

# REVIEW OF SUPPORT FOR MUSIC TUITION IN HILLINGDON:

## *INTERIM REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP*

<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Councillor David Simmonds
<b>Cabinet Portfolio</b>	Education and Children's Services
<b>Report Authors</b>	Cross-Council working – Working Group Members, Mark Braddock, Ben Lea, Alison Moore, Tricia Collis, Aileen Carlisle, Karen Wardlaw, Charles Frances and other officers.
<b>Papers with report</b>	Circulated separately from the main agenda - Interim Report of the Working Group (including appendices 1-4)

### HEADLINE INFORMATION

<b>Purpose of report</b>	To receive the interim report of the Working Group set up to review the delivery of music tuition in Hillingdon and agree the necessary recommendations to provide for the continuity of music tuition and put the service on a firmer financial footing.
<b>Contribution to our plans and strategies</b>	Putting our residents and their children first Value for Money
<b>Financial Cost</b>	Phase 1 of the review of support for music tuition in Hillingdon has been supported by an internal officer team at no external cost to the Council.
<b>Relevant Policy Overview Committee</b>	Education and Children's Services
<b>Ward(s) affected</b>	All

### RECOMMENDATIONS

That Cabinet:

1. Thanks all those involved in the review for their efforts;
2. Endorses and approves all 12 recommendations in the Interim Report from the Working Group;
3. Gives all necessary authority to implement the Working Group's recommendations to the Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Planning, Environment, Education and Community Services, in consultation with the Leader of the Council and;
4. Notes that the Working Group will undertake a further review with additional proposals for music tuition and report back to Cabinet in due course.

## INFORMATION

On 24<sup>th</sup> February 2011, the Council established a Working Group to be led by Councillor Judy Kelly, to review support for music tuition in Hillingdon in two distinct phases. Firstly, to review the operation and value for money of the Hillingdon Music Service bringing forward interim proposals to Cabinet in May 2011. Secondly, the Working Group was tasked to develop longer-term proposals, which it will undertake in earnest over the summer and autumn of 2011.

The Working Group is now in a position to report to Cabinet and their interim report and appendices are attached for information.

Members of the Working Group concluded that:

1. The Hillingdon Music Service is of a high quality and well regarded by everyone. The level of commitment by the 'Friends' in supporting the Service is greatly valued.
2. There is a substantial need for improvements to the way Hillingdon Music Service operates and provides value for money, as clearly evidenced by this Working Group and leading people involved in the Hillingdon Music Service.
3. A longer-term, more sustainable vision for music tuition in Hillingdon is an essential next step that is shared by both the Council and those involved in the Hillingdon Music Service.

The Working Group met on four occasions where it tasked officers from across the Council to provide it with a forensic overview of the Music Service, received information reports, sought valuable evidence from external witnesses involved in the music service and reviewed in detail interim proposals. Members understood the uncertainty caused by their review and sought to ensure that it would be remembered positively as having been a milestone in both shaping the future direction of the Music Service and putting it on a firmer financial footing.

Members agreed to put forward the following 12 recommendations to Cabinet:

### **Operation**

1. **The Working Group endorses the decision made to move the Music Service to Adult and Community Learning, within Education Services, and the synergies that can be made therein;**
2. **The Working Group endorses actions to implement a more flexible service structure and staff contracts for the benefit of service users, in particular a high rate of pay for advanced practitioners;**
3. **Whilst the Working Group endorses bringing the Hillingdon Music Service properly back into the council structure making it more accountable and corporate, it recommends that the service maintains its unique identity, in particular through any marketing and promotional activities;**

### **Value for Money**

4. The Working Group endorses an increase in music tuition fees by 20% from September 2011 and recommends that both this, and the clarify of the fee structure, be reviewed as part of Phase 2 of the Working Group's activity;
5. The Working Group recommends that Cabinet consider a higher rate of fees for non-residents in line with the Council's 'Hillingdon First' Policy and recommends that reduced fees for disadvantaged pupils remain unchanged;
6. The Working Group recommends that an interim financial model is implemented consisting of the new Music Grant, with all other activities not funded from this grant being provided on a self-funding basis. Furthermore, that the Working Group is consulted on the priorities and balance of music tuition / services making use of the external grant;
7. Linked to recommendation 6, the Working Group recommends that the Management Committee be consulted on what enrichment activities should be prioritised;
8. The Working Group recognises the importance of continuity of provision for those pupils currently undertaking examinations;
9. The Working Group recommends that Cabinet modernise the payment and income collection processes, making it easier for parents to pay, specifically by introducing a 24/7 self service facility;
10. The Working Group recommends that Officers review the way in which user feedback is sought to improve the quality of provision;

