

Information/Discussion Paper

Social and Community Overview and Scrutiny - 2nd April 2007

Children and Young People

This note contains the information to keep Members informed of matters relating to the work of the Committee, but where no decisions from Members are needed

1. Why has this come to scrutiny?

- 1.1 To present to Scrutiny an overview of progress made to date in responding to the Children and Young People's agenda through a presentation made to Committee.
- 1.2 To introduce the series of presentations of children and youth specific services to follow on the agenda, by providing background information of the strategic context.

2. Summary of the Issue

- 2.1 In 2005 Overview and Scrutiny highlighted Children and Young People's services as a priority within their own work plan, which instigated a review of existing services and strategies within Cheltenham. This process commenced with the scoping of a project brief, a review of existing provision and the establishment of a multi agency working group to further develop the project plan.
- 2.2 At the same time Children and Young People's issues had become even more prominent nationally with the introduction of the Children's Act 2004: 'Every Child Matters'. This included specific duties and responsibilities on district councils within a two tier structure such as Cheltenham Borough.
- 2.3 In light of the requirements of the Children's Act and our local aspirations a considerable amount of work has recently been undertaken at a local level working in partnership with the County Council and voluntary and community sector.

3. Summary of evidence/information

3.1 Background

- 3.1.1 Every Child Matters: Change for Children is a national programme of change that aims to improve the lives of all children and young people. It brings changes for all the organisations and agencies that provide services for children and young people.
- 3.1.2 The 2004 Children Act "Every Child Matters" (ECM) establishes a duty on Local Authorities to make arrangements to promote co-operation between agencies in order to improve children's wellbeing, defined by reference to the five outcomes:

Box 1: What the outcomes mean

Be healthy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Physically healthy Mentally and emotionally healthy Sexually healthy Healthy lifestyles Choose not to take illegal drugs <p><i>Parents, carers and families promote healthy choices</i></p>
Stay safe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safe from maltreatment, neglect, violence and sexual exploitation Safe from accidental injury and death Safe from bullying and discrimination Safe from crime and anti-social behaviour in and out of school Have security, stability and are cared for <p><i>Parents, carers and families provide safe homes and stability</i></p>
Enjoy and achieve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ready for school Attend and enjoy school Achieve stretching national educational standards at primary school Achieve personal and social development and enjoy recreation Achieve stretching national educational standards at secondary school <p><i>Parents, carers and families support learning</i></p>
Make a positive contribution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage in decision-making and support the community and environment Engage in law-abiding and positive behaviour in and out of school Develop positive relationships and choose not to bully and discriminate Develop self-confidence and successfully deal with significant life changes and challenges Develop enterprising behaviour <p><i>Parents, carers and families promote positive behaviour</i></p>
Achieve economic well-being	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage in further education, employment or training on leaving school Ready for employment Live in decent homes and sustainable communities Access to transport and material goods Live in households free from low income <p><i>Parents, carers and families are supported to be economically active</i></p>

3.1.3 No organisation working alone can deliver all of the necessary services to enable Children and Young People to achieve these outcomes and whilst we as a District Council provide a small number of services aimed specifically for children and young people, such as community play and the youth council, a substantial number of our services being provided generically for the community clearly contribute to delivering the outcomes for children and young people as members of households and the wider community.

3.2 The original project scope developed by Overview and Scrutiny included the following objectives:

Objective	Progress
Agreeing what we mean by children and young people (Every Child Matters covers the well-being of	Housing services consider young people to be up to the age of 25 due to Housing Benefit

children and young people from birth to age 19)	regulations – so it was agreed to expand scope to U25s
Carrying out an audit of the delivery of services and facilities for children and young people in the borough, in terms of that we provide, those that we provide in partnership and those that our partners provide	See 3.3 – 3.6
Identifying gaps in service provision	See 3.7
Consultation with children and young people and service providers to identify how best we can improve service delivery	Hear by Right presentation to be delivered to Committee

