



Report of the Director of Children's Service

Scrutiny Board (Children's Services)

Date: 7th May 2009

Subject: **Building Brighter Futures: The Leeds Children and Young People's Plan 2009-14**

Electoral Wards Affected:

All

Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity



Community Cohesion



Narrowing the Gap



Purpose

The purpose of this report is to give Scrutiny Board members an opportunity to comment on the near final version of the CYPP prior to its submission to the Council's Executive Board and full Council in June 2009.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 All local authorities are required to lead the development and approval of a Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) for their area, in partnership with all local children's services. The CYPP is intended to form the 'single, overarching strategy' for improving outcomes for children and young people. The CYPP is an important document to guide partnership working and provide a framework for measuring our progress. It is also used by inspectors to judge progress and importantly is part of the Council's Budget and Policy Framework.
- 1.2 Leeds' first Leeds CYPP was developed in 2005/06 and approved by Full Council in summer 2006. The plan was for a three-year period and so is now coming to its conclusion. As such a new Children and Young People's Plan is being developed. This is in line with revised national guidance and provides a link to the wider Leeds Strategic Plan and national Children's Plan, from which it takes its name. The new plan will be for the years 2009-2014. This period

has been chosen to link into national and local planning and budget cycles and to allow time to set out and implement the longer term strategy for children's services in line with the government's own 2020 targets in the Children's Plan. It is intended to undertake a major review in 2011, when new statutory requirements are likely to come into force for children's trusts, and also to coincide with the next Leeds Strategic Plan and the next three-year national budget cycle.

- 1.3 At its March 2009 meeting the Children's Services Scrutiny Board received a draft of the new Children and Young People's Plan for Leeds. The Board were invited to comment on the Plan as part of the final stage of a consultation process that started in January 2008.
- 1.4 The draft Plan shared with Scrutiny members was also distributed widely to partners across children's services for comments during the final consultation period running from 6th March until 6th April. It was also posted on the Children Leeds website, with opportunities to respond promoted to a variety of relevant groups.
- 1.5 In addition to the feedback received from the Scrutiny Board a variety of other comments have been submitted. This includes feedback from:
 - The Leeds Youth Council, Anti-bully Ambassadors and Reach Out and Reconnect (ROAR).
 - Individual Councillors and Political Groups
 - School Governors
 - Leeds University
 - A number of different groups within the Voluntary, Community and Faith sector.
 - Specific individuals from a wide variety of services working with children, including health, Education Leeds, Youth offending, Children and Young people's Social Care and Housing.
- 1.6 The Children and Young People's Plan has been re-drafted to take this feedback into account. A revised draft is attached to this report at appendix 1. This is being presented to the Scrutiny Board for comments prior to its submission to Executive Board and full Council for final approval and adoption.
- 1.7 The remainder of this cover report sets out very briefly the main themes within the Plan and highlights areas of notable amendment from the previous version. It also makes specific reference to issues raised by the Scrutiny Board at their March meeting and how these have been addressed within the revised draft.
- 1.8 The plan is now in the final stages of revision and refinement as it is proof read and tidied up to ensure consistency and comprehensiveness and agreed by the DCS.

2.0 Main Issues

2.1 The previous draft Plan submitted to Scrutiny included eight distinct sections. This has been simplified down to five sections with the previous distinctive sections on Safeguarding, Working Together Better and 14-19 Education merged into a single section along with our priorities. This reflects the fact that safeguarding and working together are key themes throughout our priorities and need to be seen in this context. Issues around 14-19 education have been highlighted within specific relevant sections, again to set these in a wider context. The new layout for the Plan is as follows:

- ***Our Vision:*** this section sets out our shared principles and ambitions for Leeds, for children, families and communities; our promise to children and young people; our vision for safeguarding and integrated working; and our work as a children's trust.
- ***Review:*** this part of the plan considers the progress we have made since the first Leeds Children and Young People's Plan in 2006 in particular our approach to continuity and learning, and also examines changes in the wider context both nationally and in Leeds.
- ***Our immediate priorities and our long term ambitions:*** informed by our review, our needs analysis, and the targets in the Leeds Strategic Plan, this section sets out our priorities for improving outcomes over the next two years; it also describes our long-term agenda and the key themes, vision and objectives for our wider work. This section includes our approach to improve safeguarding and integrated working to ensure that we identify problems sooner, to work together better to provide quicker and more flexible support, and how we plan to manage this change.
- ***Delivering our plan:*** this last section details key information on how we will deliver our plan. This includes targets, performance management arrangements within the children's trust and our joint plans for commissioning and resource management and programme management.
- ***Further information:*** This last section includes a glossary, web links to relevant documents and additional detail on action plans for the shorter term priorities.

2.2 The goals set out in the Plan have been defined more specifically as immediate priorities and long term ambitions. These are interlinked. They are summarised in the two tables below, together with the rationale for selecting these important areas.

