

Integrated Youth Support Update

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REASON FOR ITEM

To update the committee on the recommendation from previous reviews.

BACKGROUND

1. Education Policy Overview Committee chose 'meeting the needs of troubled young people' as a review topic in 2007/8. The review took place between December 2007 and April 2008.
2. Subsequent to the review a series of actions and initiatives have been pursued as a consequence of the outcomes of the review, including the establishment of targeted youth support services and associated integrated services for young people.

INFORMATION

3. This paper provides Policy Overview Committee Members with an overview of progress in response to previously made recommendations relating to the provision of integrated youth support services. It also advises members that the advocated approach for meeting the needs of troubled young people through the provision of integrated services is being pursued through the plans and priorities of Hillingdon Children and Families Trust (HCFT).
4. Education Policy Overview Committee Members offered the view as an outcome of the original review, that success in terms of meeting the needs of young people at risk, can only be achieved if all partners recognise interdependencies and work together to achieve common goals. This view was recommended to, and endorsed by Cabinet together with a number of others recommendations relating to operational delivery of youth support services.
5. The recommended direction of travel in terms of increasing integrated working in support of vulnerable young people and their families has been maintained. In order to achieve a fully integrated approach, strategic and operational activity concerning integrated youth support is now an integral part of the work of HCFT.
6. HCFT is the primary vehicle through which Hillingdon Council and its partners pursue their ambition to ***"Improve the outcomes for children, young people and their families in need or at risk through co-ordinated evidence based services."*** The HCFT will be going to Full Council for approval on 8 September as a Policy Framework Document. The POC have already been part of the consultation for this document.

7. The purpose of HCFT is:

- to ensure that children, young people and their families in Hillingdon experience better outcomes through improved services; and
- to support practitioners working in their constituent agencies to see themselves (and also act) as part of a community of Hillingdon children's workers, interconnected with others, and able to see their role in the wide range of provision and services.

8. HCFT is in the process of finalising a new 2011 – 2014 plan. The plan sets out the following priorities to pursue:

- Priority 1: Keeping all children and young people safe;
- Priority 2: Ensuring all children have the best start in life;
- Priority 3: Improving the health and well-being of young people, focusing on those groups undertaking risky behaviours;
- Priority 4: Improving the outcomes of Looked After Children;
- Priority 5: Improving the outcomes of Disabled Children; and
- Priority 6: Strengthen multi-professional integrated working.

9. All HCFT priorities relate to the scope and outcomes of the original 'Meeting the needs of troubled young people' review with priority 3 having particular relevance to the requirement for services to work together to support young people to negotiate risks that may present during transition through adolescence to adulthood. The 'risky behaviours' referred to are considered as:

- Young people having unprotected sex leading to STI's and under 18 conceptions;
- Young people engaging in substance misuse (including alcohol);
- Young people not being in education, employment or training (NEET); and
- Young people engaged in criminal activity leading to first time entrance into the criminal justice system.

10. The 'strengthening multi-professional integrated working' priority seeks to further the practice developed following the original review such as the provision of targeted youth support services, by ensuring best practice in terms of integrated service delivery is built upon.

11. Evidence and best practice indicates that integrated working and early intervention to address risks and problems makes a real difference to the lives of children and young people. In its report *'Grasping the Nettle, Early Intervention for Children, Families and Communities'* The Centre for Excellence and Outcomes (C4EO) suggests, based on evidence of best practice nationally and internationally, that *"early intervention clearly works when it's an appropriate intervention, applied well following timely identification of a problem; and the early the better to secure maximum impact and greatest long-term stability."*

12. HCFT is intent on ensuring that integrated working is fully embedded across the partnership so that everyone supporting children and young people work together effectively to put the child at the centre of all services in order to meet their needs and improve their lives.

13. Integrated working is being achieved through collaboration and co-ordination at all levels and across all services to identify needs early, deliver co-ordinated packages of support for the child/young person and their family and help to secure better outcomes.

14. Activities contained with the HCFT plan include:

- Establishing a Team Around the Child model and identification of a Lead Professional for every child requiring multi-agency support;
- Providing services that deliver good value for money by working together across the children's partnership as efficiently as possible;
- Maintaining multi-professional communication and best practice whilst agencies progress through structural change; and
- Offering skills development in areas identified by the Board as a priority.

Early Intervention and Prevention and the Family Intervention Project

15. In keeping with the priorities contained within the HCFT plan and research and best practice elsewhere, partners are in the process of reviewing current approaches to the provision of early intervention and prevention services in Hillingdon through the Family Intervention Project. The project seeks to create a holistic service that can co-ordinate and deliver interventions to families, children and young people with experiencing significant difficulties that they may not be able to overcome without effective support.

16. The project has carried out local research with families in receipt of a range of support services and has identified the need to create a 'one service' approach which will ensure timely and co-ordinated interventions to tackle emergent problems for children, young people and their families. The project is currently considering the best team model to implement to achieve its goal of supporting families in overcoming their difficulties and making their lives better.

17. The recommendations arising from the Review of Meeting the Needs of Troubled Young People continue to be acted upon through the approaches and activities detailed in this paper.

18. The view as articulated by Members as a consequence of the review, that success can only be achieved if all partners recognise interdependencies and work together to achieve common goals is informing the collaborative approach now being taken to meet the needs of young people who may be troubled. Education Policy Overview Committee members also recommended that support is essential for the whole family experiencing the actions of a troubled child. The work detailed in this report illustrates that this recommendation is informing the partnership approach to meeting the needs of vulnerable children, young people and their families.

19. Associated work arising as a consequence of the original review continues. Targeted youth support, information advice and guidance services for vulnerable young people and partnership work to address substance misuse amongst young people continue to be provided. This work is being delivered within the context of ongoing work, as described in this report, to create fully integrated services that make the most efficient use of resources and provide a seamless service to children, young people and families.