- 3.3** A seminar to identify the role of District Councils regarding the ECM agenda was facilitated in Gloucestershire by the Improvement and Development Agency (I&DeA). An audit of services delivered by the council that directly contribute to the ECM outcomes was undertaken to inform the seminar.
- 3.4** The outcomes of this audit proved that a significant number of services delivered by CBC, Festivals and Cheltenham Borough Homes could demonstrate a strong positive contribution to the ECM outcomes, for example: improving the quality of both social rented and private sector housing, sports development activities, cultural and leisure services; licensing; benefit take up; tackling homelessness; environmental health and public protection; community safety initiatives; planning provision; community development; community play; community rangers; festivals and entertainments; and social housing management.
- 3.5** A number of projects identified as having potential have continued to be developed to strengthen our contribution further. One such example is the involvement of children and young people in Cheltenham’s festivals which will be covered in detail in the following Play strategy report.
- 3.6** In addition to the audit of services directly provided by CBC, an audit of a wider range of partners delivering services in Cheltenham, most significantly the voluntary and community sector, had previously been completed at the birth to adults conference held in April 2005.
- 3.7** The working group established as a result of the O&S review used this information combined with an analysis of relevant deprivation figures and identified initial gaps in provision.
- 3.8** The County Council were required to submit a Children and Young People’s Plan in March 2006, which required the support and assistance of CBC and its local partners. Using the outcomes of the work we had completed as above, we were able to input and influence the development of this plan and specific actions have been incorporated to begin to address the needs that Cheltenham has identified.
- 3.9** Cheltenham Borough Council continues to be involved in supporting the County Council in planning delivery of:
- **Children Centres** - The government has committed to developing children’s centres to serve all communities. (Children’s centres should be seen as a catalyst for bringing services together rather than new buildings.) DfES guidance identifies a core ‘offer’ of services that must be available to all families through the centres, with

additional specific requirements in centres in the 30% most deprived areas. The national planning assumption is that each Children's Centre will serve around 800 children up to the age of five, although there is room for local flexibility.

- **Extended Services** - This agenda requires that all schools must offer 'a varied menu of Study Support activities' by 2010. This includes homework clubs, catch-up provision, gifted and talented provision, sport, music tuition, dance and drama, arts and crafts, special interest clubs, visits to museums and galleries, learning a foreign language, volunteering and enterprise activities. Schools are expected to work in partnership with other schools, voluntary, community and faith organisations and private businesses to develop and deliver activities for children and young people.
- **Children Trust arrangements and Local Area Planning** – Children Trusts are not new statutory bodies, but partnership arrangements bringing together representatives of Services to Children (Education, Social Care, Health, Connexions, Sure Start, Youth Offending Teams, the Voluntary and Community Sectors). It is the government's strongly held view that the planning, commissioning and delivery of children's services should be done through children's trusts' arrangements. At a District Level we have been considering how we can effectively organise local area planning arrangements to feed into the County's Children's Trust. We have in Cheltenham strong local partnerships already established which focus on Children and Young People's issues at a neighbourhood level and we continue to support these; however it has been recognised that it would be beneficial for Cheltenham to build on these existing structures and have a borough wide overview and we have subsequently begun the process of establishing a Children and Young People sub group of the Cheltenham Strategic partnership. It will be this partnership that will collate all the work undertaken to date and continue to drive the development of Cheltenham's local Children and Young People Strategy.
- **Integrated services** - aim is to enable frontline professionals to work closely together, focussed on the needs of children and young people rather than the services they represent. A common assessment framework is crucial in enabling this to happen and there are a variety of models available for us to consider how services can collectively address the needs of the individual holistically. We have begun to pilot this practice with the introduction of the Integrated Youth Housing Advice and Support model and the potential for Common Assessments to be used in housing services.

4. Assessment of progress to date

The IDeA have facilitated a number of events, around the country, such as the one held in Gloucestershire as mentioned in 3.3 and from these have developed a framework for an 'ideal district council'. Using this framework we can indicate the progress made to date in Cheltenham.

Standard	Commentary	Cheltenham Evidence
A priority in the corporate plan	<p>The local strategic partnership's (LSP) priorities for children and young people are linked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the Children and Young People's Plan (CYP Plan) ▪ local area agreement (LAA)– children and young people block <p>This has influenced the district council's corporate plan, meaning effort will be focused in that direction.</p>	<p>As detailed in paper we have been involved with the development of the CYP plan and LAA.</p> <p>The CYP Plan contains actions specifically for District Councils to deliver directly or in partnership</p> <p>Our existing and emerging community plans have identified areas of activity with specific regard to C&YP. The establishment of a C&YP sub group of Cheltenham LSP will strengthen this link further.</p>
Championed by a portfolio holder	<p>A portfolio holder acts as champion for CYP in the district. This follows from the district council's corporate priorities. The portfolio holder will be a focal point for wider member engagement and development. This member is in touch with the county's lead member and with equivalent members in other districts.</p>	<p>We have a champion for CYP and a number of District Liaison meetings are to be held with each Local Authority Champion attending with the County Council members.</p>
The organisation and its key contractors understand the statutory duties	<p>The district has put time and effort into exploring its duties within the organisation. It has also worked with the county, the Children's Services Authority, and other districts. It has influenced its major contractors, such as leisure trusts and registered social landlords (RSL). For example, the district has transferred its housing stock. Nevertheless, it organises support for vulnerable young people needing accommodation after release from local youth offending institutes.</p>	<p>We have positively responded to those additional duties placed upon us with the Children's Act 2004. Examples include the involvement in a number of partnership working groups to support the delivery of the Change for Children Programme and the adoption and implementation of the corporate Child Protection policy.</p> <p>The audit process previously mentioned has brought to the forefront of service managers the impact that their responsibilities and method of delivery has on the ECM outcomes.</p>

