

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**SCHOOLS FORUM****16th December 2014****Report of the Strategic Director for Children & Younger Adults****Developing a collective response to the 'Wicked Issue'****1. Purpose of the report**

This report seeks:

- (i) To inform the Schools Forum of the challenges faced by school and learning communities as a result of the central government cuts to Derbyshire County Council's funding and the consequential reductions in budget for Children and Younger Adults (CAYA) Services;
- (ii) Formal Schools Forum approval to the Council's request to allow Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) investment in early help services for children, young people and families in 2015-16 to be retained centrally; and
- (iii) School Forum support for an application to the Secretary of State to be allowed to retain the above funding within the central Schools Block for 2015-16.

2. Information and Analysis**2.1 Context**

As described in the 'Wicked Issue' letter sent to Derbyshire schools and academies from Ian Thomas in July 2014, local authority budgets will continue to diminish and as such we need to re-think some of the roles of partners and communities themselves in achieving what we all want for children and families. If we do nothing in future the LA will only have resource for its high risk statutory functions. The future risk of cuts to local government funding affecting educational and other outcomes has become an imminent reality.

The Council's latest five year financial plan covering the period 2014-15 to 2018-19 has an overall savings requirement of £158.9 million. Of this sum, £29.9 million has been applied to departments' budgets in 2014-15, CAYA's cut being £6.033 million. The target saving for 2015-16 is £48.2 million of which CAYA's share could be between £10 and £13 million. In addition, the Council target saving for 2016-17 is a further £37 million.

CAYA's current budget is £102.8 million so further cuts on this scale are bound to have a significant impact on frontline services, including the support for schools and families. Inevitably, if no mitigating action is taken imminently, CAYA will only have resources for its high risk statutory functions. This would mean that the support we currently provide for children aged 0–19 and their families, principally through the Multi Agency Teams (MATs), could all but disappear.

2.2 Risks

The key determinants of educational outcomes are not just the quality of teaching and learning, but also the challenges that children face in their personal lives. These early effects emerge at a young age and their influences continue to shape students' educational outcomes throughout their educational careers. However, some influences can help to ameliorate the effects of disadvantage. There are important, and probably reciprocal, associations between academic outcomes and social-behavioural development (Sammons et al, 2014). Disadvantage, as a complex and multi-faceted concept, cannot be captured by a single indicator such as the free school meal status of a pupil, and presents challenges to schools in promoting better outcomes.¹

The MATs were established in 2011 to support children and families whose social circumstances placed them at a disadvantage. For example:

- Children's Centres have approximately 86,000 contacts a year with children and families using evidence based interventions;
- the youth service provides support and interventions to around 11,000 young people a year, providing support on raising aspirations, improving self-esteem and emotional well-being and addressing risky behaviours; and
- the Supporting Families teams provide targeted evidenced-based interventions to approximately 6,000 families at any one time addressing issues of parenting capacity, worklessness, school attendance, family conflict, and domestic abuse.

Since the formation of the MATs, attendance has increased and the numbers of young people not in education, employment and training (NEET) has reduced. During 2013-14 there were 2,073 referrals to MATs from schools for specialist family interventions. N.B. this figure excludes all of the group work undertaken by youth support and children centre elements of the offer.

Parental feedback on their effectiveness also makes a compelling case of their efficacy, 94% of parents thought the MATs provision was good or better. Should these services disappear, there is no going back, and schools would inevitably

¹ Full EPPSE research available at [http://www.ioe.ac.uk/EPPSE_full_publications_list\(1\).pdf](http://www.ioe.ac.uk/EPPSE_full_publications_list(1).pdf), and other research from https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/284086/early-intervention-next-steps2.pdf

feel the consequences on an individual basis. The risks are self-evident as thresholds for support are raised - we expect that without mitigating actions school attendance will decline, NEET will increase, and the percentage of children starting statutory education 'school-ready' will dramatically reduce.

The issues that arise in primary schools will, in turn, afflict educational outcomes and continue into the secondary phase, and result in a risk to all schools' Ofsted inspection outcomes. This risk will be increased following the recent OFSTED consultation– Better Inspection for All – which has a significantly increased emphasis on help and safeguarding, key references in the document include:

Para 19 – "Inspectors will make a judgement on the effectiveness of leadership and management by evaluating, where this is applicable, the extent to which leaders, managers and governors.....make sure that arrangements to protect children, young people and learners meet all statutory requirements and promote their welfare"

Para 20 - "We (Inspectors) will always report on whether or not arrangements for safeguarding children and learners are effective"

Para 22 –"Inspectors will make a judgement on the personal development, behaviour and welfare of children and learners"

Para 25 –"Inspectors will always have regard for how well children and learners are helped and protected so that they are kept safe. Inspectors will evaluate the arrangements for safeguarding and report on whether they are effective or not in the leadership and management section and, where required, under personal development and welfare"

The increased focus on safeguarding, which will become a key part of school inspections from September 2015, builds on the DfE's existing policy frameworks. These include "Working Together to Safeguard Children" (March 2013) which states:

Para 1 - "that help is more effective in promoting the welfare of children than reacting later."

