

CHANGE FOR CHILDREN IN HEREFORDSHIRE

PROGRAMME AREA RESPONSIBILITY: CHILDREN'S SERVICES

CABINET

19TH MAY, 2005

Wards Affected

County-wide

Purpose

To note the progress in Herefordshire in relation to the Change for Children programme.

Key Decision

This is not a Key Decision

Recommendation

THAT Cabinet are asked:-

- (a) to note the progress so far;
- (b) to agree the proposed neighbourhoods of South Wye, Golden Valley and Leominster and preference for Golden Valley to reflect the rural agenda for Herefordshire; and
- (c) to ask for a further report on the strategy for Children's Centres and sustaining the extended school programme.

Reasons

To ensure routine reporting on the national change requirements delivered locally.

Considerations

- 1. The previous report of 17th February, 2005 indicated revised priorities and the significant new documentation to be taken into account.
- 2. There have been regular newsletters to staff, members, schools and partners to build further communication of key themes.

Progress

- 3. The Children's and Young People's Partnership Board has been set up and is ready to set out on a programme of work to achieve a Children's and Young People's Plan for Herefordshire by April 2006.

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

4. The first Children's Centre in Herefordshire has been officially opened by Tom Jeffrey, Director - General, Children and Young People and Families.
5. Extended Schools development continues:-
 - April 2005 – March 2006 is the third and final year for Extended Schools Cluster funding. Half of the schools in the County are already extending their provision.
 - By September 2005 there will be one full-service extended school operating in Weobley. Excellence Cluster funding will enable at least one more to develop within the Haywood/Kingstone partnerships.
 - The Young Person's Fund (Big Lottery Fund) is supporting the Extended Schools Programme – a 3-year grant to support children and young people in the villages of Clehonger, Sutton and Withington is expected to be successful.
 - An Extended Schools Community Development Worker post has been funded by the EYDCP – to facilitate development of childcare provision across the County.
 - National monitoring guidance has emphasised the need to focus on developing sustainable provision during 2005-06. The 14 school partnerships in the County have been invited to agree the area for their extended provision to enable a countywide strategy to be agreed by June 2005 – ideally linked with the expansion of children's centres.
 - Collaboration with Herefordshire Primary Care Trust, West Mercia Police, Herefordshire Learning Partnership, the Courtyard and the EYDCP have enabled a variety of community projects involving schools to be successful.
6. The Cabinet Member for Children's Services has taken part in the IDeA leadership programme for portfolio holders.
7. The Children's Safeguarding Board is taking shape, with recommendations on structure and arrangements linking to the Partnership Board, going forward via the current Area Child Protection Committee to the Partnership Board in May 2005.
8. Invitations to talk to multi-professional groups are now routinely coming in, and the Every Child Matters agenda is being more broadly understood. There is practitioner enthusiasm and schools are beginning to see their role in service change and development. So far 5 sessions have been held.
9. The Director of Children's Services has now visited:-
 - 18 primary schools
 - 6 secondary schools
 - 1 special school

This is a commitment to engage positively with each school's Head Teacher and Chair of Governors.
10. An assessment of performance on key indicators and a review of improvement plans are being undertaken as part of the self-assessment for the Joint Area Review of Children's Services. The contribution of staff and partners to completing the templates and attending "surgeries" has been excellent.

Challenges

Children's Centres

11. The Sure Start funding and the ten-year strategy for Child Care bring the second phase to Herefordshire. The allocation of capital and revenue funding is for 2005-06 and 2006-07.
12. Details of targets and funding are set out below:-

Local Authority : County of Herefordshire	Total
Total number of under 5s LA to reach by 2010 (Based on April 2003 LEA Data)	9,438
Total number of under 5s expected to reach in 20% Ward by March 2006 (Based on the 1999 IMD)	1,044
Total number of new under 5s for LA to reach during 2006-08	5,013
Number of new children's centres to be created during April 2006 - March 2008	6
Total indicative Capital funding for 2006-2008	£940,360
Total Revenue funding for 2006 - 2008	£1,027,314

13. The funding allocated means it will be challenging to deliver the targets and numbers of centres.
14. The priority is now to do further development work, including the links to extended schools, including rural models, before making recommendations.
15. Actions Local Authorities should be taking in 2005-06 are set out below:-
 - Develop with parents and partners an early years and childcare vision for your locality including integrated early education and childcare, health, advice and support to parents, adult learning and support for employment, and outreach to all parts of the community.
 - With parents, partners and childcare providers, review the supply and demand of childcare in your locality.
 - Expand and roll out children's centres and extended schools.
 - Develop local plans and programmes with parents and partners, based on "Sure Start Guidance 2006-2008" (to be issued in the autumn), to increase capacity, sustainability and quality of services.
 - Ensure plans and service provision reflect the needs of the local population, including disabled children and those from black and minority ethnic communities.
 - Ensure these plans are an integral part of the local authority's wider Children and Young People's Plan.
 - Develop a programme to grow the local childcare workforce and improve their

qualifications and training to meet the commitments in "Choice for parents: the best start for children".

- Develop a programme to improve the skills of strategic and operational managers to deliver the integrated early years and childcare services.
- Review current arrangements for provision of advice and information to parents, including services delivered by Children's Information Services.

16. This will form our change priority work which will need to be done in parallel with the work on the Joint Area Review (JAR).

Joint Area Review (JAR)

17. The challenge is to produce an excellent self-assessment which demonstrates impact, areas for improvement and tells the right story for Herefordshire.

18. The data-set for Herefordshire has now been received and much of it will need to be challenged given improvements over 2004-05. The self-assessment will come to Cabinet on 9th June and will be returned to the Lead Inspector on 13th June.

19. There are many other ingredients to the JAR including a neighbourhood study and 100 cases to enable a selection of 10 to be followed up in detail as part of the fieldwork. In addition, there is an enhanced assessment of the youth service, largely done by observation in the fieldwork.

20. The three neighbourhood areas to be proposed by Herefordshire are South Wye, Golden Valley and Leominster.

21. It is hoped a picture of a rural area can be given to reflect better the Herefordshire Community.

Consultation/Involvement of Children and Young People

22. There is much current activity in many service areas. This is being captured for the JAR. The concern is that we should plan to build on this in a managed way for the future and not seek to develop arrangements fast which cannot be effective.

Alternative Options

There are no alternative options

Risk Management

The continued focus on the priorities agreed by Cabinet on 17th February, 2005 will ensure that the leadership energy and grasp is demonstrated and sustained.

The delivery on those priorities will be linked to the annual operating plan targets and routine monitoring of both will ensure appropriate action is taken where necessary.

Financial Assessment

Children's Services resources and budgets will need to be aligned during 2005-06 and careful approaches to commissioning and capacity will need to be developed.

Consultees

Staff and Stakeholders.

Background Papers

None identified