

**HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
CHILDREN'S, SCHOOLS AND FAMILIES SERVICE SELECT
COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY 24 JANUARY 2001 AT 10.30 A.M.**

Agenda Item No:

11

**QUALITY PROTECTS MANAGEMENT ACTION PLAN AND SPECIAL
GRANT: 2001/2002**

Report of the Director of Social Services

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1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 On 18 December 2000 the Cabinet (report attached) agreed the following proposal for consideration by the Children, Schools and Families Select Committee on 24 January 2001:

That the proposals for preparation and consultation on the Quality Protects Management Action Plan and for spending the Children's Services Special Grant in 2001/02 as set out in the report be agreed and submitted to the Department of Health by 31 January 2001.

- 1.2 Comments made by Children's, Schools and Families Select Committee will be submitted to the Cabinet on 29 January 2001. The Quality Protects Management Action Plan (MAP) 2001/2002, and Special Grant budget proposals agreed by Cabinet and the Executive Committee have to be submitted to the Department of Health on 31 January 2001.

- 1.3 At the time of writing the Cabinet report the County Council had only just received the format for the MAP from the Department of Health. The report explains that it was planned to attach the MAP as an Appendix when it went to CSF Select Committee on 24 January 2001, and returns to Cabinet on 29 January. The MAP, which is laid out in the format drafted by the DoH, is now attached as Appendix 3. It explains how Hertfordshire is performing against the eleven Government Objectives for Children's Social Services (see para 1.2 of the report) and lays out the County Council's plans for the future.

2. Special Grant Supplementary Information

- 2.1 The Cabinet report explains that Special Grant has to be spent against the Government's priority areas. A description of the eight priority areas is set out in paragraph 3.3 of the report. The County Council's proposed expenditure items, with supporting reasons, are set out against the priority areas in Appendix 1. The numbering of these items matches the numbering in the spreadsheet in Appendix 2, which sets out the amounts we are proposing to spend against each priority area item, with business cases. Appendix 2 has been amended from the version that was submitted to Cabinet, to reflect the additional funding information subsequently received from the Government (outlined below).
- 2.2 The Cabinet report explained that, on 8 December 2000, the Government announced that implementation of the Children (Leaving Care) Act, which was due for implementation in April 2001, had been postponed until October 2001. Cabinet were informed verbally that we have subsequently been asked only to include spending proposals for the first half-year of 2001/2 under this heading in the MAP. This means that only £228,000 of the Special Grant has been ring-fenced for planning for the implementation of the Act, instead of the £456,000 identified in the para 3.1 of the report. Consequently, in Section 8 of Appendix 2, each expenditure proposal under this heading has been reduced by half.
- 2.3 At the time of preparing the Cabinet report the Government had not told us the exact amount of Special Grant that would be available. It now transpires that this will be £4,000 less than estimated. Expenditure on Leisure, Sports and Culture Opportunities for looked after children (under Section 5 in Appendix 2) has been reduced by a corresponding amount, by extending the recruitment period for the new post to take this programme forward.
- 2.4 The net effect of the two amendments outlined above is that we have to submit proposals for spending £2.332 million Special Grant in 2001/2002 in the MAP, instead of the £2.564 million identified in the Cabinet report (para 2.3 in the Summary and para 3.1 in the main report). However, the second half-year's Special Grant funding for the Leaving Care priority area, together with funds transferred from Children's SSA and the Government's Social Security budget, should be made available by October 2001 to finance the implementation of the Children (Leaving Care) Act.

