
Executive

27 February 2007

Report of the Director of Learning, Culture and Children's Services

Children and Young People's Plan 2007 - 2010

Summary

1. This report recommends to the Executive that the City of York Council adopt the *Children and Young People's Plan 2007 – 2010* recently approved by the board of the Children's Trust (YorOK).

Background

2. The *Children and Young People's Plan (England) Regulations 2005* require that local authorities prepare and publish a Children and Young People's Plan outlining 'the authority's strategy for discharging their functions in relation to children and relevant young persons'.
3. The Guidance requires that plans should include:
 - a statement of the authority's vision for children and relevant young persons;
 - a needs assessment against the outcomes;
 - an outline of the key actions planned to achieve the improvements so far as relating to the outcomes;
 - a statement as to how the authority's budget will be used to contribute to those improvements; and
 - a statement as to how the plan relates to the authority's performance management and review of services for children and relevant young persons.
4. Included within the Guidance is a further requirement that the authority consult widely as part of the process of producing the plan, and there is an expectation that this consultation will be undertaken through the Children's Trust arrangements that Local Authorities are expected to maintain. The DfES advises that 'government expects all areas should have a Children's Trust by 2006'. It explains that 'by 2008 local authorities are required to have in place arrangements that produce integrated working at all levels, from planning through to delivery, with a focus on improving outcomes. Local authorities may choose not to call this a 'children's trust', but the important point is that the way of working is in place and committed to'.

5. As a Pathfinder Children's Trust, York has been at the forefront of these developments, and first produced a Children and Young People's Plan in 2005, a year earlier than most authorities. Although this Plan covers the period 2005 – 2008, the authority decided that it should be up-dated a year earlier than was originally intended. The reasons for this were:
 - to reflect the significant changes that have taken place within the sector since 2005,
 - to align planning in York more closely with the national planning cycle,
 - to ensure consistency with the Children's Block of the Local Area Agreement, and
 - to prepare for the Joint Area Review in 2008.
6. Work on the production of the plan was undertaken through the YorOK board. At a meeting on 15th March 2006 the Board established a Reference Group chaired by the Director of LCCS which was asked to ensure that key stages in the approved timeline for the development of both the Children and Young People's Plan and the Children and Young People's block of the Local Area Agreement were met. The reference group comprising key partners was given the task of ensuring this work progressed in a timely, coordinated and high quality manner. The Reference Group has reported to all subsequent YorOK Board meetings beginning in March 2006 when the membership and work plan of the group was first outlined.
7. Attached at Annex 1 is the draft plan approved by the Board at a meeting on the 17 January. The constitutional position is complex. The Children's Trust operates as a forum where partners can reach agreement on key strategic priorities without foregoing any of the formal responsibilities that they carry through their own individual governance arrangements. In effect, it works because the partners want to make it work, and are prepared to invest considerable informal authority in their representatives around the table. Members of the YorOK board representing the city council include the Executive Member for Children's Services, and the Shadow Executive Member, as well as senior officers from the Directorate of Learning, Culture and Children's Services.

Consultation

8. The Planning Guidance requires the authority to consult with:
 - such children, relevant young persons and families (including persons with parental responsibility for, or who have the care of children) in the area of the authority as the authority consider appropriate;
 - such persons or bodies representing children, relevant young persons or families as the authority consider appropriate;
 - 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;
 - such persons or bodies providing voluntary services relating to children and relevant young persons in the area of the authority;

- such groups of persons representing local communities as the authority consider appropriate;
 - the Local Safeguarding Children Board for the authority's area; and
 - each of the authority's relevant partners.
9. The Reference Group produced a document which was used as the basis for consultation with all of the relevant partners. Formal consultation sessions were conducted with the EMAP for Children's Services, the YorOK board, Headteachers, the Education Joint Consultative Group (JCG), the Lifelong Learning Partnership, the Connexions Local Management Committee, the PCT and the Hospital Trust. In addition, responses were invited from the following groups and services:
- Children and young people – responses were received from over 2,000 children and young people through a postcard exercise, school council conferences and focused work with specific groups of vulnerable children and young people,
 - Parents through a targeted postcard exercise delivered through schools – over 100 responses have been received on line,
 - Service providers through partnership and other meetings,
 - Members of the public through a 2 day city centre presence with children's activities in half term which attracted a positive article in The Press.
10. The original consultation document proposed nine priorities which were reduced to six in the final plan. The outcomes of the consultation are reported in the Children and Young People's Plan itself.