The Munro Review 2011 also recommends that local authorities and statutory partners have a duty to secure sufficient provision of local early help.

2.3 Proposed developments

To address the issues described above, the Council is seeking to enter into joint commissioning arrangements with the community of schools and academies to explore how we can collectively sustain and improve our current early help offer, building on our multi-agency teams initiative. The vision for this approach would be one where schools and academies are members of a new entity and

represented by nominated heads and chairs of governors on a 'joint investment board'. This 'alliance' would determine the priorities for early help provision (including MATs, children's centres, family support, youth support etc.), monitor performance and ensure value for money is being achieved.

It is important to note that this is not a question of joint funding the status quo; rather it's a radical re-thinking of current commissioning arrangements which requires a considerable programme of change to be undertaken.

To determine the validity of this ambition a team of expert consultants has been appointed to undertake the study, engage partners and facilitate a co-created solution. The cost of this consultancy will be met from CAYA's own resources. Details of the team and the proposed timeline are attached as Appendices 1 and 2 to this report.

If the Schools Forum agrees to the Council's request for financial support, an application would be made to the Secretary of State to be permitted to retain the funding centrally in 2015-16. If the proposals are endorsed by the Secretary of State the Schools Forum would be kept regularly informed of progress towards developing a new model of working.

3. Financial considerations

A report on the Schools Block element of the 2015-16 Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) is on the agenda for this meeting. The gross increase is estimated to be £16.249m and that report sets out the Authority's proposals to allocate the additional resources.

This report proposes that £1m of the Schools Block DSG increase, together with £2m of previous years' DSG underspends, be used in 2015-16 to support existing services to schools and families, pending the development of a revised early help offer. Both of these allocations have been factored into the DSG medium term financial plan and are affordable.

The amount that authorities are permitted to retain centrally within the Schools Block is generally capped at 2013-14 levels. However, provision exists under Regulation 25 of the School and Early Years Finance (England) Regulations for this limit to be increased with the permission of the Secretary of State.

The Secretary of State has indicated that she is prepared to consider an application from Derbyshire on this issue. However, it is likely that any application would have a far greater chance of success if it had the support of the Schools Forum.

4. Strategic Director's Recommendations

As a community of leaders our role includes co-designing ways to mitigate adverse impacts of national policy and reduced funding. To mitigate the risks of the cuts to early help and targeted support services it is proposed that Schools Forum:

- i. Approves the investment of £3million in 2015-16 to support CAYA's early help offer, as described in the report;
- ii. Supports an application to the Secretary of State for Education allowing the above investment to be retained centrally for 2015-16;
- iii. Supports an independent, detailed and consultative scoping and feasibility study into potentially sustainable solutions to the Wicked Issue, engaging all stakeholders in the design of a new approach; and
- iv. Subject to the above, agree to receive further reports on this issue during 2015-16.

IAN THOMAS

Strategic Director for Children & Younger Adults

Profile of the consultancy team

Appendix 1

Greg Wilkinson runs an independent social-purpose consultancy that works with clients across public, private and voluntary sectors on issues of strategy, innovation and growth. He was previously a Partner in Ernst & Young, a Senior Executive at Accenture, a senior civil servant in the Cabinet Office and HM Treasury, an associate director of the Audit Commission, and an official and elected member in local government.

David Jackson will be the lead on education issues and on engagement with schools. David is a Partner at the Innovation Unit; he has previously worked as a head teacher and director of the National College for school leadership. He has an impressive working knowledge on all aspects of education and innovation.

Neil Reeder will lead on the analytics and evaluation. Neil has previously worked as a programme lead at the Young Foundation and as a civil servant in Department for Communities & Local Government (CLG) and HM Treasury; he is highly skilled in quantitative and qualitative analysis, and is an expert in modelling and evaluation.

All three have live experience of work in Children's Services and a solid understanding of the early-intervention agenda, as well as current or recent experience of work with Derbyshire County Council's CAYA directorate.

Draft Timeline for Scoping

Appendix 2

December 2014 to March 2015:

- Develop the scope of the project enabling the scale of the project to be evaluated.
- Engage with stakeholders
- Produce a valid business model.

April to July 2015:

- If the business model is agreed to be viable a pilot will be run and evaluated. This will more than likely be a geographical area.

July to August 2015:

- Evaluate the pilot scheme and agree any amendment to the model if necessary.

September 2015 onwards

- Further scaling as the model is expanded throughout all schools in Derbyshire