

Children and Young People Services

School Funding Reforms – Draft Budgets

Following the national changes to school funding reforms, Cambridgeshire Primary and Secondary Schools have now received their draft budgets for 2013/14. We are working with Heads to explain and manage some of the more complex areas around SEN funding. The main change is the simplification of formula factors. Cambridgeshire has a complex formula which attempts to recognise schools' different circumstances. The new system means that we need to apply just 10 formula factors which will inevitably mean some turbulence for schools.

As schools begin to consider their financial position, Cambridgeshire Schools Forum and the Local Authority continue to lobby Ministers on the case for fairer funding so that the next stage of reform finally leads to Cambridgeshire children attracting similar funding to similar children in similar circumstances elsewhere. A letter has been sent from the County Council to Michael Gove MP outlining our concerns.

OfSTED National Report on Education Standards

OfSTED have published their annual report of the quality of education and learning provision across local authority areas. The report recognised that schools in England are getting better, with 70% of schools now rated good or outstanding across the Country. In Cambridgeshire 66% of primary schools and 67% of secondary schools are rated as good or outstanding. The report has highlighted in particular that the number of schools that are good or outstanding varies widely across different parts of the country.

Early Education Funding Allocations

Free early education will become a statutory entitlement for two year olds from lower income households from 1 September 2013. The Department for Education has [announced](#) revenue funding allocations to local authorities to provide these early education places. Cambridgeshire will receive just over £3million for 2013/14 supported by a further £1.82 million of 'ramping up' funding to establish new education places where they don't already exist.

The creation of new early education placements for 2 years olds from disadvantaged backgrounds is very welcome but the funding picture is complex. Although the new statutory duty is accompanied by ring-fenced funding through the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) the Department has simultaneously and significantly reduced another key

funding stream, the Early Intervention Grant (EIG) which used to cover early year place provision. The reduction in EIG is much greater than the current spend on 2 year olds meaning that in overall resource terms this represents an un-funded mandate – with a new statutory requirement on the authority but a net decrease in available funding.

Fostering Service

October half term saw us celebrate the annual Sons and Daughter's week, a national campaign to say "thank you" to the children of foster carers. This year, we teamed up with a number of local organisations who offered a range of free and discounted activities. In December, Huntingdon Community Radio will be broadcasting a programme about fostering which will include interviews with a Cambridgeshire County Council foster carer, a looked after young person and a member of staff.

The fostering team are busy responding to an increased number of enquiries following our autumn advertising campaign in a number of local newspapers. We are looking forward to meeting 11 potential fostering families at the November information session.

Model of Staged Intervention

The Model of Staged Intervention (MOSI) exists to provide a common understanding of children's needs, a shared understanding of the roles and responsibilities of services and to aid practitioners in understanding the thresholds of different services. This document aims to provide guidance about thresholds to help ensure that the right response is given, by the right services, at the right time. The website includes 4 easy to read posters, which we are encouraging all teams, schools settings and agencies to print off and make available to all staff and practitioners.

Participation

A short animated film "Hello my name is Joe..." about entering foster care, made by some of our Looked After young people, was premiered at Cambridgeshire Arts Picture house and was well received by all. The additional benefits for those young people who participated was the learning of new skills. Plans are in place to show the film to colleagues within the county council and outside. It was recently shared with Members during a presentation of being a Corporate Parent.

Marlborough Multi-family groups

Multi-family systemic programmes are being delivered in schools to support children and young people with challenging behaviour who are at risk of social exclusion. The evidenced based programme that has been piloted in Cambridgeshire is being rolled out to include more schools, both primary and secondary. The weekly therapeutic sessions run in school by a therapist/psychologist and a member of school staff will bring together 6-8 children and their parent/carer to work together to bring about changes in behaviour.

Home care contract

The new contract for home based support services commenced on 1 November. Contracts were awarded to 6 Strategic Providers and 28 Preferred Providers. The Council purchases over 1 million hours of care per year, the majority of which are for older people, providing assistance with daily tasks such as personal care, help with eating and administering medication.

