

Cabinet

Meeting held 12 December 2012

PRESENT: Councillors Julie Dore (Chair), Isobel Bowler, Leigh Bramall, Jackie Drayton, Harry Harpham (Deputy Chair), Mazher Iqbal, Mary Lea, Bryan Lodge and Jack Scott

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1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

1.1 No apologies for absence were received.

2. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

2.1 No items were identified where it was proposed to exclude the public and press

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

3.1 Councillors Isobel Bowler and Mazher Iqbal declared a Direct Pecuniary Interest in the under-mentioned item relating to Changes to Council Tax Discounts for Second Homes and Empty Properties (Item 13 below) on the grounds that they owned second properties and left the meeting during the consideration of the item.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

4.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 21st November, 2012 were approved as a correct record.

5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND PETITIONS

5.1 Councillor Julie Dore (Leader) indicated that it was proposed that the Cabinet would, at this point, consider public questions other than those connected with the item of business relating to the Redesign of the Early Years' Service, which would be considered, along with associated petitions, as part of that item.

5.2 Release of Council reports submitted to Council Meetings

5.2.1 Mr Nigel Slack asked, at the forthcoming Audit Committee meeting on Thursday, 13th December the following item appears on the agenda:-;

“ 12. Financial/Commercial Monitoring of External Relationships
Report of the Executive Director, Resources
(Note: The report is not available to the public and press because it

contains exempt information).”

Could the Council explain the nature of the information that causes this report to be censored, and why that information really requires that the whole document be kept secret or whether the relevant information could be ‘redacted’ and the rest of the report released?

- 5.2.2 In response, Councillor Bryan Lodge (Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources) stated that sometimes it was difficult, when a report came forward to release all information as some would be considered commercially sensitive and, on some occasions, if a meeting decided to discuss such information, then the public and press would be asked to leave the meeting. In this particular case, he would examine whether some of the report could be released with any confidential information redacted out, but this would only occur following the consideration by the item at the Audit Committee.

5.3 Council Response to the Political and Constitutional Reform Committee

- 5.3.1 Mr Nigel Slack referred to the fact that, on the 7th November 2012 I submitted a written question to Council for which he had yet to receive a response. He, therefore, restated that question in the hope of expediting an answer.

“The deadline for submissions to the Political and Constitutional Reform Committee has passed. I am disappointed that this council has missed the opportunity to support this inquiry, an important attempt to reform the broken system of local government in this country.

The Council seemed keen on the inquiry when last I asked a question on this subject and the Leader urged all Councillors to make individual submissions, as well as promising to publish their response to the inquiry should they make a submission.

Could the Council explain their reason for choosing not to make a submission to the Committee?

It is a further disappointment that only one councillor of the whole chamber took the time to support the inquiry and make a submission, it took me just ten minutes. Whilst I do not expect the leader to comment on the minds of other members could she explain why, considering the urging commented on above, she did not make an individual submission?”

Mr Slack indicated that, should the Council be concerned that he was putting words in peoples’ mouths, he included the relevant extract from the minutes.

- 5.3.2 Councillor Julie Dore (Leader) confirmed that she had received Mr Slack’s e-mail and she read out a response thereto as follows;-

“I had hoped that I had made my position clear with my response to your previous Council question, which was that I did not agree with you that the Political and Constitutional Reform Committee was the most significant opportunity for restoring the reputation of local government.

I couldn't personally agree to a “written guarantee” of local government rights and responsibilities and codified arrangements for the funding of local government without the detail of what that would mean for Sheffield.

An example of my scepticism would be the shambolic way in which the current Government have devolved responsibility for Council Tax Benefit without the funding necessary to operate a “national scheme” and to delay the detail of the funding of such a scheme, which makes it virtually impossible to implement the scheme within the timescales set by the Government. Whilst greater devolution of powers to local government is a considerable step in the right direction, this needs to be accompanied by fundamental funding and I would want to see what the reform would be.

I also feel quite apathetic regarding any consultation carried out on behalf of Parliament as I believe the current Government will do exactly as they wish. The Leveson Inquiry is a prime example and this was a judicial public inquiry costing over £5 million where the Prime Minister has ignored the parts he didn't agree with. This Government will do exactly what they want without regard to the impact that their decisions have on their citizens.

Finally, the Council's Research and Policy Team have other priorities, such as the Fairness Commission, which will actually make a real difference to the lives of the people of Sheffield.

Out of 84 Members of the Council, only one responded and she (Councillor Dore) could not speak for the remaining Members.”

5.4 Securing and Sustaining Good Quality Personalised Social Care for Adults

5.4.1 Mr Peter Davies referred to the report on the agenda – “Securing and Sustaining Good Quality Personalised Social Care for Adults” and to proposals for the establishment, amongst other options, an Arms Length Management Company or Workers' Co-operative to deliver such services. Mr Davies suggested that, based upon experience, there was seldom any resource applied to services which were the subject of outsourcing, for example, the City-wide Alarm Service. He asked, therefore, what resources would be invested into the existing model of provision of adult social care, as an alternative to outsourcing services

5.4.2 Councillor Mary Lea (Cabinet Member for Health, Care and Independent Living) responded that one of the aims of the report was to set the strategic approach to the provision of adult social care in the City,

recognising the financial savings to be made by the Council. She added that the imposition of Government cuts had, unfortunately, required the Council to give consideration to the way it delivered local services. In adult social care, people were now able to choose the services that they required which would be funded by personal budgets agreed with the Council. Therefore, the services they chose to receive could, under current arrangements, be provided by a variety of adult social care providers. However, the Council still retained a duty to ensure that people received the best quality care and the Council acknowledged the need, as described in the report, to examine how the services provided by the Council would be delivered in the future. This was an issue which had formed the basis of extensive discussions with officers.

