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

4 December 2008

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

**Service Plan Performance 2nd 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 first two quarters 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. Executive Member and Advisory Panel (EMAP) members will recall that the planning process for 2008/9 for Learning, Culture and Children's Services included some important changes. For 2008/9 we responded to concerns about the length and complexity of some of the service plans that were submitted in previous years and the difficulties that this presented in monitoring progress during the year. We reduced from 16 to 5 the number of Service Plans reflecting the responsibilities of each of the Asst Directors.
4. A summary of the main findings on progress on services within the Executive Member's portfolios is included below.

Analysis

5. The service plan monitoring reports shows good progress in the first six months of the year against the actions from the service plans. The comments from paragraph 8 below identify some of the key achievements in the year to date, and identify areas where further work is needed. Before

going into the detail of the monitoring reports I would want to also draw attention to three important developments from recent quarter.

6. **The Audit Commission schools survey** is an annual national event, originally developed as part of the process of gathering evidence to support the inspection of local authorities. The main message from the survey for 2008 however, is that York schools believe that the vast majority of the services provided by the Local Authority remain amongst the best in the country. The average score for all schools put York in the top 25% of LAs for 72 of the 82 questions, *(and 64 are ranked in the top 10 LAs nationally – with 9 being ranked first)*. When comparing our results with those of our statistical neighbours (SN), we are the top rated LA of the SN benchmark group. It was particularly pleasing that the authority improved its relative position by comparison with other authorities across the country. Overall we ranked 3rd nationally of all local authorities in the eyes of our schools in comparison to 5th in 2007. At 67%, the rate of return by schools in York was higher than the national average of 34% and an improvement from last year's of 57%. The findings of the survey will continue to play a very important part in influencing service planning within the Directorate. In January 2009 we will be reporting to schools our detailed plans in respect of areas which were not ranked top quartile.

7. In addition, I take this opportunity to update on the **Primary Capital Strategy submission**. The Primary Capital Strategy for the authority was approved by EMAP and submitted by the June deadline. On the 12 November we received feedback describing the excellent news that the strategy was approved subject to some relatively minor clarifications.

“This strategy provides a good summary of vision and local context. There is a thorough and wide-ranging analysis of baseline data but there needs to be a little more specificity in respect of the current development of ICT in York primary schools. There is a clear and coherent long term vision and a convincing approach to tackling issues including ECM outcomes, poorly performing schools and surplus places. There is clear capacity to deliver and a commitment to building stakeholder capacity (although brief reference to workforce development might have helped). Procurement and design proposals are sound, but, although there is a reference to risk assessment, little detail is provided. Priorities are clear and relate to the analysis of need although there needs to be more detail in respect on plans for ICT. The strategy is approved subject to the following conditions being met:

- *More detail is required on current development of, and future plans for, ICT in primary schools.*
- *Details are required on intentions in respect of workforce development.*
- *Evidence is required of a risk assessment in respect of the overall strategy.*

On the basis of this assessment, I am able to confirm your authority's indicative allocation for 2009-10. This will enable you to move ahead with planning and procuring your initial investment priorities”

This green light will enable us to continue to develop plans to improve primary school provision for the Clifton with Rawcliffe Federation and the Our Lady's/English Martyrs Federation.

8. And finally before getting to the monitoring reports I would wish to acknowledge the professionalism of the York High school leadership team, in responding to the difficult challenges set by the recent fire at York High school. The LA was also grateful for the important contributions of other schools and would wish to particularly thank the staff, governors, parents and students of Manor School, Burnholme Community College and Westfield School for their support. I would also like to recognise the dedication of staff across the various departments of the council and the efficient and impressive response from local contractors who, together, ensured that the disruption to children's' education as a result of the York High fire was minimised as far as possible.
9. The monitoring reports are attached and are necessarily 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:

9.1 Integrated Services:

- Arrangements to establish a co-located multi agency transitions team by Jan 08 are progressing well with agreement to jointly fund a team co-ordinator between LCCS & HASS.
- The excellence of our Bookstart scheme (books for babies and toddlers) has been recognized nationally. We are achieving 100% coverage through partnership working.
- The upgrade of, Fulford and Kingswater youth hubs completed. At Moor Lane, the upgrade to toilets and meeting space is in hand. Enhanced provision in New Earswick, Huntington and Strensall is in place. New part-time staff appointments have been made. The new Service was formally launched on 24 October.
- There has been a continued increase in the number of completed common assessments (64) and contacts to the YorOK Child Index (152 - 2 closed); Lead Practitioners: 124 (3 closed).
- Children's centre programme advancing with the scheme at Haxby Rd nearing completion.

9.2 New Provision:

- Major secondary school construction and refurbishment schemes continue as planned. York High School due to open January 2009. Manor School to open Easter 2009 and Joseph Rowntree at Easter 2010.

