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RECORD OF CABINET DECISIONS

Cabinet – 4 September 2007

Date of publication: 5 September 2007

Subject to call-in these decisions will be effective from 13 September 2007

PRESENT	Rodney Chambers	Leader
	Alan Jarrett	Deputy Leader/Finance
	Janice Bamber	Customer First and Corporate Services
	Jane Chitty	Strategic Development and Economic Growth
	Howard Doe	Community Services
	Phil Filmer	Front Line Services
	Tom Mason	Adult Services
	Les Wicks	Children's Services
	David Wildey	Children's Social Care

APOLOGY FOR ABSENCE

Councillor Rehman Chishti (Community Safety and Enforcement).

RECORD OF DECISIONS

The record of decisions from the meeting held on 17 July 2007 was agreed.

DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

Councillor Tom Mason declared a personal interest in agenda item 4 (The Future of Connexions Services in Medway), as he is a member of the Fairbridge Trust (Kent) and retained his right to speak and vote.

Councillors Janice Bamber, Howard Doe and David Wildey declared personal interests in agenda item 4 (The Future of Connexions Services in Medway), as they are members of the Medway Carers Association and retained their rights to speak and vote.

Councillor David Wildey also declared a personal interest in agenda item 4 (The Future of Connexions Services in Medway), as he is a member of Homestart and retained his right to speak and vote.

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THE FUTURE OF CONNEXIONS SERVICES IN MEDWAY

Background:

This report brought forward a number of options for the future provision of the Connexions Service in Medway.

The service provides information, advice, guidance and access to personal development opportunities for young people and from 1 April 2008 responsibility and resources for commissioning the delivery of Connexions Services would fall directly to local authorities. The Council therefore needed to agree the arrangements for future provision in Medway.

Details of the existing service were set out in the report, together with an appraisal of five options for future provision. The report recommended the establishment of a Youth Trust as the Medway-based charity commissioned to deliver Connexions Services for a transition period from 1 April 2008. The benefits and flexibilities associated with this option were set out in the report.

It was noted that the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Council's Procurement Board had already considered the five options. Details of the discussions and comments made were set out in the report and it was reported that both had supported the establishment of the Medway Youth Trust.

An exempt appendix presented a copy of Counsel's advice on the procurement issues, as requested by the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Decision number: ***Decision:***

145/2007 The Cabinet recommended to Council the approval of Option B, as set out in the report, and the establishment of the Medway Youth Trust as the Medway-based charity commissioned to deliver Connexions Services for a transition period from 1 April 2008.

Reasons:

Option B is recommended as the best option for Medway Council and Medway's schools and young people for the following reasons:

- It is a Medway-based solution where management, governance and provision is focused on Medway, its schools and young people
- more secure, independent charitable provider with low risks on future viability as the trust will employ approximately 50 staff nearly all of whom have TUPE protection were the contract to change in 2010

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- service continuity with the same staff working in schools and the community under Medway-based and Medway-focused management
- Medway-led charity can focus on improved performance and developing additional provision based on charitable and other funds and the engagement of the Medway community and voluntary sector to meet the needs of Medway schools and young people
- charitable company is a safe and proven legal structure and procurement law permits a two-year transition period commission for the new charity from April 2008-10 followed by a Part B service procurement procedure
- the opportunity to make this change now while DCSF Transition Support Funds are available to Medway Council to make the new arrangements (these funds end in March 2008)
- sufficient Connexions Grant will be available at approximately £2.6 million for Medway with inflation rises 2008-11 which will enable enhanced management of the trust and improved monitoring by Medway Council
- locally-based charity in Medway will encourage the engagement of more young people and more voluntary organisations in Medway services
- enables full integration with Medway Council's policies for the new children's trust arrangements and support services for young people including alignment with support services provided by Extended Services and Hubs.

RECONFIGURATION OF THE CHILDREN'S SERVICES DIRECTORATE

Background:

This report set out proposals for the reconfiguration of the Children's Services Directorate.

In 2006 the Council was subject to both a Comprehensive Performance Assessment and Joint Area Review. These major inspections had identified a range of operational issues and made recommendations for change, including the need to build leadership and management expertise and capacity to secure rapid and sustained improvement. Capacity challenges for the senior management team and the directorate were also created by the agenda for change contained within the Every Child Matters legislation.

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This report set out proposals for the reconfiguration of the directorate, which would provide the required capacity to deliver service improvements and address the future agenda facing the service.

Decision number:

146/2007 The Cabinet recommended to Council the following proposals, as set out in the report, for the reconfiguration of the Children's Services Directorate subject to consultation in accordance with the reorganisation and redundancy procedures:

- **The establishment of a fourth Assistant Director position responsible for Planning, Performance and Commissioning.**
- **The reconfiguration of the current organisational arrangements for child protection.**
- **The reconfiguration of the existing Assistant Director positions to ensure a more equitable distribution of workload.**

Reasons:

These recommendations provide the capacity to deliver service improvements and address the future agenda facing the service.

