

By: Marisa White, Head of Strategic Planning and Review

To: Kent Children's Trust Board

Date of Meeting: 4 March 2011

Subject: Overview of Financial Resources for Children's Services in Kent

Classification: Confidential to KCT Unrestricted For Information Only

Summary of Paper:

This report has been prepared to support a shared understanding of financial resources for children's services across Kent. It is intended to facilitate decision making about resource allocation against priorities within the context of the new Children's and Young Peoples Plan and to highlight potential areas of opportunity and risk. It details budget information as at February 2011 and recognises that details about budget cuts, redirection and redesign are still emerging.

KCT Board are asked to:

- Consider the overview of resources, and debate the impact on action to address priorities for the new CYPP and outcomes for children, young people and families.
- Share further information and identify next steps to build and refine the partnership overview of resources against a delivery plan for the CYPP, particularly for Year One.
- Provide a steer to Local Children's Trust Boards on developing a district based overview of resources for children's services.

1. Introduction & Background

1.1 The purpose of the Kent's children's trust arrangements is to improve the wellbeing and life chances for children and young people in Kent through joint working at strategic and local levels. The KCT County Board has a particular role to set ambition, agree values and identify partnership priorities to improve outcomes. These ambitions, values and priorities are expressed through the Children and Young People's Plan. Although the government has withdrawn the statutory basis for a CYPP it has clearly stated that:

'Partnership working gets results. We have no plans to remove this sensible principle, enshrined in the 'duty to cooperate' (section 10 of the Children Act 2004) from legislation. Local authorities should continue to lead partnership arrangements that make sense for local people and services' DfE November 2010

The KCTB has agreed to continue to produce a CYPP for 2011 -2014 to drive partnership activity and service improvements; this is in line with many other children's trust partnerships.

1.2 The KCT review 2009 identified that there is considerable evidence of effective joint working in certain areas of service delivery and there is strong support for

partnership working in principle however there is limited evidence of joint commissioning involving shared and pooled resources to address priorities identified through our needs assessment. This was identified as a development area for the Kent Children's Trust and there was a commitment by the KCTB to work towards resourced joint commissioning plans to underpin the new CYPP. Progress since June 2010 has been hindered by huge changes at national level creating uncertainty about resources across all partner agencies however the need to maximise resources through a joined up and place based approach has become more pressing. We need to move from sharing information to making decisions around what we commission, where we focus our staffing resources and how we change the way we work in order to impact on our priority areas and improve outcomes for children, young people and families.

2. Financial overview

2.1 On 11 February members of the KCT Executive Commissioning Group shared budget information as set out in Appendix 2. The intention was to support a shared understanding of budget reductions and opportunities to support partnership planning and joint work through the new CYPP. It was recognised that much information was still emerging and this overview would need to continually updated over the coming months.

2.2 Since this date the County Council has considered the KCC Medium Term Plan 2011-13 including the budget setting for 2011-12. A summary of key points relating to the Children, Families and Education budget is attached as Appendix 1.

3. CYPP priorities and the Early Intervention Grant

3.1 The KCTB has agreed that the top priorities for partnership action through the CYPP are safeguarding and emotional health and CAMHs. These areas will be the primary focus of the KCT during year one of the new CYPP. Effective use of the new Early Intervention Grant (EIG) will be central to securing improvements in safeguarding and emotional health.

3.2 A number of existing centrally directed grants to support services for children, young people and families are ending. In their place, the EIG will provide a substantial new funding stream for early intervention and preventative services. The new grant is not ring-fenced, bringing a significant extension of local flexibility to respond to local needs and drive reform. The EIG supports a focus on early intervention in the early years and up through the age range, and provides new opportunities to pool and align funding to enable local authorities and partners to target disadvantage and achieve better results.

3.3 The new Early Intervention Grant is £11.5m less in 2011/12 than the original announcements for the 2010/11 grants which transferred into the new grant. Some of this reduction relates to the in-year reductions to Area Based Grant in 2010/11 (which were expected to be reflected in the 2011/12 settlement) but the further reductions (equivalent to 9.7% nationally) were not anticipated. See appendix 3 for further information on the EIG grant.

3.4 The Kent Children's Trust has now agreed to establish shared resources to improve the provision of emotional health and tier 2/3 CAMHs provision across the county.

4. Participation and engagement

4.1 The KCT is committed to engaging children, young people and families in decisions about and for them both at strategic and local levels. Through the 'good childhood' engagement programme in 2010 we know that from the seven areas of greatest need children, young people and families feel that the top priorities for partnership action are:

- Safeguarding
- Homelessness and housing
- Family poverty

Involving children, young people, families and citizens in general should underpin resource decisions particularly at the local level.

5. Equalities

The impact of budget reductions and opportunities on particular groups must be central to decision making. Equality impact assessments will be undertaken as partnership action is agreed through the CYPP.

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- Share further information and identify next steps to build and refine the partnership overview of resources.
- Provide a steer to Local Children's Trust Boards on developing a district based overview of resources for children's services.

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