

Open Report on behalf of Debbie Barnes, Assistant Director Children's Services

Report to:	Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee
Date:	25 February 2011
Subject:	Proposals for Children's Services Core Offer 2011/2014

Summary:

This paper outlines the services which LCC propose to continue to deliver as part of its core offer post March 2011.

Actions Required:

To discuss and comment on the proposal for Children's Services core offer.

1. Background

The proposals contained within this paper are made as a response to the significant budget cuts announced in the Government's Spending Review in October 2010. In light of these budgetary reductions, Children's Services has further reviewed its current service. This paper outlines the services which Children's Services propose to continue to deliver and/or remodel as part of its core offer post March 2011.

The core budget for Children's Services in 2009/10 is £87,497,090 with additional funding made up from grants. Children's Services need to make a circ 20% reduction over 4 years in its core budget with grants streamlined into the Early Intervention Grant (this grant has been subject to a circ 11% reduction nationally).

Over the past 3 years, Children's Services have worked hard to drive out inefficiencies and have reduced the budget by £10 million. This has been achieved through reducing management costs (Heads of Service reductions x 3 in the last restructuring, a reduction of 17 managerial posts as a result of social care modernisation) better contract management (family support/out of county placements) decommissioning non priority services as well as service reviews in transport and social care. Our continued modernisation of services together with our need to reduce the budget has led to a further reconfiguration of service delivery. This reconfiguration prioritises early intervention whilst bringing specialist (social care) and targeted services closer together to provide a more responsive, flexible and seamless service for children and families. We have also reduced our back office functions predominantly in our commissioning and performance service whilst maintaining quality assurance posts (consistent with the coalition's drive to

reduce performance targets whilst driving up quality of front line services). The impact of this will be to target performance reporting on key areas of service delivery.

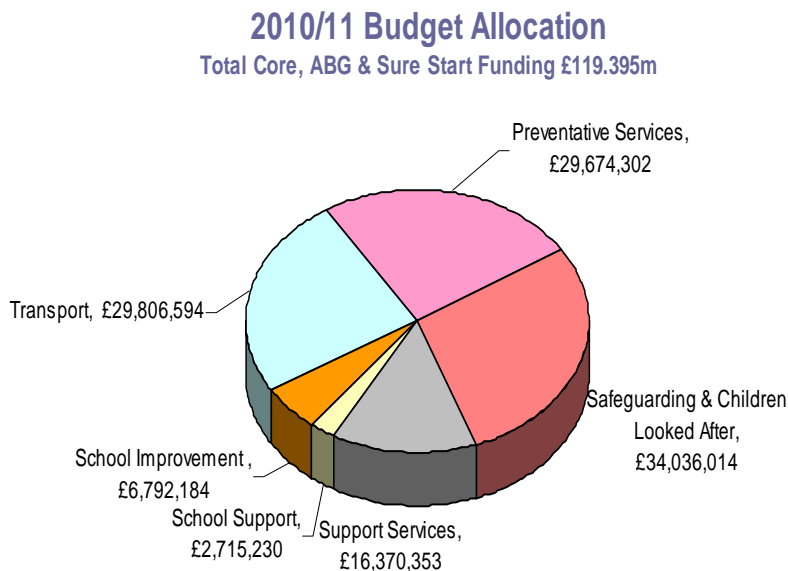
1. Overview of Children’s Services Budget

Children’s Services currently deliver a range of services which are best summarised as follows:

- Home to school/ college transport
- Services which promote children’s learning including school improvement
- Services which keep children and young people safe and promote their welfare
- Preventative services including Children’s Centres and positive activities for young people
- Regulated Services to safeguard vulnerable children
- Back office functions including performance management/provision planning/ quality assurance/ commissioning and business support to support front line activity

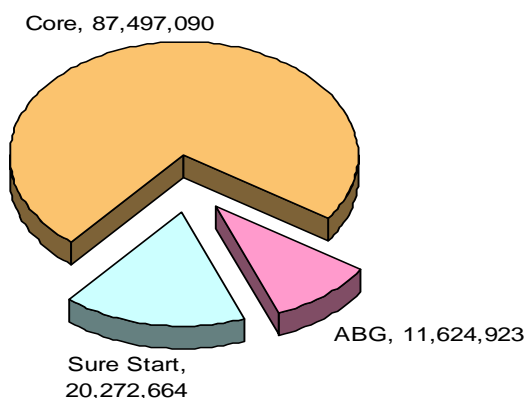
The budgets to deliver these services are made up of core budget and a series of grants.