- 5.4.3 Councillor Lea added that a Programme Board had been established to examine the options available to the City Council for the delivery of services including what level of direct control the Council needed in order to ensure that the services provided met people's personal requirements and need. It was proposed that the Board would comprise stakeholders and partners, including trade union representatives, who would have an input into service design and the Board's findings would be reported to the Executive Director, Communities and herself, as Cabinet Member for this area of service, with a view to identifying a Business Plan to be taken forward. It was envisaged that the Programme Board would produce its first report in June, 2013 with a final report being produced later that year.
- 5.4.4 Councillor Bryan Lodge (Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources) also responded that, as far as the City-wide Alarm Service was concerned, the Council was faced with a requirement to make savings over the next financial year and the Council would have to make some tough decisions based upon the demand for services and cuts in Government financial support for local authorities. He added that the Council was in collective dispute with the trade unions concerning the City-wide Alarm service which they were trying to resolve, but the trade unions had withdrawn from Service Delivery Evaluation Process and the Council, therefore, had no option but to take forward this work in light of the huge budgetary savings it had already made and the additional savings it would be required to make in 2013/14.

6. REDESIGN OF EARLY YEARS' SERVICE

- 6.1 The Executive Director, Children, Young People and Families submitted a report setting out in principle proposals to redesign Early Years' Services in Sheffield.
- 6.2 In considering this matter, Councillor Julie Dore (Leader) indicated that it was proposed to receive any representations, in the form of Petitions or Public Questions, prior to Cabinet considering its decision and that before a decision was made, points raised by the public would be answered by officers, in their presentation of the report, and Councillor Jackie Drayton (Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families).

6.3 Petition

6.3.1 The Cabinet received and noted a petition presented by Ms. Emma Chadwick containing 1,554 signatures opposing the cuts in funding for 20 nurseries in Sheffield, indicating that this was devastating both for staff, who could be out of work after years and thousands of pounds of education and training, and also to working parents, who sent their children to these nurseries and who also faced the risk of losing their jobs without childcare facilities.

6.3.2 In presenting the petition, Ms Chadwick referred to her own position where she was the parent of a three year old son with a learning disability who attended Darnall Community Nursery and that, as a result of the Council's proposals, was faced with finding, at short notice, a place at a new nursery providing appropriate special needs support. This would provide problems in terms of her child establishing new relationships with staff and other children. She asked how could the Council consider closing the Nursery in light of the hard work the staff had undertaken in order to support her son?

6.3 Councillor Julie Dore (Leader) thanked Ms Chadwick for sharing with the Cabinet her personal circumstances which, she understood, was a highly emotive matter for her. She stated, however, that the Council needed to re-examine how it accommodated provision for special needs in the early years' service and this would be undertaken as part of the review.

6.4 Dawn Walton, Assistant Director, Prevention and Early Intervention, Children, Young People and Families Service, responded that there were no proposals in the report submitted to Cabinet for the closure of any childcare provision. However, the report examined the principles in relation to the delivery of childcare across the City and recommended a proposed programme of further public consultation which would enable the Council to receive feedback from people like Ms. Chadwick in order that a smooth transition to any designated alternative childcare provider was made and high quality childcare provision within a familiar setting was maintained.

6.4 Public Questions

The following questions/issues were asked or raised by members of the public in relation to the report of the Executive Director, Children, Young People and Families, on the Redesign of Early Years' Services:-

6.4.1 I attend the Fir Vale Centre to improve my English speaking skills as advised by the Job Centre and currently use nursery provision at the Centre to be able to do this. Where will I leave my children if the provision was closed?

6.4.2 As my husband works nights and is unable to care for their children during

- the day, I need childcare to enable me to study English to fulfil my determination to become independent.
- 6.4.3 Where could I leave my four children if the Fir Vale nursery closed, in light of the English language studies which I have undertaken in order to help both myself and my children with their studies?.
- 6.4.4 A member of staff from Fir Vale Nursery, asked how children could achieve entry level attainment when cuts were being made?
- 6.4.5 Why was the Council cutting childcare provision when they had not consulted with parents, in light of the importance of this provision to parents' and children's futures..
- 6.4.6 A parent of a 2 year old child explained that she and was using nursery provision to enable her to go to work and, as she was not grant eligible, currently paid £4 per hour which was affordable, with the true cost being £7 per hour. Where would my child go so that I could go to work?
- 6.4.7 Had consideration been given to the impact on Sheffield as a whole, as a result of the hundreds of jobs and thousands of children who would be affected in the City? She highlighted the fact that people would not be able to return to work as there would be nowhere for them to take their children.
- 6.4.8 A questioner stated that she had 37 years' experience in early years' provision in Sheffield and asked what consideration had been given to the impact of the proposals on vulnerable children. She added that Sheffield would not recover from the loss of experienced staff.
- 6.4.9 Where would the children attend alternative childcare facilities if the Darnall Community Nursery closed. leaving vulnerable children without experienced and skilled support staff?.
- 6.4.10 Why had Multi-Agency Support Teams (MAST) not been included within meetings on the Early Years' Review as this is what MAST wanted? The questioner stressed the importance of the first intervention in a child's development and the co-ordinated response being carried out by different services at this stage and asked why this was being abandoned? She also stated that the City Council was the only Authority in Yorkshire and Humberside to have no Children's Centres graded as outstanding and had two Centres graded unsatisfactory. She asked, when such large cuts were being made, how could parents and staff trust that services could be delivered with even less money?
- 6.4.11 The last Labour Government had championed childcare and now the Council was stressing that it had no choice but to cut funding in this area because of Government cuts. The questioner suggested that this was not true, referring to the action taken by Essex Council who had challenged the Government on policy and had won. The questioner stated that

