changes to early years services including the consultation document 'New Vision for Early Years Services Including Children's Centres'; and
2. Agree to receive a further report on the outcome of the consultation prior to making any decision on the delivery of the early years service including children's centres.

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

The recommendation to consult on the proposals would ensure that the council provided its residents with the opportunity to comment on the proposals, which may in turn result in the council amending these prior to Cabinet on 20 January 2014.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

The alternative option was to do nothing. This was rejected because the council needed to ensure that the services it provided were delivering value-for-money and the review found that current provision was not targeted to those in the greatest need but there were more universal services that were open to all families across the city. The proposals outlined would also enable the council to deliver more cost effective services while ensuring that vulnerable families had access to services they needed for themselves and their children aged up to five-years-old.

10.15 a.m.