The new contract sought to reduce the number of organisations providing services across the county by specifying explicit contract standards and seeking the most competitive prices for different types of care in each of the 5 contract areas. In general the contract has been successful; however there have been a few problems with late calls and a small number of missed calls.

These issues are being investigated by the Adult Social Care Contracts Team, supported by care managers from Cambridgeshire Community Services. Many problems stem from a lack of availability of care staff across the county. Recruiting staff continues to be challenging for all providers due to the competing employment opportunities available to job seekers.

Every agency is currently advertising for staff and the Council has been involved in organising recruitment events alongside its Strategic Providers. Weekly meetings are taking place with Strategic Providers to discuss the challenges facing health and social care. Officers are also meeting with Preferred Providers in order to maximise the efficient use of care staff across each contract area.

Benefit Changes Awareness Sessions

The Government's Welfare Reform changes are having an increasing effect on people who receive a range of benefits. The biggest effects are being felt in Housing Benefit, where restrictions are leading to shortfalls in benefit and increasing concern about homelessness. From April 2013, restrictions for Housing Benefit for social housing are expected to affect around 4,300 households in the county. The 'Benefit Cap' will affect a further 200 families in the county, with excess benefit taken from the Housing Benefit the family receives.

Council Tax Benefit is being replaced by local schemes from April 2013, with local support schemes being introduced. This is likely to result in cuts in support for working age households. Changes are also happening to sickness and disability benefits, with the Disability Living Allowance for adults to be replaced by a new benefit, the Personal Independence Payment. The County Council, District Councils, Housing Associations and voluntary organisations are all concerned about the changes. In conjunction with the districts we ran a series of information sessions throughout October to explain the changes and the likely effects on service users.

More than 400 people from councils and voluntary bodies attended. Feedback has been largely positive about the sessions although there is real concern about how the changes will impact on vulnerable households. Due to the very high demand, extra sessions are being arranged and the County Council is working to improve liaison with partner agencies to map the effect of the benefit changes on local people and how we can best respond to them.

Economy Transport and Environment Services

Connecting Cambridgeshire

The Connecting Cambridgeshire project to provide better broadband for all by 2015 is on track to conclude the complex procurement process early in the New Year. The contract award is subject to EU State Aid approval and sign off, and will be made in the early months of 2013, with the roll-out plan to follow. Bidders have been given a small extension to the timescale to ensure the highest quality bids in order to secure the maximum investment in rolling out the broadband infrastructure across Cambridgeshire. Demand registration for the Connecting Cambridgeshire campaign is still rising and is close to a record 24,000 registrations, supported by 98 local Broadband Champions. The campaign success shows the high level of demand for better broadband across Cambridgeshire and registration will close at the end of December.

Super-connected City bid success

A bid for Greater Cambridge to be a super-connected city with ultrafast broadband speeds of 80-100 mbps has been submitted to the Department of Culture Media and Sport's Urban Broadband Fund and the success of our bid was announced in the Chancellor's Autumn Statement. For more information, visit the [website](#) or [contact Connecting Cambridgeshire](#)

Cambridgeshire Future Transport

Linton-Balsham Area - Currently working with the community to finalise proposals. Questionnaire responses have been collated and local transport options developed. These have been discussed with the Parish Councils. The options went back to the community on the 19 Oct and the community has suggested alternative options. A working group of local users, parish reps, members and CCC is looking to develop a final option. In the Whittlesford Area - a solution has been agreed and is now out to tender.

Areas C and D - meetings have been held with all South Cambridgeshire parishes in these areas. The parishes were very positive about the process and have agreed to help in the engagement process. Meetings have also been held with East Cambridgeshire parish councils. Initial meetings with community groups has begun and a working group put together to help develop options.

Allocation of Community Transport funding - the criteria for allocation of the Community Transport Funding is being developed. The member steering group, formally the Governance Group met on 21 of Sept. They have signed off the Community Engagement strategy and asked that further work is carried out on the Community Transport Fund allocation criteria. CFT is meeting with Community Transport providers and District officers to agree a final draft of the criteria on 6 of Nov.