- Councillors were elected to represent the public and the issue was very important to them and that the Council should not decimate provision in this way.
- 6.4.12 Were the Council aware of how the proposed budget reductions would impact on black and minority ethnic employment and how did they fit in with equalities and diversity within the Early Years' workforce?
- 6.4.13 How, in light of the proposed reductions, would services, particularly those for the vulnerable, be maintained and improved?
- 6.4.14 The Council had a responsibility to provide flexible childcare and that private childcare was often inflexible in that it was focussed on full-time provision. Families were being refused childcare if less than two days' care was required. The questioner also referred to the need for further consultation and that the consultation undertaken so far had been a token gesture and many parents felt that they had not been consulted at all.
- 6.4.15 What accompanying plans were in place for alternative provision given that many of the Centres were currently in pushchair walking distance, suggesting that parents would have to provide for increased parking and driving costs which, for many parents, was not feasible. As there were no affordable places available in private childcare centres, how did the Council intend to support those who needed to go out to work?
- 6.4.16 On behalf of the Tinsley Parent and Child Consortium, was the Council aware that Tinsley Green was the only nursery within the community and had received an outstanding OFSTED report. The questioner highlighted poor transport links between Tinsley and other areas of the City and the associated problems for travelling to other Centres. She also stressed the importance of Early Years and the safeguarding of vulnerable children and asked who would see them each day should Centres close. She suggested that parents were desperate to preserve the universal, locally developed and culturally sensitive services currently offered.
- 6.4.17 A member of staff from a women's refuge referred to the issue of domestic abuse and the fact that such refuges relied on community childcare provision for those women suffering domestic abuse. She stated that childcare was crucial to enable those women who had been the subject of domestic abuse could access counselling and meet with outreach workers. She stressed the importance of trusted services who had already been through the trauma and for families in vulnerable circumstances.
- 6.4.18 Chrissy Meleady, Families using Community Childcare Group, provided Cabinet with a written submission asked a number of questions/issues on behalf of an amalgamation of parents and asked that written response be provided to the questions/issues:-
- concerns in relation to the consultation process, in particular to the

lack of consultation with parents, service users, providers, the poor and vulnerable.

- there was an absence of equalities considerations within the report submitted to Cabinet.
- whilst the Council was stating that the proposed cuts in childcare were the fault of Government cuts, it was understood from central Government that funding was available through a range of budgets available to local authorities.
- in 2012, six local authorities took the Secretary of State for Education to court on his decision to immediately cease funding on the Building School for the Future Programme without consulting local authorities and won the case. Parents now felt that a similar lack of consultation was happening to them. Would the City Council now heed this?
- the proposals were based on flawed and presumptive assumptions and therefore, the Cabinet should reflect on this.
- Cabinet had not been briefed adequately in terms of best value. Nolan principles, the Equalities Act and existing childcare legislation had not been taken into account.
- the Council asserted that it wishes to maintain an Early Years' vision, but the withdrawal of funding did not equate to that vision. What was the Council's vision?
- how will the proposal to facilitate greater competition in the early years' field secure better value for money and is there an assertion that current services do not provide value for money? if so, how has this been assessed, has the Council triangulated this evidence and shared it with current providers and the public?
- under current proposals, the removal of Council grant aid from not for profit community charities from March 2013 will not be replaced by alternative funding, on a limited basis until September 2013, so were there any contingency plans in place so that the Council could ensure funding was made available from April to September 2013 in order to fulfil its responsibilities under the Childcare Act 2006?
- what regard had been given to the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 in terms of its impact on the community sector.
- there had been a lack of support for not-for-profit community organisations in preparing them for the competition alluded to in the Cabinet paper which could lead to a situation where the not-for-profit sector was disadvantaged against larger companies wishing to enter the market using loss leader strategies.

- the Equalities Impact Assessment was disappointing. No consultation had been held with providers, users, staff and communities on such an assessment.
- had the principles of “Total Place” been applied? This would seem not to be the case as the reality was that the Council was cutting much needed and demanded community not-for-profit grants and services.
- why had the Council not worked with the community sector and others to produce specifications for commissioning/ procuring services?
- what were the findings and recommendations of the Early Years’ Review and why had no feedback on its key recommendations been provided?

6.4.19 a recent Council press statement stated that proposed reforms would provide greater access for services. How was this possible when parents would have to travel greater distances to access services. The questioner also asked which children’s centres were not meeting the needs of parents and children as there was reference in the report to the Council not being able to “prop up” providers.

6.4.20 five Labour Councillors in Hull recently voted against budget cuts, so why could the Council not take similar action to resist Government cuts?

6.4.21 a questioner commented that many students on English for Speakers of Other Languages would be affected by losing nursery provision and, in referring to page 16 of the report, which stated that there would be opportunities for local providers to improve services to children and families, asked was the Council aware of the high standards achieved by the present Teams in place and how would the proposals in the report improve on these standards?

6.4.22 In presenting the report of the Executive Director, Children, Young People and Families, Dawn Walton, Assistant Director, Prevention and Early Intervention, indicated that the proposals submitted to Cabinet were designed to seek approval in principle to redesign the Early Years’ Service within the context of significant consultation and opinion gathering carried out in 2011 during the Early Years’ Review and set against the backdrop of the financial circumstances the Council found itself in. She emphasised that the proposals would be subject to further consultation to be undertaken in January 2013, with stakeholders and parents, with a view to final proposals being submitted to the Cabinet meeting on 27th February, 2013.

6.4.23 Ms. Walton stated that the proposals reflected the key themes of the Early Years’ Review and the priorities of the City Council to improve early intervention and preserve as many of the Centres as possible. The proposals aimed to improve outcomes at Foundation Stage level so that young children could make an effective start to school through effective

interventions which met the needs of families. The recommendations within the report ensured that the Council focussed on its statutory duties and met the high standards expected by children and families. It was recognised that re-organising the Children's Centres and reducing the number from 36 to 17 children's Centre areas would provide greater value for money and focus services on front line delivery at the same time reducing management and administration costs.

- 6.4.24 The redesign of services would increase accountability to families and ensure that the local authority focussed on its statutory requirements to provide a satisfactory number of childcare places and ensure the take up of these places was maximised. In order to ensure this, the proposals would offer the opportunity for childcare service delivery to be undertaken by other providers such as schools, private organisations, the independent and voluntary and community sectors.
- 6.4.25 Ms Walton re-affirmed that the issues raised today would be examined as part of the January, 2013 consultation process. However, 19 million had been transferred from Early Intervention Grants Under 2s provision to school budgets. Whilst the Council hoped to expand childcare places from April, 2013 as soon as funding was available it was recognised that there could be a mix of childcare provision, with schools as well as other providers, delivering the best opportunities. It was also important to understand that support would be given to encourage parents to take up their two year entitlement to support.
- 6.4.26 There was no intention to close any childcare provision, but changing childcare providers would be examined in order to maximise resources and buildings that were available in order to ensure that the Council met its statutory commitments to make sure sufficient childcare places were available. The Sufficiency Assessment carried out in 2011 had informed work to identify early years childcare requirements and the Council wanted to maximise access to the whole range of prevention and early intervention services. Childcare providers were an important link in the provision of universal health services and the report acknowledged the importance of health visitors and other maternal services as a means of ensuring children got the best possible start in life.
- 6.4.27 Early Years services were crucial when focussing on prevention and early intervention at the earliest opportunity and, from the evidence that the Council possessed, picking up problems made a substantial difference to families and their future resilience. She stressed, as did the report, that there was every intention of working with vulnerable families in the City to improve the life chances of all children, wherever possible.
- 6.4.28 As far as consultation was concerned, the current consultation and the proposed round of consultation in January, 2013 would take account of the Early Years' Review as submitted to Cabinet in March 2012 and be reflected in the proposed report to Cabinet in February 2013. As far as Equalities Impact Assessments were concerned, these were critical as

