

**Meeting of Executive Member for Children and
Young People's Services and Advisory Panel**

12 March 2009

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

**Service Plan Performance 3rd Quarter 2008/9 – Children and Young
People's Services**

Summary

1. This report analyses performance by reference to the service plan, the budget and the performance indicators for all of the services funded through the Children's Services budget.

Background

2. In line with the council's integrated reporting arrangements this report seeks to provide members with an opportunity to reflect on progress in the third quarter of the financial year 2008/9 against actions, performance indicators and finance projections. A common proforma has been developed and used for services in the directorate which summarises progress against the actions listed in the new service plans, records variations from the budget, and comments on the performance indicators for which information has become available during the reporting period. These are attached as appendices to the covering report (Annex 1).
3. A summary of the main findings on progress on services within the Executive Member's portfolios is included below.

Analysis

4. This quarter saw our ability to respond collectively to major challenge severely tested as a result of the York High fire. An incident which saw the department, the council, partners and the whole school community working to ensure the impact of a very serious fire had the least possible detrimental effect on children and young people of the school. The response was magnificent with alternative activities arranged within hours and alternative interim schooling arranged within days.
5. The service plan monitoring reports attached as annexes show steady progress in the first period of the year against the service plans. The following comments identify some of the key achievements in the year to date, and identify areas where further work is needed.

6. The monitoring reports are attached and are detailed as they are also required for use within the service to drive forward improvements. However, to assist EMAP members I have extracted the following particularly encouraging points of progress against key themes:

6.1 Integrated Services:

The 'YorOK' broker pilot which seeks to ensure that the right children get access to the right help at the earliest possible stage is underway with 14 schools participating at this stage.

The important work to establish a *co-located multi agency transitions team for disabled children and young people* continues to progress with core team established and coordinator of team appointed. A formal launch of the team is planned for April.

The site of the ninth children's centre has been confirmed as being at Knavesmire School in South Bank with outreach to both the Scarcroft School and St Clement's Hall buildings

A cross directorate sustainable school travel policy is now in place and promotion of policy being implemented.

Traveller young people were provided with cultural enrichment opportunities through participation in a further project at the Art Gallery in conjunction with York Museums Trust.

6.2 New Provision:

York High School new premises opened on schedule, new builds for Manor (opens Easter 2009) and Joseph Rowntree (Easter 2010) progressing to target dates.

The Building Schools for the Future Secondary Expression of Interest was submitted to DCSF by November deadline, work on readiness to deliver has begun.

New work-related learning for 10 Applefields learners at Danesgate Skills Centre; transition support for up to 20 students with learning difficulties or disabilities who are currently not in Education Training or Employment to progress into full-time education or employment

A Diploma Roadshow held in December 08 included a drop-in evening targeting parents and employers, plus a day event for Yr9 and Yr11 attended by 450 York students. An Opportunities Fair aimed at young people with special needs and their parents will take place in Spring 2009.

Early Intervention Funding has been secured, on a partnership basis, to improve services to children affected by *domestic abuse*. This funding will support the recruitment of a specialist worker in the Independent Domestic Abuse Service [IDAS] to focus on the specific needs of the 5-13 age group.

Children and Families were successful in a bid to the governments 'Home Access to Technology' fund. This fund will help to ensure that all of our Looked After Children have access to ICT and importantly that their carers will have the training and support to help their young people use this technology safely and effectively.

Opportunities Fair for Disabled Young People planned for March 09 to bring together providers within education, social care and leisure with employers and young people and their families. Information, advice and guidance will be supplemented by hands on workshops.

The authority has been awarded wave 2 Playbuilder status from April 2009. This will involve capital funding of around £1 million and around £45K revenue funding, to develop an average of 22 play spaces in the York area.

School Food Trust school meals promotional pilots in place

The council have now signed up to offer free swimming for under 16's at its pools

6.3 Organisational Effectiveness:

The Children's Trust Unit within the Directorate is leading on the drafting and production of the new Children and Young People's Plan, to be launched on 1 April 2009. Over 4,000 young people have contributed to the consultation on the new CYPP. There has been a major effort to coordinate and synthesise this, with the results available on our website.

An audit of Independent Reviewing Officer practice against the City of York Safeguarding Children's Board [CYSCB] standards has been undertaken. An action plan based on the finding will be developed and implemented during the final quarter.

Having worked very hard to meet and exceed the recommendations from its last review, the staff at our children's home *Wenlock Terrace* received very positive feedback from the most recent inspection. The home has been upgraded and is now judged as Good. This is a particularly positive result when viewed against a national and regional trend of inspections downgrading such settings.

