

CHANGE FOR CHILDREN IN HEREFORDSHIRE

Report By: Sue Fiennes, Director of Children's Services

Wards Affected

County-wide

Purpose

1. To advise on the Change for Children progress overall, including extended schools and the recent Education & Inspection Act 2006 as applied to transport.

Financial Implications

2. The financial implications are covered in current budgets and funding arrangements. It is too early to tell what resource levels will be needed for support for families in the medium term. The resource base for Herefordshire Council and schools and the limitations are described in the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

Considerations

Change Programme

3. The national change programme – Every Child Matters – is now into the delivery stage.
4. The inter-agency governance is secured by the Children & Young People's Partnership Board and the Local Safeguarding Children's Board. Children's Trust arrangements are to be in place by April 2008. The Partnership Board will ensure that the commissioning plans are in place. The Council and the PCT are in dialogue on the next steps of establishing a Public Service Trust which will include Children's Trust arrangements. The Council already has a Lead Member and Director of Children's Services. The Children & Young People's Plan is in place.
5. The key service priorities moving forward are to deliver a support for Families Strategy and to ensure that the Children's Centres and Extended Schools programmes are fully operational by 2008 and 2010 respectively.
6. In Herefordshire there are to be 9 Children's Centres, 5 are in place. The extended schools programme is on track, 14 schools were offering full core offer in September 2006. The extended services strategy was considered by School Forum on 6th December, 2006.
7. The Commissioning framework is in place and the priorities going forward include the Support for Families work including short breaks and support for children and adolescents with mental health needs, alongside workforce development.
8. The indications from this work and the annual assessment suggest that support for families, early intervention/prevention will increase in priority and school standards will come into sharper focus.

Further information on the subject of this report is available from Sue Fiennes, Director of Children's Services on 01432 260039

9. The indicative priority list for 2007/08 is attached at Appendix 1, this will inform the Directorate Plan and the Children & Young People's Delivery Plan for 2007/08.
10. The Youth Matters programme is on track and the Youth Offer and Youth Council arrangements are in place.
11. The common assessment framework to assist integrated working is being tested in two pilots in Herefordshire. They are in South Wye in Hereford City and in Children with Disabilities Services across Herefordshire. This will inform the model of integrated working in Herefordshire for professionals.
12. There is considerable progress in arrangements to involve children and young people effectively. The Youth Council and the Shadow Partnership Board are established and being refreshed by new elections.
13. The performance management of the Children & Young People's Plan is being secured through the Board nominating chairs of outcome groups (every child matter outcomes) in order to ensure an integrated approach.
14. The Workforce Strategy and reform is in development and progress is to be reported to the GOWM Improvement Board in December.

Education & Inspection Act 2006

15. The implementation of the denominational transport policy has not demonstrated any particular concerns. There is a report going to Cabinet on 14th December and a further briefing will be given at the Scrutiny meeting on 15th December.
16. The new legislation and the impact on school organisation and arrangements will need to be further considered as part of the Schools Review programme.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Committee note the progress in Herefordshire.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- None identified.