- they identified the most vulnerable families in communities but the Council needed not just one document but a composite , overarching document which took account of the outcome of consultation. This final document, which would be presented to Cabinet in February, 2013 and would inform service provision.
- 6.4.29 The Public Services (Social Value) Act would govern the way that that the Council engaged providers to deliver service, but the Council's policy acknowledged the need for specialist services to be delivered by specialist organisations. This would require recruitment of a talented workforce.
- 6.4.30 It was quite clear that the local authority wanted to focus and concentrate on the need to secure sufficient childcare provision, to meet parents' demand for flexibility and a service which met changing social and family needs. This would be examined in the Sufficiency Assessment to ensure that the Council delivered services which were of the right type and of a high standard tailored to meet parents needs.
- 6.4.31 Councillor Jackie Drayton (Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families) in responding to the questions asked, stated how much she appreciated the hard work staff in nurseries and other childcare settings who provided invaluable and effective support to families and children in what were, sometimes, difficult circumstances. She understood that many parents and staff were feeling upset at the moment but these were difficult times and had to be set in the context of a tidal wave of draconian cuts which amounted to £140 million over the last two years with a further cut of approximately £50 million in 2013/14.
- 6.4.32 She added that Early Intervention Grant which, in addition to early years services, supported youth offending services to families with disabilities was due to be cut by £6.8 million. The Council, therefore, was trying to make savings responsibly whilst striving to protect services to families. However, in terms of early years services, it would be wrong for the Council to say that it could make £3.5 million savings without affecting anybody. She suggested that the previous Labour Government had been committed to early years services through the SureStart Scheme but the present Government had an alternative policy of supporting the Pupil Premium and Free Early Learning, the latter being supported by funding of approximately £6.8 million which was the amount by which Early Intervention Grant was being cut.
- 6.4.33 Councillor Drayton indicated that the Council had tried to make savings through management and administration and reducing premises costs and that was why the Council was reducing the number of Children's Centres requiring inspection (and the consequential reduction in advisory groups and management teams) down to 17. It was envisaged that some childcare facilities might have to be relocated to suit local groups, but the council had to make best use of the funding it had for services. Named OFSTED Centres would have to de-registered with OFSTED and the 17

Centres would have to be re-registered with OFSTED and would continue to be monitored and measured by that agency.

- 6.4.34 Councillor Drayton referred to the fact that parents had indicated, during the consultation on the Early Years Review, that they required flexibility in childcare provision which was relatively low cost, available at different times and situated in locations that were relatively easily accessible. The proposals in the report offered an opportunity for the provision of such flexibility to provide childcare not just for 36 weeks but for 50 weeks per year. She added that it was important that people recognised that any Cabinet decision on this matter would not be made lightly and the report asked for approval in principle to hold further consultations on the current situation where the Council had little money for funding childcare. The Council would do what it could to protect the most vulnerable children and families, but universal provision for childcare sat within the early years budget in accordance with Government policy. The current situation was something that the Council did not want to be doing, but this was the reality of the position in which the Council was placed.
- 6.4.35 Councillor Julie Dore (Leader) added that the Essex case involved representations made to Government on the Building Schools for the Future Programme and a judicial review on the decision taken by the Secretary of State for Education, Michael Gove M. P. to cut funding on the Programme without any consultation. This was in stark contrast to the Council's intended action to consult widely on the Redesign of the Early Years Service.
- 6.4.36 In relation to Councillors in Hull refusing to support budget cuts, if the Council refused to set a balanced budget, Government officials would take over the administration of the Council's affairs and make, what could be, unfair cuts. The Council was committed to protecting the most vulnerable and would examine the cumulative impact of the cuts on the most vulnerable families in the City. The Fairness Commission would report on these issues in the near future and suggest recommendations as to how the Council and other agencies might reduce inequalities.
- 6.4.37 Councillor Dore stated that the Council had written to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, Eric Pickles, M. P., the Deputy Prime Minister, Nick Clegg, M. P. and Secretary of State for Education, Michael Gove M. P. on the cuts to childcare funding and the Sheffield MPs had also made representations to the Government on the matter as had the Shadow Education Minister, Stephen Twigg M. P. Responses received from the Government to these representations were unsatisfactory and suggested that the Government was not listening. She was, however, due to attend a Core Cities conference in Liverpool in January 2013 which would act to provide a collective voice against unfair cuts.

Following the receipt of the above petition and representations Cabinet made the under-mentioned decision:-

6.5 **RESOLVED:** That Cabinet (a) approves in principle:-

- (i) the proposed redesign and streamlining of the organisational structure in early years services in order to maximise access to high quality early learning and health services with the resources available;
 - (ii) the proposed action plan for a quality improvement programme for all early years settings;
 - (iii) the proposed reorganisation of the management and co-ordination of 36 Children's Centres into 17 Children's Centre Areas;
 - (iv) the proposal that existing contracts with providers (due to end in March 2013) are not renewed where services are no longer required or funding is not available, while, at the same time, specifications for procurement of new targeted services will be developed;
 - (v) the proposed cessation of grants to 16 childcare providers in the Private, Voluntary and Independent sector and 4 in the statutory sector; and
 - (vi) the proposed reduction and transfer of the maintained childcare provision; and
- (b) notes (i) the proposed further communication and consultation to be carried out on the Early Years' Review and (ii) that a further report will be submitted to Cabinet in February, 2013 on the outcome of the consultation.

