

Report of Head of Governance and Scrutiny Support

Report to Scrutiny Board (Children and Families)

Date: 14 December 2017

Subject: Financial Health Monitoring Children's Services

- 1) Budget Update Period 7 2017/18**
- 2) Budget Proposals for 2018/19**
- 3) Children's Centre Budget response to recommendations 6&7**

Are specific electoral Wards affected?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):		
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number:		
Appendix number:		

Summary of main issues

1. The Scrutiny Board (Children and Families) resolved to consider the budget of Children's Services at appropriate intervals. This is reflected in the work programme of the Scrutiny Board 2017/18. The purpose of this report is to provide Board Members with information with regard to the financial health of Children's Services for period 7 (appendix A). Period 7 information will be considered at the Executive Board on the 13 December 2017.
2. Initial budget proposals for 2018/19 are also due to be considered at the Executive Board meeting on 13 December 2017, when the Board is expected to refer the proposals to Scrutiny in accordance with the Budget and Policy Framework of the Council. This report is attached (appendix B).
3. The appended budget reports contain a full overview of the complete corporate budget to provide context, however the focus of Scrutiny Board (Children and Families) is in relation to the budget delegated to the Director of Children's Services.
4. The Scrutiny Board will have the opportunity at its meeting to raise any specific questions with regard to budget proposals that fall within its portfolio area. Any conclusions, observations and recommendations that are made by Scrutiny Board (Children and Families) will be fed back to Executive Board prior to full Council. Each Scrutiny Board will be undertaking a similar level of focus for their defined areas.

5. In October 2017 the Scrutiny Board agreed its inquiry report into Children's Centres. This report made a number of recommendations, two of which specifically relate to Children's Centre budgets as follows:

Recommendation 6 Desired Outcome – To secure the future financial sustainability of all Children's Centres in Leeds.

Recommendation 6 – That the Director of Children and Families explores how further funding reductions can be prevented in order to support the continued sustainability and prosperity of all Leeds Children's Centres by:

- a) working in collaboration with partner organisations to secure sufficient funding which will support continued integrated practice.
- b) working in collaboration with the Director of Resources and Housing to attain sufficient Local Authority funding in accordance with the Council's Budget and Policy Framework
- c) bringing a detailed report regarding Children's Centre funding proposals for 2018/19 to the Scrutiny Board in December 2017.

Recommendation 7 Desired Outcome – To promote financial planning, the building of aspirations and delivery of longer term programmes.

Recommendation 7 – That the Director of Children and Families provides additional stability by supporting the planning of services in the longer term and by investigating the feasibility of budget allocation to all Children's Centres that extends beyond the current 12 month annual settlement. The outcome of this investigation to be reported to this Scrutiny Board in December 2017.

6. The Director response to these specific recommendations will be provided after agenda publication and will follow as late supplementary information.
7. The Director of Children and Families and the directorate's Head of Finance has been invited to present the budget information and address any further questions from the Board.

Recommendations

8. Members are asked to:
- a. note the financial position of Children's Services for period 7 2016/17
 - b. consider the initial 2017/18 budget proposals relevant to the Scrutiny Board's portfolio and provide relevant comment and recommendations.
 - c. Consider the response of the Director of Children and Families to recommendations 6 and 7 of the Children's Centre Scrutiny Inquiry Report and make further recommendations as deemed appropriate.

Background documents - None¹

¹ The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.