

# Children's Services Committee

<b>Report title:</b>	<b>Children's Services Committee Plan 2018/2021</b>
<b>Date of meeting:</b>	<b>13 March 2018</b>
<b>Responsible Chief Officer:</b>	<b>Sara Tough Executive Director of Children's Services</b>
<b>Strategic impact</b>  The Children's Services Committee's three year forward plan (Appendix 1), sets out how its areas of responsibility will be shaped by the ambition and principles of <i>Norfolk Futures</i> , the County Council's new strategy. The plan sets out what will be delivered over the next three years in the resources available. It identifies key metrics against service transformation which will be monitored by Policy and Resources Committee over the period.	

## Executive summary

Norfolk County Council agreed a vision and strategy for the medium term in February 2018. *Caring for our County* communicates the Council's ambitions for Norfolk; the strategy *Norfolk Futures* sets out the principles and priorities to turn this vision into plans that deliver sustainable services, working with our partners across the public and private sectors.

Service committees have been commissioned by Policy and Resources Committee to develop Committee Plans which will set out objectives for the year, and specifically demonstrate how each area of the Council's work will change to deliver our Norfolk Futures transformation plan.

### Recommendations

- **Agree Children's Services Committee Plan**
- **Note the Committee's contribution to, and responsibilities, for Norfolk Futures, NCC's transformation plan.**
- **Agree metrics against which this committee will report to Policy and Resources Committee for monitoring purposes**

## 1. Proposal

### 1.1 Norfolk Futures and Children's Services Committee

1.1.1. Norfolk Futures set out new ways of working within the Council and plans for a transformation programme that will change how Council services re delivering in future.

1.1.2 The overarching principles underpinning the Strategy are;

- Offering our help early to prevent and **reduce demand** for specialist services

- **Joining up** our work so that similar activities and services are more easily accessible, done well and done once
- Being **business like** and making best use of digital technology to ensure value for money
- Using **evidence** and data to target our work where it can make the most difference.

1.1.3 The Council has agreed seven corporate priorities to deliver these principles, under the *Norfolk Futures* strategy. The priorities ensure that there is intense focus and tangible delivery in specific areas that can only be delivered through whole Council cross department working. The priorities are:

- Safe children and resilient families
- Promoting independence for vulnerable adults
- Smarter information and advice
- Towards a housing strategy
- Digital Norfolk
- Local service strategy

1.1.4 The Children's Services Committee will be responsible for safe children and resilient families, and the oversight for the entire transformation programme will be provided by Policy and Resources Committee.

1.1.5 Under this priority we want children and their families to have access to local, community based services that enable them to be resilient in identifying and seeking solutions to challenges they might face. In turn, it is envisaged that this will reduce the pressure on the front door ensuring that professionals have access to a social work service that offers advice and guidance. That only those children who are deemed to require a level of intervention that can only be provided by a social work team are appropriately referred.

1.1.6 In contrast to the rise in contacts but predicted decrease in referral and further decrease in assessment it is envisaged that we will fully understand our CiC population and ensure that there are sufficient support and preventative services in place at the earliest possible opportunity to keep children and young people safely at home within their families.

1.1.7 The attached Children's Services Committee Plan bring together core information and overview of services, current operating context, challenges, risks, innovation and priority actions within the resources available. This is information which is felt to be helpful background for Members to inform decision making. The plan is intended to be a living document and it is expected that it will updated during its life to reflect the Committee's and the Council's work and progress.

- Committee will continue to receive performance information that gives the most valid and accurate position of performance across education, social care and early help.
- It will focus on areas that require attention, resource or change in practice to adapt to the needs of children, young people and their families.
- Targets will be ambitious.
- It will highlight areas of improvement and provide a narrative as to why this is required.

## **2. Financial Implications**

- 2.1 The County Council continues to spend around £1.4 billion (gross) delivering vital services to Norfolk residents. As in previous years, around £400 million of the total budget is passed directly to schools. At a high level, the proposed revenue budget for 2018-19 is broadly the same year-on-year, and full details of changes in Committee budgets are set out in the January 2018 Policy and Resources Revenue Budget report.
- 2.2 The Council faces very significant cost pressures over the next four years. These are the result of:
- Inflation (which arises both on staff salaries and on the prices we pay for contracts and services);
  - Legislative changes and policy decisions, including the National Living Wage;
  - Increasing demand for services (including demographic changes)
- 2.3 The impact of the cost pressures experienced between 2011-12 and 2018-19 total £308 million.
- 2.4 In addition between 2011-12 and 2017-18, government funding has reduced by £189 million. Further reductions of £31 million are forecast for the period 2018-19 to 2019-20.  
The Council agreed to freeze Council Tax (0% increases) for the years 2010-11 to 2015-16. Since 2016-17, annual increases have been agreed. Since 2014-15 Revenue Support Grant has declined significantly (by 67%), while funding from Business Rates has only increased by 8%. In total, between 2014-15 and 2018-19, funding from these three sources has been relatively static, reducing by £27m (4%). However this represents a real terms reduction in funding when inflation is taken into account.
- 2.5 It is these cost pressures and reduced funding that require the Council to transform the way it works.

## **3. Issues, risks and innovation**

- 3.1 These are set out in the Committee Plan included at appendix 1.

## **4. Background**

### **Our Vision, Strategy and Whole Service Plan – Appendix 2**

Report by Managing Director to Policy and Resources, 29<sup>th</sup> January 2018

### **[Caring for Your County](#)**

Report by Managing Director Policy and Resources, 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2017

### **[Strategic and Financial Planning 2018/19-2021/22](#)**

Report by Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services to Policy and Resources 25<sup>th</sup> September 2017

### **[Strategic and Financial Planning 2018/19 - 2021/22](#)**

Report by Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services and

## **Officer Contact**

If you have any questions about matters contained or want to see copies of any assessments, eg equality impact assessment, please get in touch with:

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