6.6 **Reasons for Decision**

6.6.1 The purpose of this report is to inform Members and seek approval in principle for proposals to redesign and streamline early years services in Sheffield in order to make savings in management, administration and premises costs whilst maintaining universal, early intervention and family support services that are flexible, accessible and of high quality. This is the next phase in the development, which builds on the consultation and proposals that formed the conclusions of the Early Years Review. The size, depth of the savings proposed and the timescale are as a result of the severe Government cuts to funding and changes in Government Strategies for early years. Due to these changes the Council will concentrate on being the Champion and advocate for children and families, will have an increased focus on 'uptake', quality assurance and value for money.

6.7 **Alternatives Considered and Rejected**

6.7.1 No alternatives were considered or thought to be appropriate in the

circumstances.

6.8 Any Interest Declared or Dispensation Granted

None

6.9 Reason for Exemption if Public/Press Excluded During Consideration

None

6.10 Respective Director Responsible for Implementation

Jayne Ludlam, Executive Director, Children, Young People and Families.

6.11 Relevant Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee If Decision Called In

Children, Young People and Family Support.

7. HOME TO SCHOOL TRANSPORT POLICY

7.1 The Executive Director, Children, Young People and Families submitted a report providing a summary of the responses to the consultation process on the proposal to withdraw the discretionary element of free transport that is currently approved for attendance at denominational schools with effect from September 2013. The report recommended three options for consideration by the Cabinet

7.2 Petition

7.2.1 The Cabinet received and noted a petition submitted by Bishop John, Diocese of Hallam, containing 59 signatures against the removal of discretionary bus fares for those children who are attending Catholic schools.

7.3 Chrissy Meleady made the following comments to Cabinet on the effect of the recommendations in the report to remove the current provision for discretionary transport for attendance at denominational schools:-

- the withdrawal of such funding would have an impact on the most vulnerable children and families who found it difficult to fund transport costs,
- there had been inadequate consultation on the Equalities Impact Assessment carried out in connection with the proposal; and
- what arrangements were in place to mitigate the impact of any decision taken to cease the payment of the discretionary element of transport funding for travel to and from denominational schools.

7.4 Following the receipt of the above petition and representations Cabinet made the under-mentioned decision:-

7.5 **RESOLVED:** That Cabinet agrees to withdraw all current provision for discretionary transport with effect from September 2013, including the withdrawal of passes for pupils who are currently in receipt of them under the current policy.

7.6 **Reasons for Decision**

7.6.1 The current provision to fund denominational transport is discretionary. Under the current economic climate there is an urgent necessity to explore all areas of potential savings and efficiency.

7.6.2 The proposed change in policy would also ensure that all children are treated more equitably. Under current arrangements a child may receive a free bus pass to attend a Catholic School even though that may not be their nearest school. If a non-Catholic student wishes to attend an out of catchment area school that is beyond the statutory walking distance they are not provided with free transport.

7.7 **Alternatives Considered and Rejected**

7.7.1 The alternatives of (a) retaining the current funding of discretionary transport or (b) withdrawing current provision for funding discretionary transport on a phased basis commencing with entry to Reception and Year 7 in September 2013 and each subsequent year (under this option, pupils currently receiving a pass under discretionary criteria would continue to receive it until they finish at their current school) were rejected on the grounds of equity and the need to maximise savings within the Council's budget

7.8 **Any Interest Declared or Dispensation Granted**

None

7.9 **Reason for Exemption if Public/Press Excluded During Consideration**

None

7.10 **Respective Director Responsible for Implementation**

Executive Director, Children, Young People and Families.

7.11 **Relevant Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee If Decision Called In**

Children, Young People and Family Support.

8. ITEMS CALLED-IN FOR SCRUTINY

- 8.1 The Chief Executive reported that there had been no items of business called-in for scrutiny from the meeting of Cabinet on 21st November, 2012.
- 8.2 The Cabinet noted the information reported.

9. RETIREMENT OF STAFF

- 9.1 The Chief Executive submitted a report on Council staff retirements.
- 9.2 **RESOLVED:** That this Cabinet:-

- (a) places on record its appreciation of the valuable services rendered to the City Council by the following staff in the Portfolios below:-

<u>Name</u>	<u>Post</u>	<u>Years' Service</u>
<u>Children, Young People and Families</u>		
Anne Wilson	School Manager, Longley Primary School	21
Sharon Revitt	Teacher, Stannington Infant School	33
Carol Willerton	Teaching Assistant Level 3, Netherthorpe Primary School	20
<u>Communities</u>		
Elaine Lindley	Support Worker	36
Ann Burrows	Cook	21
Brenda Lupton	Support Worker	28
<u>Resources</u>		
David Russell	Technical Officer, Property and Facilities Management	22

- (b) extends to them its best wishes for the future and a long and happy retirement; and
- (c) directs that an appropriate extract of the resolution now made under the Common Seal of the Council be forwarded to those staff above

with over twenty years service.

10. COMMUNITY COVENANT ANNUAL REPORT AND ACTION PLAN

10.1 The Executive Director, Resources, submitted a report fulfilling the Council's commitment to produce an Annual Report on the progress made in meeting the commitments made as part of the Community Covenant in Sheffield which sought to ensure that local services, such as education, housing etc. were appropriate to support the needs of the local armed forces community and which had been established in November 2011.

10.2 **RESOLVED:** That Cabinet:-

- (a) notes the progress made on the Community Covenant in Sheffield in the last year; and
- (b) approves the actions set out in the attached report.

10.3 **Reasons for Decision**

10.3.1 The Community Covenant ensures that services:-

- recognise the contribution made by the Armed Forces Community; remember the sacrifices made by members of the Armed Forces Community;
- share knowledge, experience and expertise to provide help and advice to members of the Armed Forces Community;
- encourage the integration from Service life into civilian life.

10.4 **Alternatives Considered and Rejected**

10.4.1 No alternatives were suggested or considered to be appropriate in the circumstances.

10.5 **Any Interest Declared or Dispensation Granted**

None

10.6 **Reason for Exemption if Public/Press Excluded During Consideration**

None

10.7 **Respective Director Responsible for Implementation**

Laraine Manley, Executive Director, Resources.

10.8 **Relevant Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee If Decision Called In**

Overview and Scrutiny Management .

