

Cabinet

6 February 2019

Children and Young People's Strategy



Report of Corporate Management Team

Margaret Whellans, Corporate Director of Children and Young People's Service

Lorraine O'Donnell, Director of Transformation and Partnerships

Councillor Olwyn Gunn, Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People's Services

Electoral division(s) affected:

Countywide

Purpose of the Report

- 1 To consider the final draft of with the Children and Young People's Strategy 2019 – 2022, attached as Appendix 2.

Executive summary

- 2 The Children and Young People's Strategy (CYPS) 2019 - 2022 is a partnership strategy for all children and young people and their families in County Durham. The aim of this strategy is to provide focus and clarity on the priorities for improving services and life opportunities for children and young people.
- 3 The document considers what life is currently like for children and young people in County Durham, based on feedback from children and young people and analysis of their needs. It sets out where we want to be in three years and what actions we will undertake to achieve this. For the public it provides a summary of the importance of services and support for children and young people, who are the future of our county, and what they can expect from local services.
- 4 Cabinet received the draft Children and Young People's Strategy 2019 – 2022 (CYPS) as part of the consultation on 17th October 2018.

Recommendation

- 5 Cabinet is recommended to:
- (a) Agree the final Children and Young People's Strategy 2019/22 to ensure continued delivery and support for our young people.

Background

- 6 The CYPS is informed by the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) which is part of the Integrated Needs Assessment (INA) which brings together the evidence base and a wide range of strategic assessments to inform strategic planning. The JSNA provides a detailed overview of the current and future health and wellbeing needs of children and adults in County Durham. In addition, Durham Insight has also supported the INA by bringing together the relevant data analysis for children and young people.
- 7 The CYPS has also been informed by a number of policy drivers, for example, the strengthened Working together to Safeguard Children guidance to improve partnership working to protect children and young people.
- 8 A full Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken as part of the process for developing the CYPS and is attached at Appendix 3.
- 9 Engagement has taken place with a range of partners and stakeholders including children and young people, NHS partners, local authority colleagues, Education partners, Local Safeguarding Children Board, Office of Police Crime and Victims Commissioner, Overview and Scrutiny Committee, thematic partnerships and Area Action Partnerships.
- 10 A Student Voice survey (an online questionnaire) took place in both primary and secondary schools in County Durham between January and April 2017. Of the 204 primary schools 97 participated (3,719 students) and 20 of the 33 secondary schools (5,640 students). In total, more than a third of all eligible students in County Durham participated in the engagement.
- 11 Engagement took place with a number of children and young people aged 4 to 22 within County Durham through two Investing in Children agenda days. Children and Young People from different groups including young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), Children in Care, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Questioning (LGBTQ) and different areas across County Durham have had the opportunity to have their voice heard and views listened to.

- 12 The issues which young people consider important to them include:
- (a) Children and young people feel they need more support when leaving school to get into further education, training or employment. With a specific emphasis being placed upon more support needed for students who experience mental health difficulties.
 - (b) Young people reported that they would benefit from receiving more life skills at school
 - (c) Bullying appears to be apparent across the age groups. Children and young people reported that more needs to be done within school policies to ensure this is dealt with properly.
 - (d) Children and young people reported a lack of financial resources which negatively impacts on experiences in and out of school and therefore impacts on overall health and wellbeing
 - (e) The need to feel safer at home, school and in the community with consistent stability from parents, guardians and teachers was highlighted for all children and young people including those looked after.
 - (f) Children and young people felt that parental drug and alcohol misuse had negative impacts on overall health and wellbeing

Focus of the proposed new strategy

- 13 The proposed vision for the CYPS is:

“County Durham will be a great place for children and young people to grow up in and for Durham to be a place where all children are healthy, happy, safe and achieving their potential”.