- The Starting Blocks partnership with Yorkcares and local employers, including City of York Council (CYC), to provide carefully designed and fully supported work experience placements for care leavers has seen the successful placement of 5 care leavers since July. These placements have been hosted by local companies and the Council.
- Planning for the new enhanced resource provision for children with autistic spectrum conditions in the new build at Joseph Rowntree School is making good progress.
- The *Staying Put* [fostering for 18+] Development Officer and Family Placement Officer posts have been filled.
- Over 1,500 parents are now registered to receive regular information through the Family Information Scheme.
- The strategy for Phase 3 of our Children's Centre programme, providing citywide coverage by 31 March 2010, is now approved – work is underway to identify a site for a ninth centre and for two satellites.
- We have been successful in finishing as the top placed initiative both in the Yorkshire and Humber Region and now nationally with our Special Olympics City of York Initiative. This means we will receive £62,500 from Norwich Union.
- The "Sports Unlimited" initiative co-ordinated through Active York is now involving community sports clubs in delivering over 100 activities a week in schools.
- A volunteering project was established at Heworth Lighthouse for October half-term to involve large number of young people to transform the grounds. This was hugely successful, and provides a model for volunteering work in the city.
- 14-19 developments: Overall there are 295 learners beginning vocational courses in September 2008: -115 KS4 learners (approx 7% of Y10 cohort) and 75 post-16 learners starting on Engineering and Society, Health and Development diplomas, 70 KS4 learners started Young Apprenticeship provision at York College, and 35 school based KS4 learners started Danesgate Skills Centre courses.
- Travellers and Ethnic Minority Service (TEMS) has worked with the Arts Service to provide better support to Polish KS3 new arrivals via a photography project, new Teaching Assistants have been inducted to support new arrivals in class especially KS3. TEMS have been working with Children's Centre staff to develop mums and tots drop-ins for new families and Traveller mums therefore building relationships at early stage.
- Pilot Learning Support Units (LSUs) have been developed for three secondary schools.

9.3 Organisational Effectiveness:

New services, new buildings draw understandable attention but we should not underestimate the work undertaken on policies/procedures and systems to improve organisational effectiveness.

- The Child Protection Monitoring Group is coordinating work on quality standards in core assessment processes and outcome focused child protection plans.
- A pilot is proposed to support schools through the allocation of a 'YorOK' broker to ensure the Common Assessment Framework arrangements are used to support and address for persistence absentees and other vulnerable young people displaying risky behaviors.
- The Runaway from Home procedures have been reviewed and protocols with the Police and Safer York Partnership have been agreed to support implementation.
- A booklet entitled 'Supporting Children and Young People with Attention Difficulties' has been published and disseminated to all schools, Children's Centres and specialist CAMH (Child and Adolescent Mental Health) services.
- Children's Social Care has successfully bid to be included in the CWDC (Children's Workforce Development Council) Newly Qualified Social Worker induction programme for 2008/ 09.
- The Graduate Leader Fund is supporting early years providers to have more graduates among their employees. 31 applications have so far been supported towards graduate training and 3 have been awarded grants for achieving Early Years Professional Status (EYPS) since April '08.
- All school anti-bullying policies have been collated. A draft anti bullying policy incorporating all the new guidance has been written and is at a consultation stage. The Safe to learn and Emotional well being conference for pupils and adults is planned for 14 November 2008 and has attracted national interest.
- Good progress with the procurement of new city wide Broadband contract.
- Serco selected as the preferred provider for the city's Learning Platform.

9.4 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.

- % of children in care missing 25+ days school after concern in 2007 has met its challenging target.
- % of children and young people's participation in high quality PE and sport (2 hours a week) has increased still further from last years impressive performance.
- We have exceeded our targets for the "Schools Out" programme, partly as a result of our successful partnerships with private and voluntary community organisations.
- Data for the first half of 2007 shows a continuing decline in the number of teenage conceptions in York.
- Over 100% of 3 year olds are receiving free early years provision. (Children from surrounding local authorities postcodes account for the number above 100.
- The number of parents attending programmes in Q2 has exceeded the expected target (50) with 68 parents accessing the three main structured, targeted parenting programmes. Targeted programmes at levels 3 and 4 continue to have a higher referral rate than places available.
- Since the beginning of July 2008, there have been 4 inspections with all schools judged as good.
- Permanent exclusions are down but fixed term exclusions (FTE) have risen slightly over the year. All schools except one have reduced their FTE. In the one school where they have risen, the impact of a pilot LSU has drastically reduced the FTE within the last two months. Therefore, the capacity to improve is good in this area.
- Number of pupils in 'Out of School' provision has fallen and the number of days provided in 'Out of School' provision increased.
- Targets exceeded achieved for performance of children at the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- The most recently published school attendance figures show that performance at primary level in 2006/07 is excellent, being 11th best nationally.
- 3,500 children signed up for the Summer Reading Challenge (exceeding the 2,500 target).

