

CABINET: 5 APRIL 2006

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE PLAN: CONSULTATION RESPONSE

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Children Act 2004 set out a statutory agenda for local government under the theme of "Every Child Matters". This indicates at the outset that all agencies are regarded as having a part to play in this agenda. The Duty to produce a Children and Young People Plan is that of the Children's Services Authority (in effect the County Council). District Councils have a duty to co-operate with the Every Child Matters agenda and the Children and Young People Plan that guides the work.

2. PRODUCING A RESPONSE TO THE PLAN

- 2.1 The requirement placed on the Children's Services Authority is to write a plan that embraces all services for all children provided by all agencies across the whole County. Clearly this is a challenging task, especially as the guidance issued by Government called for brevity. This Plan has had to be produced in a very short timescale and as a result it might be regarded, even now, as "work in progress". Indeed, it is likely that the Plan and its process, will continue to develop as all the agencies gain experience.
- 2.2 A brief summary of the Plan vision, objectives and targets areas is included as Appendix 1.
- 2.3 There are only three questions in the formal feedback form but they cover the entire content. The proposed response can be reproduced to match the on-line form but it is presented here in the same order as the Plan, so as to ease cross referencing if needed.
- 2.4 In developing this response, a meeting was held with the Portfolio Holders, Panel Chairmen and Vice Chairman and opposition spokesman of the two lead Panels for youth issues, together with similar representation from the Crime and Disorder Portfolio and Panel. Subsequently there has been a member's seminar, which included discussion on the Plan and briefings on a number of the other initiatives that are happening in the Every Child Matters agenda. That seminar supported the idea of a group of lead members to act as a sounding board for the lead Portfolio Holder. The suggested composition of the group is:

| Portfolios | |
|--------------------------------------|------|
| Leisure Tourism and the Arts | Lead |
| Health, Housing and Social Inclusion | |
| Crime and Disorder | |

| Panels | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| Leisure | Representatives to be Chairman, Vice Chairman and opposition spokesman |
| Health Housing and Social Inclusion | |
| Crime and Disorder | |

- 2.5 In broad terms, the County Council have made considerable efforts around the County to involve interested parties and have done well in bringing views together. As a result, the content of the Plan is substantially sound and to be welcomed.
- 2.6 Looking to the future, one of the key aspects of the Plan is the promotion of Local Children’s Partnerships. Essentially, this is a proposal to form multi-agency partnerships at a local level. There is no prescription in the Plan as to how this might be done but there is likely to be a strong presumption to arrangements on District Council boundaries. In the District, we have the Community Action Network for Children and Young People, which supports the work of the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP). This would be the obvious candidate to provide that partnership locally. It is comprised of all the key players, is well established and supported. The group would need to develop its role to accommodate all the facets of the Every Child Matters agenda but it is capable of doing so. This would mean no additional groups, a clear relationship to the LSP and direct involvement of executive agencies.

3. GENERAL COMMENTS

- 3.1 The draft response is in Appendix 2 (pages 6 – 14 of this paper) and this contains the detailed comments.
- 3.2 There are a few matters which stand out for comment:
- a) There should be definite, clear, written reference to what is regarded as the “local” dimension. The informal discussion with HCC has always been strong on the theme of using District boundaries as the basis of the structure. However, this has been slow to find its way into print. The work on structural matters continues in parallel with the consultation on the Plan. The District is well placed with its involvement with the process and also the track record of its partnership working on this subject, latterly through the LSP.
 - b) Related to the above is the composition of what are termed “Locality Children’s Partnerships”. Essentially, this is a proposal to form multi-agency partnerships at a local level. In the District, we have the Community Action Network for Children and Young People, which supports the work of the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP). This would be the obvious candidate to provide that partnership locally. It is comprised of all the key players, is well established and supported. This would be best use of an existing group.
 - c) The expectations which the Plan places on partners is not clear. Actions are listed but there is no reference to lead agencies or scale of commitment. Some means of gauging

what this is, would help partners when it comes to committing to support the Plan itself.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no particular implications at this stage. There is the prospect that once the Children and Young People Plan is adopted, there would then be implications to be considered as part of the Expenditure Planning process. However, the priorities and actions currently proposed, relate strongly to existing work. Therefore, subject to the caveat in section 3.2c above, no significant financial impact is anticipated from this version of the Plan. If there were changes in future editions, there would be the opportunity to comment before any subsequent Plan's adoption.