STRATEGY AND DEVELOPMENT

Transport Strategy for Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire

The consultation closed on 28 September. The consultation process has been aligned with City Council's and South Cambridgeshire Local Plan consultations. Some 292 responses were received and there was a high level of endorsement for the vision and objectives outlined, and for a long term strategy to be produced which aims to 'do more' to improve accessibility and reduce congestion. Modeling work is underway with an assessment of Growth Options. A report was taken to the Joint Member meeting on 30th November to outline governance, timescales and principles and priorities for progressing towards a draft Transport Strategy which is proposed to be consulted on in summer 2013.

A14

We have been working closely with DfT and local partners on the A14 study which has now been completed and the final stage is due to be published imminently. Much work is still required to finally define the scheme, decide how it will be procured, by whom and what role the Local Authorities will play in its delivery. Nevertheless there are steps which can and should be taken to expedite delivery.

We have initiated early discussions between Local Authorities and LEPs in the region to explore how far they can support the financing of the scheme from future locally-controlled revenue streams.

Detailed discussions are ongoing with Government about the ultimate funding package, what special delivery arrangements might be instigated to deliver the design, part financing and delivery of the scheme. More work is also needed on determining the optimum tolling strategy to raise revenue while minimising the diversion of traffic to other routes. The Secretary of State suggested that construction could begin in 2018 (and possibly as early as 2016 if a conventional funding route were used). If that is to be the case, then detailed scheme design will need to commence soon.

The DfT has allocated £5m to the Highways Agency within this current spending period to progress the scheme through the options and development phases review, although the design process is likely to need more funding, even if the scheme draws heavily on the preparatory work of the previous scheme. The separate announcement, also on 18 July 2012, of the Government's intention to underwrite £50bn of infrastructure investment, may offer an opportunity to help with the delivery of the A14 corridor transport improvements.

Cambridge Science Park Station

The station has multiple benefits, including improved access to the railway network from the north side of the city, improved access to the key employment centres at the Science Park and other business parks on the northern fringe, direct interchange with the Busway,

and opening up a significant area of land for economic development. The design of the new station is being developed in partnership with Network Rail and the train operators and the formal Option Selection report was submitted to Network Rail at the beginning of November. The public are now being asked for their input to the emerging designs to allow a final design to be developed for submission of a planning application in the New Year.

There has been a delay to the franchise process as the issuing of the invitation to tender for Thameslink due in October has been delayed for three months by the DfT following the review of the West Coast Main Line tendering process. It is not anticipated that this delay will have any impact on the delivery of the station at this stage.

Ely Rail Crossing

There is a common agreement that action needs to be taken to resolve the growing congestion at the level crossing. The selected bypass option is currently felt to be the best solution when all factors are taken into account. The impact on Ely Cathedral has been given due consideration alongside the other factors: reduction in congestion, severance between the railway and the town, future traffic growth and cost benefit. The suggested 'hidden bypass' presents some significant technical challenges, but to demonstrate that all options are being properly considered this proposal is now being subjected to a full technical evaluation comparable with those undertaken for the other options. To allow this to take place the public consultation planned for November has been deferred until January.

Cycleways

High quality cycle routes allow people to cycle to work, education and for leisure providing benefits to the economy, congestion, the environment and people's health and wellbeing. The Council has been successful in securing funding for an expanded programme of cycleway provision from the EU, through the Local Sustainable Transport Fund, and from new developments. Additional staff have been recruited to deliver this programme which will be implemented over the next three years.

Local Plans - Strategy & Delivery

South Cambridgeshire DC is currently consulting on the detail of the sites to be included in their draft Local Plan. The next version of this will be subject to a further round of public consultation in January/February 2013.

Cambridge City Council is currently consulting on the detail of the sites to be included in their draft Local Plan. The next version of this will be subject to a further round of public consultation in January/February 2013.

