

HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

**CHILDREN'S SERVICES CABINET PANEL
WEDNESDAY, 7 FEBRUARY 2018 AT 10,00AM**

INTEGRATED PLAN 2018/19 - 2021/22 (CHILDREN'S SERVICES)

Joint Report of Director of Resources and Director of Children's Services

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Executive Members: Teresa Heritage, (Executive Member for Children's Services)
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1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To highlight the areas of the Integrated Plan which relate to Children's Services in order for the Panel to consider these and provide comment.
- 1.2 Members are asked to bring the following reports to the meeting, which have been circulated separately to all Members of the County Council:

'Public Engagement and Consultation on the 2018/19 – 2021/22 Integrated Plan' (circulated as Item 4(i) for the Cabinet meeting of 22 January 2018); and

'DRAFT INTEGRATED PLAN 2018/19 – 2021/22 (incorporating the Strategic Direction and Financial Consequences and the Treasury Management Strategy)' (circulated as Item 4(ii) for the Cabinet meeting of 22 January 2018). **(As issued for the January Cabinet)**

2. Summary of the Integrated Plan proposals for the County Council

- 2.1 The Integrated Plan brings together the financial impact of service plans and the available funding to resource these, over the next four years. Strategic Direction summaries have been produced for each Portfolio, which set out the future direction of services in the context of achieving substantial further savings. These have been informed by comparative benchmarking, both through published data and informal networks with other comparable authorities, to identify areas of potential efficiency gains.
- 2.2 Services have identified savings, in the context of the continuing budgetary pressures and reduction in available funding. Savings

requiring a policy change have been or are being taken through Panels for Cabinet decisions throughout 2017, and substantial efficiency savings have been identified. Savings include reducing the allocation of general non-pay inflation to zero. Whilst this is mitigated to some extent by excluding exceptional inflation areas it will require services to manage the impact during 2018/19.

- 2.3 The Government announced the provisional Local Government Finance Settlement for 2018/19 on 19 December 2017. This was the third of the Government's four-year settlement offer, and so a number of the reductions to funding were known in advance when preparing the proposed budget. Revenue Support Grant (RSG) will reduce by £22m between 2017/18 and 2018/19, and by a further £20m in 2019/20. Other grant announcements have confirmed expected reductions in Public Health grant (2.5%) and the cessation of Education Services Grant (ESG) from September 2017.
- 2.4 Funding from 2020/21 is uncertain, especially with proposed changes to the business rates retention system and a Fair Funding review which the Government proposes to introduce from that year. The IP assumes a further reduction of £5m pa in 2020/21 and 2021/22, but this will be kept under review.
- 2.5 The provisional Settlement also increased the referendum threshold for basic council tax, allowing authorities to increase this by up to 3% in 2018/19, without requiring a referendum. The 2017/18 IP had included a proposed 1.99% council tax increase each year, and the raising of the 3% remaining permitted Adult Social Care (ASC) Precept in 2018/19. The IP considered by Cabinet in January assumes a basic council tax increase of 2.99% in 2018/19 and 2019/20, and the 3% ASC Precept in 2018/19.
- 2.6 The final position will not be confirmed until the Final Settlement (expected early February) and other late grant announcements, and until figures are received from Districts for council tax base and collection fund balances, due to be provided by end January. Should any late changes result in an unbalanced budget, specific reserves will be used to provide one off funding in 2018/19. Any additional funding will be available to support the 2018/19 budget, for example by increasing contingency to mitigate risk, or to help meet the funding gap for future years.
- 2.7 The future position remains challenging: even with the identified savings and revised increases in council tax and the social care precept, current projections of pressures and funding require a further £8.1 million saving to be identified in 2019/20, rising to £30 million by 2021/22.
- 2.8 To help meet these challenging targets, work is in hand to progress further savings during 2018, for implementation for 2019/20 or sooner where achievable. It is recognised that savings require significant lead in times, especially where there is service redesign or consultation.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 The Panel is invited to comment to Cabinet on the proposals relating to the Integrated Plan in respect of Children's Services.
- 3.2 The Panel is also asked to identify any issues that it feels that the Cabinet should consider in finalising the Integrated Plan proposals for Children Services.