5. CONSULTATION

5.1 Consultation has taken place with the internal officers group, a meeting with lead members (16th February) and a member's seminar (3rd March).

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no particular implications arising from this report.

7. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no direct implications arising from the report. However, some of the content in the Plan is driven by crime and disorder issues. Comments on those are contained in the response at the appropriate points.

8. PORTFOLIO HOLDERS COMMENTS

8.1 This item is relevant to all Portfolio Holders, however the lead Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People supports the recommendations.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 It is recommended that Cabinet approve:

- a) The proposed response to the Children and Young People Plan.
- b) The creation of a group to support the work of the lead Portfolio Holder on Children and Young People as presented in the report.

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Background Papers:
Published report.

[j:l:m:cabinet:2006:04:CYPP CAB V02]

APPENDIX 1

This vision and beliefs are based on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. This sets out the basic rights of each child. The full text is at www.unicef.com.

Vision

Everyone offering services to children, young people and their families in Hampshire shares a vision that **every** child and young person:

- has the best possible start in life and develops to their full potential
- receives an excellent education in preparation for a fulfilled life as an adult
- has their achievements celebrated
- is able to grow and develop in safety and free from discrimination of any sort
- receives the highest possible standard of health care
- is listened to and has their views taken into account
- can easily get the information and support they need to help them, their families and carers take responsibility for their own lives
- is treated with respect, and treats others in the same way

Guiding beliefs

- 1 The interests of children and young people aged 0 -19 and support to their families and carers must be at the centre of our work at all times.
- 2 We will actively seek and listen to the views of children, young people and their families and carers. We will involve them in the development and management of services to meet their needs.
- 3 The safety of children and young people is paramount. We will always take action to secure this.
- 4 Problems are best prevented. In all our work with children and young people, their families and carers, we will work to recognise need early, prevent things going wrong in the first place and encourage self help and responsibility.
- 5 Vulnerable children and young people will be identified and will receive additional support and services to ensure they have the best possible chances in life.
- 6 We know that some children and young people will experience great difficulties. We will not give up on them. In partnership with them we will provide the support and services they need to help them develop to their full potential.
- 7 Schools and colleges have a very important role to play in ensuring the health, safety, achievement, participation in society and future economic wellbeing of all the children and young people in their care.
- 8 Everyone providing services to children and young people must work together to maximise the use of the limited resources available. By working together we can achieve things that we could not achieve alone.

Overall priorities

All children and young people in Hampshire must achieve to their full potential against the 5 main aims of the Children Act. We want them all to *be healthy; stay safe; enjoy and achieve; make a positive contribution* and *achieve economic wellbeing*.

All organisations who work with children and young people across Hampshire are working together with the following overall priorities.

To ensure:

- 1** We engage with and listen to children, young people and their families
- 2** Good and well co-ordinated support and advice for parents and families
- 3** Excellent general education and healthcare provision
- 4** The right provision and support for vulnerable children and young people and their families and those who need specialist support
- 5** Resources are targeted according to need, whether it is geographical or focussed on individual circumstances.

Target areas for improvement

The following table shows where particular attention will be targeted over the coming three years to improve life-chances for the most disadvantaged children and young people in Hampshire and support those most in need or at greatest risk. Everyone working with children in Hampshire can contribute to taking these activities forward. They are set out under the 5 main aims of the Children Act.

