

Report of	Meeting	Date
Head of Leisure and Cultural Services (Introduced at Executive Cabinet by the Executive Member for Life and Leisure, Councillor Cath Hoyle)	Overview and Scrutiny Committee Executive Cabinet	2 March 2006 9 March 2006

A PLAN FOR ALL THE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE OF LANCASHIRE - CONSULTATION

PURPOSE OF REPORT

- To consider a response to Lancashire County Council's draft 'Plan for all the Children and Young People of Lancashire'.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

- Delivering the Every Child Matters outcomes – be healthy, stay safe, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution and achieve economic well-being – is a key area of work in the Community Strategy.

RISK ISSUES

- The issue raised and recommendations made in this report involve risk considerations in the following categories:

Strategy	√	Information	
Reputation		Regulatory/Legal	
Financial		Operational	
People		Other	

As mentioned above, delivering the Every Child Matters outcomes is a key area of work in the Community Strategy. It is important the needs of Chorley's children and young people are clearly identified, articulated and acted upon to deliver the strategy.

BACKGROUND

- This report aims to highlight the key issues in the draft 'Plan for all the Children and Young People of Lancashire'. The Plan is 55 pages in length – should Members wish to read the full document it can be accessed on:

www.lancashire.gov.uk/education/every_child_matters/consultations/index.asp



5. Why have a Children and Young People's Plan? The plan is for Lancashire's children and young people and responds to the reforms set out in the Children Act 2004 whereby local areas must produce a single, strategic, overarching plan for all services affecting children and young people.
6. The responsibility for co-ordinating the production of this Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) falls on Lancashire County Council as the statutory Children's Services Authority. But Section 10 of the Children Act defines a number of 'relevant partners', ie those who must co-operate at every level with the local authority in making arrangements to improve the well-being of children and young people.
7. In Lancashire the 'relevant partners' are:
 - the 12 District Councils
 - Lancashire Constabulary
 - the local Probation Board
 - Lancashire Youth Offending Service
 - Cumbria and Lancashire Strategic Health Authority (SHA)
 - the 8 Primary Care Trusts (PCTs)
 - Learning and Skills Council
 - Connexions.
8. In addition, valuable contributions are made by many other organisations that provide services in relation to children and young people in Lancashire. They too are covered by elements of this plan. These organisations include:
 - schools
 - voluntary community and faith sector agencies and cultural groups
 - diocesan/church authorities
 - agencies with responsibilities for delivering other front-line statutory services to children, young people and their families – eg not-for-profit and private sector bodies, colleges, work-based learning providers, NHS Trusts and Jobcentre Plus
 - childcare, culture, sport and play organisations
 - children and young people themselves
 - parents, families, carers and communities.
9. Co-operation between local partners to deliver the outcomes defined in the Children Act is secured through Lancashire's Children & Young People's Strategic Partnership (C&YPSP). The C&YPSP has oversight of delivery of the goals related to children and young people and will ensure that improved outcomes are actively sought by each of the local partners.

THE VISION FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

10. Lancashire's Children and Young People's Partnership has agreed the following vision:

"Together, we will provide excellent services where people live and which are tailored to local priorities. We will stand up for Lancashire's children, young people and their families, listen to what they say is important and let everyone know what we are doing to improve the outcomes for our children and young people".

EMERGING PRIORITIES IN THE PLAN

11. There are 28 priority areas of work identified in the plan. They have been grouped under the five Every Child Matters outcomes to demonstrate the links.

Positive Contribution

- Develop communication strategies so that partners can share information about the positive contributions made by children and young people with the community
- Improve provision of places to go and things to do for children and young people
- Increase the number of children who are engaged in positive and diversionary activities
- Increase the % of children and young people permanently excluded from Lancashire's schools that are offered full-time alternative educational provision of 21 hours per week or more
- Reduce the level of offending.