Options

11. The Executive has two options, to approve or not to approve the *Children and Young People's Plan 2007 - 2010*. A decision to adopt the plan will require that it be referred back to the YorOK board for further consideration by all of the partners to the Children's Trust.

Analysis

12. The plan is based on an analysis of the consultation responses and the audit of provision included under each of the 5 outcomes for children and young people.
13. Since the production of the draft plan, the DfES has issued further guidance about the annual review of the Children and Young People's Plan. This draws attention to new duties placed on local authorities in the Children and Young People's Plan (England) Amendment Regulations 2007, the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and the Childcare Act 2006. In summary, these are that:
- the vision statement must now include more specific statements of intent about the integration of services provided by the authority, arrangements to safeguard and promote welfare and arrangements for early intervention and preventative action.
 - authorities must consult with schools, school forums and school admission forums,

- schools must 'have regard' to the CYPP,
 - authorities must 'promote diversity of school provision and increase parental choice in planning and securing the provision of school places' and should include within the plan an analysis of parental demand,
 - authorities must 'secure young people's access to positive leisure time activities...as far as is reasonably practicable' and 'secure the provision of sufficient childcare to meet the requirements of working and training parents in their area'.
14. For the most part, the Children and Young People's Plan or the service plans derived from it meets these new requirements. Where this is not the case, the gaps will be addressed in a review of the plan proposed for the Annual Performance Assessment (APA) which, this year, will be taking place in September.

Next Steps

15. Following approval of the plan, the Reference group will seek to ensure that the key priorities are communicated effectively. This includes work to ensure the text is transferred into a user-friendly publication. Priority will be given to the development of at least one and ideally two children and young people's versions of the Children and Young People's Plan. Some elements particularly around workforce strategy, the financial statement and the relationship with other plans will need further work and this will be completed prior to publication.
16. The Plan will be formally launched at a conference to be held 18th April 2007, with the theme of learning about what makes prevention effective. The launch on that date will also include the showing of the DVD of young people's views in the city produced as part of the consultation. The venue is York St John's College, which can accommodate up to 180 people.
17. Future meetings of the YorOK board will be organised to enable Board members to receive periodic updates on progress against both the priorities in the plan and the specific targets in the LAA (Children and Young Peoples block).

Corporate Priorities

18. The priorities in the Children and Young People's Plan are grouped under the LAA outcomes, which themselves have been organised to reflect the 5 national outcomes for children and young people adopted by the DfES for all planning purposes. The LAA has been approved by the GO:Y&H and has been adopted by the Local Strategic Partnership (Without Walls).
19. In addition, the plans incorporate work being undertaken by the Directorate to meet the 13 priorities in the Corporate Strategy, but particularly:
- To increase people's knowledge and skills to improve future employment prospects',

- To improve the contribution that Science City York makes to economic prosperity’,
- To improve the health and lifestyles of people in York, in particular among people whose levels of health are the poorest’,
- To improve the life chances of the most disadvantaged and disaffected children, young people and families in York.

Implications

20. There are no implications arising directly from the publication of the plan itself. Implementation of the plan will be subject to the normal requirements of the constitution and financial standing orders.

- **Financial:** None
- **Human Resources (HR):**None
- **Equalities:** None
- **Legal:** Included within the body of the report.
- **Crime and Disorder:** None
- **Information Technology (IT):** None
- **Property:** None
- **Other:** None

Risk Management

21. The Children and Young People’s Plan plays an important role in helping the directorate of Learning, Culture and Children’s Services identify significant risks in the work of the directorate. The risks associated with the Plan itself are largely reputational, as the plan will be a key document in the forthcoming Joint Area Review (JAR) and is now subject to annual assessment by the DfES through the GO:Y&H in order to ensure compliance with statutory requirements and as part of the Performance Management of Children’s Services Departments.

Recommendations

22. The Executive is invited to consider, comment upon and recommend the Children and Young People’s Plan 2007 - 2010 to full Council for approval.

Reason: To improve outcomes for children and young people in York.

Contact Details

Author:

Patrick Scott
Director of Learning, Culture and
Children's Services

Chief Officer Responsible for the report:

Patrick Scott
Director of Learning, Culture and Children's Services

Report Approved**Date** 15/2/07**Specialist Implications Officer(s)** List information for all**Wards Affected:** List wards or tick box to indicate all**All** **For further information please contact the author of the report****Background Papers:**

Children and Young People's Plan: Consultation Document

Annexes

Annex 1: Children and Young People's Plan 2007 – 2010.