SCHOOL ORGANISATION PLAN PRINCIPLES

Background:

This report sought approval for the overarching principles for the next School Organisation Plan.

The principles outlined in the plan would provide a framework to ensure that the Council complies with its duty to provide school places, that school organisation decisions were fair and consistent and that children and young people achieve the highest standards of which they are capable. The report set out the requirement for extensive consultation on the principles.

The outcome of the consultation process would be presented to the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee, prior to consideration by Cabinet in the New Year.

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Decision number: *Decision:*

- 147/2007** **The Cabinet approved the principles set out in section 4 of the report for consultation.**

Reasons:

These principles will enable the Council to establish a new School Organisation Plan to comply with the statutory duty to provide school places and to promote high standards. It will also reduce the number of schools with surplus places of over 25%.

MOBILE AT WAYFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL, CHATHAM

Background:

This report brought forward a recommendation from the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee that the mobile at Wayfield School, Chatham, remain at the site and that another mobile be acquired for the All Faiths School, Strood, in time for it to establish its SureStart Centre.

The Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee had considered a petition objecting to the removal of the mobile on 12 July 2007. The report set out details of the background to this issue and the Committee's consideration of it, together with the financial and legal implications of the proposal.

Decision number: *Decision:*

- 148/2007** **The Cabinet confirmed its original decision of 30 January 2007 (decision no. 12/2007) to move the mobile to All Faiths Community Primary School and officers were instructed to explore with stakeholders alternative ways of meeting the needs of local young people.**

Reasons:

This decision confirms the Council's commitment to the implementation of plans for the establishment of a SureStart Children's Centre at All Faiths School. It also takes into account the financial and planning issues set out in the report.

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RECRUITMENT FREEZE

Background:

This report presented information on vacancies that officers had requested approval to commence recruitment for, following the process agreed by Cabinet on 7 January 2003 (decision number 9/2003).

Appendix 1 to the report provided details of the posts and included supporting Portfolio Holder comments.

Decision number:

149/2007 The Cabinet agreed to unfreeze the following posts, as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report, to enable officers to commence the recruitment process:

Business Support

- a) Political Assistant to the Conservative Group**
- b) Legal Assistant (Property)**
- c) Senior Accountant**

Regeneration and Development

- d) Appeals and Research Assistant.**

Reasons:

The posts presented to Cabinet support the efficient running of the Council.

PROCUREMENT OF ICT HARDWARE

Background:

This report examined the options available for the procurement of ICT hardware by the Council and recommended the use of existing EU compliant framework agreements.

The procedure set out in the report was designed to ensure compliance with prevailing regulations, whilst at the same time demonstrating value for money, securing flexibility and ensuring a benchmarking market test is carried out for significant purchases.

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<i>Decision number:</i>	<i>Decision:</i>
150/2007	The Cabinet endorsed the use of existing EU compliant framework agreements in relation to ICT Hardware Procurement in preference to letting a separate tender solely on behalf of the Council.

Reasons:

The decision will offer the Council value for money procurement routes combined with minimum investment in setting up procurement arrangements for ICT Hardware. It also offers minimal risk combined with maximum flexibility to exploit any particular procurement route that arises in the future.

SUPPORTING PEOPLE: OUTREACH SUPPORT CONTRACT

Background:

This report sets out the options available for procuring increased capacity in the Supporting People outreach support programme.

The outreach service provides community support to vulnerable adults enabling them to develop and maintain the skills required to live independently in the community. The existing contract had been awarded in October 2006, however, it was now necessary to increase the capacity of this contract.

It was noted that the Supporting People Commissioning Board of Medway had supported the need to extend incrementally to a total capacity of 120 units.

<i>Decision number:</i>	<i>Decision:</i>
151/2007	The Cabinet agreed to award a support service contract for outreach support to In Touch for a period of 3 years.

Reasons:

The procurement of this service from In touch will provide the basis for a high quality service that is increasingly responsive to the needs of service users and contributes to the preventative agenda.

NEW CIVIC HEADQUARTERS: PROVISION OF OFFICE FURNITURE

Background:

This report recommended the selection and acceptance of a preferred supplier for the provision and installation of office and meeting room furniture at the new Civic Headquarters building.

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It was noted that the replacement of the old furniture was necessary to enable maximum occupation of the building and to comply with current health and safety legislation. Costs would be mitigated by the disposal of existing furniture at maximum return.

Decision number:

152/2007 The Cabinet approved the selection of Senator International Limited as the preferred bidder for the provision and installation of office furniture for the new Civic Headquarters building.

Reasons:

Senator International Limited submitted a bid that represented the most economically advantageous offer to the Council. New office furniture is required for the new Civic Headquarters and this bid presented the best value solution.

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Leader of the Council

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Date

**Wayne Hemingway
Cabinet Co-ordinator
Telephone: 01634 332509 E-mail: wayne.hemingway@medway.gov.uk**