Breakdown of 2010/11 budget including 2010/11 Sure Start Grant within Preventative Services



Budget breakdown by funding type

2010/11 Budget Breakdown



ABG – Area Based Grant

The proposals within this paper provide a saving of over £22 million over 4 years phased as follows:

2011/12 £11.379m
2012/13 £9.564m
2013/14 £1.520m
2014/15 £0.589m

The savings represent 23% of the base budget (including Area Based Grant)

2. Priorities

OfSTED has judged Children's Services overall as outstanding for safeguarding, and good for children looked after with outstanding capacity to improve. Lincolnshire's school performance is strong and the Council's ambitious Transformation Programme plays a leading role in the improvement and efficiency agenda. It is essential we retain our quality services which have achieved excellent outcomes for children and families and received regional and national accolades. The development of a commissioning strategy with partner agencies is a key programme of activity that will, in the future challenge the directorate to shape service delivery towards a new operating model.

Our priorities have been refreshed as follows:

Early Intervention and Prevention:-

- Strong universal services, focusing on early action and intensive support for vulnerable children and young people

Safeguarding

- Ensuring children are safe in every environment

Aspiration and Well being

- Closing the gap between vulnerable groups and children living in disadvantaged communities

- Developing self esteem and self belief in all children, young people and their families

Achievement

- Ensuring all children achieve their potential

Best Use of Resources

- Make best use of resources to provide better services locally
- Empower communities, creating more opportunities for them to engage and make a contribution

2a Core Offer - Our core offer post 2010/11 will be funded through core budget and Early Intervention Grant (EIG) as well as centrally held elements of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) and will include the following:

Services for Safeguarding and Children Looked After

- Fostering and residential homes
- Adoption Service
- Leaving Care service (including enhanced apprenticeship scheme)
- Assessment and support for children in need of protection
- Statutory reviews of looked after children
- Advocacy service for looked after children
- Family Group Conference Service
- Services for unaccompanied asylum seeking children
- Identification and support for children in need
- Contribution to the duties of the Safeguarding Children Board
- Emergency Duty Service
- Domestic Abuse Support
- Interventions for victims and perpetrators of sexual harm
- Performance assurance as a key mechanism for service improvement

Services which promote children's learning including school improvement

- School Improvement Service
- Services to promote positive behaviour and attendance
- Assessment of elective home education
- Licensing for employment of young people
- Early Years and Child Care Services
- Sufficiency of School Places
- School Admissions and Appeals
- Services to track children missing education
- Statutory Home to School / College transport (with some policy changes)
- Statutory Special educational needs including assessment for statements / monitoring of schools Special Education Needs duties
- Pupil Referral Units and outreach into schools to support behaviour/ attendance and children with additional needs

- Training for Special Educational Needs Co-Ordinators in schools and settings
- 14-19 Commissioning
- Parent Partnership
- Virtual School for looked after children (remodelled service to challenge and support schools to use the pupil premium)
- Music Service
- Birth to Five Services to provide quality and sufficiency of early years provision
- Art and sport in school
- Capacity to promote school partnership
- School improvement projects to drive up standards (these are wide ranging and further details can be provided)

Prevention and early intervention services to promote welfare

- Children's Centres
- Family Support and Parenting interventions
- Targeted positive activities and interventions for young people to promote participation and reduce anti social and risk taking behaviours
- Community development work to encourage communities to provide universal activities for young people through a Big Society approach
- Drug and alcohol services
- Support for young carers
- Assessment and support for children with disability including transition
- Provision of direct payments and short term breaks for children with disability
- Information and participation service
- Education welfare (moving to a traded model)
- Domestic abuse services
- Services to promote emotional well being of vulnerable children including investment in psychology services