9.5 Challenges

The scale of the looked after children population in the city continues to pressurise existing resources and as a result creates financial pressures through the greater use of independent fostering agency placements. NEET (not in Education,

Employment or Training) figures at 30/9/08 are higher than previously at 7%. Further tracking and targeted support from the post 16 team working from Castlegate and in the localities will reduce the numbers. However, the wider economic situation will make achievement of this target especially challenging. We are working with York College on some specific targeted initiatives. Myplace bid - outline plans in place drawn following young people's involvement on City centre site. However, considerable legal and planning issues remain outstanding. A bid will go to second round in 2009 and an update will be provided to EMAP at its next meeting. Secondary Head teachers, College Principals and LA visioning sessions have been held on the required nature of post 16 provision in the city, sessions which have stimulated considerable debate. An independently commissioned piece of work is planned to assist.

Consultation

Not applicable.

Options

Not applicable

Corporate Priorities

10. 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

- 11 The report has the following implications:

Financial

- 12 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.
- 13 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 £29,280k. In total the projected net outturn for 2008/09 is £30,108k, leaving a projected net overspend of £828k or 2.8% (0.3% of gross budgets).
- 14 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	+ £300k
General Fund (Council Tax)	+ £528k

Dedicated Schools Grant

- 15 The net projected overspend has increased from £173k at quarter 1, an increase of £127k. The major changes from quarter 1 are set out briefly below with full details of all variations from approved budgets given in the Annex.
- A reduction in the projected additional income being generated from Inter Authority Recoupment of £45k.
 - An increase of £40k in the projected overspend on Nursery Education Grants now that the autumn term take up of the free entitlement has been assessed.
 - A projected overspend of £52k on support required for statemented children from Learning Support Assistants in schools.
- 16 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 2008/09 and become a first call against the DSG in that year.

General Fund

- 17 Quarter 1 highlighted a projected net overspend after mitigating action of £629k. The individual service plan financial monitoring sheets in the Annex now show a total projected overspend of £1,174k. To offset this mitigating action is being taken to hold back expenditure or redirect resources totalling £646k, with the details also shown in the Annex. The result of this action leaves the net projected overspend of £528k, which is an £118k improvement on the position reported at quarter 1. The major changes from quarter 1 are set out briefly below with full details of all variations from the approved budget shown in the Annex:
- Higher demand for leaving care services for 18+ year olds resulting in an increase in projected costs of £52k.
 - A reduction in the projected overspend on the Fostering budget of £41k due to a reduction in the use of Independent Fostering Agency (IFA) placements.
 - An increase in the number of staff vacancies within various children's social care teams resulting in an increased projected saving of £98k.
 - A shortfall in the Social Care Workforce Training Grant of £55k.
 - A net increase in the projected overspend on Legal Fees of £31k.
 - An improvement in the position on Music Service Income of £25k.
 - A significant increase in the projected underspend on the Integrated Children's Centres programme of £160k due to a later than planned start to of some of the new activity.
 - Staffing vacancies totalling £39k being held within the Young People's Service to fund previously reported income shortfalls.
 - A projected net overspend on Home to School Transport of £38k now that all data relating to the new academic year has been assessed.
 - A projected net overspend on the School Repair & Maintenance Buy Back Scheme of £110k.
- 18 At the time of the quarter 1 monitor the Executive Member agreed that the following requests be put to the Executive for the release of corporate contingency funding set aside when the original 2008/09 budget was approved:
- £80k for Children's Social Care Fostering
 - £142k for Children's Social Care Legal Fees
 - £40k for Music Service Income Shortfall
- 19 The Executive considered these requests at its meeting in October but requested further more detailed information before it would agree to release any of the contingency budget. This information has now been prepared and, subjected to the approval of the Executive Member; it is recommended that the request for contingency funding totalling £262k be resubmitted. If the

Executive subsequently agrees the request this would reduce the net projected general fund overspend to £266k.

20 Officers will continue to work to identify further savings to bridge 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.

21 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	1,174
Less mitigating action already implemented	(646)
Latest quarter 2 projection	528
Less requests to Executive for release of contingency funding	(262)
Less savings expected from further action being undertaken	(100)
Revised projection	166

Human Resources (HR)

22 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.

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

Risk Management

24 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

- 25 That the Advisory Panel advise the Executive Member to:
- Note the performance of services within the directorate funded through the Children's Services budget.
 - request that the Executive agree to release the following amounts currently contained within the Corporate Contingency Budget:
 - > £80k for Children's Social Care Fostering
 - > £142k for Children's Social Care Legal Fees
 - > £40k for Music Service Income Shortfall

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

Contact Details

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Services

**Report
Approved**

Date *21 November
2008*

Specialist Implications Officer(s)

Financial Implications.
Name: Richard Hartle
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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

Background Papers:

Learning Culture and Children's Services Service Plans 2008/09
2008/09 Budget Monitoring Files