<p>CYP are recognised as citizens</p>	<p>This shift has made children and young people visible to the organisation. It promotes engagement. The district adopts the 'Hear by right' standard. It makes progress towards genuine involvement in decision making</p>	<p>CBC has a long established Youth Council supported by the council, with representatives being co-opted onto Overview and Scrutiny. We have undertaken, in partnership with MAD youth council, an audit under Hear by Right- results to be presented to committee.</p>
<p>Information is shared, and protocols understood throughout the council</p>	<p>Those who need to know, do know. They also know what to do.</p>	<p>The process of implementing the corporate child protection policy is a good example as to how we use our management and communication mechanisms to disseminate the necessary information to support and empower staff in delivery.</p>
<p>Prepared to share good practice and ask for advice where needed</p>	<p>The county provided discrete advice and support – particularly in safeguarding. This allowed the district to make a leap of faith knowing there were support networks in place. Lead officers meet counterparts in other districts and the county at least six times a year. A similar member's network is active.</p> <p>There are examples of innovative service provision The district has several examples, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ basing leisure staff at schools in support of extended schools ▪ targeted activity for obese children and those not attracted by the usual sports menu ▪ activities to support teenage mothers 	<p>We have worked very closely with the county in the development and implementation of our corporate child protection policy which links directly to the County's policy and safeguarding board.</p> <p>The innovative integrated youth housing advice and support service has been operating for a transitional period since the new year, but went live completely on 1st April. We deliver our Early Years play ranger service to expand and complement provision at Children Centres and their vicinity.</p> <p>Further partnership and integrated service delivery is being planned and co-ordinated through the local C&YP partnerships and service specific partnerships (e.g. housing and community play).</p>
<p>Service planning includes impact assessment</p>	<p>Existing policies were assessed for their impact on the five outcomes. Business planning and decision making processes take account of the impact on children and young people. This keeps children and young people in mind of officers and members.</p>	<p>Again the audit process previously mentioned has brought to the forefront of service managers the impact that their responsibilities and method of delivery has on the ECM outcomes. In our equality impact assessments undertaken for all services across the council, C&YP formed one of the strands for considering impacts.</p> <p>Young people are able to directly voice their views of impacts of</p>

		policies through the recognition of MAD youth council for consultation process and their co-opted representative on Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
Joint planning with other districts and county (as CSA)	This agenda offers great opportunities for joint planning, mapping and coordination of effort. It also serves to achieve the district council's corporate objective for CYP.	The district and county council lead officers for C&YP regularly come together to map, plan and analyse information.
Using existing structures and partnerships	Existing structures and partnerships are used to the maximum as a matter of routine. A key message is 'no new structures are to be set up'.	Cheltenham has a history of strong partnership working locally and across the county and we have used existing partnerships such as housing, play and regeneration partnerships to their optimum in promoting and addressing C&YP issues. The establishment of a specific C&YP sub group of the LSP has been identified as necessary for sometime and work has been undertaken to progress this.
Sharing resources	Expertise is frequently shared with other councils. For example, the council has run joint training on safeguarding with other councils locally. In exchange a neighbouring council researched and drafted the safeguarding policy. The district will be borrowing a mobile skate park from another council one week this summer	There are a number of county wide working groups and partnerships whereby the districts come together to share information, knowledge and skills to improve services, such groups include housing, play, sports, leisure, culture etc. The districts regularly take advantage of and deliver joint training.
Organisational boundaries are not a big concern	Organisational boundaries are not allowed to hamper progress on improved outcomes. Confident councils seem more willing to share with, and learn from, others.	The number of cross boundary initiatives such as the housing market packages are set to increase with joint improvement boards and joint commissioning arrangements.
Children and young people are engaged in decision making	<p>The district has been engaging young people for a long time. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ it has made a small budget available to an elected group of young people websites are being designed in consultation there is a corporate target to include them on some interview panels 	Again the continued support of MAD youth council demonstrates the council's commitment to youth engagement and the partnership working we undertake with Gloucestershire Youth Service. The youth council has developed its own independent website with support from the council. Further activities for increased involvement are detailed in the Hear by Right paper.

5. Next Steps - possible next steps for the committee to consider e.g. potential witnesses, further report, site visit etc.

5.1 Comments from Scrutiny to be taken and incorporated into the emerging Children and Young Peoples Strategy and/or reported to relevant partnership(s) for consideration and further action.

Background Papers	Social and Community Overview and Scrutiny Project brief Children and Young People 9 th June 2005 Gloucestershire Children and Young People's Plan 2006-09
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Scrutiny Function	Social and Community overview and scrutiny committee