

Cllr Paxton Hood-Williams
Convener
Child & Family Services Scrutiny
Performance Panel

BY EMAIL

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Our Ref: MC/JW
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Date: 04 December 2017

Dear Cllr Hood-Williams

CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES PERFORMANCE PANEL – 14 NOVEMBER 2017

Thank you for your letter of 14th November 2017 and for your interest in this important area of work.

The element of the Family Support Services Commissioning Review which focuses on children with disabilities and additional needs will be instrumental in supporting and co-producing innovative services, better able to meet the needs of this most vulnerable group of children.

There has been a concerted effort to ensure the voices of children and parents/carers are heard within the review and lessons have been learnt for the future. The plan is to commission out the work of developing the parent/carer forum, jointly with Education, as there are overlaps with the Additional Learning Needs (ALN) review. This will provide further opportunities to give parents a stronger voice in decision-making, reaching out and including those in the past who may have found it more difficult to find their voice, encouraging them to engage.

The comment on grant funding is noted however 11% is a relatively small percentage of the overall budget and when contracts are awarded the uncertainty of future funding will be clarified. As with all other projects the opportunity to seek additional grant monies will continue. The WG have awarded an additional grant for the development of support to young carers, which is recurring. It will be important for this grant to be ring fenced when included in the RSG next year.

The voucher scheme is an aspiration at this point, and something which will require careful development with parent/carers. This scheme will only become an option when there is confidence in the maturity of the newly established Forum to deliver on the scheme.

The appraisal workshop considered five options. The young carer's option was already being driven through the regional and local arrangements so this would have been duplication. Between the October workshops and Cabinet in February two of the five options i.e. overnight respite and early help were taken out of the review due to concerns about meeting the review timescale. These were reinstated as further information became available to confirm that the work could be completed without delaying the review. These areas had however been considered at the options appraisal workshop. Just one of the recommendations is a purely internal development as there is an internal registered service with very good inspection reports available to deliver.

Detailed information on scoring the separate elements is attached to this letter. I hope this information is helpful and I look forward to reporting progress on the implementation of the review recommendations in due course.

Yours sincerely



**COUNCILLOR MARK CHILD
CABINET MEMBER FOR HEALTH & WELLBEING**