11. **SECURING AND SUSTAINING GOOD QUALITY PERSONALISED SOCIAL CARE FOR ADULTS**

11.1 The Executive Director, Communities, submitted a report containing details of a business case for the future of the current social care service for adults provided directly by the Council. The report set out the scope of current services under consideration and the broad options for change open to the Council, consistent with the Council's aspirations.

11.2 **RESOLVED:** That Cabinet:-

- (a) approves City-wide customer and public consultation about service redesign and alternative service options;
- (b) approves a formal consultation with staff and trade unions about service redesign and alternative service options; and
- (c) approves the development of more detailed proposals in the form of a business case which will be submitted to Cabinet in late 2013.

11.3 **Reasons for Decision**

11.3.1 The policy direction set out in the Corporate Plan 'Standing up for Sheffield' requires consideration of alternative delivery arrangements for existing In-House services. An exploratory review carried out by Officers in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Health, Care and Independent Living has identified broad options for change which indicates the need for Officers to undertake more detailed analysis of the options informed by the views of stakeholders. This will lead to a detailed business case to inform future decisions.

11.3.2 The nature of the potential changes to Council directly provided services impact on a staff group of over 1,000 employees and supports approximately 13,000 customers across Sheffield. Clear communication, involvement and inclusion in shaping the future of services are essential

11.3.3 The core outcome 'Better Health and Wellbeing' in the Corporate Plan 'Standing Up for Sheffield' is clear that our approach to promoting lifelong health and wellbeing, promoting independence and having effective and efficient care will require a shift of funding towards individuals and communities. Self Directed Support and personalised budgets are providing opportunities for people to have greater choice and control over the services they want to meet their needs. The recommendations made are in order to develop a business case for how

the current resources invested in In-House services need to change to support this development.

11.4 Alternatives Considered and Rejected

11.4.1 The development of a full Business Case as proposed by this report will consider other potential change options and provide evidence for any future recommendations for change.

11.4.2 The Business Case will carry out a full programme risk assessment and Equalities Impact Assessments to inform future decisions.

11.5 Any Interest Declared or Dispensation Granted

None

11.6 Reason for Exemption if Public/Press Excluded During Consideration

None

11.7 Respective Director Responsible for Implementation

Richard Webb, Executive Director, Communities.

11.8 Relevant Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee If Decision Called In

Healthier Communities and Adult Social Care.

12. FUTURE OF COUNCIL HOUSING

12.1 The Executive Director, Communities, submitted a report containing details of the work undertaken, amongst other things, on the consultation with tenants, other customers and staff on the delivery of housing services in Sheffield following the transfer of Sheffield Homes staff to the Council on 1st April, 2013.

12.2 RESOLVED: That Cabinet:-

- (a) notes the updates given in this report; and
- (b) requests that a further report be presented to Cabinet when the outcomes of the service design work are known, detailing the longer-term proposals for the structure of housing services.

12.3 Reasons for Decision

12.3.1 At its meeting on 21st March 2012, Cabinet asked for a report to be brought back to Cabinet at a suitable time to 'set out the proposed

organisational structure and a timetable for implementation’.

- 12.3.2 This report satisfies that request – in its details of the location of Sheffield Homes Teams from 1st April 2013, and in its update on the progress of the Programme as a whole.

12.4 Alternatives Considered and Rejected

- 12.4.1 An alternative option for the organisational location of Sheffield Homes teams within the Council from 1st April 2013 was considered. This option involved dispersing Sheffield Homes teams more widely across the Council.

- 12.4.2 However, the long-term organisational location of Sheffield Homes teams within the Council will not be known until the service design work is completed. Therefore, to minimise any potential disruption to service delivery, and to reduce uncertainty for staff, the option to locate the majority of teams within the Communities Portfolio under a Director with lead responsibility for Council Housing was chosen.

- 12.4.3 Those teams who are transferring to a different location (eg. to the Resources Portfolio) are support services. For these specific teams, being located with the equivalent service in the Council will enable them to perform their function most effectively.

- 12.4.4 Although the majority of services will initially transfer to the Communities Portfolio, some teams will have regular interfaces with services within Place (eg. those working on council housing capital investment and strategy). This will help ensure that the necessary links are made to ensure that we maximise the benefits for integration.

12.5 Any Interest Declared or Dispensation Granted

None

12.6 Reason for Exemption if Public/Press Excluded During Consideration

None

12.7 Respective Director Responsible for Implementation

Richard Webb, Executive Director, Communities.

12.8 Relevant Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee If Decision Called In

Safer and Stronger Communities.

13. CHANGES TO COUNCIL TAX DISCOUNTS FOR SECOND HOMES AND EMPTY PROPERTIES.

13.1 The Executive Director, Resources, submitted a report referring to the Government's intention to provide, with effect from 1st April, 2013, local authorities with greater discretion on the level of Council Tax reliefs and discount they could offer as a means of generating more income. The report, specifically, contained proposals for the Council, from April, 2013, to remove the 10% discount on second homes, replace the exemption from Council Tax on empty homes in need of repair with a 25% discount for 12 months, replace the exemption from Council Tax on empty unfurnished with a 10% discount for 6 months and, in respect of properties that have been empty for 2 years, increase Council Tax liability by 50%.

13.2 **RESOLVED:** That Cabinet:-

- (a) notes the proposals relating to Council Tax discounts and the Empty Homes Premium, detailed in this report and set out in Appendix 1 to the report; and
- (b) recommends to Council that it approve the proposals, to take effect from 1st April 2013.

13.3 Reasons for Decision

13.3.1 Adopting the proposed changes to Council Tax discounts for second homes and empty properties will potentially generate income in the region of £2m per year.

13.3.2 The reduction of discounts on second homes and empty properties and the implementation of an empty homes premium may encourage property owners to bring properties back into use providing associated environmental benefits.

13.4 Alternatives Considered and Rejected

13.4.1 A number of options are available to the Council including doing nothing. Doing nothing is not recommended as it is clear that making changes to the discounts on second homes and empty properties offers a valuable source of income to the Council which will make a significant contribution to its budget planning.

