

Meeting:	Cabinet Lifelong Learning Scrutiny Sub-Committee
Date:	16 March 2006 4 April 2006
Subject:	Children and Young People's Plan 2006 - 2009
Responsible Officer:	Paul Clark, Director Children's Services
Contact Officer:	Mark Gillett, Group Manager Strategic Commissioning and Business Management
Portfolio Holder:	Cllr Davine, Portfolio Holder for Health and Social Care Cllr Stephenson, Portfolio Holder for Education and Lifelong Learning
Key Decision:	Yes
Status:	Public

Section 1: Summary

Decision Required

(For Cabinet)
To approve the Children and Young People's Three-Year Plan 2006 – 2009

(For Lifelong Learning Scrutiny Sub-Committee)
To note the report.

Reason for report

The Children and Young People's Plan is a statutory plan (Children Act 2004) which requires the approval of the Council. The Plan replaces a number of statutory and non-statutory plans.

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.

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.

Although the Council is required to produce the plan, it is not a Council Plan, but it is integral to the Audit Commission and Ofsted's view of the Council as part of the Corporate Performance Assessment, Joint Area Review and Annual Performance Assessment processes. The Plan is a three-year plan which will be updated and published each year.

- 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 publish a plan by April 2006.
- 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 sets out initial intentions, and, as agencies move forward together on the integration of services, the plan will be adjusted accordingly.
- To ensure wide circulation and to raise awareness, the Plan will be publicised through Harrow People in April/May, with an update of progress reported in the October edition of the magazine.
- 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 took place during the Autumn of 2004.
- 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 took 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 was held on 19th January 2006 from 4 – 6pm at the Teachers Centre.

- The plan has wide support from our partners, who have had the opportunity to contribute to its development, and are looking forward to its further development when it is updated for 2007.

2.4 Financial Implications

There are no financial implications to the Council of implementing the plan as costs will be contained within existing budgets and funding to deliver the Local Area Agreement

2.5 Legal Implications

The Children Act 2004 (s17) provides the legal framework for the plan. The Children and Young People's Plan (England) Regulations 2005 makes further provision for the council to prepare the plan and prescribes the procedures for publication, content consultation and review. The Regulations are expanded upon in the non-statutory guidance 'Guidance on the Children and Young People's Plan' published by the DfES in 2005 as part of the Every Child Matters agenda.

It is a requirement under the Regulations that the plan be published by the Council by 1 April 2006

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. (Should we attached the draft Equalities Impact Assessment or mention it?)

2.7 Section 17 Crime and Disorder Act 1998 Considerations

It is recognised that Section 17 and community safety considerations are a key priority for the Council, and the Children and Young People's Plan will link to local plans that deal in detail with this issue:

- Community Strategy
- Youth Justice Plan
- Probation Area Annual Plan
- Crime and Disorder and Misuse of Drugs and Alcohol Strategies

Section 3: Supporting Information/Background Documents

Background Documents:

Appendix A: Children and Young People's Plan – Relationship to other plans

Appendix B: Summary of Groups/Organisations Contacted

Appendix C: Draft Children and Young People's Plan