

Meeting:	School Organisation Committee
Date:	3 November 2005
Subject:	Children & Young Peoples Plan
Responsible Officer:	Executive Director, People First
Contact Officer:	Maggie White
Portfolio Holder:	Portfolio Holder for Education and Lifelong Learning
Key Decision:	No
Status:	Public

Section 1: Summary

For information and comment

- The School Organisation Plan was one of seven statutory plans repealed by the Children Act 2004. The Children Act also requires Children's Services Authorities to prepare and publish a Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP).
- The Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) is a new duty. It is an important part of the reforms underpinned by the Children Act 2004.
- It must be published by 1 April 2006 and will be a three-year plan for children and young people that will be delivered by statutory services and their partners.
- The council has the duty to produce the plan on behalf of all the statutory services that deliver services to children and young people. In Harrow, the CYPP will be a management tool for the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership (C&YPSP), which is part of the overall partnership working set within the context and remit of the Harrow Strategic Partnership (HSP).
- The CYPP is an overarching plan, which will determine the direction of local services and deliver the new National Service Framework and the Children's Trust Approach. The CYPP will be a strategy for change. Progress against the plan will be monitored and evaluated by the C&YPSP.
- The plan must be more than a vision statement. It must be a strategy that defines a clear set of actions that everyone can work to. It will cover the whole range of services: universal services such as education and health; services targeting groups who are vulnerable and individual services to children in need.

Reason for report

To advise Members of the School Organisation Committee of the change in status of the School Organisation Plan and the introduction of a Children and Young People's Plan. The process for constructing the CYPP began in May 2005. This report summarises progress to date and invites comments on the proposed priorities for the final plan.

Benefits

- The focus of the CYPP will be outcomes for children. Thus, it has to be constructed on a secure understanding of the local needs of children and young people, in relation to national priorities.
- The thrust of the CYPP will be about making all services easier to access, locally based and able to meet religious and cultural needs. It must include how universal services are to be fully inclusive and available to all. But where children have particular or different types of needs, it must be clear as to what services will be available and how they are to be accessed. This will include making sure those children and young people who are at risk, vulnerable or suffering are protected and offered the right kind of support.
- The council will benefit from the fact that the CYPP will replace 7 statutory plans and 12 non-statutory plans including the School Organisation Plan.
- Progress will be monitored and evaluated by the Children and Young Person's Strategic Partnership. The CYPP will be a rolling three-year plan.

Cost of Proposals

The actual cost of publishing the CYPP is small and in the first year the contents will reflect the plans and budgets for services already in place for 2006/7. However, the longer-term impact of the plan will throw up challenges. In some circumstances, such as the joint commissioning of services, it is reasonable to expect that efficiencies and savings will be achieved. However, new aspirations and newly defined areas of need will introduce new requests for funding. At this stage, it is difficult to quantify future needs or funding sources.

Risks

There is a statutory requirement on the authority to prepare and publish a C&YPP.

Implications if recommendations rejected

The Council will not meet its statutory obligations under the Children's Act 2004.

Section 2: Report

Brief History

The Children Act became law in November 2004 and it encourages partnership working and an integrated cross agency response to developing services for children, young people and families. Key points included:

- A new duty on agencies to cooperate to improve the wellbeing of children and young people.
- Encouraging improved information sharing and integrated approaches.
- Enabling and encouraging local authorities, Primary Care Trusts and other agencies to pool budgets into a Children's Trust.
- A tighter focus on child protection through a duty on key agencies to safeguard children and promote their welfare through new Local Safeguarding Boards.
- Creating clear accountability through a Director of Children's Services and a lead Council Members for Children's Services.

Progress to Date

Overall, the council has made early organisational changes that put in place a good framework to deliver the aspirations of the Children Act 2004.

Progress with the CYPP is on target:

- The initial stage was to review the relevant statistics, plans and strategies to establish a picture of the needs of children and young people in Harrow (the Audit of Need).
- In the second stage, key issues were analysed and summarised in a discussion document and, over July and August, the various groups of professionals working in the various children service authorities were asked to comment and clarify their priority areas and their plans for action.
- This feedback has been summarised and has been made available to the wider circle of stakeholders to seek their views and ideas on the proposed partnership plans for services and facilities for children and young people in the borough. The third stage is to construct the final proposed plan for approval by each of the statutory agencies in readiness for publishing by 1 April 2006.

The particular challenge of the Harrow CYPP is to demonstrate that although this is a good place to live, the general statistics can easily mask the fact that there are pockets of poverty and deprivation that affect some children's lives.

In relation to school organisation, there are two issues that are apparent:

- The surplus of school places in Harrow.
- The need for more post 16 provision targeting young people requiring vocational courses and to increase the number of young people achieving at least Level 2 qualifications.

Questions for Members of the SOC to consider

1. Where are the gaps in knowledge and provision/remedies that the agencies/partnership needs to know more about?
2. Are there particular problems for C&YP in Harrow that you know to be different to national/London averages?
3. Do you think the consultation document reflects the actions and plans that need to be addressed over the next 3 or more years?
4. What does not feature in the plan but needs attention?
5. Do you think the priorities cited in the consultation document are right?
6. What has been left out?
7. Any other comments?

Consultation

The following list sets out the different range of organisations that we have consulted with.

- Children
- Young people
- Parents and Carers
- Neighbouring councils
- Police authorities
- Local probation boards
- Youth offending teams
- Strategic Health Authorities
- Primary Care Trusts
- Connexions Partnerships
- Local Learning and Skills Councils
- Diocesan authorities
- School organisation committee
- Relevant voluntary organisations
- Relevant community organisations
- Local safeguarding board
- Maintained and independent schools
- Local strategic partnership
- Drugs Action Teams
- NHS trusts
- Relevant local private sector providers
- Local cultural, sport and play organisations

Financial Implications

The actual cost of publishing the C&YPP can be contained within existing budgets and in the first year the contents will reflect the plans and budgets for services in place for 2006/7. The financial implications arising from the longer-term impact of the plan will be incorporated into the Council's High Level Service Planning and Medium Term Budget Strategy in future years.

Legal Implications

Under the Children's Act 2004, there is a statutory requirement on the authority to prepare and publish a Children & Young People's Plan which will determine the direction of local services and deliver the new National Service Framework and the Children's Trust Approach.

Equalities Impact

The focus of the C&YPP is on improving outcomes for all children by making services easier to access, locally based and able to meet religious and cultural needs. Services will be inclusive and available to all but when children have particular or different types of needs, services will be available to meet these. This will include making sure those children and young people who are at risk, vulnerable or suffering are protected and offered the right kind of support. Wide-ranging consultation will provide input from all communities to inform planning for service delivery for children and young people in Harrow.

Section 3: Supporting Information/ Background Documents

Appendix 1 – Brief overview of C&YPP