Areas targeted to improve outcomes for children and young people

| Be healthy | Stay Safe | Enjoy and achieve | Make a positive contribution | Achieve economic well being |
|---|--|--|---|---|
| Fewer teenage pregnancies and improvements in sexual health Healthier eating, more physical activity and less obesity Better mental health and well-being Reduced substance misuse Better access to leisure services and recreation | Reduced youth offending All children and young people stay safe and feel safe Identification, protection and support for children and young people affected by domestic violence | Fewer children not in school. High quality support for those out of school Less bullying Improved life-chances for young carers | Easier access to information on services More young people volunteering More positive images of young people in the media | Better range, quality and access to vocational and work related learning for the 14 -19 age group Better housing arrangements for those in unsuitable accommodation Better transport options and costs. |

APPENDIX 2

HAMPSHIRE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S PLAN: DRAFT RESPONSE

[Comment in plain text, *CYPP text in bold italic*]

FIRST SECTION

GENERAL

Support the idea behind having two sections

There is quite a lot of presumption that readers will know what a lot of the terms refer to – there would seem to be a strong case for reference to a technical / glossary / structures appendix (or web link).

Does it say what the Plan period is?

SPECIFICS

Introduction

Welcome the recognition of the different readers – children and parents as well as agencies.

Vision and beliefs (First Section p4) – support the use of UN framework

Rights, respect and responsibilities (First Section p5)

This is hard to read technical jargon. It may put some people off what is an important message – could it not be written so it is simpler and more easily understood?

Overall priorities and target areas of work (First Section p8)

This is hard to follow and understand how these relate to each other. There seem to be three levels or ways in which this very large subject is to be reduced to identifying where the focus of activity is to take place:

- 1/. Five “***overall priorities***”
- 2/. Lead statement to target “***the most disadvantaged***” and “***those most in need or at greatest risk***”
- 3/. Seventeen ***target areas*** within the five Aims.

At the moment this structure suggests that there will be no overall emphasis on the seventeen targets – just a focus on those seventeen with those children / young people who are most disadvantaged, whether this be through personal services or geographically based services.

Is this really the case? It would seem unlikely, given that the remit for Children and Young People Plans is to account for the needs of all children and young people. Presumably the Plan could be clearer in identifying that it is led by the seventeen targets but recognising that it will be necessary to deal with disadvantage as an issue within each.

Finally, we would advocate that the five “**overall priorities**” section should be substantially altered. Items 1, 3 and 5 are already covered (more comprehensively) in the **Vision and Guiding Beliefs** and the content is already part of the Target Areas or Behind the Scenes sections. There would however appear to be added value in bringing together the issues to do with items 2 and 4: Parenting and Vulnerable Children and Young People. If these were termed “Cross cutting priorities” the role of this section may be more clearly understood. This has implications for action programmes in the second section and is picked up again there.

If this approach is taken there will be a much clearer relationship between the Aims and targeted outcomes. This ability to understand the future drive of the Plan is vital to the following section on making things work.

Making it work (First Section p10)

“**In the future it will be very important that all plans reflect the priorities in this CYP**” and “**thinking about “...how their work and service can change to align behind these priorities**” are clearly fundamental messages in a Plan where agencies have a duty to co-operate. It is good that it is stated and it will focus the minds of partner agencies. The detail of this will be the real test, depending what degree of change and diversion of resources is called for. The Plan could be more helpful in this respect. It could make clear where there is an expectation of particular agencies by the Plan. Perhaps a “lead agency” role could be identified? The “**Main supporting plans**”, within each topic that follows later in the Second Section, is not a reliable guide, for agencies may well have vital delivery roles in supporting Plans held by others but not have a specific one of their own. This may particularly apply to the voluntary and community sector.

It is good to note the reflection of the need for local co-ordination and joint working. We would support this but it will require Children’s Services to be organised and resourced in a way that makes local working effective.

Multi-agency and partnership working (First Section p10)

The last paragraph refers to “**New arrangements for formal partnerships**”. No detail is given here, or reference for further information. This may be unnerving for some. Not all will know what “Change for Children” is. If there are such partnerships in development, we would hope that there is a local dimension to this work and that it reflects arrangements currently in existence, especially Local Strategic Partnerships. The authority strongly supports the role of the Local Strategic Partnership and the Children and Young People Community Action Network that supports it. This is an existing and effective network which any revised Children’s Services structure can link with. It is extremely important that the re-structuring of the Service includes a strong and defined local Service element, based on the boundaries of the District. The draft plan suggests that these discussions will be complete by the time the CYP is issued. Without knowing the detail of this, it does seem a very short timescale to conclude formal service partnerships.