Be Healthy

- Reduce infant mortality rates particularly in those areas above the national average
- Improve access to the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services
- Increase the % of Lancashire's schools and National Healthy School Status
- Improve the impact of specialist intervention on vulnerable young people at risk of substance misuse
- Ensure that children and young people choose not to take illegal drugs, smoke or misuse alcohol
- Reduce teenage pregnancy rates particularly in the under 16 age group
- Increase the number of young people accessing sexual health services.

Stay Safe

- Improve safeguarding of vulnerable children and young people through prevention and early intervention
- Improve assessment processes alongside implementing the Common Assessment Framework, including timely initial and core assessments
- Ensure that children and young people are safe from accidental injury and death
- Reduce fear of crime and anti-social behaviour
- Ensure that children and young people are safe from crime and anti-social behaviour in and out of school, including bullying and discrimination
- Improve stability of placements of Lancashire's looked after children and young people.

Enjoy and Achieve

- Raise attainment in early years before children enter Reception Class
- Improve attendance in Lancashire's schools
- Ensure Lancashire's looked after children and young people make progress at the same rate as their peers in relation to educational attainment and engagement
- All identified underachieving groups show progress in attainment at age 14
- All identified underachieving groups show progress in attainment at age 16
- Improve the proportion of pupils achieving 5+ A*-C grades at GCSE and 5+ A*-C grades including English and Maths, especially in socio-economically deprived areas of Lancashire.

Economic Wellbeing

- reduce number of children and young people living in low income households
- reduce number of young people not in employment, education or training
- Increase % of 19 year olds achieving Level 2 in NVQ or equivalent
- Develop transport policies that meet the needs of children and young people.

12. Again, using the Every Child Matters outcomes, the plan identifies emerging local priorities for Chorley, South Ribble and West Lancashire. These are:

Positive Contribution

- Reduce fixed term exclusions in secondary schools (Chorley and South Ribble only)
- Develop positive activities away from schools, especially for 11 year olds and over
- Develop voluntary and community engagement opportunities

Be Healthy

- Reduce the incidence of alcoholism (with links to sexual health and violence)
- Raise the profile of the needs of children with additional special needs
- Support the development of effective parenting skills.

Stay Safe

- Improve parenting skills/mentoring
- Improve local networks for raising awareness and communicating between agencies
- Workforce development across statutory agencies to improve staff retention.

Enjoy and Achieve

- Develop networks of schools to work together to deliver Every Child Matters and extended services in specific localities
- Develop locality Directories grouped by interaction and conventions to raise awareness, improve contact and signposting
- Improve early years (pre-school, nursery and child care).

Achieve Economic Well-Being

- Breaking the cycle of deprivation by helping parents access local jobs
- Increase the range of flexible job opportunities with appropriate training and transport access.

13. To help achieve the vision, the plan lists a number of processes that will be introduced:

- We will develop Children's Trust Arrangements which function effectively in the diverse localities of Lancashire
- We will develop integrated processes underpinned by timely information sharing
- All partner organisations will consider ways and means of improving their involvement and engagement with children and young people in service monitoring and planning
- All partner organisations will ensure that their service plans reflect the strategic direction set out in the CYPP
- Work will be carried out to improve the data available to allow more accurate targeting of services to meet needs
- A clear strategy will be developed to enable timely decisions to be taken about the mainstreaming of short-term funded initiatives
- An inter-agency joint commissioning framework will be developed in 2006
- A multi-agency workforce development strategy and action plan will be developed in 2006

