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## Meeting of Executive Members and Children's Services Advisory Panel

14 March 2007

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

### Service Plans: 2007/2008

#### Purpose of Report

1. The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the Service Plans for council services that are wholly or partially funded from the children's services budget.

#### Background

2. The planning process this year for *Learning, Culture and Children's Services* is broadly similar to the arrangements in previous years. The main change is in response to concerns about the length and complexity of some of the service plans that were submitted to the Executive Members for 2006/07 and the difficulties that this presented in monitoring progress during the year.
3. Members of EMAP will be aware that monitoring reports focus on three things: the key strategic actions identified in the service plan, financial performance and performance against performance indicators. This year, service managers have been asked to provide a much simplified account of the key strategic actions in the service plans. In practice this means that Section 4 of the planning template has been reduced to a single side of A4. This has advantages and disadvantages. Members of EMAP will find that this year's plans are more concise, more focused and more strategic. What is missing, however, is the detail about where responsibility lies for particular actions, including the deadlines for action, and the explicit links with corporate plans. More detailed action plans are available to members on request and will be submitted to inspectors during the forthcoming Annual Performance Assessment and Joint Area Review.
4. There have also been changes in national policy. The Children Act 2004 requires local authorities to produce a Children and Young People's Plan. In previous years, local authorities were also required to submit a self evaluation statement by the end of May to be followed by a visit from Ofsted and CSCI in July before the publication of the Annual Performance Assessment (APA) letter in September. On the basis of this letter, grades were awarded for inclusion in the authority's

CPA rating published in December. This requirement has changed. In future, the Annual Performance Assessment will be based on the audit of need included in the Children and Young People's Plan. Inspectors will be visiting the authority in September and government is consulting about changing the timing of the CPA feedback to February.

5. An up-dated *Children and Young People's Plan: 2007 - 2010* was adopted by the Executive at a meeting on the 27 February. The priorities in the Plan are fully reflected in the service plans.
6. The planning cycle starts in September when the Departmental Management Team (DMT) begins the process of building a budget for the following year on the basis of priorities identified in the strategic plans. Between September and December, strategic priorities are finalised in the review of the *Children and Young People's Plan*. Following agreement about the budget in January, service and group managers are required to review their performance as part of the annual service planning exercise and to produce plans for the year ahead.
7. The planning system that has evolved from this is significantly more detailed than in previous years. An annual review statement has been incorporated in the service plan itself, and the number of sections in the plan has increased to take account of corporate requirements.
8. The Service Plans recommended for approval at this meeting are based on the current management structure for the department. Proposals are being developed for a revised management structure in response to the departure of a number of senior officers in the directorate. It was felt that it would be premature to anticipate changes that might be made during the course of the year. For this reason, the service plans included in this report are organised as follows:

**1 School Improvement and Staff Development**

- 1.1 Education Development Service
- 1.2 School Governance Service
- 1.3 Training Development Unit

**2 Access and Inclusion**

- 2.1 Access
- 2.2 Special Educational Needs
- 2.3 The Youth Service

**3 Children and Families**

- 3.1 Children and Families

**4 Lifelong Learning and Leisure**

- 4.1 Arts and Culture
- 4.2 Sport and Active Leisure
- 4.3 Early Years, Extended Schools and Community
- 4.4 Adult and Community Education

## **5 Resource Management**

- 5.1 Finance
- 5.2 Planning and Resources
- 5.3 Information Technology
- 5.4 Human Resources
- 5.5 Management Information Service

### **Options**

- 9. These plans have been produced by service managers in response to the strategic plans for the authority. The Executive Members can modify service plans within the planning framework for the authority.

### **Analysis**

- 10. Not applicable.

### **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 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**

#### **Financial**

- 12. Service Plans have been produced on a timescale that ensures they reflect the budget settlement for 2007/08. Because of the timescale for reporting to EMAP, it has not been possible to include budget statements for individual services within the directorate. Final budget plans will include financial information.

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

- 13. Whilst there are no direct implications for HR arising from this report, it should be noted that the planning demands on Assistant Directors and Service Managers are increasing.

### **Equalities**

14. There are no implications

### **Legal**

15. There is no statutory requirement for the production of service plans, though there is a strong expectation by District Audit and by inspection regimes such as Ofsted that they will be produced in order to support effective Performance Management.

### **Crime and Disorder**

16. There are no implications

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

17. There are no implications

### **Property**

18. There are no implications

### **Other**

19. There are no implications

### **Risk Management**

20. The risk to the authority of not maintaining service plans is that there will be no appropriate mechanism for Performance Management of the work of the directorate.

### **Recommendations**

21. The Executive Member is recommended to approve the Service Plans attached to this report:

Reason; In order to ensure that service and group managers are in a position to implement the strategic priorities for the directorate.

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**Report Approved**  **Date** 27 February 2007

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

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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:** None

**Annex: Service Plans**