Whilst it is inevitable that different agencies and functions will have boundaries that did not always co-incide, it was an important factor to consider in the delivery of services. This issue would apply across County as well as District boundaries and should be explicitly recognised in the Plan.

Local Strategic Partnerships (First Section p10)

We support the recognition of the role for Local Strategic Partnerships, in particular if there is indeed a local resource from Children's Services to back it up.

The role of early education settings, schools and the further education sector (First Section p11)

We welcome the recognition of this inter-relationship.

Data and performance indicators (First Section p11)

There are more indicators needed to provide coverage across all five aims. It would be useful to see a chart relating the indicators to the targets within the five aims.

Joint area review and local data sets (First Section p11/12)

The intent to develop data sets at the lowest level of analysis is very strongly supported. In rural Districts, there tend to be pockets of deprivation and need, which can be lost if data is aggregated across too large an area. Children and young people, for the most part, require services delivered locally to where they live and this is where this local dimension to delivery is so important. This is a critical point that must be covered by the Plan.

Reporting and evaluation process (First Section p12)

Another paragraph where there are terms used that may not be familiar to all readers and reference to a technical appendix / glossary could assist.

As well as the comparisons that are based on performance indicators, it would be important to show how learning is shared across the partnerships. If there are approaches which are successful, it needs to be evident that this is readily made available to all interested parties.

SECOND SECTION

GENERAL

The inclusion of LPSA2 targets is welcomed.

The three sections, each having its own actions are difficult to follow and (with the exception of the targets) difficult to trace back to the aim to which it relates. Also, given the presentation of the three sets of actions, it is not possible for partner agencies to see where they may be particularly expected to assist delivery. This uncertainty may mean that partners will be unsure where and to what extent they are implicated the earlier instruction: "***In the future it will be very important that all plans reflect the priorities in this CYPP***" and "thinking about "...***how their work and service can change to align behind these priorities***". As a starting point, the identification of a lead agency would help a good deal. District Councils have a duty to co-operate with the Plan and therefore it will be important to have some gauge of the likely implications of signing up to the CYPP.

Carrying forward a point made in relation to Section One, the value of "***Overall Priorities***" is questioned. It would seem that the majority of the points are covered

by other elements of **Target Areas** or **Behind the Scenes**. If they are not, should not other categories be created in those two?

This is a structural suggestion for consideration. In the meantime our comments are made on the basis of the current structure.

OVERALL PRIORITIES

To summarise our view of this section from points made before:

Items 1 and 3: merge into Target Areas

Items 2 and 4: keep separate as “cross cutting”

Item 5: delete

1. Engage with and listen to children, young people and their families (Second Section p3)

There is no disagreement with the Actions in themselves but they do indicate some of the questions posed in the general comment above. For example, the third action is a direct parallel with a Behind the Scenes priority on training; the fifth on interagency working; the sixth on information.

The eighth point refers to **CAT Mark** – can this be explained (and /or put in full)? A number of the points are very generic and if they remain, they would be better if they related to targets.

The **Main indicators of progress (Second Section p4)** are clear and understandable but they don't seem to have any direct mention or relationship to the actions. Perhaps they should be actions?

There is a wish to re-inforce the work being undertaken on engagement of young people. This is a priority, for without it there may not be an adequate appreciation of the needs of young people.

It would benefit a wider understanding of Council members and probably also across all organisations, for there to be a condensed interpretation of the wide range of material that is produced.

Given the references to localities elsewhere, there should be reference to what is going on at a District level, for example in terms of Youth Panels / Citizens Panels. It is locally where the engagement will often take place.

2. Good and well co-ordinated support and advice for parents and families (Second Section p5)

This section is coherent and contained. Perhaps this is because it deals with parents rather than children and young people and therefore the subject does not fit as easily elsewhere. So a separate section to bring material together across all Target Areas has merit. It could be clearer that these services are intended to provide parenting support as a routine matter for all parents, like we do anti-natal and in some areas post – natal care. It is not just for families once difficulties have arisen.