13.4.2 Awarding no discount at all for all empty unfurnished homes and properties in need of repair is an option, however, it is considered that this option poses operational risks that will adversely impact the service and its ability to collect the additional revenue particularly by a potential increase in queries, complaints and appeals as well as an increase in avoidance tactics and potential fraudulent claims.

- 13.4.3 The proposals made in this report are expected to deliver a fair offer for the taxpayer, a realistic level of revenue for the Council and not to add a burden on the administration process through problems associated with tax avoidance and non payment.

13.5 **Any Interest Declared or Dispensation Granted**

None

13.6 **Reason for Exemption if Public/Press Excluded During Consideration**

None

13.7 **Respective Director Responsible for Implementation**

Laraine Manley, Executive Director, Resources.

13.8 **Relevant Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee If Decision Called In**

Overview and Scrutiny Management.

(NOTE: Councillors Isobel Bowler and Mazher Iqbal declared an interest in the above item on the grounds that they were in receipt of a discount for a second home and left the meeting during the consideration of the item.)

14. REVENUE BUDGET AND CAPITAL PROGRAMME MONITORING 2012 -13 (MONTH 6)

- 14.1 The Executive Director, Resources submitted a report providing the Month 6 Monitoring Statement on the City Council's Revenue and Capital Budget for 2012/13.

14.2 **RESOLVED:** That Cabinet:-

- (a) notes the updated information and management actions provided by this report on the 2012/13 budget position;
- (b) approves the release of £500,000 of additional financial support to Museums Sheffield as part of a long term stabilisation funding package as detailed in paragraph 15; and
- (c) in relation to the Capital Programme:-
 - (i) approves the proposed additions to the capital programme

listed in Appendix 1, including the procurement strategies and delegations of authority to the Director of Commercial Services or Delegated Officer, as appropriate, to award the necessary contracts following stage approval by Capital Programme Group;

- (ii) approves the proposed variations in Appendix 1, noting that some have already been approved by EMT within its delegated authority;
- (iii) notes the emergency approvals and variations approved by Directors under their delegated authority; and
- (iv) notes the latest position on the Capital Programme including the current level of forecasting performance.

14.3 Reasons for Decision

14.3.1 To formally record changes to the Revenue Budget and the Capital Programme and gain Member approval for changes in line with Financial Regulations and to reset the capital programme in line with latest information.

14.4 Alternatives Considered and Rejected

14.4.1 A number of alternative courses of action are considered as part of the process undertaken by Officers before decisions are recommended to Members. The recommendations made to Members represent what Officers believe to be the best options available to the Council, in line with Council priorities, given the constraints on funding and the use to which funding is put within the Revenue Budget and the Capital Programme.

14.5 Any Interest Declared or Dispensation Granted

None

14.6 Reason for Exemption if Public/Press Excluded During Consideration

None

14.7 Respective Director Responsible for Implementation

Laraine Manley, Executive Director, Resources.

14.8 Relevant Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee If Decision Called In

Overview and Scrutiny Management.

15. DISPOSAL OF LAND AT ROTHER VALLEY WAY.

15.1 The Executive Director, Resources, submitted a report to enter into a conditional contract with UYE (Ltd) for the disposal of land at Rother Valley Way on a 99 year lease with an option to purchase the freehold interest within the first ten years. The conditional contract requires UYE Ltd to comply with conditions which have been imposed as part of Planning Permission that was granted on 24th September 2012 for a Community Renewable Energy Centre.

15.2 **RESOLVED:** That Cabinet:-

- (a) declares the land at Rother Valley Way surplus to the requirements of the Council for disposal;
- (b) approves the conditional contract for the disposal of the site at Rother Valley Way to UYE Ltd. in accordance with the terms of this report and delegate authority to the Director of Property and Facilities Management to finalise the terms of the sale; and
- (c) authorises the Director of Property and Facilities Management to instruct the Director of Legal Services to prepare and complete all necessary documentation to conclude the sale in accordance with the agreed terms.

15.3 **Reasons for Decision**

15.3.1 UYE`s Community Renewable Energy Centre will generate electricity and hot water from the incineration of waste wood. The electricity will be supplied to the National Grid and the hot water to provide heating for nearby homes. The proposals will diversify the energy sources available in the City and reduce reliance on the burning of fossil fuels.

15.4 **Alternatives Considered and Rejected**

15.4.1 UYE Ltd has been trying to identify a suitable site for a Community Renewable Energy Centre for a number of years. A site immediately opposite Rother Valley Way was discounted at an early stage on the basis of its likely ecological impact. A further site immediately adjacent to the eastern boundary of the Traveller`s Site was also discounted at an early stage on the basis of its likely impact on the living conditions of the travellers.

15.5 **Any Interest Declared or Dispensation Granted**

None

15.6 **Reason for Exemption if Public/Press Excluded During Consideration**

None

15.7 Respective Director Responsible for Implementation

Laraine Manley, Executive Director, Resources.

15.8 Relevant Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee If Decision Called In

Overview and Scrutiny Management.

16. WYBOURN SITES DISPOSAL (CRICKET INN 1B AND 1C)

16.1 The Executive Director, Place, submitted a report seeking authority to dispose of two cleared sites at Wybourn, known as Cricket Inn 1B and 1C, to Great Places Housing Group (GPHG) for the development of housing for affordable rent. This follows the decision of Cabinet on 1 August 2012 to dispose of the first Cricket Inn development site, known as 1A, to GPHG for the same purpose

16.2 RESOLVED: That Cabinet:-

- (a) agrees that the Cabinet decision of 1 August 2012 concerning the disposal of the site then identified at Appendix A and now described as Cricket Inn Site1A, be rescinded;
- (b) agrees that, subject to planning permission, the site now shown at Appendix A as Cricket Inn 1A be leased to Great Places Housing Group at nil consideration for a period of 125 years for use as social housing;
- (c) agrees that, subject to planning permission, the site now shown at Appendix A as Cricket Inn 1B be leased to Great Places Housing Group at nil consideration for a period of 125 years for use as Social housing;
- (d) agrees that, subject to planning permission and funding for the development being secured the site now shown at Appendix A as Site 1C be leased to Great Places Housing Group at nil consideration for a period of 125 years for use as social housing;
- (e) authorises the Director of Property and Facilities Management, in consultation with the Director of Housing, Enterprise and Regeneration, to agree terms for the disposal of the sites for the purposes set out in this report and to instruct the Director of Legal Services to complete the transfer on the terms agreed; and
- (f) agrees the proposed nomination arrangements set out at Section 6 of this report.

