



# Executive Advisory Panel on Forward Together for Children's Services

Minutes of the meeting held at on Monday, 27 February 2017.

**Present:**

Steve Butler (Chairman)  
Susan Jefferies and Daryl Turner.

Members Attending

Deborah Croney  
Kate Wheller

Officer Attending:

Stuart Riddle (Senior Manager - Change for Children), Paul Scothern (Manager - Design and Development), Claire Shiels (Commissioning and Procurement Manager, Children's Services) and Jason Read (Democratic Services Officer).

(Notes: These notes have been prepared by officers as a record of the meeting and of any decisions reached. They are to be considered and confirmed at the next meeting of the Panel).

**Election of Chairman**

1 **Resolved**

1. That Councillor Steve Butler be elected Chairman for the remainder of the year 2016/17.

**Appointment of Vice-Chairman**

- 2 There were no nominations for the appointment of Vice-Chairman. The Panel felt that as future meeting dates were always arranged based on the Chairman's availability, it was not necessary to appoint a Vice-Chairman.

**Apologies for Absence**

- 3 An apology for absence was received from Peter Richardson.

**Code of Conduct**

- 4 There were no declarations by members of disclosable pecuniary interests under the Code of Conduct.

**Notes of the Previous Meeting**

- 5 The notes of the previous meeting were confirmed.

**Stocktake Report on the Transformation of the Youth Service**

- 6 The Panel considered a report by the Senior Manager - Design and Development, Children's Services which highlighted the work that had been undertaken in relation to the Youth Service following recommendations from the Panel's previous meeting being agreed by Cabinet.

It was explained that the targeted youth service was currently being provided to nearly 500 young people across Dorset, with 160 of these receiving one to one interaction and support. Relationships had been established with schools across the county and the Council now had links with anti-social behaviour co-ordinators.

The Panel questioned the evidence behind claims that the transformation of services had empowered young people to take social action and that it had allowed Dorset County Council to become better at supporting vulnerable young people. It was noted that no research had yet been carried out in regards to feedback with the vulnerable young people affected and that this should be done in order to obtain a true picture of how the transformation of services had impacted service users.

As a result of the community offer, 39 groups across Dorset were now offering places to go and things to do for young people, which was only three less than before the changes were made. However, there had been a significant reduction to expenditure.

It was explained that £200,000 had been made available to support community groups for the financial year 2016/17. However, only £12,500 had been allocated. Councillors raised concerns that the funding could not be used for salary or building costs and that this was the area that community groups needed funding, which explained why there had been little allocation of funding. It was explained that the scope of permitted usage for the funds had been widened and community groups were now able to use funds for both building and salary costs. It was agreed that this had not been communicated to community groups clearly and that a new communication should be circulated as a matter of urgency so that provisional allocation of funding could be established before the end of the financial year.

The Panel received an overview regarding the status of each community group across Dorset and were updated on the building usage situation for each group. Particular concerns were raised in regards to Corfe Mullen and Blandford with a breakdown of communication and lack of flexibility with schools causing issues. It was acknowledged that meetings needed to be arranged with all parties involved to establish the best way forward, and officers would assist councillors with this.

Councillors suggested setting up a meeting and inviting service users along to share their feedback and experiences in relation to the new services being provided. It was agreed that a less formal meeting would be more appropriate and a workshop or inquiry day set-up would work better.

### **Resolved**

1. That meetings with officers, community groups and schools would be established to help resolve outstanding issues in the Blandford and Corfe Mullen areas.
2. That contact groups would be set up and communications circulated to all community groups to highlight the flexibility of how funding could be used and to encourage groups to request provisional allocations of funds before the end of the financial year.
3. That a meeting be established later in 2017 to allow service users to share their experiences of the new services being provided.

### **Dates of Future Meetings and Work Programme**

- 7 Future meeting dates would be established following at a later date following the completion of the actions highlighted above.

Meeting Duration: 2.00 pm - 4.00 pm