

Cabinet

16 November 2022

**Growing Up in County Durham Strategy
2023-25**



Ordinary Decision

Report of Corporate Management Team

John Pearce, Corporate Director of Children and Young People's Service and Chair of Children, Young People and Families Partnership Board

Councillor Ted Henderson, Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People's Services

Electoral division affected:

Countywide

Purpose of the Report

- 1 To present Cabinet with the Growing Up in County Durham (GUiCD) 2023-25 Strategy for endorsement, which can be found at Appendix 2.

Executive summary

- 2 The current Children and Young People's Strategy 2019-2022 comes to an end this year and is due for review.
- 3 The strategy is based on evidence about the needs of children and young people in County Durham, which can be found in a range of infograms available on Durham Insight at <https://infogram.com/1p626dwy190l56t5kvjly77rjei3njk7gv?live>.
- 4 The strategy is also based on four strategic aims to better manage outcomes and reflecting the subgroup arrangements of the Children, Young People and Families Partnership Board (CYPFPB). The aims of the strategy are:
 - (a) Making sure every child has the best start in life – even before they are born;
 - (b) Making sure that all children are supported to be happy, healthy and safe to achieve their potential, and provide additional help when it is needed;

- (c) Making sure that children and young people with additional needs are supported throughout their childhood, teenage years and as they move into adulthood;
 - (d) Making sure the services we provide are joined up, with children, young people and families/carers at the centre.
- 5 The wider context of Growing Up in County Durham is reflected in the strategy, including the impact of Covid-19, which covers young people's physical health, mental health and wellbeing and signposts to other strategies provided where common themes and issues are identified.
 - 6 A strategy development group was established to oversee the development of the strategy, including the coproduction process and ensure a wide cohort of partners, VCS representatives, children, young people, families and carers were involved in its development.
 - 7 Coproduction sessions took place with children, young people, parents and carers to develop the new GUiCD Strategy which is based on what is important to those who use and need community support and services as well as the wider population, focusing on strengths, rather than deficits.
 - 8 Consultation has taken place throughout the development of the strategy at three key stages.
 - 9 The strategy will be launched in early 2023 by our children and young people.
 - 10 The new strategy will run from the start of 2023 until the end of 2025 to align with the timescales for the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2021-25 and the County Durham Place Based Commissioning and Delivery Plan 2020-25.
 - 11 The strategy includes the delivery of Family Hubs, improved transitions from children's services to adult services, ensuring that all children and young people can participate in good quality learning and skills opportunities and improved communications with our children, young people and their families.

Recommendations

- 12 Cabinet is recommended to:
 - (a) receive and endorse the Growing Up in County Durham Strategy 2023-25.

Background

13 A Children, Young People and Families Partnership Board development session took place in October 2021 to give direction on developing the new Children and Young People's Strategy, and the following was agreed:

- (a) a name for the new strategy – Growing Up in County Durham 2023-25;
- (b) the strategy is based on evidence about the needs of children and young people in County Durham, which can be found on Durham Insight;
- (c) coproduction sessions to take place with children, young people, parents and carers to develop the Strategy in order to base it on what is important to those who use and need support from services, building on people's own strengths and those of communities;
- (d) the strategy would have a narrower focus built on four aims to better manage outcomes and reflecting the subgroup arrangements of the CYPFPB. These aims are:
 - (i) making sure every child has the best start in life – even before they are born;
 - (ii) making sure that all children are supported to be happy, healthy and safe to achieve their potential, and provide additional help when it is needed;
 - (iii) making sure that children and young people with additional needs are supported throughout their childhood, teenage years and as they move into adulthood;
 - (iv) making sure the services we provide are joined up, with children, young people and families/carers at the centre;
- (e) the wider context of Growing Up in County Durham is reflected in the strategy, including the impact of Covid-19, which covers young people's mental health and wellbeing and signposts to other strategies provided where common themes and issues were identified, to avoid duplication;
- (f) the new strategy will run from 2023-25 to align with the timescales for the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2021-25 and the County Durham Place Based Commissioning and Delivery Plan 2020-25.

- 14 A strategy development group (SDG) was set up with the responsibility to develop the GUICD strategy. The group also oversaw the coproduction process, involving a wide cohort of partners such as VCS representatives, and health provider and commissioner representatives, children, young people, families and carers in its development, ensuring a whole family approach was taken.

