

## **Meeting of Executive Member for Children & Young People's Services and Advisory Panel 10 June 2008**

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

### **Service Plan Performance Year End 2007/8 Report: including feedback from the Joint Area Review (JAR)**

#### **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. The paper also creates a timely opportunity to receive formal written feedback on the Joint Area Review (JAR) which is published on the 3 June 2008.

#### **Background**

2. A common proforma has been developed for all services in the directorate which summarises progress against the actions listed in the service plan, 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 Annex 1 to this covering report. Service Managers have been asked to use no more than 2 sides of A4 for their monitoring reports.
3. EMAP approved the new relevant service plans for the Directorate at its last meeting and recognised that for 2008/9 that we have moved to a smaller number of more integrated plans. However, it is clearly important to create the opportunity to reflect on previous year performance even if it is on the previous service plan structure. In addition, our planning for 2008/9 was in the context of the new National Indicator set (198) which seeks to reduce the reporting burden on authorities – all relevant children and young peoples indicators have been included in the new service plans. This will result in more focused streamlined reporting than may have been the case previously.
4. A summary of the main findings on progress on services within each of the Executive Member's portfolios is also included in the short analysis below.
5. Significantly, the authority was subject to the Joint Area Review process in January and February 2008. A team of 8 inspectors led by OFSTED spent 3 weeks thoroughly assessing the effectiveness of local services for children and young people. Their report will be published on the 3 June and a copy of the draft report is attached at Annex 2.

## Options

6. The report is primarily an information report for Members and therefore no specific options are provided to Members regarding the contents of the report.

## Analysis

7. The full year evaluation of progress against the service plans for 2007 – 08 shows that that most of the action that was planned 12 months ago has been completed. Where progress has been slow, it has usually been because of delays in appointing staff to key posts or long-term staff absence. However, some priorities have been re-assessed during the year in the light of feedback about the impact on outcomes for young people and actions have been postponed or modified as a consequence.

8. The most eye-catching achievements have been as follows:

- A significant increase in the number of schools judged 'outstanding'
- A second successful submission for the provision of specialist diplomas (14 – 19) which will result in 8 of the 10 available diplomas being available in York from September 2009
- Improved performance in SATs and GCSE, particularly in secondary schools, GCSE results saw an exceptional improvement of 6% since last year, and as it stands 6% more than the early national results and ranked 12th in England
- Further accredited progress on the establishment of children's centres
- The completion of the first Child Care Sufficiency Assessment and the successful establishment of the Early Years Child care Pathfinder projects
- Successful establishment of the new Integrated Young People' Service with the merger of previously separate Connexions and Youth Services
- The successful opening of Danesgate Skills Centre
- Continuing growth in the scale and quality of the Schools Out programme
- Delivery of the biggest ever capital programme for schools
- Outstanding inspection judgement for the Glen Respite Care Centre
- New Parents Forum for parents of disabled children established
- Improvements in school attendance
- Excellent % improvement in school children (aged 5-16) participating in at least 2 hours of sport a week representing a 19% increase in last years figure and has achieved LPSA target one year early
- More encouraging signs of progress against teenage pregnancy targets with latest figures at least evidencing fewer conceptions in 2006 compared to 2005. That improvement takes the authority to clearly below the national comparative figure for under 18 pregnancies. The performance for under 16s conceptions had always been below national comparators
- Good progress in schools achieving healthy schools standard – only six authorities with higher % performance nationally and 2<sup>nd</sup> best in the region
- Slight increase in take-up of school meals following the 2006/7 drop

- YorOK website now live and Children's Information Service successfully made transition to Family Information Service
  - Relatively modest but realistic targets for accessing child index system, as we move through the implementation process, have been met
  - Some progress against indicator for long term stability of looked after children
  - Performance maintained on key assessment completion indicators whilst at the same time seeing an increase in the numbers of assessments completed
  - Progress on extended schools and on environment programmes engaging schools is encouraging
  - Parenting Programmes: 248 families have engaged in targeted parenting programmes. These programmes are intensive and range from 12 week to full year courses. The excellent uptake is in direct response to the additional funding secured via pathfinder status funding which had enabled an expanded set of programmes being available
  - Given concern about the increase in Looked After Children (LAC) missing more than 24 days we have implemented a tracking procedure to identify children at risk of missing a lot of school and ensure measures are in place to improve attendance. Creative use of Alternative Learning Programmes have improved outcomes for LAC in recent months. Progress in this area will be positively reported in forthcoming Joint Area Review report
  - Encouraging evidence of increase in Arts events for young people - whilst progress, still much to do to improve the reality of and residents satisfaction with leisure facilities for young people
  - As we reduce NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) figures we do see an increased % representation within this group of young people with learning difficulties/disabilities (LDD) – will continue to influence post 16 commissioning arrangements
  - Good progress in reducing the numbers of young people outside of mainstream educational provision but more challenges to ensure they receive the newly defined requirement for full engagement
  - Excellent progress led by the Youth Offending Team (YOT) in reducing re-offending rates
  - Good progress in schools achieving the Inclusion Award and organisations awarded Youth Charter
  - Good progress in young people's involvement in sports leadership
  - Further work needed to meet challenging targets on quick access to substance misuse assessments
9. The Joint Area Review report makes exceptionally positive reading. To be inspected against key issues which have proved most challenging to others and to then achieve "outstanding" judgements against those issues is tremendous feedback to the authority, its partners and the overall workforce.
10. The new leadership team of the Directorate has established itself quickly, balancing the maintenance of already high performing services with highlighting issues for