- The Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership will routinely monitor achievements towards improving outcomes using an agreed performance scorecard.
14. The plan sets out the strategy for the development and delivery of children's services and the improvement in outcomes we will be seeking for children, young people and their families within Lancashire from April 2006.
 15. The first plan covers the 3 years to March 2009 in some detail but there are some ambitions that stretch beyond this date, reflecting the commitment to achieve long term sustainable improvement.
 16. The Children's Service Authority and its partners recognise that the plan will need to be reviewed and refreshed at the end of each year. This will enable the authority and the partners to take account of emerging Children's Trust arrangements and refinements in priorities based on improved needs analysis and involvement and engagement activities.
 17. The Partnership make it clear that they want every aspect of the services and the strategies that are developed to lead to the best possible outcomes for children, young people and their families and they are committed to be well placed for the anticipated Joint Area Review of Lancashire children's services in 2008.
 18. The Government requires all lead local authorities, in conjunction with their partners, to have developed children's trust arrangements by April 2008. It is through these arrangements that effective partnerships will be made and children's services operate. Children's trust arrangements will be made up of four strands:
 - integrated governance
 - integrated strategies
 - integrated processes
 - integrated front-line delivery.
 19. As mentioned previously, arrangements have been established to co-ordinate efforts on a county basis through the creation of Lancashire's Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership. Locality footprints have also been identified. The footprint covering Chorley also includes South Ribble and West Lancashire. There is a separate footprint for Preston. Two 'partners days' have taken place using the locality footprints. These have taken the form of a wide invitation to a range of partners, presentations on work to date and group exercises to attempt to prioritise issues.

CONSULTATION

20. In their response form, Lancashire County Council are keen to hear responses to the following points:
 - Do you share the visions for children and young people in Lancashire (section 10 of this report)?
 - Do you agree with the priorities set out in the plan (sections 11 and 12 of this report)?
21. It is recommended that the following sections form the basis of the Council's response to the consultation.
22. The Council shares the vision for children and young people in Lancashire as set out in the draft plan.
23. The Council is supportive of the county-wide priorities as set out in the draft plan, in principle. However, while the role of district councils can be seen clearly in some of the

priorities, they do read as a set of County Council priorities. For example, there is no reference to housing and its impact on children and young people's well-being. As partnership working develops further, it is recognised that the priorities should change to more accurately reflect all partners priorities.

24. In terms of the locality priorities for Chorley, South Ribble and West Lancashire, these have come to the fore as a result of the group sessions in the locality 'partners days'. Locality priorities need to be established on shared and agreed evidence, and take into consideration all partners' contributions to children and young people's services. As they stand at the minute, it is not possible to say with any certainty that the local priorities identified in the plan for Chorley, South Ribble and West Lancashire are the highest priority.
25. Some of the local priorities require further clarification so everybody knows what exactly is meant by them, for example 'workforce development across statutory agencies to improve staff retention'. Some of the actions in the plan reinforce the perception of it being a county document and a lack of ownership, to date, of partners. For example, under more things for children and young people it says it will be the Youth and Community Services' responsibility to provide sporting and leisure opportunities. Granted, they are a player, but not the biggest.
26. The Council welcomes the development of Children's Trust Arrangements which function effectively in the diverse localities of Lancashire. The Council is of the view that decisions are best taken locally and would welcome the speedy development of decisions being taken at the locality 'footprint' level, previously agreed – in our case, covering Chorley, South Ribble and West Lancashire. The 'partner days' at locality level have been useful for the dissemination of information. However, if we are to deliver the maximum improvements for local children and young people, governance arrangements should be developed to allow for improved working at 'footprint' level, including decision making.

COMMENTS OF THE HEAD OF HUMAN RESOURCES

27. There are no human resource issues arising directly from this report.

COMMENTS OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE

28. There are no financial issues arising directly from this report.

RECOMMENDATION

29. That the comments made in sections 22 to 26 from the basis of the Council's response to the consultation.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

30. To take an active involvement in the consultation exercise so that the best outcomes for the Borough's children and young people can be achieved.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

31. Not to comment on the consultation document.

JAMIE CARSON
HEAD OF LEISURE AND CULTURAL SERVICES

Background Papers			
Document	Date	File	Place of Inspection
A Plan for all of the Children and Young People in Lancashire – Consultation Draft (Version 3)	February 2006	LCS/ECM/CON	Head of Leisure and Cultural Services office, Gillibrand Street

Report Author	Ext	Date	Doc ID
Jamie Carson	5815	20 February 2006	ADMINREP/REPORT