### **Marketing**

11. The Working Group recommends that in conjunction with Corporate Communications, officers be asked to undertake intensive marketing activities immediately to maintain and increase interest in music tuition following the recent uncertainty about the future of the Service;

### **Governance**

12. The Working Group recommends that officers review the Terms of Reference of the Management Committee to ensure its powers and responsibilities are consistent with the Council's Constitution, consulting the Working Group and Management Committee and that delegated approval be given to the Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Planning, Environment, Education and Community Service in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to approve any changes.

In formulating their recommendations, Members of the Working Group appreciated the need for continuity and certainty for pupils and their families in relation to music courses and tuition fees from September 2011.

The Working Group also accepted the need for early actions by the relevant decision-making body and endorsed a number of decisions made by Cabinet on 14<sup>th</sup> April 2011 and

subsequently by Officers in consultation with the Leader to: (a) uplift fees for music tuition (b) implement a new structure for the Service within the Council and (c) to introduce new flexible staff contracts, benefiting users.

The interim financial model recommended by the Working Group has been worked up in close consultation with the Council's finance officers and is self-financing in nature, based upon an increase in fees and use of the external grant from the Federation of Music Services, where most appropriate, to subsidise various forms of tuition or music activity.

Officers in the Planning, Environment, Education and Community Services will be charged with implementing the Working Group's recommendations swiftly upon Cabinet approval.

The Leader of the Council will hold a meeting for those involved in the Music Service to present the findings in this report at 5:30pm on Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> May, before Cabinet meets.

### **Financial Implications**

The recommendations in this report present interim proposals to put the Music Service on a firmer financial footing. Actions already taken under delegated authority on the structure and efficiency of the service during Phase 1 of the review have made substantial progress towards the savings targets set for the service in the Council's budget, as set out in the corporate finance section below. For example, the increase in fee levels from September 2011 will deliver additional income of £63k in a full year, assuming no reduction in take-up of the service. Further opportunities for savings and efficiencies will continue to be identified during the next phase of the review.

The Working Group recommend that self-service on-line payment is made available to customers of the Music Service. This will be subject to the internal investment appraisal and prioritisation processes of the Customer Focus Board, before any timetable can be set for implementation.

### **EFFECT ON RESIDENTS, SERVICE USERS & COMMUNITIES**

#### **What will be the effect of the recommendation?**

To provide for interim arrangements for the Hillingdon Music Service, providing greater assurances to pupils, parents and families that currently receive music tuition.

#### **Consultation Carried Out or Required**

Before the time any decision is taken, the Council will have held two public meetings with those involved in the Music Service, including parents and young people.

A Petition Hearing was held on 12<sup>th</sup> April 2011 by the Cabinet Member for Education and Children's Services. The Council's petition process allows residents to consult directly with decision-makers.

The Working Group received oral and written evidence from a variety of people involved in the Music Service, including young people and parents.

## **CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS**

### **Corporate Finance**

At the Council Tax setting meeting in February 2011 the 2011/12 music budget was reduced by £323k and the budgets for 2012/13 onwards by £449k. This related to the removal of the base budget subsidy for this service from the end of the 2011 summer term. The initial proposals of the working Group have resulted in a proposal to increase fees from September 2011 which will increase fee income by around £63k in a full year. The effect of this fee increase combined with savings from the new service structure, flexible staff contracts, process improvements and the careful utilisation of the external grant will place the Music Service on a much firmer footing. The final financial implications of the revised proposals will be clear once the final report and proposals are agreed.

### **Legal**

This report makes recommendations for the future interim management and development of the Hillingdon Music Service and to increase the charge for extra-curricular music tuition.

Section 455 of the Education Act 1996 enables the Council to charge for the provision of extra-curricular music tuition, provided that the charges levied do not exceed the cost to the Council of providing the service. There is, however, no obligation on the Council to provide such music tuition or to subsidise the cost of the Service.

The Borough Solicitor therefore confirms that there are no legal impediments to Cabinet agreeing the recommendations set out in the report. Further legal advice will be provided, as necessary, when the future development of the Hillingdon Music Service is considered.

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

A significant amount of oral and written evidence, including background papers, is set out in Appendix 2 of the Interim Report.