Consultation

- 15 Consultation has taken place throughout the development of the strategy at three key stages:
- (a) **Stage 1** – March to 30 April – coproduction sessions with children, young people, families and carers via the SDG and the VCS Alliance to establish the vision for the strategy and the priority areas that the strategy should focus on;
 - (b) **Stage 2** – 22 June to 10 August – wider consultation on the proposed vision statement and priority areas, carried out via an online survey and targeted consultation with stakeholder groups;
 - (c) **Stage 3** – 5 September to 12 October – further consultation on the proposed strategy document, carried out through an online survey with stakeholder groups, as well as presenting the draft strategy to key stakeholders, giving them the opportunity to comment before final agreement at the Children, Young People and Families Partnership Board. The consultation period was extended from 2 October to 12 October as promotion of the strategy has been on hold due to the national mourning period.
- 16 Following the analysis of the results from stages 1, 2 and 3 of the consultations, the GUICD Strategy 2023-25 is attached at Appendix 2. Details of the consultations can be seen in Appendix 3.

Focus of the Proposed New Strategy

- 17 The new vision for the strategy is:
- “County Durham supports all children, young people and their families to achieve their goals in life, in an environment that is safe, happy and healthy.”**
- 18 The six priority areas identified by children, young people and families which we will focus on are as follows:
- (a) Family, friends and community;
 - (b) Being safe;

- (c) Breaking down the barriers;
 - (d) Development, learning and skills;
 - (e) Physical health, mental health and emotional wellbeing;
 - (f) Access to community support and services.
- 19 Some key programmes of work, identified within the priority areas above, are included in other strategies and plans, for example, the new Inclusive Economic Strategy, which will be provided to a future cabinet meeting. To avoid duplication, these are signposted in the GUiCD strategy. The GUiCD strategy includes ten high level actions that identify the key areas of work which the Children, Young People and Families Partnership Board will focus on and where they can add value to improve outcomes for children and young people.
- 20 These high-level actions will be owned by the subgroups of the Children, Young People and Families Partnership Board who will develop detailed action plans to deliver the GUiCD strategy.
- 21 By 2025, we will know we have been successful if we have:
- (a) created 15 Family Hubs to provide better community-based support and services;
 - (b) improved children and young people's experience of the move from children to adult's services;
 - (c) improved attendance levels for all children and young people across all schools and settings;
 - (d) increased the numbers of young people traveling by bus;
 - (e) shown how children, young people and families are more involved in developing the support and services they use;
 - (f) increased the number of children who achieve a healthy development during the first years of their life;
 - (g) reduced the number of babies going into care to help families stay together;
 - (h) reduced the number of times children and young people have to go to hospital with unintentional injuries;
 - (i) developed an online toolkit which will show partners what is happening across the county and where we need to focus our efforts.

Equality Impact Assessment

- 22 A detailed Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been undertaken alongside the development of the GUICD strategy, attached at Appendix 4.
- 23 Implementation of the strategy will have a positive impact on a number of protected characteristics, for example, relating to age – the development of a network of family hubs will provide a range of local support and services to children and young people as they grow from babies through to young adults. Also, relating to disability - every young person, who has health, education and/or care needs, and their family, will have access to the right support on their move from children to adult services.
- 24 Where an actual or potential impact has been identified for any of the protected characteristics, actions have been identified in the EIA to mitigate any impact.

Timeline and next steps

- 25 Cabinet is requested to note the next steps as follows:
- (a) Partner organisations endorse GUICD 2023-25 – **November/December 2022;**
 - (b) Launch and promotion of the strategy by children and young people - **Early 2023.**

Conclusion

- 26 The development of the GUICD strategy has been led by the Children, Young People and Families Partnership Board supported by a multi-agency and VCS development group. Children, young people, families and carers groups have been involved from the start in shaping the strategy and a robust consultation process has been in place throughout the development of the strategy. Relationships will be maintained with children, young people, families and carers across the lifespan of the strategy through to adoption and monitoring of outcomes.

Background papers

- None

Other useful documents

- None

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Appendix 1: Implications

Legal Implications

The CYPFP ensures it incorporates the legal requirements pertaining to children's services.

Finance

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

Consultation

Details of the consultations are provided in the report. Partners and children, young people and their families and carers have all been provided with an opportunity to shape the direction and the content of the strategy and will continue to be involved throughout the lifetime of the plan.

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty

An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken as part of the process for developing the new CYPF Strategy.

Climate Change

The new strategy is aligned with and contributes to the current priorities within the Climate and Emergency Response Plan which focuses on climate change.

Human Rights

There are no adverse implications.

Crime and Disorder

The new strategy is aligned with and contributes to the current priorities within the Safe Durham Partnership Plan which focuses on crime and disorder.

Staffing

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

Accommodation

There are no accommodation implications.

Risk

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

Procurement

Commissioners will take account of the GUiCD strategy when procuring services aligned to children, young people and families.

Appendix 2: Growing Up in County Durham Strategy 2023-25

Attached as a separate document.

Appendix 3: Consultation – Stages 1, 2 and 3

Attached as a separate document.

Appendix 4: Equalities Impact Assessment

Attached as a separate document.