



Report for:	Special Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 20th February 2015	Item Number:	
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Title:	Special Overview and Scrutiny Committee to consider the Call In of Cabinet Decision CAB809 - Corporate Planning.
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Report Authorised by:	Tracie Evans Chief Operating Officer
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Lead Officer:	Gill Gibson Assistant Director, Quality Assurance, Early Help & Prevention
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Ward(s) affected: ALL	Report Non Key Decision
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1. Describe the issue under consideration

The Call In of a decision to approve the Corporate Plan and Medium Term Financial Strategy agreed by Cabinet on 10 February 2015, specifically with regard to proposals on Children’s Centres and the Youth Service.

2. Cabinet Member introduction

These matters have already been thoroughly discussed at the Cabinet Meeting on 10 February. The proposals are set in the context of a transformation across all of Children and Young People’s Services and in the wider context of re-shaping Early Help with our partners.

As I have already made clear there will be further engagement on the detailed proposals for delivery of the Young People’s Strategy and Children’s Centres.

3. Recommendations

3.1 That the report be noted.



4. Alternative options considered

Not applicable.

5. Background information

5.1 The relevant background information is contained in the papers for the Overview and Scrutiny meeting 20 February 2015.

6. Call In Reasons & Responses:

6.1 The stated reason for the Call In is a concern about the proposed cuts to Children's Centres and Youth Services. The specific reasons and responses are provided below in two sections; Children's Centres and Youth Services.

6.2 Call In Reasons: Children's Centres

Children's centres are key to meeting two of Haringey's primary corporate objectives:

- 1. Early Intervention*
- 2. Giving families the best start in life*

6.2.1 *Children centres provide a vital service and we think early years should not have their budget cut by £1.44m. Many vulnerable families are only picked up in children's centres because staff are able to build a trusting relationship with the family. Centre staff is able to identify vulnerable families and can then provide a programme of support.*

6.2.2 *We also note that the early intervention work done in children's centres reduces costs to the council. If families are not helped early their needs are likely to be more complex and more expensive particularly if they reach a crisis point in their lives.*

6.2.3 *The variation of action proposed is that no cuts should be proposed until the council has undertaken its review and consultation.*

6.3 **Response** - There are three elements to the Early Years £4.1m budget: Children's Centres, Commissioned Services and the central Early Years Team and the proposals to reduce the Early Years budget by £1.44m over the three years of the Medium Term Financial Strategy would have an impact on each of these elements and not on Children's Centres alone.

6.4 Officers are working with a Children's Centres Representative Group which includes governors, head teachers, parents and staff to develop the detailed proposals for re-modelling the Children's Centres and to ensure the re-commissioning of appropriate services to support early years provision in



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Haringey. We are also engaging with a wider range of stakeholders, notably parents, through existing Parents' Forums and are planning a series of locality events.

- 6.5 Any proposals developed will be subject to statutory consultation for a minimum of 90 days after which Cabinet would be asked to make a decision based on the outcome of the consultation. Should the Medium Term Financial Strategy be agreed, it is proposed that Cabinet be asked to give permission for the statutory consultation to start in June 2015, running through to the beginning of October 2015 to ensure the impact of the summer holiday period is minimised.
- 6.6 As the Early Help model for Children and Young People's Services across the borough is further developed, it is timely to consider how locality based services can strengthen the work of the Children's Centres and ensure a family focus which will help to build resilience and offer effective early intervention and support to all families. By centring more services around Children's Centres, the offer to families can be enhanced and there will be greater opportunities for peer support and a more coherent parenting programme across the borough.
- 6.7 There are clear opportunities also in the transfer of commissioning responsibility for conception to 5 public health services from NHS England to the local authority in September 2015. For the first time for a significant period, a Universal Healthy Child Programme will be commissioned and in place in the borough, offering a platform for engagement with all families with young children in the borough and delivering developmental checks and reviews for all children up to the age of 5.
- 6.8 The Council is required to set its budget. The formal consultation process for any proposed changes to Children's Centres will take place in the context of the available budget.
- 6.9 Call In Reasons - Youth Services**
- 6.9.1 *Youth Services provide an important service to the borough's young people. We are concerned that the proposed savings are reliant on a youth trust. We are also concerned that by merging the youth offending service with youth service that youth services are likely to be left with few resources.*
- 6.10 **Response** - At the request of a Member, officers were asked to consider whether a youth trust might be an option for the future. Work is in progress to explore this, but there are no specific proposals or decisions relating to a youth trust at this time. The proposed savings are not reliant on a youth trust.
- 6.11 We recognise the value of skilled youth workers in supporting young people as part of early help and that is why a new operating model for this service is being developed alongside the whole of Children and Young People's Services. There has already been engagement with young people and this will continue as we



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confirm the priorities and develop detailed delivery plans under the Young People's Strategy.

7. Comments of the Chief Finance Officer and financial implications

- 7.1 This report provides further information in response to specific questions and comments raised by Councillors. It should be read in the context of the Corporate Plan and Medium Term Financial Plan report to Cabinet on 10th February – especially the Medium Term Financial Planning section of that report and the earlier reports to Cabinet on 16th December. These reports set out the legal requirement to set a balanced budget, the basis of the budget gap estimates and the principles followed in developing the plan.
- 7.2 The savings proposals approved at Cabinet on 10th February, including the ones discussed in this report, contribute to the balancing of the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy over the period to March 2018. Should any of these decisions be overturned, therefore, alternative proposals will need to be identified and implemented to ensure the Council's budget remains sustainable for the future

8. Comments of the Assistant Director of Corporate Governance and legal implications

- 8.1 The Assistant Director, Corporate Governance has been consulted in the preparation of this report, and makes the following comments.
- 8.2 Pursuant to the Council's Call-In Procedure Rules, the Committee is required to determine whether the call-in decision is "inside or outside the policy / budget framework". In reaching that judgment, the Committee is required to consider the views of the Monitoring Officer and the Chief Finance Officer. Those views are expressed in a report which forms part of the report pack to this Committee. Both statutory officers agree that the called-in decision is inside the policy / budget framework. (See paragraphs 5.7 and 6.1 of the Report).
- 8.3 The report of the Monitoring Officer also sets out the options open to the Committee to determine the Call In decision in the event that it resolves that the decision is inside or outside of the policy/budget framework. (See paragraphs 5.11 – 5.13 of the Report).

9. Equalities and Community Cohesion Comments

Equalities Impact Assessments have been developed on the high level proposals and will be subject to further development on any proposals that are being taken forward following budget decision.

10. Head of Procurement Comments



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If the Medium Term Financial Plan is agreed, further modelling work will be developed to support the proposals. It is at this stage that Procurement would be engaged.

11. Policy Implication

If the Medium Term Financial Plan is agreed, further modelling work will be developed to support proposals. This will include any required changes to policy. These will be subject to further detailed consultation with Member decisions.

12. Reasons for Decision

The purpose of this report is for information.

13. Use of Appendices

Not applicable.

14. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

Not applicable.