

Select Committee on Children's Services – 17 June 2010

Report of the Director of Children's Services

Dudley Children and Young Peoples Plan and Directorate of Children's Services Strategic Plan 2010/11

Purpose of Report

1. The purpose of this report is to inform the committee of the priority objectives detailed in the Children and Young People's Plan and the Directorate Strategic Plan and highlight the linkages / differences between the two plans.

Background

2. The Children and Young People's Plan sets out the priorities for Dudley Children's Trust during 2010/11. Priorities have been established by analysing the outcomes from the Comprehensive Area Assessment and other inspections, discussions with Government Office and a consultation exercise with partners on the Children's Trust Board.
3. The Directorate Strategic Plan details the key priority objectives for the Directorate of Children's Services during 2010/11. Priorities have been established by analysing the outcomes from the Comprehensive Area Assessment and other inspections, discussions with Government Office and a full and extensive consultation exercise with all managers across the Directorate.

Children and Young Peoples Plan Priorities

4. Through the process described above at point 2, the Children's Trust has identified ten priority objectives, that through partnership working are aimed at improving outcomes for children and young people. These are:
 - Support all children to be and feel safe
 - Narrow the gaps between the performance and outcomes achieved by under performing and under privileged groups in Dudley and the national average
 - Support children and young people to become and remain healthy

- Support children and young people to enjoy growing up in Dudley and to acquire the skills to live successful lives
- Support children and young people to achieve economic and social well being
- Enhance the skills and confidence of parents and carers in Dudley
- Continue to strengthen Dudley Children's Trust and strategic commissioning
- Children and young people have opportunities to be involved in giving their views and opinions – having a voice
- Further enhance the skills and fitness for purpose of our children's workforce
- Increase the effectiveness of transition arrangements from children's to adult services.

Directorate of Children's Services Strategic Plan Priorities

5. Through the process described at point three, the Directorate has identified 7 key priority objectives for 2010/11. These are:
- Improve the effectiveness of early intervention for vulnerable children and young people to be safe from maltreatment, neglect, violence and sexual exploitation
 - Ensure looked after children have security, stability and are cared for
 - Improve behaviour and attendance at school
 - Improve outcomes for children aged 0-11 years (early years and primary)
 - Improve outcomes for children and young people aged 11 – 19 years (or aged 25 for those with disabilities)
 - Develop and implement an effective strategy for the delivery of Vision 2025
 - Develop, improve and embed strategies and processes to support service delivery
 - Improve the directorate's approach to workforce planning and development.

Children and Young People's Plan / Directorate Strategic Plan

6. Whilst the Directorate of Children's Services has a major role in improving outcomes for all children and young people, it is recognised that this cannot be achieved without working in partnership with other organisations both in the public, private and voluntary sector.
7. To this end, the Directorate have agreed that any objectives that require a partnership approach should feature in the Children and Young People's Plan and the Directorate Strategic Plan will detail objectives where the Directorate has sole responsibility.

8. This benefits of doing this are:

- Provides each plan with a clear focus and highlights the differences between both plans
- Provides readers with a clearer understanding of the role of the Children's Trust and the Directorate
- Minimises duplication and burden on managers reporting performance through multiple processes
- Council Plan priorities will clearly reference the Children and Young Peoples Plan and the Directorate Strategic Plan.

Finance

9. There are no additional budget implications for the delivery of the Children and Young People's Plan and all priorities will be met within existing resources.

Law

10. Section 10 of the Children Act 2004 requires local authorities to make arrangements to promote co-operation to improve well-being for children and places a duty on named 'relevant partners' to cooperate with those arrangements. The Apprenticeships, Skills and Learning Act (2009) has extended the duty to co-operate to include maintained schools, academies, further education and sixth form colleges and Job Centre Plus to bring key delivery partners into the strategic planning role of the Children's Trust.

11. The Children's Trust Board has a statutory responsibility to prepare and monitor the implementation of the Children and Young Peoples Plan – but does not deliver it. Delivering the strategy remains the responsibility of the partners, both individually and together.

Equality Impact

12. Children and Young People are consulted and involved extensively as part of the work of the Children's Trust and the development of the Children's Plan. The vision of the Trust and the Plan is to ensure that children and young people in Dudley are happy, healthy and fulfilled.

13. A Children and Young People's Board was established in September to work closely with the Children's Trust Board. This will help ensure that the views of children and young people are heard, understood and acted on within the partnership.

Recommendation

14. It is recommended that the Committee note and approve this report and the work it describes and request reports on future progress.



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