INFRASTRUCTURE MANAGEMENT AND OPERATIONS

Waste PFI

The continued suspension of the MBT facility remains following the structural failure in September 2012. AmeyCespa are undertaking further assessments to determine the cause of the failure and to put a contingency plan in place. All other parts of the facility remain fully operational as before and stakeholders and communities have been informed. Until we have commissioned a detailed recovery plan from AmeyCespa and review its contents we are unable to determine the length of time the MBT facility will be out of action. AmeyCespa has made no claim against the Council and we are aware of no negative financial affects upon the Council, in fact the terms of the PFI mean that the Council is protected financially in these circumstances.

The Community Re-Paint Scheme that is contracted by AmeyCespa to collect paint from our Household Recycling Centres for re-use and recycling back into the community announced on 15 October that it has some significant financial problems. Officers have worked with AmeyCespa, CCORRN and Partners to keep the scheme running, so that CCORRN can receive the outcomes of its funding bids and sponsorship arrangements. The scheme will now continue until the end of the financial year. Officers will be working with AmeyCespa and CCORRN on identifying the value of this scheme for the community against the costs, to evaluate whether it is sustainable for all parties in the long-term.

Operation Magpie

We have received good publicity after five rogue traders who preyed on elderly and vulnerable people in and around Cambridgeshire have been given sentences totaling more than 17 years in prison. The sentencing was as a direct result of a two year investigation into rogue trading activity (referred to as Operation Magpie) conducted by the County Council's Trading Standards service in conjunction with the Police after complaints were first received in summer 2010.

Street Lighting PFI

A Recovery Plan is being actioned by the Service Provider to improve their overall performance in delivering the Core Investment Programme to bring our street lighting stock up to the required standards together with the 10% overall reduction in stock needed. Particular emphasis is being placed upon improving the Service provider's consultation process undertaken with local Communities and their elected members. Previous issues raised from earlier works undertaken are being addressed by Officers and the Service provider. .

Customer Service and Transformation

Health and Wellbeing Strategy

The Cambridgeshire Shadow Health and Wellbeing Board have now approved the Cambridgeshire Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2012-17. The Strategy focuses on the following six priorities to improve the physical and mental health and wellbeing of Cambridgeshire residents. In particular, within each of these priorities, we will work to improve the health of the poorest fastest:

1. Ensure a positive start to life for children, young people and their families.
2. Support older people to be independent, safe and well.
3. Encourage healthy lifestyles and behaviours in all actions and activities while respecting people's personal choices.
4. Create a safe environment and help to build strong communities, wellbeing and mental health.
5. Create a sustainable environment in which communities can flourish.
6. Work together effectively.

Officers from the Council and partner organisations have been identified to lead operationally on action planning for each of the first five priorities within the Strategy. The Health and Wellbeing Board will be responsible for ensuring the action plans reflect the aims of priority six.

Greater Cambridgeshire Local Nature Partnership

Work on the development of a Greater Cambridgeshire Local Nature Partnership (GCLNP) has reached the stage of forming a Board that will develop a delivery plan for the promotion and enhancement of the local natural environment, highlighting the social and

economic benefits of having a high quality natural environment. The Board membership, made up from a wide-ranging group of organisations, represents the cross-cutting benefits the natural environment can provide. The first meeting of the board will take place on Thursday 10 January.

Children's Centres and Wild Play

Over the summer we have worked with colleagues at Children's Centres in Cherry Hinton, Sawston, Linton, March and Somersham, delivering a programme of *Wild Play* sessions. These have proved very popular with a total of 100 children and 69 adults attending a total of 9 sessions. The aim of *Wild Play* is to encourage more physical activity through getting younger children (and their parents/carers) to learn and discover the wonders of the natural environment through interactive play sessions. Participation on a regular basis can have benefits for health and social skills.

Sawston Library

The Library Service has agreed terms with the Village College for a temporary building to be erected on the College site as a temporary library facility, until the school building is rebuilt or an alternative provided through the development of a community hub for Sawston.

County Councillor John Reynolds
County Briefing
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