Children's Social Care has successfully bid to be included in the Children's Workforce Development Council [CWDC] *Newly Qualified Social Worker* induction programme for 2008/ 09, and workers identified to undertake award.

A Review of the Integrated Working Strategy (aims and objectives) is under way, involving partners and key input from Dr Henri Giller. This includes a full review of integrated working business processes with commitment to amend and improve as appropriate.

The Directorate Equalities Group has now been established and has met twice; our first Directorate Equalities Plan has been produced

Officers are consulting with young people and the Young People's Working Group on re-engaging with the UK Youth Parliament, including the election of a Member of Youth Parliament (MYP) and the possible establishment of a York Youth Council in support.

Completed and planning rollout of Broadband and Learning Platforms procurements.

Implemented the pilot project to introduce School Business Managers in York's smallest primary schools.

In this monitoring period the HR team played a significant role in supporting the

implementation of the revised pay arrangements in the Directorate and Schools, with all staff now being paid on the new grades.

6.4 Specific Performance Outcomes : There is something of a frustration that many indicators, from the national indicator set, are still to be defined in detail or await first year benchmarking data and therefore, targets are not in place. However, in that context It is specifically encouraging to note :

- The *timeliness and completions rates of both initial and core assessments* [NI 59 and NI 60] shows sustained good performance.
- The number of parents attending targeted parenting programmes in Q3 has exceeded the expected target of 30 with 50 parents attending. This brings the current number attending to date in 07/08 to 168.
- There has been a further increase in the number of completed common assessments (78) and contacts to the YorOK Child Index (83 during Oct – Dec 08); 40 practitioners attended Integrated Working Training Oct – Dec 08.
- We have seen a 50% reduction in use of exclusions. Secondary fixed term exclusions have halved, from 434 to 213, compared with the same period last year with only 1 permanent exclusion compared with 12 for the same term. It is a similar picture in Primary with fixed term reducing from 79 to 40 and no permanent exclusions.
- Linked to the above is the excellent increase in the hours of intervention now being made with excluded pupils – up to 4.7 hrs per day compared to 2.2 only two years ago
- Attendance in the LA continues to be better than national average with attendance in our primary schools amongst the very best nationally (ranking 12th out of 150 LAs in most recent published figures)
- 71% of secondary schools have Ofsted judgments of 'good or better' for behaviour, up from 64% at the same time last year.
- The number of schools validated as Healthy Schools (HSS) is now 56 schools or 85%
- Good improved performance in looked after children's school attendance

6.5 Challenges

We have been working with young people in a worsening economic climate resulting in a number of apprentices losing their jobs and reduced number of employers who are able to offer work based training – more detailed information on specific initiatives is included in the Annex. Work commissioned to investigate and analyse the reasons children and young people entered care in York during 07/08 has been completed and an initial report produced. The findings and recommendations of this work will form the basis of an action plan which will be progressed through the Strategic Partnership for Looked After Children. The education performance of looked after children and the access to training and employment for young people known to the Youth Offending Team must remain key priorities.

Corporate Priorities

7. The service plans funded through the Children's Services budget were developed within a clear planning framework and under an overarching partnership statutorily required document the Children and Young Peoples Plan 2007-10. The service plans do contribute to key corporate priorities including

- Increase people's skills and knowledge to improve future employment prospects
- Improve the health and lifestyles of the people who live in York, in particular among groups whose levels of health are the poorest
- Improve the life chances of the most disadvantaged and disaffected children, young people and families in the city
- Improve our focus on the needs of customers and residents in designing and providing services
- Improve leadership at all levels to provide clear, consistent direction to the organisation
- Improve the way the Council and its partners work together to deliver better services for the people who live in York
- Improve efficiency and reduce waste to free-up more resources

Implications

8. The report has the following implications:

Financial

- 9 Based on the actuals to date and other information on future expenditure plans and income generation, an assessment has been made by budget managers of the likely net outturn for each service plan and cost centre. At this stage in the year there is no reason to suggest that most budgets will not come in at or about the level of the current approved budget. There are though a number of exceptions to this and these variations are summarised in the Annex, with full details provided in the budget section of each service plan profile.
- 10 The original net budget for Children & Young People's Services for 2008/09 was set at £29,179k. Since then there have been a number of changes made (the annex provides details) resulting in a latest approved net budget of £29,459k. In total the projected net outturn for 2008/09 is £30,296k, leaving a projected net overspend of £837k or 2.8% (0.3% of gross budgets).
- 11 Members will be aware that the majority of the Children & Young People's Services budget is now funded from the ring-fenced Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). As a consequence the net projected overspend for the portfolio is split:

