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CORRESPONDENCE FOLLOWING THE COMMITTEE MEETING

Committee CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date and Time of Meeting TUESDAY, 12 DECEMBER 2017, 4.30 PM

Please find below correspondence send by the Committee Chair following the meeting, together with any responses received.

For any further details, please contact scrutinyviewpoints@cardiff.gov.uk

9 **Correspondence Following Committee Meeting** (Pages 3 - 8)

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County Hall
Cardiff,
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Neuadd y Sir
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Date 15 December 2017

My Ref SS/CYP/MJH

Councillor Graham Hinchey
Cabinet Member for Children and Families
County Hall
Atlantic Wharf
CARDIFF
CF10 4UW

Dear Graham

On behalf of the Committee, I would like to thank you, and Irfan Alam, Assistant Director Children's Services for attending the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee on 12 December 2017 to present the **Children's Services Quarter Two Performance report**.

The Committee noted the performance information included in the report and agreed that this quarter's data was not showing any clear improvement, and was not that different to previous reports. The Members also considered that many of the issues they were going to raise had been raised before and that they expected that they would receive similar responses.

Members explained that they were not going to ask any specific questions on the performance data, but would seek a different format of report, for the next quarter which highlighted the improvements being made.

During the way forward section of the meeting the Members considered the information in the report, and agreed that the format of future reports should be amended to include additional monitoring information, from which the Committee can assess the Directorates progress in addressing the challenges and risks that it is facing.

In respect of this additional monitoring information the Committee identified four key areas for future monitoring, namely:

- Recruitment and retention of children's social workers
- Performance in relation to the timeliness of assessments
- The percentage of looked after children returned home from care during the year
- The percentage of social worker vacancies and number and cost of resultant agency staff

The Committee is particularly interested in receiving the following information for each of the above points:

- The current position
- The trend over the past five years
- The management target and how it was calculated
- The current management actions to improve current performance
- The expected future quarterly improvements

In addition the Committee would also be pleased to receive details of the budgetary implications of the projected growth in the number of children who are looked after for this year and the years covered by the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan.

The Committee looks forward to receiving the additional monitoring information in addition to the next and future quarterly performance reports for Children's services.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'L. BRIDGEMAN', written over a light grey rectangular background.

COUNTY COUNCILLOR LEE BRIDGEMAN
Chairperson – Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

CC: Tony Young, Director of Children's Services
Jo Watkins – Cabinet Business Manger
Irfan Alam – Assistant Director for Children's Services



Fy Nghyf / My Ref: CM39101

Dyddiad / Date: 2nd February 2018

Councillor Lee Bridgeman
C/O Members Services
County Hall
Atlantic Wharf
Cardiff
CF10 4UW

Annwyl/Dear Lee

Children & Young People Scrutiny - 12 December 2017

Thank you for your letter dated 15th December 2017 on behalf of the members of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee following its meeting on the above date.

I would like to thank members for their constructive comments and I am pleased to provide the following response to your request for a different format of report for the next quarter.

- We are in the process of reviewing the existing report and developing a new reporting template. The Assistant Director, Children's Services and Service Manager, Policy & Performance will arrange to meet with you in advance of the next Committee to propose a new template.

In relation to your request for details of the budgetary implications of the projected growth in the number of children who are looked after for this year, and the years covered by the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan, please note the summary below.

A budget realignment for pressures in Children's Services was reflected in the Budget Proposals for Consultation as approved by Cabinet on 2nd November 2017. This reflected known commitments in the current financial year as identified at that time including any potential full year impact in 2018/19. In addition to this, it is anticipated that a contingency will continue to be maintained to cover the cost of new cases in 2018/19. In 2017/18, this contingency amounted to £950,000. The Cabinet are currently considering their budget proposals for 2018/19 and these will be presented to Cabinet on 15th February.

ATEBWCH I / PLEASE REPLY TO :

Swyddfa Cymorth Y Cabinet / Cabinet Support Office, Ystafell / Room 518, Neuadd y Sir / County Hall
Glanfa'r Iwerydd / Atlantic Wharf, Caerdydd/Cardiff, CF10 4UW
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In relation to future years (2019/20 and beyond), an amount of £1.5m per annum is currently built into the MTFP for future demographic pressures (the £1.5m would be the equivalent cost of approximately an additional 38 children, if placed in an external fostering placement). It is also anticipated, in future years, that the current arrangements for a contingency will be maintained, though this would be subject to the detailed budget proposals for those years.

Yn gywir
Yours sincerely



Councillor / Y Cynghorydd Graham Hinchey
Cabinet Member for Children & Families
Aelod Cabinet dros Blant a Theuluoedd

My Ref: Scrutiny/Correspondence/MJH

13 December 2017

Councillor Sarah Merry
Cabinet Member - Education and Skills
County Hall
CARDIFF CF10 4UW



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Dear Sarah

On behalf of the Committee, I would like to thank you for attending the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee on 12 December 2017 to provide an opening statement and answering questions on the **21st Century Schools – Band B Priorities – draft Cabinet Report**

I would also like to thank Nick Batchelar, Director of Education and Lifelong Learning, for the report and answers to Members questions. Members really appreciated the opportunity to scrutinise this issue at such an early stage. The Members also wished to express their appreciation for all the hard work that the Education Directorate staff have undertaken to ensure that these proposals were presented to the Welsh Government.

The Committee welcomed the announcement by the Welsh Government of their approval, in principle, of the strategic outline case submitted by Cardiff Council to the value of £284M, half funded by the Welsh Government and half funded by the Council. Members noted this approval is subject to the approval of individual project business cases.

The Committee agreed to commend the report to Cabinet.

During the way forward section of the meeting the Members considered the information in the report, together with answers to their questions, and agreed to provide you with the following comments, concerns and recommendations your consideration prior to Cabinet approving the report.

The Committee considered that communication of the plans and projects was critical to the success of the Plan B priorities and wished to seek your assurance that all stakeholders will be kept informed of the progress of the Plan B schemes, in addition to the statutory consultation.

The Committee did express concern that the funding of the revenue consequences of the proposals would be dependent on the significant annual capital financing costs being included in the annual budget report and failure to fund these costs would severely restrict the essential improvements to the school estate.

The Committee also expressed concern around the maintenance of the school estate, and recommended that a detailed maintenance programme is developed and integrated into future school and council budgets.

The Committee was particularly concerned that communities should also benefit from the programme of new builds. A member highlighted that access to communities facilities at Eastern High may be managed by a private company. The Committee recommended that, as the operational arrangements of the community facilities at Eastern High had not yet been finalised, the operational arrangements must be kept in-house.

Finally the Members noted that a series of reports will be presented to Cabinet as each other the separate projects move forward. The Committee requested that these reports be presented to this Committee prior to their consideration at Cabinet.

I hope that these comments will be of use and support in the future development of the School Estate in Cardiff and implementation of the Plan B priorities, and the Committee looks forward to working with the Directorate and Cabinet in the future.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'L. BRIDGEMAN', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

COUNTY COUNCILLOR LEE BRIDGEMAN
Chairperson – Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

CC: Nick Batchelar, Director of Education and Lifelong learning
Jo Watkins – Cabinet Business Manger