4. Background

4.1 The integrated plan comprises:

- an overview of the proposed revenue budget and capital programme, including a review of the budget estimates and adequacy of reserves (Part A);
- Strategic Direction and Financial Consequences - by portfolio (Part B);
- the Treasury Management Strategy (Part C)
- the Capital, Asset Management and Invest to Transform Strategy (part D)
- the Insurance and Risk Strategy (part E)
- an Equalities Impact Assessment (Part F); and; and
- other technical information and finance summaries (Part G)

4.2 Part B of the Integrated Plan has separate sections for each Portfolio. These contain the strategic direction summary (for Children's Services portfolio, on p45 of Integrated Plan Pack Part B); revenue budget information including a schedule of Key Budget Movements that sets out details of financial pressures and savings (p54); and a summary of the proposed Capital Programme (p60).

4.3 Key issues for this portfolio include:

- Reducing both the number of Children Looked After and use of high cost placements.
- The 0-25 Integration for Children and Young People with Additional Needs Programme to continue to improve services and reduce costs through better integration.
- Continuing to embed the Families First Programme for supporting families at the earliest opportunity.
- Expansion of Family Safeguarding to include educational support at Key Stage 2 and Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)
- Delivering the Family Centre Programme
- Re-Modelling YC Herts
- Establishing the feasibility of creating a Regional Adoption Agency

4.4 The table below summarises the (demographic) pressures for change referred to above that relate to Children's Services:

Demographic Pressures	Amount of Pressure (in 2018/19) (£000's)	Approx. current budget (£000's)	Service Section and page
Children Looked After (CLA)	803	44,100	Children's Services page 55
Unaccompanied Asylum Seekers	259	1,926	
Adoption & Special Guardianship Orders	171	7,693	
Total Demographic Pressure	1,233	53,719	

Other Pressures	Amount of Pressure (in 2018/19) (£000's)	Approx. current budget (£000's)	Service Section and page
Nascot Lawn consequential costs	383	8,085	Children's Services page 55
Section 17 No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF)/ Intentionally Homeless (IH)	340	874	
ICT transformation programme	103		
Independent Placement Costs	919	21,498	
Total Other Pressures	1,745	30,457	

4.5 The table below summarises the savings proposals referred to above that relate to Children's Services:

Saving	Amount of Saving (in 2018/19) (£000's)	Approx. current budget (£000's)	Service Section and page
Printing Contract Savings	(16)	237	Children's Services page 56
Families First ITT Bid	(37)	N/A	
Family Centre Recommissioning	(62)	10,844	
Youth Connexions	(829)	8,290	
Children's Services Efficiencies	(150)	48,242	
Independent Placements – additional use of DSG	(1,090)	21,498	
Total Savings	(2,184)	89,111	

- 4.6 Details of the capital schemes (including cash flows and funding sources) relating to Children’s Services portfolio can be found on pages 60 of Part B of the IP, and are listed in the table below.

Capital Scheme name	Total Scheme Cost (£000’s)	Service Section and page
Liquidlogic – Early Help Module Implementation	272	Children’s Services page 61
Liquidlogic - LCS (Liquidlogic Children’s System)	640	

5. Equality Implications

- 5.1 When considering proposals placed before Members it is important that they are fully aware of, and have themselves rigorously considered the equality implications of the decision that they are making.
- 5.2 Rigorous consideration will ensure that proper appreciation of any potential impact of that decision on the County Council’s statutory obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty. As a minimum this requires decision makers to read and carefully consider the content of any Equalities Impact Assessment produced by officers.
- 5.3 The Equality Act 2010 requires the County Council when exercising its functions to have due regard to the need to (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited under the Act; (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it and (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. The protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 are age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation.
- 5.4 Part F of the Integrated Plan provides an equality impact assessment of the savings included within the plan and how these are intended to be mitigated by the service.