Does the second action need re-wording? It is agencies that sign up to strategies, not managers. Also, might there be two stages: the organisations signing and then the managers being trained?

The target of July 06 in the fifth action seems optimistic.

3. Excellent general education and healthcare provision (Second Section p6)

It is not apparent why there is a need for this section when there are specific **Health** and **Attainment** Target Areas. There does not seem to be added value to content that could sit equally well within the material on Target Areas.

In this particular area (and in other rural areas we suspect) there are “hot spots” of very low birth weight babies – if there is a desire to make an impact, then the plan should mention that there is a need to research localised hotspots for such issues .

There is concern over the prospect of losing NHS dental services for children from April when there ceases to be an obligation to provide treatment for children as NHS patients, unless the entire Practice was NHS based. This should be treated as a priority.

4. The right provision for vulnerable children (Second Section p9)

Vulnerable children and young people are a group which may have particular needs across all the Aims. This would seem to have merit in a section which brings this together across all the Aims.

The emphasis on the needs of Travellers families is welcome. The need for connectivity between different Children’s Services areas should be recognised, linking the need for spatial planning, continuity of delivery and achieving some form consistency in standards of delivery.

5. Resources targeted according to need (Second Section p20)

This does not appear to add anything beyond what was already offered in Section One - so is it needed at all? There may be a place for collective agreement on the tools for assessing need in deprived areas – for example the role of Participatory Needs Assessment.

With such an extensive list of topics and actions, the Plan needs to have clearer regard for the resource implications. To achieve more within current resources will be difficult, given the high level of partnership working that already takes place. There will be some scope but the degree and rate of change needs to be realistic.

TARGETS FOR IMPROVEMENT

GENERAL

There are a great many actions. Some are specific to the subject but others mirror process or general matters, especially: training, information, data and engagement. Whilst it is understood that individual authors have seen a need for this, is there not a case for taking these out, in lieu of the priority given to these items across the whole Plan?

Fewer Teenage pregnancies and improvements in sexual health (Second Section p21)

Indicators – just a point of tidying up – the indicators are expressed in a range of terms – and the means of measuring may well be a reason why. However if it is possible, could they be expressed as a percentage increase or an absolute percentage level? Should targets be expressed that are outside the plan dates (eg 2010 when the Plan is until 2009)?

Healthier eating, more physical activity and reduced obesity (Second Section p23)

Indicators – is it possible to set targets for “**the numbers.....**”? There is clearly a direct relationship to the targets set in LPSA2. If the final plan could make these relationships clear, it would be advantageous.

There is clearly a direct relationship to the targets set in LPSA2. If the final plan could make these relationships clear, it would be advantageous.

Better mental health and well being (Second Section p25)

Reduced substance abuse (Second Section p27)

There should be more on the abuse of alcohol by young people. An awful lot of alcohol that young people consume, they obtain from their parents own stores at home. We would suggest the need for an action related to the level of education that parents are given on how young people use/abuse alcohol.

Better access to leisure services and recreation (Second Section p29)

Supported.

Reduced youth offending (Second Section p31)

There is a need to re-work this section and we support the additional content supplied via the District Leads meeting which focuses on the essential matter of early intervention, before young people “get into the system”.

We would also suggest consideration is given to Accredited Community Safety Officers having a presence in the vicinity Schools at the beginning / end of the school day. They might also have a role in moderating behaviour on school buses.

All children and young people to stay and feel safe (Second Section p33)

It is not clear from whose perspective it's been written for – so an approach should be agreed. On the main indicators of progress on that section, the indicator ‘reduction in road deaths’ – should read ‘reduction in road deaths and serious injuries’, because serious injuries are much more of an issue.