Our immediate priorities		Priority for children	Priority for parents	Priority for services	Priority for inspectors	National priority	Leeds Strategic Plan priority	Narrowing the gap
Improving outcomes								
1	Improving outcomes for Looked After Children			✓		✓	✓	✓
2	Improving attendance and reducing persistent absence from school				✓	✓	✓	✓
3	Improving early learning and primary outcomes in deprived areas		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
4	Providing places to go and things to do	✓	✓	✓		✓		
5	Raising the proportion of young people in education or work	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
6	Reducing child poverty	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
7	Reducing teenage conception		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
8	Reducing the need for children to be in care			✓	✓		✓	✓
Working together better								
9	Strengthening safeguarding		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
10	Enabling integrated working		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓

Our long term ambitions.		Priority for children	Priority for parents	Priority for services	Priority for inspectors	National priority	Leeds Strategic Plan priority	Narrowing the gap
All Children and Young People:								
1	Are safe and secure	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2	Are safe and supported in stronger communities	✓	✓				✓	✓
3	Are helped to narrow the gap			✓			✓	✓
4	Are thriving in learning		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
5	Are safe supported in stronger families	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
6	Enjoy life and have places to go and things to do	✓	✓			✓		✓
7	Make the right choices	✓	✓			✓		✓
8	Make a good start		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
9	Are supported by excellent, integrated working.		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓

2.3 Other notable changes from the previous draft of the Plan include:

- The addition of an 'Aiming Higher' section to make clearer reference to the Disabled Children's Strategy.
- Details on all offers and entitlements for children and young people to be included as an annex to the Plan.
- More focus on the role of elected members around accountability within the 'Delivering Our Plan' section.
- Specific reference to Narrowing the Gap in the 'Vision'.

2.4 At their last consideration of the Plan the Scrutiny Board raised a number of particular issues, these are referenced, along with a response below:

- A number of concerns around the term 'places to go and things to do' and the work associated with this – *Response*: this phrase has been maintained as it is familiar to young people who themselves identified it as a priority. However it has been set in the context of the wider agenda to develop a child-friendly and play-friendly city, where children and young people can enjoy life through play, sports and arts. The priority is linked to providing high quality youth work and developing more opportunities for young people in their local area.
- Members highlighted the importance of looked after children work, particularly around early intervention and parental responsibility – *Response*: The importance of this reflected in two of the short term improvement priorities being specifically around LAC and the wider emphasis on safeguarding and integrated working.
- The need for appropriate consultation with the Unions and staff in progressing the workforce reform agenda: *Response*: This is recognised as being important and has now been referenced in the Plan.
- Concerns about the impact of efficiency savings – *Response*: work towards greater efficiencies sits within the context of the national (Gershon review) targets for efficiencies and the Council's medium-term financial plan. Targeted commissioning and stronger working together will enable resources to be better targeted at priority areas.
- Questions about the role of Area Committees and the Scrutiny Board in taking forward and monitoring work stemming from the new Plan – *Response*: A revised section on managing performance specifically references the involvement of Area Committees and Scrutiny. There is a strong commitment to involving elected members consistently throughout the implementation and monitoring of the new Plan.

- The need to increase the number of apprenticeships and opportunities for young people with learning difficulties and disabilities – *Response*: clearer reference to ambitions for Disabled Children through the Aiming High work.
- Concern that in its current form the Plan would mean little to children, young people and the public in general – *Response*: an accessible, short ‘public friendly’ version will be published with the official launch of the Plan in early autumn.

3.0 Next Steps

3.1 Having been through a detailed consultation process the latest draft of the Children and Young People’s Plan takes into account a wide variety of contributions. The version submitted to the Scrutiny Board is also being shared with the key bodies within the Children’s Trust Arrangements, as required by national guidance. Following feedback from this further final and minor amendments will be made before the Plan is submitted to the Council’s Executive Board and then to Full Council and the Department for Children’s Schools and Families. This process will be completed over the summer of 2009. Following this, the Plan will be formally launched in the autumn of 2009 with public and young people friendly editions also made available.

4.0 Conclusion

4.1 The development of the new Children and Young People’s Plan for 2009-14 follows an extensive and detailed consultation over the past year with relevant groups and individuals across Leeds. The Plan recognises the ongoing challenges facing Leeds to deliver improved outcomes in children’s lives, but also sets out clearly how services will priorities and work together to achieve this. The Plan will be the basis for guiding work with children and young people in Leeds in the years ahead, so it is crucial that it effectively sets out the overall vision, approach and priorities for services. Scrutiny will be regularly updated on work to implement the priorities in the Plan.

5.0 Recommendations

- 5.1 Scrutiny Board are asked to note the current version of the CYPP09-14 and the way previous comments have been taken on board.
- 5.2 Scrutiny Board are asked to offer any final comments on the latest version of the CYPP prior to its final submission to Executive Board and full Council.

Background Papers

Leeds’ Children and Young People’s Plan 2006-2009