

Budget Consultation – Response from Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

At its meeting on 26 January 2023 the Council's Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee considered proposals relating to children's integrated services and education being consulted on for potential inclusion in the Council's proposed budget for 2023/24 and MTFP.

The Committee is supportive of the proposals relating to children's integrated services for 2023/24 in dovetailing with the transformation programme, and having potential to improve outcomes for children, young people and families by enabling children to get the right support in the right setting, alongside making financial savings and working towards a financially efficient service. However, the Committee has a concern about capacity and capability to manage and deliver the savings. While savings for 2022/23 are on track for delivery by the Service, there have been issues that affected delivery and mitigations for savings that have not happened as anticipated, which has affected outcomes for children and families. Where mitigations are proposed to reduce impact there needs to be clarity about the outcome of that and the extent to which that is a replacement for a Council saving or not. The Committee understands that the recent implementation of a corporate landlord model should support smoother management of building related issues in the future and that the Service is working with Newton Europe regarding development of the fostering offer, but the Committee seeks assurance that full and robust consideration is given to delivery plans and that the necessary resource is focused on ensuring smooth delivery, which hasn't always been the case in the past.

The Committee is aware that there is a proposal for additional resource to support the Council's scrutiny committees in carrying out their role in the governance of the organisation. The Committee is supportive of this proposal.