Identification, protection and support for children and young people affected by domestic violence. (Second Section p35)

Fewer children not in school: high quality support for those out of school (Second Section p37)

Less bullying (Second Section p40)

Improved life chances for carers (Second Section p41)

Easier access to information on services (Second Section p43)

It is understood that the possibility of a children's version of the Plan is being considered. This would be excellent if it could be achieved. Also, this might apply to www.hantsfish.org.uk, the dedicated website for Children's Services. It is a key element of the planned work, but could present an approach that is more "young person friendly". The young person focus of the "**Where we want to be**" is very clear and commendable – perhaps it is just ensuring the mechanisms deliver in practice.

More emphasis might be given to continuing co-operation between local authorities along the lines of HPSN.

More young people volunteering (Second Section p45)

Supported and this is also part of LPSA2

More positive images of young people in the media (Second Section p47)

The direction of this Target is strongly supported. Perhaps the media itself could be suggested for a lead on action.

Locally in low crime areas, there is a lot of hard work going into the reassurance message. A lot of the problems that we have are about generation gaps, older people not valuing younger people and vice versa. Perhaps there could be an action to influence Community Safety Strategies and the media work that they do within them.

Better range, quality and access to vocational and work related learning for 14-19 age group (Second Section p49)

The actions do not sufficiently reach out to the business sector and /or individuals with the skills to bring to vocational courses, they are too school / college focussed.

Better Housing arrangements for those in unsuitable accommodation (Second Section p51)

The first action calls for the development of "a clear housing strategy that meets the accommodation needs of vulnerable groups such as Care Leavers; Teenage Parents; Foster Carers; children with special needs; homeless post-16 students; adolescents at risk of disengagement with society, including drug and alcohol abusers.' The principle of the producing such as a strategy is supported, if there were a clear and strong connection to Housing Strategies at the District level. It would therefore, be helpful to have some clarification on the nature of this county-wide strategy and how it would relate to District level housing strategies.

Better transport options and costs (Second Section p53)

Transport has a huge influence on access to services. The multi-agency pilot activity is welcome but it should have a defined time line for implementation and reporting the pilot, followed by mechanisms for taking the findings forward.

There would seem to be scope for more action on this subject. There is a strong Local Transport Planning framework that could in any even consider more closely questions of access. Also there are, through LSP frameworks, existing local multi-agency groups that have already proven useful in connecting transport and service delivery interests.

BEHIND THE SCENES

Better and more frequent interagency training (Second Section p55)

The text makes reference to a group of people working together. An action should be to perhaps make the constitution of that group better known or to target an output from that group.

The workforce planning agenda could be more overtly referred to and planned for.

All the training activity referred to elsewhere could be listed here (or cross referenced)

Development of the information sharing process, lead professionals and common assessment framework (Second Section p56 [[p2 on current version]]

This is clearly of immense importance and there will be good reason why this might hold more text than other sections.

It is apparent that there are some implementation issues with the Information Sharing Protocol even now, so it might be prudent to recognise the need to effectively engage all partners as early as possible and certainly before the ISI is implemented.

The IT infrastructure and the protocols that go with data management for all shared systems is a key element that reaches across a number of Target Areas. Could there be a role to identify an ICT group to bring these elements together?

Workforce re-structuring (Second Section p59 [[p5 on current version]])

This section does not reflect the message from earlier in the document about the need for local co-operation and arrangements, as well as at the County level. This has implications for all the elements mentioned and so there should be a specific reference to the need for a local dimension to Workforce Planning in order to facilitate the effective delivery of the CYPP.

Development of Extended Schools (Second Section p61 [[p7 on current version]])

The fourth action is particularly welcome as the development of the initiative to date might have achieved more in this respect.

Development of Children's Centres (Second Section p63 [[p9 on current version]])

Children's Centres are a planned development based around data to select priority areas. As such there is a greater fit with the planning of other elements of the Every Child Matters agenda. The actions largely read as a separate Children's Centre agenda – it would be important for them to be part of the local pattern of provision and integrated with it. This should be given greater emphasis in the Actions.

Development of management information and supporting data streams (Second Section p65 [[p11 on current version]])

The proposed development of the JAR data set is welcome and useful. We would advocate the production of data at the District Council level where ever possible. It is understood that some material is difficult to assemble in other than post code areas but this is not the best unit of account.

There is again a link to ICT elements (as mentioned previously)

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