

HILLINGDON CHILDREN & FAMILIES TRUST PLAN 2011-14

Reporting Officer: Head of Democratic Services

SUMMARY

As a policy framework document, this report seeks Council's approval of Hillingdon's Children and Families Trust Plan following consultation and recommendation by Cabinet on 28 July 2011. The new plan is aimed at improving the outcomes for vulnerable children, young people and their families within Hillingdon. The plan aligns the priorities of the Children and Families Trust alongside the Council's priorities and those of Hillingdon Partners and the Sustainable Communities Strategy.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Hillingdon Children and Families Trust Plan 2011-2014 as set out in the Appendix be adopted.

INFORMATION

The Children & Families Trust Board (the Children's Theme group of the Local Strategic Partnership –Hillingdon Partners) in Hillingdon believes a family approach is required to support the child and to improve their life chances and outcomes. To achieve this aim the Hillingdon Children and Families Trust Plan (HCFP) outlines the vision that the partnership has for vulnerable children, young people and their families in Hillingdon. It identifies the joint priorities that the Trust Board will commit to undertake, in partnership, over the next 3 years (2011-14) to improve outcomes for children and young people.

The current plan expired at the end of March 2011. This will be the third HCFP and is owned, delivered and monitored by the Children and Families Trust Board.

Effective joint work has taken place over the last five years and this work is now embedded in service delivery across children's services in Hillingdon. This Plan goes further and highlights the transformational agenda across the partnership in Hillingdon and how it will be achieved.

The partnership is focused on continuing to improve services and outcomes. However, the Trust Board realise given the current economic climate that we must change the way we work and target those most vulnerable within the community.

The Trust Board have agreed on six priorities which will drive the transformational agenda:

- 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 behaviours¹
- Priority 4. Improving the outcomes of Looked After Children

¹ The risky behaviours we refer to include: 1. Unprotected sex leading to STI's and under 18 conceptions; 2. Substance misuse (including alcohol); 3. Emotional health and wellbeing; 4. Young people not in education, employment or training (NEET); and 5. First time entrance into the criminal justice system

- Priority 5. Improving the outcomes of Disabled Children
- Priority 6. Strengthen multi-professional integrated working

By identifying these priorities we will be able to focus our resources, ensuring that those most vulnerable receive the support they need, while ensuring that those potentially 'at risk' do not fall into acute statutory provisions.

Comments of the Education and Children's Services Policy Overview Committee

As a statutory consultee on policy framework documents, the Education and Children's Services Policy Overview Committee welcomed the Plan and felt that in this difficult economic climate it was positive that partners across Hillingdon had come together to form joint priorities. The Committee indicated that unlike in some areas it would be wrong to abandon a good model of partnership working in which the Local Authority is fully committed

The Committee made the following observations and comments:

- POC recently reviewed the impact of Overcrowding on children's attainment levels. The Committee requested that the findings be inserted and actioned in the HCFT Plan
- It was felt that a stronger statement was required within Priority 6 on the value of front line staff in the early identification of need to children, young people and their families
- The work in improving outcomes of children with SEN to be made more explicit in Priority 5
- Stronger statement on the governance arrangements and the accountability of the Children's Trust Board
- Commitment in the importance of sharing information and data across the partnership to be included in Priority 6.

These comments were incorporated, where possible, within the Plan.

Consultation Carried Out

The vision and priorities for the Plan were produced through the analysis of need and consultation of the following groups:

- Children and Young People
- Partner agency on the Children's Trust Board
- Local Safeguarding Children's Board
- Schools

Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. For the current year, activity will be funded within existing resources. Any future budgetary implications that arise in relation to the delivery of the plan will be fully considered as part of the Council's medium term financial forecast (MTFF). Corporate Finance has also reviewed this report and there are no direct financial implications to the Council.

Legal

The Children and Families Trust Plan is an important element of the reforms underpinned by the Children Act 2004, building on the best local planning practice to produce a single, strategic, overarching plan for all services affecting children and young people. This should support more integrated and effective services to secure the outcomes for children set out in local Sustainable Communities Strategy.

Under the Council's Constitution and as a Policy Framework document, the Plan requires final adoption by full Council. There are no other significant legal implications arising out of this report to bring to Cabinet's attention.

Background Papers: Nil