

Somerset County Council
Scrutiny for Policies, Children and Families Committee –
19 October 2018

CAF-14-b “Proposals for the alteration and/or reduction of early help services provided to children and their families – getset”

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Cabinet Member: Cllr Frances Nicholson, Cabinet Member for Children and Families Division and Local Member: All

1. Summary

- 1.1. On the 12th September 2018, Cabinet approved CAF-14b “Proposals for the alteration and / or reduction of early help services provided to children and their families – getset”. This decision followed its consideration and debate, along with CAF 14a, at Scrutiny Place committee on 11th September.

2. Issues for consideration / Recommendations

The Committee is asked to consider and comment on this report, requested at its 14 September meeting, that sets out details of the proposed consultation regarding savings proposal CAF 14b.

3. Background

- 3.1. The purpose of the consultation is to understand the impact of the Council no longer providing services for children with additional needs (at level 2 of the Effective Support for Children and Families in Somerset guidance), and how best the Council, as the lead agency, ensures effective early help across the partnership in the future. The consultation is aimed at service users, partners and staff.
- 3.2. The consultation sets out the following principles for early help support in Somerset to:
 - Bring services into the community, to the children and families who need them the most.
 - Help communities and parents offer local activities and groups.
 - Make it easier for families to access the information and advice they need, through providing better joined-up digital services.

3.3. The timeline for this consultation is detailed below:

ACTIVITY	START	END
Launch consultation (8 weeks) (Christmas hols 20/12/18 - 08/01/19)	05/11/2018	31/12/2018
Analyse responses (as they are received)	05/11/2018	31/12/2018
Write paper for cabinet and circulate	31/12/2018	02/01/2019
Scrutiny for Policies, C&F- Pre-meet Report Deadline	07/01/2019	07/01/2019
Scrutiny for Policies, C&F - Pre-meet	10/01/2019	10/01/2019
Deadline for Forward Plan	14/01/2019	14/01/2019
Deadline for Final Reports - Scrutiny	16/01/2019	16/01/2019
Cabinet pre-meet reports deadline	23/01/2019	23/01/2019
Cabinet Meeting - Pre-meet	23/01/2019	23/01/2019
Deadline for Final Reports - Cabinet	30/01/2019	30/01/2019
Scrutiny for Policies, Children & Families Meeting	25/01/2019	25/01/2019
Cabinet Meeting	11/02/2019	11/02/2019

3.4. The approach for the consultation would be to:

- Set out the background to early help in Somerset, how the service has been developed since 2014, and what services are currently provided for Early Help by SCC and its partners.
- Set out the rationale for change.
- Explain what early help services would be available following the decision.
- Explain how we think our partners can help.
- Explain how we think our communities and voluntary sector can help.
- Set out the impact we think the proposals will have on families in Somerset.
- Ask what effect this will have on families.
- Ask what effect this will have on our partners.
- Ask families and partners whether they think SCC can achieve its objectives in other ways.

3.5. The target audience of this consultation is partners, staff and families. During the consultation period we will offer briefing notes to staff, attend targeted focus groups and attend as many partner events as possible such as headteacher briefings, early years partnership meetings. Paper copies will be made available at all children's centres and libraries. The consultation will also be made available online and promoted through social media channels.

4. Consultations undertaken

4.1. CAF14-b set out the proposal for a public consultation and this approach has also been shared with our strategic partners who are members of the Early Help Strategic Commissioning Board.

5. Implications

5. As set out in previous papers (See background papers)

6. Background papers

6.1. CAF-14a Scrutiny call in paper (08/10/18).

- 6.2. CAF-14b “Proposals for the alteration and/or reduction of early help services provided to children and their families – getset” – Part of the cabinet papers on 12th September 2018.
- 6.3. Equalities Impact Assessment for CAF-14b – Part of the cabinet papers on 12th September 2018.

Note: For sight of individual background papers please contact the report author