Future Developments

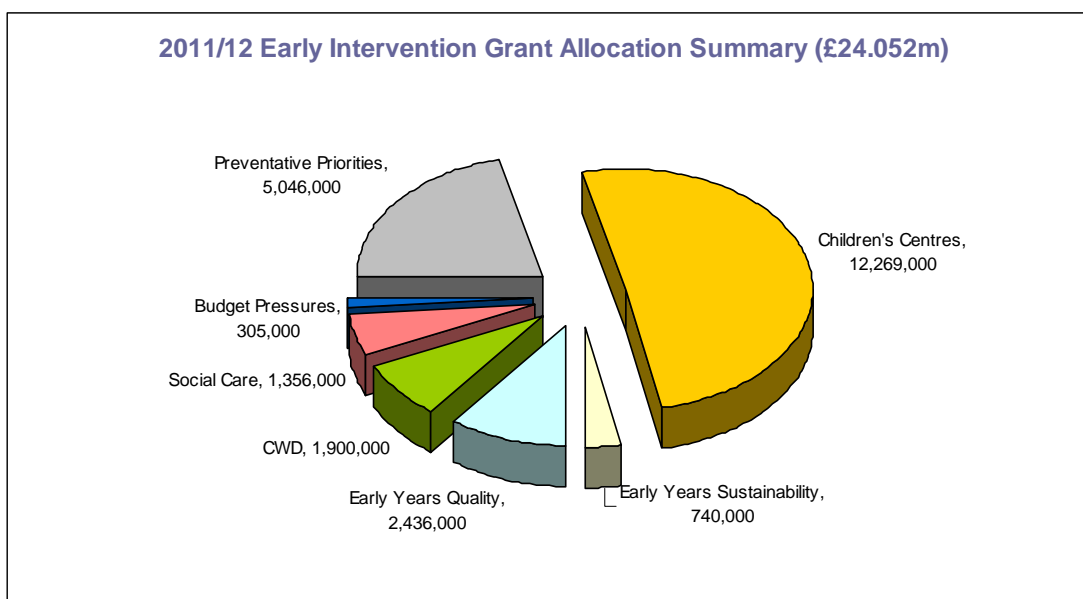
- Resources will be targeted on increasing opportunities for young people to get involved in enterprising activities across Lincolnshire to increase opportunities for employment.
- We will deliver interventions to support schools across the primary and secondary sectors to deliver and drive forward the English Baccalaureate
- Graduate leader programme to enable all Early Years settings to have a qualified Early Year's practitioner by 2015
- A remodelled commissioned service to promote positive mental well being. The Authority was a pathfinder in relation to targeted mental health in schools. Evidence from this pathfinder has shown that closer working across schools, locality teams and Primary Mental Health Workers improves

children's emotional well being and reduces the need for referral to specialist services. We seek to adopt this approach targeting resources to those with greatest need

- Disability – we will review our services for children with disabilities including our residential short term break provision to enable more children to be supported at home
- 2 year offer for children from disadvantaged communities to access 15 hrs of early education
- Enhanced apprenticeship scheme for Looked After Children
- Arts, sports and music with projects to support the Olympic legacy (*following the Henley Review a government grant for music may has been made available*)
- Additional investment in elective home education
- Continued support in school leadership to assist recruitment and retention of Head Teachers
- We will also deliver transition arrangements to ensure young people have access to independent advice and guidance on career options until the national careers service is established and move towards a traded model.

Further work to create detailed business plans in relation to these developments is in progress.

