

9. INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC SERVICE UPDATE

An update report by the Head of Education (Learning, Policy and Resources) was considered by the Committee. The report provided information on the Instrumental Music Service (IMS) following the decision of the Education Executive in May 2018 to implement an annual charge for music tuition.

It was anticipated that there would be a decrease in participation after the introduction of the charge but this was in excess of the 20% reduction which was predicted. A four-week programme of taster sessions which took place in November 2018 had attracted a significant new intake of pupils to the IMS.

The number of pupils registered with the service and projected figures for each discipline were set out in the report, with a school by school analysis showing the profile of IMS student numbers before and after charging, and following the taster sessions attached at Appendix 1 to the report.

Details were also provided of the changes to the service as a result of the reduction in student numbers, including the reduction in the number of area bands and ensembles from 13 to eight. Financial projections for 2018/19 and 2019/20 were also included in the report.

The report concluded that there was sufficient demand for the continuation of instrumental music tuition on a chargeable basis.

The Education Executive were recommended to:

1. Note the number of students receiving instrumental tuition and associated financial projections for 2018/19 and 2019/20.
2. Note that with effective resource management, the IMS service could be continued within approved council resources for financial year 2019/20 onwards.
3. Agree that a further IMS update would be reported to the Education Executive in the autumn term which would include service development proposals to consider opportunities to provide more musical experiences.

The Chair moved a motion in the following terms:

“The Education Executive instructs that the current charge for instrumental music tuition should be exempted from the annual uplift of charges as part of the budget process and should remain at its current level for session 2019/20. Based on projected uptake, the annual uplift of 3.5% would equate to additional income of approximately £12,000 for the session. However, this increase was not included within the pricing schedule which formed part of the revenue budget strategy for 2018/19 to 2022/23 agreed by Council in February because the decision to commence charging for IMS was made after this date. This proposal would therefore have no impact on the currently approved revenue

budget.

Officers are instructed to investigate how the concessions available for instrumental music instruction can be extended to support families unable to pay the full charge but who are not in receipt of free school meals, to consider how this might be funded and to report back to the Education Executive in time for measures to be put in place for session 2019/20.

Officers will report back to the Education Executive at its meeting in October/November with details of the numbers involved in instrumental music tuition in each school in the authority.”

Decision

To unanimously approve the terms of the motion.