- 14 The proposed strategic aims and objectives of the CYPS are as follows:

- (a) All children and young people have a safe childhood
 - (i) Provide a range of universal services for children, young people and families
 - (ii) Protect and support those children and young people in need of help and protection
 - (iii) Provide excellent social work practice and support for children, young people and families in County Durham

- (iv) Provide excellent care for looked after children and care leavers
- (v) Provide support for young people who have offended or been victims of crime
- (b) Children and young people enjoy the best start in life, good health and emotional wellbeing
 - (i) Ensure every child has the best start in life (0-5)
 - (ii) High quality nursery and primary education which meets all children's needs
 - (iii) Improve health and wellbeing outcomes for children with a specific focus on vulnerable young people (5-24)
 - (iv) Children and young people and their families are supported to achieve their optimum mental health and wellbeing
- (c) Young people gain the education, skills and experience to succeed in adulthood
 - (i) Children and young people have the best possible education
 - (ii) Improved educational attainment for all disadvantaged children and young people
 - (iii) Support young people to gain qualifications, skills and experience to progress into sustained employment
- (d) Children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) achieve the best possible outcomes
 - (i) Provide better coordinated services for children and young people with SEND across the local area
 - (ii) Children and young people with SEND have high quality support which meets their needs
 - (iii) Ensure that young people with SEND are well prepared for adult lives and can live independently

Main Implications

Consultation

- 15 The draft CYPS is informed by extensive consultation, detailed at paragraphs 9-12 above, but also sets out our ambitions to further strengthen partners work together to listen to our vulnerable children and young people and their families so that their 'voice' is heard and acted upon.

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty

- 16 A full Equality Impact Assessment (Appendix 3) identifies many positive impacts where the CYPS is designed to reduce the gaps identified in age, disability, pregnancy and maternity, gender, sexual orientation and transgender. Examples include a focus on reducing the inequality in excess weight amongst children aged 4-5 and 10-11 years, supporting women to achieve a smoke free pregnancy and improved education, health and care opportunities for children and young people and their families in the autistic spectrum.
- 17 In addition, further actions to strengthen the equality impacts include:
- (a) the development of a participation and engagement strategy
 - (b) Monitoring and reviewing the CYPS to address gaps/emerging issues
 - (c) Promotion of healthy eating and embedding physical activity in schools

Crime and Disorder

- 18 This area will be strengthened by working with our partner organisations, particularly the Safe Durham Partnership to raise awareness of hate crimes including homophobic bullying.

Finance

- 19 Resources continue to be stretched and the Council has allocated additional funding resources to support statutory social work services and where demand is increasing nationally.

Conclusion

- 20 The CYPS will be monitored robustly and progress on performance indicators which are reported to the Integrated Steering Group for Children and the Children and Families Partnership.

21 This allows partners the opportunity to challenge each other and ensure that services are delivered in a timely and effective way to achieve good outcomes for children, young people and families.

Background papers

- Appendix 2: Children and Young People's Strategy 2019 – 2022
- Appendix 3: Equality Impact Assessment

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Appendix 1: Implications

Legal Implications

The CYPS ensures it incorporates the legal requirements pertaining to Children's services.

Finance

Resources will need to be agreed and the CYPS will guide resource decisions and priorities.

Consultation

Extensive consultation has been carried out in the development of this plan which is outlined in the report. Partners and children and young people have all been provided an opportunity to shape the direction and the content of this plan.

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty

An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken as part of the process for developing the CYPS and is attached at Appendix 3.

Human Rights

None

Crime and Disorder

"All children and young people have a safe childhood" is a key aim of the CYPS and the Safe Durham Partnership are included in the consultation.

Staffing

Resources will need to be agreed and the CYPS will guide resource decisions and priorities.

Accommodation

None

Risk

A clear strategy framework is vital to ensure improvement in Children's services across the County.

Procurement

None

Appendix 2: Children and Young People's Strategy 2019 – 2022

Attached as a separate document.

Appendix 3: Equality Impact Assessment

Attached as a separate document.