

Executive

14 July 2016

Report of the Director of Children's Services, Education and Skills

Portfolio of the Executive Member for Education, Children & Young People

Children and Young People in Care: York's New Strategy 2016-2020

Summary

1. Children and young people in care are a priority group for the council and its partners. This paper introduces the new Children in Care Strategy 2016-20 and seeks council endorsement of the strategy which has been developed on the basis of consultation and input from children and young people in care, council colleagues and multi-agency partners.

Recommendations

2. It is recommended:
 - a. that Executive recommend council endorsement of the Children in Care Strategy 2016 – 2020
 - b. that Executive recommend council note the introduction of new strategic partnership arrangements and strengthened leadership to ensure the progress and delivery of the strategy

Reason: To endorse the new children in care strategy

Background

The Strategy

3. The new Children and Young People in Care Strategy 2016 – 2020 sets out our vision, ambition and aspirations for children in care. The Strategy is provided at Annex 1. Our vision is simple: we want our children in care to have everything that good parents want for their children; for them to be happy and healthy, safe and protected and supported each step of the way to adult life.

4. The strategy relates to all children and young people in the care of City of York Council including those placed outside the city, care leavers, children placed for adoption, children subject to special guardianship arrangements or child arrangement orders and children on the edge of care. The strategy also incorporates our corporate parenting strategy, the development and progress of which is overseen by the Corporate Parenting Board which has recently refreshed its focus and terms of reference.
5. Much progress has been made in our work with children in care, and it could be said that this is 'good enough'. However, 'good enough is not good enough' and we want the very best for every child in care – just as we do for our own children. This sentiment and ambition sets the scene for our collective ambition and intent, and the strategy introduces six strategic themes that are deliberately intended to inspire and challenge everyone who works in this area. These are: ambition, personalisation, normality, trust, accountability and efficiency.
6. The previous strategy set out nine strategic outcomes that are still relevant and which provide a comprehensive framework within which we will progress and deliver our strategy. These are:
 - a. respect and involvement
 - b. good, safe placements
 - c. relationships
 - d. identity
 - e. education
 - f. health
 - g. emotional wellbeing and mental health
 - h. moving to adulthood
 - i. corporate parenting
7. The new strategy sets out the actions and projects that we will undertake to achieve our strategic ambition for children in care. Actions fall into three categories: *immediate and significant priority actions*, *continuous improvements* that will be undertaken throughout the period covered by the strategy; *ideas for further consideration* which will not be pursued immediately but which we will keep on our radar and will follow up when the time is right of after some further preparatory work has been undertaken. The development of a separate action plan is underway that sets out

the actions we will take to deliver the children in care strategy within the context of our local multi agency partnership working arrangements. Progress against the action plan will be overseen by the Children in Care Strategic Partnership.

8. A young person's version of the Children in Care Strategy document will be produced over the summer. This will be led by the Show Me That I Matter Panel (York's Children in Care Council) with support from council colleagues. This will offer an additional and meaningful opportunity for dialogue and engagement between the Panel and the strategic partnership group.

New Strategic Partnership Arrangements

9. The strategy was produced by the Multi Agency Partnership for Children who are Looked After (known as MALAP). Consultation for this strategy highlighted a desire from the wider partnership for a review of the delivery arrangements, specifically a refreshed and expanded membership and terms of reference for the Partnership group that better reflected priorities and the new operating landscape. The strategy document consequently sets out revised membership of a new Strategic Partnership for Children and Young People in Care that includes many of the previous MALAP executive member agencies.
10. The new Children in Care Strategic Partnership will provide strategic leadership across agencies responsible for commissioning and providing services for children in care in York. It will identify the needs and aspirations of children and young people in care, children on the edge of care and care leavers in York, it will develop a shared and coherent strategic vision that takes account of those needs, ensure that partner agencies provide services designed to support and implement that strategic vision and specify measurable outcomes that can be used to assess the delivery of those services.
11. The Children in Care Strategic Partnership is responsible for monitoring the implementation of the strategy and for ensuring that progress is made in improving outcomes for children in care. Priority actions will be progressed through task and finish groups and impact and outcomes will be monitored through the introduction of a new and comprehensive performance scorecard, feedback from children and young people and other key stakeholders, and formal reports to the Strategic Partnership.

12. The Strategic Partnership meets every two months and is accountable to the YorOK Board, with clear links to the Children's Safeguarding Board, the CAMHS Executive and the Corporate Parenting Board. The Strategic Partnership will report annually to the Health and Wellbeing Board.

Strengthened Leadership

13. As part of a wider Children's Social Care restructure, and to support the implementation of the new strategy, a new role of group manager, achieving permanence has been established. Reporting to the head of social work services, the group manager will lead for the LA on the implementation of the strategy, working closely with partners to plan, support and convene the bi-monthly meetings of the new partnership group.

Consultation

14. Extensive consultation underpinned the development of the strategy, ensuring that children in care and care experienced children and young people were fully involved in its development, along with a wide range of colleagues in different roles across council services and partner organisations. Drafts were tabled for feedback at key forums including the Corporate Parenting Board and the YorOK Board.
15. This report is for endorsement and information only.

Options

16. There are no options for the Executive to consider; this report is for endorsement and information only.

Analysis

17. This report is for endorsement and information, and therefore analysis of options is not applicable.

Council Plan

18. The strategy is in line with the following Council Plan priorities:
 - a prosperous city for all: everyone is supported to achieve their full potential

- a focus on frontline services, to ensure all residents, particularly the least advantaged, can access reliable services and community facilities: every child has the opportunity to get the best possible start in life; all children and adults are listened to, and their opinions considered; everyone has access to opportunities regardless of their background; support services are available to those who need them; residents are encouraged and supported to live healthily

Implications

19. There are no known risks arising from the recommendations in the following areas: financial, human resources, equalities, legal, crime and disorder, information technology or property.

Risk Management

20. There are no known risks arising from the recommendations.

Contact Details

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Approved

Specialist Implications Officer(s)

None

Wards Affected:

All



For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers:

None

Annexes

Children in Care Strategy 2016- 2020

Glossary of abbreviations used in the report:

CAMHS - Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services

LA – Local Authority

MALAP - Multi Agency Partnership for Children who are Looked After