

The Children, Young People and Families Partnership Plan

Report by Councillor D Madden, Cabinet Member for Children and Families

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Purpose of report

The Children, Young People and Families Partnership Plan (CYPFPP) sets the broad interagency agenda for Children's Services and will influence the future commissioning intentions, priorities and approach within the County Council's emerging People Commissioning Strategy (Children, Young People and Families).

Cabinet endorsed the Plan on 10 September 2013 and approval of the Plan, attached as Annex A to this report, is sought from Council.

Recommended:

That Council approve the Children, Young People and Families Partnership Plan as endorsed by Cabinet and attached as Annex A to this report.

Background and proposal

The Children, Young People and Families Partnership Plan is no longer a statutory requirement for Councils following the rescinding of all statutory guidance by the Coalition Government requiring councils to produce a plan. Despite this the Duty to Co-operate is still in force and there is local discretion in how this duty is supported. In Essex there is a broad consensus that a partnership board underpinned by a strategic plan (the CYPFPP) is the best way to support partners in the delivery of this duty.

The Essex Children, Young People and Families Partnership Plan for 2013-2016 has been developed at a time of significant change both at a National and County Level. The document takes account of the increasing emphasis on commissioning for children's services within Essex alongside reconfiguration within the NHS, transfer of Public Health responsibilities to the Local Authority and significant restructure within the County Council.

The plan is essential in setting the direction of travel for Children's Services across Essex and maintaining progress through a commitment to partnership planning and exploring opportunities to integrate commissioning.

At this strategic level the Partnership seeks to determine the overlap between the range of organisations involved, bringing them together over a common set of outcomes that improve services for Children, Young People and Families. In a time where demands on budgets are increasing and savings need to be made the Partnership will seek opportunities for long term integration where the results are sustainable and represent value for money.

The Children, Young People and Families Partnership Plan is influenced by a broad range of current priorities including planning for integrated commissioning with Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) and Public Health, implementation of the Essex Health and Wellbeing Strategy and actions set out through the work of the Essex Safeguarding Children Board (ESCB).

Policy context

The strategic priorities within the Children, Young People and Families Partnership Plan align with the vision and priorities set out in the Vision for Essex 2013-2017 which will ensure that progress made to improve outcomes for children, young people and families also drives the Local Authority towards achieving its corporate goals.

The CYPFPP is based on the most current County and Locality Needs Assessments. As such the priorities set out in the document reflect the changing demographic and socio-economic characteristics of the County's population.

The document emphasises the importance of placing Children, Young People and Families central to decision making and sets out the importance of empowering local communities and building resilience in families, children and young people, enhancing their capacity to resolve their own problems.

Mirroring the Vision for Essex 2013-2017 the CYPFPP centres around working with a diverse range of public, private and voluntary and community sector partners in order to deliver joined up and integrated services for families that represent the best value for money.

Financial Implications

The Children Young People and Families Partnership Plan will be delivered within annual resource allocations and implementation of any activities directly aligned to Essex County Council will need to be funded from within the approved service budgets.

Legal Implications

The Children Young People and Families Partnership Plan formally referred to in legislation as the Children's Plan is no longer a statutory requirement. However, the Council's Constitution still requires this to be approved by Full Council.

Equality and Diversity implications

In making this decision the County Council must have regard to the public sector equality duty (PSED) under s.149 of the Equalities Act 2010, i.e., have due regard to the need: (a) to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act; (b) advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not; and (c) foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not including tackling prejudice and promoting understanding. The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

The PSED covers service users, staff and members of the public as a whole who are potentially affected by the proposals addressed in the Report.

The PSED is a relevant factor in making this decision but does not impose a duty to achieve the outcomes in s.149. It is only one factor that needs to be considered and may be balanced against other relevant factors. It is, however, important to demonstrate that it has been considered.

The plan sets out 10 priority themes, agreed by partners, which provide strategic direction to inform commissioning. Partners have agreed to work within a set of principles including the principle to 'eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster positive relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not'.

Priority themes, within the plan, incorporate strategic equality considerations. Equality Impact Analysis (EqIA) of the performance framework and systems/ processes that influence how the priorities will be achieved, will ensure that equality is integral to the implementation of the plan.