Dedicated Schools Grant	+ £161k
General Fund (Council Tax)	+ £676k

Dedicated Schools Grant

- 12 The net projected overspend has reduced from £300k at quarter 2, a reduction of £139k. The major changes from quarter 2 are set out briefly below with full details of all variations from approved budgets given in the Annex.
- An increase in the projected overspend on the education costs of Out Of City Placements of £63k.
 - An improvement in the position on Nursery Education Grants of £214k now that it has now been confirmed that an element of the Standards Fund flexibility funding can be allocated towards general increased take-up.
 - An increase in the projected overspend within the Behaviour Support Service of £30k.
- 13 Under the terms and conditions of the DSG any deficits either have to be funded in year by a contribution from the council's General Fund budget or carried forward and funded from the following financial year's DSG. The current presumption is that the final deficit amount would be carried forward to 2009/10 and become a first call against the DSG in that year. The £161k projected deficit has, therefore, already been included as a pressure when setting the 2009/10 Schools Budget.

General Fund

- 14 Quarter 2 highlighted a projected net overspend after mitigating action of £528k. The individual service plan financial monitoring sheets in the Annex now show a total projected overspend of £1,210k. To offset this mitigating action is being taken to hold back expenditure or redirect resources totalling £534k, with the details also shown in the Annex. The result of this action leaves the net projected overspend of £676k, which is a £148k worsening of the position reported at quarter 2 (£330k worse when the £182k of contingency funding allocated by the Executive at quarter 2 is taken in to account). The major changes from quarter 2 are set out briefly below with full details of all variations from the approved budget shown in the Annex:
- A projected overspend on Section 17 costs of £23k, due to several new and expensive packages of support to vulnerable families to prevent their reception into care.
 - A net increase in the projected overspend on the Fostering budget of £54k.
 - An improvement in the position on the care element of Out Of City Placements of £68k.
 - A net increase in the projected overspend on children's care legal fees of

£36k.

- A significant shortfall of £100k in Adult Education grant income from the LSC due to learner number targets not being met.
- An increase in the projected net overspend on Home to School Transport of £184k mainly due to increased SEN costs and lower than anticipated savings on the main bus contracts.

15 At quarter 2 the Executive agreed to the release of corporate contingency funding of £182k set aside when the original 2008/09 budget was approved. In light of the worsening position, the Executive Member has already asked the Executive to consider releasing the remaining £80k budget set aside for fostering and the music service. If the Executive agrees to the request, then this would reduce the net projected general fund overspend to £596k.

16 As can be seen significant action has already been taken to reduce the overspend position, with £534k of mitigating action recorded in the annex. Officers will continue to work to identify further savings to try and further reduce the remaining budget gap before the end of the financial year. This will include work in the following areas:

- Working with colleagues in Legal Services to increase in-house legal resources and thereby reduce the need for more expensive external advice and support.
- Reviewing the operation of the Schools R&M Buy Back budget.
- Carefully reviewing staff vacancies when they arise and taking opportunities to delay replacement of some, if this can be done without having a significant detrimental impact on service delivery.
- Reviewing other discretionary directorate expenditure budgets with a view to identifying any expenditure that could be delayed or reduced, again if this can be done without having a significant impact on service delivery.
- Reviewing savings options that are being developed as part of the 2009/10 budget process to identify any that could be implemented prior to 1 April 2009.

17 At this stage it is thought reasonable to assume that the action identified above should be able reduce the projected general fund overspend by at least a further £100k by the end of the financial year. In summary then the latest projected position on the general fund budget is set out below:

Summary of General Fund Projection	£000
Total of projected overspends	1,210
Less mitigating action already implemented	(534)
Latest quarter 3 projection	676
Less requests to Executive for release of contingency funding	(80)
Less savings expected from further action being undertaken	(100)
Revised projection	496

- **Human Resources (HR)** – whilst there are no specific HR implications arising from this report the report does recognize and report in part the findings of the staff survey.

18 There are no specific equalities/ legal/IT/ property or crime and disorder implications arising from this report

Risk Management

19. All of the original service plans include a section on risk management. Performance sessions within the directorate update those risks in the light of experience.

Recommendations

20. The Executive Member is recommended to:

- Note the performance of services within the directorate funded through the Children's Services budget.

Reason: In order to ensure appropriate performance management arrangements are in place for the work of the department.

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Specialist Implications Officer(s)

Financial Implications.
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Wards Affected: *List wards or tick box to indicate all*

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

Annexes

Annex 1: Summary of Service plan monitoring reports incl key performance indicators and budgets