

Responses to scrutiny comments/recommendations from RPPR 2017/8

Children's Services

Scrutiny comment / suggestion / recommendation at Dec 2017 RPPR Board	Response
<p><u>The Children's Services Department's (CSD) role in an increasingly complex school system</u></p> <p>The Board noted that the school system had evolved into a complex mix of different types of schools and academies, with different lines of accountability. At the same time schools had been granted increasing levels of autonomy. This greater level of autonomy had the potential to produce benefits for all schools.</p> <p>The Board also welcomed the steps CSD was taking to support all schools and academies in the county to cope with the ongoing changes within the educational system and that, given its reduced resources, the Department needed to find new ways of working to achieve its proposed savings.</p> <p>The Board remain concerned though, about how the educational system will work with more 'fragmentation of control' and therefore asked that its concerns on this point be taken into account by Cabinet.</p>	<p>The Cabinet and Lead Member recognise the description of a fragmented landscape and believe the authority is already doing all it can with the money available and the environment it is working within. The Committee's interest in this issue is welcomed though and careful consideration will be given to any recommendations which may arise from the separately appointed 'Coping with Change – The Way Forward' Review Board.</p>
<p><u>Early Help and Savings Plan Details</u></p> <p>With regard to 'Early Help', and as the figures set out in the Savings Plan did not appear to be 'firm' at the time of its meeting, the Board agreed it would like further information and reassurance regarding CSD's proposals for 2018/19 and 2019/20. It appeared to the Board that some savings built into the 2018/19 Plan will not be delivered until 2019/20. This caused some concern about the deliverability of the 2018/19 plan. The Board also felt it had not been presented with sufficient general background detail to be able to make informed comments regarding the potential impact of the proposed savings on this crucial service area. This could also apply to other savings areas within the Plan.</p>	<p>Subject to the County Council agreeing to fund the savings requirement out of reserves for 2018/19 there are no in-year impacts. Future impacts will be considered as part of the Early Help Review commencing in 2018 to inform savings proposals in 2019/20.</p>