

Scrutiny Board (Children's Services)

Comments on the Draft Strategic Plan

The Scrutiny Board recognised the strong links between the priorities set out in the Children and Young People's Plan and the draft strategic outcomes, whilst acknowledging that in the context of the strategic plan most of the outcomes were applicable to the general population of Leeds rather than children and young people specifically.

This was seen to reflect the hierarchical nature of the planning framework, and the respective positions of the two plans within that hierarchy.

Members stressed that they were particularly interested in the more detailed targets and measures showing how these outcomes would be achieved.

In terms of specific observations, the Board made the following comments:

- The 'Every Child Matters' agenda is so important and so widely recognised that consideration should be given to finding some way of referencing it explicitly in the Plan. (This is notwithstanding the Board's recognition that the aims of Every Child Matters are consistent with the draft strategic outcomes and improvement priorities.)
- The Board asked that consideration be given to a specific reference to improved outcomes for Looked After Children, possibly under the health and wellbeing theme relating to assessment and care management.
- Learning is a route to cultural wellbeing, through better understanding of both one's own culture and the diverse cultures that make up the city. Members felt that this should be reflected in the draft strategic outcomes and improvement priorities.
- The Board was disappointed that there was no mention of the private sector's impact on the environment. Members felt that the draft plan should take a broader focus, recognising the need for the behaviour of all sectors to change in order to improve the city's environment.

The Board decided that it wished to see the revised draft of the Plan, in order to see how its comments had been taken into account. This will be scheduled for the January 2008 meeting of the Scrutiny Board.