further improvement. Our priorities for the future informed by both year end performance and the outcome of the JAR include the need for:

- A continuing reduction in the number of NEETs particularly including those with learning difficulties or disabilities (LDD)
- A refocus on the standards agenda aiming for no schools to be in an OFSTED category and more outstanding schools
- The delivery of a Primary Capital Strategy that will provide higher quality learning environments whilst at the same time addressing spare capacity and performance
- Effective completion of key new secondary school provision during 2008/9
- Improved arrangements for full time education or training for 14 – 19 year olds at the Skills Centre, the Pupil Referral Unit (PRU), through alternative learning programmes and through Work Based Learning (WBL) provision
- An appropriate response to the increase in the number of Looked After Children and the consequent impact on budgets
- Closer links between all services engaged in delivery of the National Strategy programme for 'Behaviour and Attendance'
- A resulting decrease in the number of permanent exclusions but an increase in the hours of input to those individuals
- Enhanced delivery of the 'Youth Offer' providing more places to go and things for young people to do
- Enhanced processes for ensuring that early intervention services are provided to vulnerable children and young people
- The authority to honour its commitment to meet the Every Disabled Child Matters Charter by December 2008 including improved transition arrangements into adult services provision
- Greater attention and capacity to ensure that greater integrated practice is supported by integrated workforce strategies

## **Corporate Priorities**

- 11 The service plans reflect the national and local planning framework, including the Local Area Agreement and the Children and Young People's Plan. In particular they take account of the need:
- To increase people's knowledge and skills to improve future employment prospects'
  - 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**

### **Financial Implications**

- 12 This report sets out the draft outturn figures for the financial year 2007/08. Whilst most budgets have outturned at or about the level of the current approved budget, there are still a number of exceptions to this. The individual variations are detailed in full at Annex 1 but in summary the draft net outturn for 2006/07 is £27,558k. This compares with a current approved net budget of £27,566k, a net underspend of £8k or 0.03%. It must be noted that the figures are provisional and may be adjusted. However, significant changes are not expected to be made.
- 13 Members will be aware that the majority of the Children's Services budget is now funded from the ring-fenced Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). As a consequence the net draft underspend for the portfolio is split:
- |                            |         |
|----------------------------|---------|
| Dedicated Schools Grant    | - £427k |
| General Fund (Council Tax) | + £419k |
- 14 The original net budget for Children's Services for 2007/08 was set at £25,990k. Since then there have been a number of changes made (the summary table at Annex 1 provides details) resulting in the latest approved net budget of £27,566k.
- 15 The Executive Members have also received two formal monitoring reports and have been kept informed on expenditure and income trends during the year. The latest report was presented on 6 December 2007. Further regular monitoring reports have also been considered by the Learning, Culture & Children's Services (LCCS) Departmental Management Team throughout the year.

#### Dedicated Schools Grant

- 16 The net underspend has increased from a projected £32k at monitor 2, an increase of £395k. The major changes from the 2nd monitoring report are set out briefly below, with full details of all variations from the approved budget shown at Annex 1:
- An increase in the underspend on Out of City Placements of £155k as the provision for 2 possible extra placements highlighted at monitor 2 was not required.
  - An increase of £85k in the income generated from the selling of places in York special schools to other Local Authorities (Inter Authority Recoupment).
  - A £34k reduction in the overspend on Nursery Education Grants following successful negotiations with the Department for Children, Schools & Families (DCSF) to allow more of the pathfinder grant to be used to support the base budget pressure.
  - An increase in the underspend within the finance service of £30k due to staff vacancies and the securing of some one-off grant funding from the DCSF.
  - Additional costs of £58k at the Pupil Referral Unit due to delays in implementing other placement programmes.
  - A reduction in the costs charged against the Newly Qualified Teacher (NQT) training budget of £47k.
  - An underspend on the contingency set aside to deal with corrections to schools' formula funding and on the specific contingency provided for job evaluation costs in schools in 2007/08 totalling £113k.