16.3 Reasons for Decision

- 16.3.1 Disposal of these sites would allow for residential development consistent with the Council approved Masterplan for Wybourn, Arbourthorne and Manor Park.
- 16.3.2 The development of approximately 70 new homes for affordable rent would help meet the identified shortfall in affordable housing in the city.
- 16.3.3 The provision of a mix of housing types, including bungalows, would provide greater housing choice, especially for local older people who may wish to move to more suitable accommodation, thus freeing up much needed family housing.
- 16.3.4 The development of the sites by GPHG, the local landlord of choice, would ensure that local people and stakeholders were properly consulted and that their needs and aspirations were at the forefront of the planning and development process.

16.4 Alternatives Considered and Rejected

16.4.1 Do not dispose of the site yet.

In order to maximise receipt from the potential sale of the site it has been considered whether it would be appropriate to wait until an upturn in the economy before disposal. This would however mean that the site would be left undeveloped for an indeterminable time with no guarantee of developer interest in this site or potential best price offer.

It would also deny the opportunity to develop the site speedily and to fit with GPHG investment plans for the neighbourhood or resident expectation for the development of the site.

GPHG view continued investment in Wybourn as a high priority for their organisation, and the first new homes should be available by 2014.

The timely development of the site is also intended to raise developer confidence in the wider area which will be reflected in the viability of other potential projects.

This option would also delay the delivery of an important strategic intervention of the Wybourn and Manor Park Masterplan.

16.4.2 Open market with conditions/no conditions

Although this option could potentially allow rapid development of the site and maximise receipt, this is improbable in the current economic downturn as we could not guarantee developer interest or potential best price offer.

If the site was sold for open market development it would reduce the opportunity for local residents to access the new housing. It would also deny opportunity for local lettings and compromise the investment strategy of GPHG.

The process would also delay appointment of a developer and a start on site.

16.4.3 Disposal of the site to another Registered Provider

This option would allow development by a Registered Provider other than the local resident's landlord of choice.

Although this would introduce a choice of landlord for residents, it may compromise the opportunity for aligning investment and maintenance strategies.

This option may also compromise the compatibility of local lettings policies to the detriment of local residents wanting to access properties at Wybourn.

16.4.4 Disposal of the site to Sheffield Housing Company (SHC).

This site is not on the current list of sites that has been offered to the SHC. If it were to be offered then there is no certainty as to when the site would be released and any agreed release date would be made on the SHC priorities rather than local need.

16.4.5 Open competition with detailed development brief.

The Council could agree a development brief and advertise the site to developers. This would allow the Council to be prescriptive and prioritise the development requirements; however, it would delay the release of the site, be Council resource intensive and not guarantee developer interest or potential best price offer.

If a condition were included in the development brief that required that the developer work in partnership with GPHG then this may deter developer interest or create a difficult working arrangement that may be detrimental to any scheme.

16.5 Any Interest Declared or Dispensation Granted

None

16.6 Reason for Exemption if Public/Press Excluded During Consideration

None

16.7 Respective Director Responsible for Implementation

Simon Green, Executive Director, Place.

16.8 Relevant Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee If Decision Called In

Safer and Stronger Communities.

17. IMPLEMENTING THE COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY IN SHEFFIELD

17.1 The Executive Director, Place submitted a report containing proposals relating to the introduction of a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) as a new way of securing contributions from developers towards infrastructure provision through the planning system. The first stage in introducing such a levy was to establish a *Preliminary Draft Charging Schedule* setting out the proposed rates that will be charged on new development, and this will be subject to a period of public consultation.

17.2 **RESOLVED:** That Cabinet:-

- (a) agrees to publish a Preliminary Draft Charging Schedule for public consultation;
- (b) agrees that the Council proposes a multiple rate CIL, to include a 'buffer', to deal with uncertainties in assessing future viability equating to 50% of the calculated 'margin' that could make a CIL contribution, in line with the proposed rates set out in the Table in paragraph 7.2 of the report;
- (c) includes an option in the Charging Schedule to allow for relief to be offered in exceptional circumstances; and
- (d) offers payment of CIL in instalments as a matter of course, as assumed in the viability study.

17.3 Reasons for Decision

17.3.1 The CIL will help to deliver the City's strategic priorities for infrastructure provision, will be generated by economic growth and reinvested into economic growth and infrastructure. Successful implementation and investment of CIL funds will make the city more competitive.

17.3.2 The first stage in adopting a CIL is to produce a *Preliminary Draft Charging Schedule* setting out the proposed rates that will be charged on new development, and this will be subject to a period of public consultation.

17.3.3 The recommended CIL rates are based on the ability of development to

pay. A Viability Study has provided evidence that some development in the city can afford to pay a CIL charge to help meet identified needs for infrastructure. The CIL rates proposed represent a cautious approach to viability through the assumptions used and the inclusion of a 50% margin below the potential maximum affordable charge.

17.4 Alternatives Considered and Rejected

17.4.1 One option is not to implement a CIL, as it is not compulsory. Wolverhampton and Doncaster have decided not to implement a CIL at present. But most councils are working on a CIL because funding for essential infrastructure is not otherwise available (60 authorities have already published a Preliminary Draft Charging Schedule).

17.4.2 If implemented, the Council has the option to set either a single or multiple rate CIL. A single rate would be where all development in all areas pays the same amount per square metre. This would have the advantage of simplicity. However, as the rate has to be based on viability, multiple rates may be appropriate to reflect variations in the viability of different types of development and different locations. The Viability Study has recommended multiple rates due to significant variations in viability across different uses and areas. A multiple rate is likely to raise more total CIL revenue and better reflects the actual viability of individual developments

17.5 Any Interest Declared or Dispensation Granted

None

17.6 Reason for Exemption if Public/Press Excluded During Consideration

None

17.7 Respective Director Responsible for Implementation

Simon Green, Executive Director, Place.

17.8 Relevant Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee If Decision Called In

Economic and Environmental Well-being.

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