

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S INTERIM PLAN (Report by the Chief Executive)

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to brief the Cabinet on changes to services for children and young people and specifically on the proposed Plan for Children, Young People and Families in Cambridgeshire.
- 1.2 The draft Plan has been considered by the Overview & Scrutiny Panel (Service Delivery & Resources) as part of their study of services for young people. The Panel's comments are set out in paragraph 5 below.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 "Every Child Matters" set out an agenda for change in services for children and young people in response to highly publicised failures to protect vulnerable children. These changes are being introduced by a body of legislative and policy changes, including the –

- Children Act 2004;
- National Service Framework for Children, Young People and Maternity Services (NSF);
- Five Year Strategy for Children and Learners;
- Public Health White Paper; AND
- Youth Green Paper.

- 2.2 This legislative and policy framework is intended to improve statutory services for children and young people, particularly the integration of Education and Social Services. In Cambridgeshire these services have been combined to form the Office of Children and Young People. Locally there has been an emphasis on developing comprehensive and integrated responses to the needs of children and young people, which has had implications for a wide range of services. Further co-operation and joint working between agencies will be required to achieve the outcomes for children and young people to -

- Be Healthy;
- Stay Safe;
- Enjoy and Achieve;
- Make a Positive Contribution; and
- Achieve Economic Well-Being.

3. THE DISTRICT COUNCIL'S CONTRIBUTION

- 3.1 The Children's Act makes the County Council the lead organisation but places on it a duty to work with relevant partners to achieve the outcomes. The District Council is a relevant partner and as such has a reciprocal duty to co-operate. In addition, the Council is specified

as a member of the Safeguarding Children Board under the new legislation.

3.2 The Council's contribution, however, is much wider than this legislative duty and includes —

- developing and supporting the delivery of leisure, recreation and play opportunities, planning, economic development and regeneration, housing and benefits services;
- the provision of community facilities used by children, young people and families, often in the most deprived communities;
- the promotion and support of good practice in the involvement of children and young people in local decision making;
- the promotion of the well being of the local community;
- leading the development of the Huntingdon Strategic Partnership and other key local partnerships;
- through participation in the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership and the development of an Area Group; and
- helping to improve young people's access to facilities and services as part of Local Public Service Agreements.

4. PARTNERSHIP APPROACH

4.1 To promote the integration of services, a Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership (CYPSP) has been established in Cambridgeshire. This Countywide partnership will be supported by Area Groups for Huntingdonshire; East Cambridgeshire & Fenland; and South Cambridgeshire & Cambridge City. These Area Groups mirror the three Directorates of the newly formed Office of Children and Young Peoples Services and will provide District-based planning for services for children and young people. In Huntingdonshire the Group will form one of the thematic or partnership groups of the Huntingdonshire Strategic Partnership, to avoid duplication and reinforce the concepts of co-operation and joint working.

5. PLAN FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

5.1 Government guidance is expected on the preparation of statutory Children and Young People's Plans from 1st April 2006. In the meantime, the CYPSP has approved an interim plan to provide direction for all agencies. Area based plans will be developed from this County-wide plan.

5.2 It is important to remember that this is a high level strategic plan in a newly defined work area. Again, the plan is written in different terms from those seen at this Authority in dealing with Housing, Environmental Health, etc.

5.3 The plan does not require Government approval, but all partners are invited to endorse it.

5.4 The plan is intended to recognise the contribution of a broad range of agencies, in addition to those with direct statutory responsibilities, to the achievement of the adopted outcomes and will be used to

develop the Statutory Plan during the forthcoming year. It is accepted by the CYPSP that the plan will continue to change throughout 2005/06 as its development is an iterative process. However, the CYPSP has requested all partners to steer the interim plan through their governance arrangements and a report was presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Panel on 5 April.

5.5 The Overview & Scrutiny Panel (Service Delivery & Resources) at their meeting on 5th April —

- endorsed the principle of the District Council's contribution towards meeting the objectives of the Plan in terms of the broader range of services and opportunities it provides for children, young people and their families;
- felt that the District Council should be represented at a senior level on the proposed Area Group for Huntingdonshire; and
- requested the opportunity to consider and help develop the future versions of the Children & Young People's Plan.

5.6 The CYPSP have also decided to create a joint commissioning group to oversee the development of the plan. In particular, it is essential that partners are clear on their respective responsibilities and further work is required to address this point.

6. RECOMMENDATION

6.1 Cabinet is recommended to consider the comments of the Overview & Scrutiny Panel (Service Delivery & Resources) and to endorse the Children and Young People's Interim Plan, 2005-2006.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Children and Young People's Interim Plan, 2005-06

Children, Young People & Families in Cambridgeshire Strategic Plan file held by the Chief Executive.

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