- 17 Under the terms and conditions of the DSG any in year underspend can either be allocated to schools at the year end or carried forward and added to the following financial year's DSG. Following consultation with the Schools Forum, it is proposed to carry forward the final DSG underspend to 2008/09. (Overspends 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).
- 18 Following changes at the time of the first monitor (when a DSG overspend was being projected), the current approved budget for 2007/08 already includes a budgeted deficit carry forward to 2008/09 of £198k. This means that a net sum of £229k is now expected to be carried forward to 2008/09 (i.e. £427k underspend against budget less the already assumed £198k deficit carry forward).

### General Fund Budgets

- 19 The individual service plan financial monitoring sheets at Annex 1 now show a total draft overspend of £941k. To offset this savings and other mitigating action taken to hold back expenditure has produced underspends, additional income or redirected resources totalling £522k, with the details again shown in Annex 1. The result of this action leaves the net draft overspend of £419k, which is an improvement of £33k on the position reported in the last monitoring report. The major changes from the 2nd monitoring report are set out briefly below with full details of all variations from the approved budget shown at Annex 1:
- An increase in the underspend on staffing within the Arts & Culture Service of £47k as more posts were kept vacant to help offset the shortfall in income generation.
  - An increase in the overspend within the Youth Service of £36k as the service was unable to make the compensatory savings required of it at the time of the 2nd monitoring report.
  - Increased savings from staff vacancies, grants and income generation within the LCCS Finance team totalling £46k.
  - A reduction in the level of insurance premiums and costs of £35k.
  - No dividend has been received by the council from the Yorkshire Purchasing Organisation in 2007/08. At the time of the 2<sup>nd</sup> monitoring report it was assumed that £60k of the directorate's £80k budgeted income would be received.
  - At the time of the 2<sup>nd</sup> monitoring report a shortfall of £35k was being reported against the directorate's 'management challenge' saving. Since then savings in the amounts set aside to fund Soulbury Staff Performance Awards (SPAs) have meant that this shortfall has been eliminated in full.
  - An overspend of £49k on the repair and maintenance buy back scheme for schools due to the increased costs of building works combined with lower than expected income.

### On-going Impact in 2008/09

- 20 Although many of the underlying variations have already been accounted for when the 2008/09 budgets were set, there are still some items that are expected to have an impact in 2008/09. Initial estimates of this impact suggest continuing net

overspends and probable calls on the corporate contingency budget in the following areas:

- Independent Foster Agencies (£80k).
- Children's Social Care Legal Fees (£70k). There is also the potential for a further pressure in this area as the government are currently undertaking consultation on increased court fees for child protection cases. Additional funding of £72k has been provided to the council within the Revenue Support Grant for 2008/09 but this is currently being held within the corporate contingency budget rather than within directorate budgets.
- Music Service Income Shortfall (£40k).

#### Proposals to Carry Forward Unspent Budgets

- 21 In order to promote good management and allow planned 2007/08 projects to proceed, it is proposed to continue the arrangements of previous years and permit underspendings to be carried forward in certain circumstances. Rather than being a general provision, it is suggested that carry forward proposals should only be allowed where the portfolio area and directorate actually underspends due to a genuine slippage.
- 22 Because of the net overspend in the Children's Services general fund budget, no carry forwards are requested this year.

#### **Human Resources (HR)**

- 23 There are no implications for HR, other than those identified within the plans.

#### **Equalities**

- 24 There are no implications

#### **Legal**

- 25 There is no statutory requirement for the directorate to maintain service plans or to report on them. However, elected members do have a responsibility for monitoring performance and this report is a key element in the Council's arrangements for Performance Management and will be subject to scrutiny under arrangements for Comprehensive Performance Assessment.

#### **Crime and Disorder**

- 26 There are no implications

#### **Information Technology (IT)**

- 27 There are no implications

#### **Property**

- 28 There are no implications

## Other

29 There are no implications

## Risk Management

30 The risk to the authority of not monitoring service plans is that there will be no appropriate mechanism for Performance Management of the work of the directorate. Poor performance in respect of the work of this directorate impacts not only reputationally upon the authority but also on the real life chances of local children and young people. The findings of the Joint Area review provides external independent scrutiny of that work and its result minimises the risk faced by the authority. However, it is only minimisation as this activity is not an area for complacency.

## Recommendations

- 31 The Advisory Panel advise the Executive Member to:
- note the performance of services within the directorate funded through the Children's Services budget
  - approve the draft revenue outturn for 2007/08, noting that the General Fund overspend will be funded from council reserves
  - note the outcome of the Joint Area review of services to children and young people

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

## Contact Details

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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

**Background Papers:**

Learning Culture and Children's Services Service Plans 2007/08

2007/08 Budget Files

2007/08 Closedown Files

Revenue Estimate 2007/08 reported to Council in February 2007

Budget monitoring reports presented to the Executive Member during 2007/08

**Annexes:**

Annex 1: Service Plan Monitoring report

Annex 2: JAR report