

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S PLAN 2008-2011**Report By: Director of Children's Services**

Wards Affected

County-wide

Purpose

To approve the Children and Young People's Plan 2008-2011

Recommendation

THAT: Council accepts Cabinet's recommendation to approve the Children and Young People's Plan 2008-2011

Reasons

- 1 The Children and Young People's Plan is a statutory document and forms part of the policy framework for the local authority. It is a crucial vehicle to enable services to be delivered effectively across partners to improve outcomes for children and young people in Herefordshire.

Key Points Summary

- The Plan has been produced by the Children's Trust in Herefordshire, a statutory partnership of key agencies with the Local Authority as lead partner.
- The Plan covers all children and young people within the county aged 0-19, and up to 25 years for those with learning difficulties and disabilities
- The Plan lists the priorities that the Children's Trust need to address over the next three years. These priorities have been drawn from a needs mapping exercise, discussion and debate with stakeholders and a consultation period. These priorities are additional to the preventative and statutory work that partners must undertake as part of their day-to-day operations.
- The Plan is a statutory document; Cabinet has commended the plan for approval, and Children's Services Scrutiny Committee has endorsed the document.

Alternative Options

2. There are no alternative options; Herefordshire has to have a plan in place. This has been a requirement since 2005 and this is the second plan for the county.

Considerations

3. The local authority has a duty to prepare a Children and Young People's Plan, to review it annually and to secure cooperation amongst partners. This is the second plan that has been developed for Herefordshire. This new plan has been produced by the Children's Trust, a statutory partnership of local agencies across Herefordshire that commission and deliver services to children, young people and their families. This covers children and young people from 0-19 years of age and up to 25 for those young people with learning difficulties and disabilities.

The partner agencies include:

- Herefordshire Council, including schools
- Herefordshire Primary Care Trust, including GPs
- Learning and Skills Council
- Connexions
- Youth Offending Service
- Probation Service
- Voluntary Sector organisations
- West Mercia Police
- Herefordshire Hospitals NHS Trust

4. The Children and Young People's Plan, a statutory document, contains the key priorities for children and young people. These priorities have been arrived at through a needs mapping exercise, which was then debated and discussed during November and December 2007 at various forums to arrive at a draft document. Children, young people and professionals from schools, services and partner organisations were involved in these discussions. The document was then subject to an eight week consultation period for individuals, and agencies to feedback views.
5. This final document has been amended, where appropriate, to take account of the consultation responses received. The plan has been approved by all those agencies within the Children's Trust.
6. The outcome groups within the Children's Trust will be considering more detailed responses from the consultation in the annual delivery plans. These delivery plans will support the three year strategic document by detailing the actions needed to achieve the priorities. Outcome groups are overseen by a management group and a Children's Trust Board, whose membership includes chief officers and directors of partner agencies and the Chief Executive of Herefordshire Council and PCT. The Management Group will closely monitor the delivery plans, with the Board ultimately accountable for ensuring the priorities are achieved. The Management Group will also be responsible for those activities that cut across all outcome groups, and ensuring that vulnerable groups of children and young people have their needs adequately addressed.

7. The Children and Young People's Plan supports the Local Area Agreement and its priorities, as well as covering statutory and preventative service areas for the Council and for partners.
8. The Plan has been considered by Cabinet and commended for approval to Council. The Children's Services Scrutiny Committee has endorsed the plan.

Financial Implications

9. The plan will be used as the basis for commissioning services for children and young people in Herefordshire, alongside emerging commissioning arrangements under the Public Service Trust in Herefordshire. It will also be used to make the most of existing resources across partners targeted towards children and young people.
10. The plan includes information (section 10, page 25) on the financial arrangements of the Children's Trust partners, with approximate figures on the funding available for children and young people's services in Herefordshire. This amounts to some £166million per annum, which includes approx £85million from the Dedicated Schools Grant. Additionally the Children's Trust is managing the Area Based Grant (ABG) from April 2008 for all children and young people's activities. Over time (as there are many existing commitments against this grant), and with the flexibility offered by the ABG, the Children's Trust will be looking at how this funding can be increasingly directed toward delivering the plan's priorities. In 2008/09 the ABG amounts to £3.7million, rising to just over £4million in 2009/10.

Legal Implications

11. The Plan is a statutory document under the Children Act 2004, which the Local Authority must develop with its relevant partners.

Community Impact

12. The Children's Trust is a statutory partnership of agencies that commission and provide services in the county. This Plan is county-wide and will positively impact on communities, as services are more effectively designed and delivered to be integrated around the needs of children, young people and their families. The Children's Trust is committed to developing existing mechanisms, and finding new ways of engaging with children, young people, their parents and carers to ensure services meet their needs.
13. The priorities in the Plan were developed in tandem with work informing the new Local Area Agreement priorities for children and young people. The Plan also supports the four themes of the Herefordshire Community Strategy.

Risk Management

14. The Local Authority has a statutory duty to act as the lead agency in the development of the Children and Young People Plan and there is a duty to have a plan in place. Failure to do so would adversely affect service delivery to children and young people and the reputation of the Council and its partners.

Consultees

15. The following list includes those agencies which statutorily must be consulted with:
- Children, young people and families (including persons with parental responsibility for, or who have the care of children)
 - Persons / bodies representing children, young people and families
 - The appropriate diocesan authority for any foundation or voluntary school situated in the authority's area which is a Church of England or Roman Catholic Church school
 - The school organisation committee for the authority's area
 - Persons / bodies providing voluntary services relating to children and young people
 - Groups / persons representing local communities
 - The Local Safeguarding Children Board
 - Each of the authority's relevant partners
 - The proprietor of each school in the authority's area
 - The Schools Forum for the authority's area
 - The Admission Forum for the authority's area

Additionally the plan has been through a consultation process for eight weeks and was registered and published by the Herefordshire Partnership. All Councillors, parish and town councils, schools and school governors were included in the distribution of the plan for comment, either receiving email or hard copy in January 2008.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Children and Young People's Plan 2008-2011

Background Papers

- None identified.