

Meeting:	Education Consultative Forum
Date:	31 st January 2006
Subject:	Children and Young People's plan
Responsible Officer:	Paul Clark, Director Children's Services
Contact Officer:	Heather Clements
Portfolio Holder:	Margaret Davine and Bill Stephenson
Key Decision:	NO
Status:	Public

Section 1: Summary

Decision Required

To ask the Forum to support the first edition of the Children and Young People's plan

Reason for report

To update the Forum on the process of drafting the first edition of the children and young people's plan.

- The plan replaces several statutory and non-statutory plans and will incorporate the 14-19 strategy, the parenting, community, and participation strategies (see appendix A; list of plans)
- Evidence for the plan has been gathered from the vitality profile and consultation with partner agencies, children, young people and parents.

Benefits

- The plan supports more integrated and effective services to improve outcomes for children, as set out Children Act 2004.
- It identifies where outcomes for children and young people need to be improved, and how and when these improvements will be achieved. Improvement is based on an assessment of the current position.
- The plan is a requirement of the Children Act 2004

Cost of Proposals

Cost of activity to deliver proposals is contained within the existing budget of the Council and other agencies.

Risks

A key challenge will be taking forward government's expectation to develop integrated services, focussed on outcomes for children, within financial constraints.

Implications if recommendations rejected

The local authority will fail to comply with requirements of the Children act 2004, which will impact negatively on the JAR and CPA.

Section 2: Report

2.1 Brief History

The Children and Young People's plan is a requirement of the Children Act 2004 and guidance for the plan is laid out in government guidance Every Child Matters: Change for children (DfES 2004). This requirement is largely influenced by the findings of the Victoria Climbié inquiry report, which recommended clear governance arrangements and leadership, improved multi-agency communications, and the integration of services to focus on outcomes for children.

- The Children Act 2004 requires all areas to produce a single, strategic, overarching plan for all services affecting children and young people. All areas must have a plan by April 2006.
- It is not a council plan but is led by the council via the Director of Children's Services.
- The plan links separate agency operational plans to focus on

Multi-agency ownership of key issues

Working together to deliver shared objectives

The plan will identify key priorities for multi-agency action as well as government targets agencies are already set to achieve.

The Local Area Agreement Children's Block priorities will be included in the plan.

- It identifies where outcomes for children and young people need to be improved, and how and when these improvements will be achieved. Improvement must be based on an assessment of the current position.
- Working together, the council, partner agencies and the voluntary sector will agree targets and priorities for all services affecting children and young people and will identify the actions and activities needed to achieve them, and ensure delivery.
- The plan sets out a rolling developmental programme for children's services in Harrow. It will therefore change over time and will be revised formally each year.
- The first edition will set out initial intentions, and, as agencies move forward together on the integration of services, the plan will be adjusted accordingly.
- It is a working tool to support the agenda for change. Consultation will be continuous throughout the year, with amendments made in December 2006 for the 2007 version.

2.2 Options considered

The option of including individual business and action plans from all agencies and service areas was rejected in favour of providing one easy to read comprehensive strategic plan.

2.3 Consultation

- The Children and Young People's partnership has provided the lead and consulted widely with voluntary and statutory agencies, including schools and colleges. For the first edition (2006), consultation with over 200 voluntary agencies and faith groups as well as all statutory agencies has taken place during the Autumn of 2005. A list of those consulted is attached at appendix B
- Young people's views were collected during the summer and are identified within the plan - participants in the Summer Holiday Programmes, APSIG Events and Harrow Youth Council have had the opportunity to contribute. More than 50 young people have contributed in some way. Their views have also influenced the priorities set out in the Local Area Agreement
- Throughout January 2006, further consultation with voluntary and statutory agencies, schools and colleges will be taking place. Members of the Children and Young People's partnership and the Children and Young People's Planning group will attend various groups to seek their views, and an open meeting is being held on 19th January 2006 from 4 – 6pm at the Teachers Centre.

- This round of consultation ends on 25th January 2006.

2.4 Financial Implications

The long-term vision to pool budgets will be a feature of the plan. There will be initial plans to align budgets to meet some elements of the plan including the Local Area Agreement.

2.5 Legal Implications

Guidance for the plan is set out in *Every Child Matters; change for children* (DfES 2004) and incorporates the requirements in *The National Service Framework for Children, Young People and Maternity Services* (DOH 2004). The Children Act 2004 provides the legal framework for the plan.

2.6 Equalities Impact

The plan reflects the views of voluntary agencies and faith groups, many of whom represent the Black and Ethnic minority groups in Harrow. It uses key demographic indices described in the Harrow vitality profile.

2.7 Section 17 Crime and Disorder Act 1998 Considerations

The plan will link to local operational plans that deal in detail with this issue.

Section 3: Supporting Information/Background Documents

Background Documents:

Appendix A: List of plans

Appendix B: List of agencies consulted

Appendix C: Draft consultation: children and young people's plan