Many of these projects are proposed to be funded fully or in part through the EIG Allocation of the EIG is as follows:



3. Budget Reductions

Our newly reconfigured model of service provision is:

- **Remodelling of Locality Team**

Proposal is to create one integrated locality team including both the targeted and the FAST team (Family Assessment and Support - social care), in three areas managed by one Head of Service. This will achieve a more streamlined service between our specialist and targeted services, with more effective use of resources across the service and greater clarity and transparency for children, families and partner agencies. There will be continued accountability at local level whilst delivering a clear focus on earlier preventive services to meet child and family needs. Resources will be drawn from both the specialist and targeted area of the locality team creating greater flexibility and responsiveness and less duplication of assessment. The challenge will be to sustain the increased pressure of work with reduced staffing at a time of economic instability for families. Resources will include:

- Universal children's centre activities focusing resources on the most vulnerable families
- Universal generic youth provision provided through local communities in line with the aspirations of the Big Society. We will employ Development Workers to facilitate this
- Preventative and targeted services through a Team Around the Child approach seeking to engage vulnerable, marginalised and hard to reach young people and families
- Targeted Youth Support for the most vulnerable young people who are at risk of exclusion and engaging in high risk behaviours – We propose to integrate the roles of Youth Development Workers and Personal Advisers and the new role will be to undertake focused work with individuals and deliver against outcomes in respect of NEET (not in education, employment or training), antisocial behaviour, substance misuse, prevention of offending etc.
- Family Support and Parenting interventions
- We will integrate the roles of Parent Support Advisor/Prevention Worker/Family Support to achieve a more versatile and flexible workforce
- Assessment and interventions for children in need and in need of protection
- Co-ordination of child protection and looked after children care plans
- Quality assurance of front line practice including services delivered through the Team Around the child process

Support Functions

- Performance management – Consistent with Government intentions, we will aim to reduce performance reporting where it is either not required for DfE returns or essential to service delivery whilst promoting a culture of quality service delivery with our audit and quality assurance systems enhanced.

- Commissioning – The proposals are to reduce staff involved in commissioning activities which will require a risk based approach to contract monitoring
- Learning and development - We propose to reduce our training and workforce development offer to staff and will prioritise training and seek additional grant funding to fund priority areas
- Property review – Use of our current premises for service delivery will be enhanced and transfer to community ownership and schools where appropriate which will reduce facilities management costs

- **Services which Promote Learning**

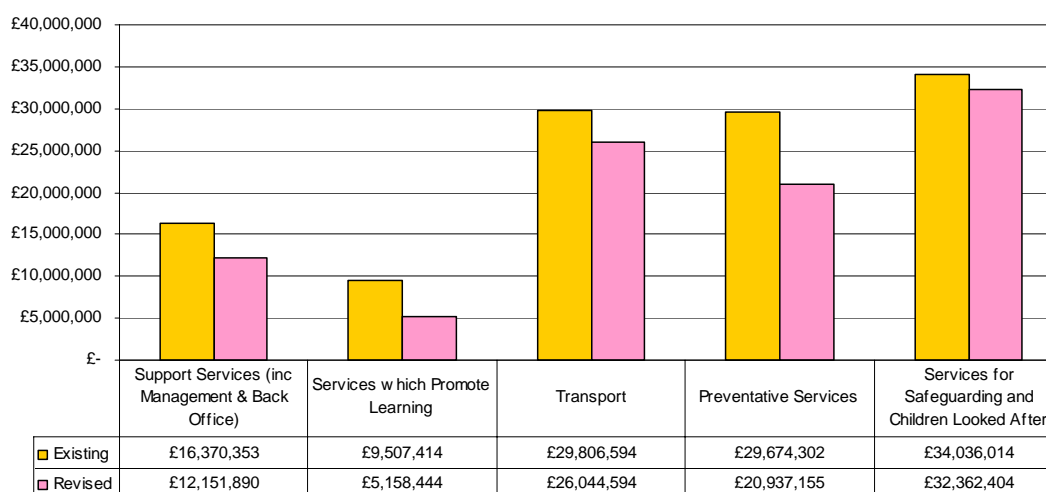
The White Paper “The Importance of Teaching” creates a more autonomous school system which will result in a changing role for the Local Authority. Resources will increasingly be devolved to schools with the Authority acting as a broker of school to school support to drive improvement. In line with this we seek to change our offer to schools which will enable schools to purchase their own support based on local needs:

- Ethnic Minority Achievement Service and Traveller Education Service. Our advisory teacher service will be replaced by Community Link workers to promote inclusion and community cohesion in newly arrived and transitional communities
 - Outward bound provision and other extended provision activities will be procured by schools purchasing their own extended provision to meet their pupil’s needs
 - Our additional needs service is on a continued journey to provide support to children with additional needs in schools through refocusing of our support services which will assist schools to provide quality interventions for pupils
 - Remodelling of the music service
- **Transport (note many of these reductions have an implementation time frame of 5 years)**
 - Continuation of better procurement , service reviews, robust application of eligibility criteria -
 - Undertake a review of the existing designated transport areas and consult on proposals to only transport to nearest school,
 - Consult on changes to transport for post 16 travel including a revision of designated transport areas and increase charges
 - Undertake feasibility study of special schools - transport savings can be achieved through more local provision

New Priorities

The impact of these reductions compared with current spend is outlined in the chart below:

2010/11 Budget Comparison to Planned Reductions



NB Further Transport reductions will be realised post 2015

4 Transformation Projects within Children's Services

1. **Further improvements in safeguarding services** – we will further develop our Quality Assurance approach within teams and respond to the recommendations of the Munro Review of Safeguarding. Working with the Social Work Forum, we will further improve skills development for frontline workers and Team Managers.
2. **Further integration of Children's Services through Locality Teams** – New Locality Teams will bring together a wide range of professionals dealing with children providing support to schools, youth work, work with children and families in need and a range of preventive services. Our work with complex families under Community Budget Pilots will involve multiple agencies working alongside families to create dramatic improvement in outcomes and significant cost reductions. We will also integrate the roles and responsibilities of former youth services and Connexions services. This means that our new work force will develop their support for young people in career and employment pathways.
3. **A New Relationship with Schools** – an increasingly autonomous schools system will see Children's Services acting as a broker or provider of wrap-around support services which are proven to improve attainment within our schools. Children's Services will assist schools in improving outcomes for children.
4. **Additional Needs Services** – continuing the review of provision of support services to schools and development of area based special schools.
5. **Aspiration and Wellbeing** – helping every child become the best that they can be will continue to be central to our vision. Our Brilliant Lincolnshire

programme will continue to support aspiration and wellbeing with work with parents, staff and young people themselves.

2. Conclusion

Budgetary cuts have given us an opportunity to significantly reconfigure our service delivery. In doing so, we have retained our overriding belief and principle of earlier intervention through early years provision and our highly praised children's centres whilst retaining most of our preventive services. Sustaining performance and excellent outcomes will be a challenge with a reduced budget and workforce. Notwithstanding this, we have protected our front line specialist services to keep children safe. Our social care teams were enhanced in 2010/11 by additional front line social workers. OfSTED continue to praise our focus on safeguarding, delivering high quality assessment and interventions for children most in need. Nevertheless, providing early intervention must continue. To not do so will mean increased pressure on the front line and on our regulated services. We believe that this current reconfiguration proves and meets that balance within a reduced budget although we recognise the challenges we face in delivering this changing model of delivery. Our work on community budgets and the other transformation projects list will be a continuation of our refocusing priorities whilst our reductions in performance reporting and targets will give us an opportunity to focus on quality. Moreover, we will wherever possible work to develop community resources to raise aspiration and well being for young people and children. We do not underestimate the impact of these changes on our workforce but we will mitigate the effect on our children and families by creating a leaner, more operational and efficient service meeting a whole spectrum of need whilst focusing on our most vulnerable families.

3. Consultation

a) Policy Proofing Actions Required

n/a

4. Background Papers

No background papers within Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the preparation of this report.

This report was written by Debbie Barnes, who can be contacted on 01522 553204 or debbie.barnes@lincolnshire.gov.uk.