

**Report of:** Neighbourhood Renewal Business Manager

**To:** Executive Board

**Date:** 19<sup>th</sup> June 2006

**Item No:**

**Title of Report :** Children and Young People's Plan – Update



### Summary and Recommendations



**Purpose of report:** To update members on the developments of the Oxfordshire Children and Young People's Plan.



**Key decision:** No

**Portfolio Holder:** Councillor Caroline van Zyl

**Scrutiny Responsibility:** Community Scrutiny Committee



**Area(s) affected:** All

**Report Approved by:** Andy Collett – Financial Services  
 Jeremy Thomas – Head of Legal and Democratic Services  
 Councillor van Zyl



**Policy Framework:** The Oxford Plan through meeting the following priorities:  
 Reduce income inequality and social exclusion; reduce and prevent crime and anti-social behaviour; ensure more efficient and improved services; be an open and responsive organisation.



Oxford Strategy through meeting the following priorities: a vibrant and inclusive economy; safer communities; opportunities for life; active and healthy communities.



**Recommendation(s):**

1. To note the feedback from the consultation on the Oxfordshire Children and Young People's Plan.
2. To endorse the Oxfordshire Children and Young People's Plan.



Revision number: 1.0  
 Date

3. To receive a further report setting out the details of the City Council Children and Young People's Plan in the autumn.

## **Introduction**

1. On 20th February the Executive Board received a report on the draft Oxfordshire Children and Young People's (C&YP) Plan for comment. It was agreed to endorse the principles set out in the Plan. Members requested a further report providing information on any changes made to the Plan following the Consultation process.
2. The C&YP Plan was agreed by Oxfordshire County Council on 4th April 2006. A copy of the Plan is available on the County Council's web site along with all the supporting plans. Hard copies can be obtained on request from the author of this report. The supporting documentation also includes a summary of the consultation responses and feedback from children and young people.

## **The Consultation Process**

3. The C&YP Plan has been developed in consultation with a wide range of service users and statutory and non-statutory agencies. There has been a number of consultation meetings held across the county aimed at involving different organisations.
4. There has been good engagement from a range of partners, including all of the District Council's. The Neighbourhood Renewal Business Manager represented the City Council on the Multi-Agency Steering Group that oversaw the development of the Plan.
5. A multi-agency C&YP Plan Leads Group has now been established to oversee the implementation of the Plan. This group includes officers from the PCT, County and City Councils. The responsibility for the Strategic implementation of the Plan will be the Children and Young People's Board which will fulfil national requirements for a 'Children's Trust'.
6. The first meeting of the Children and Young People's Board will take place on 28<sup>th</sup> April 2006 and the terms of reference for this group will be agreed at this meeting. Cllr Dan Paskins is currently the nominated City Council member representative on this Board. Further information the Board is available on the Oxfordshire County Council website or from the author of this report.

## Feedback

7. A total of 384 responses were received as a part of the consultation. These can be broken down as follows:



8. The Consultation feedback highlighted particular support for:
- the engagement of children and young people in the future development of services;
  - proposals to address the problem of bullying;
  - the strong focus on early intervention and prevention support for children and families before difficulties become intractable;
  - the proposed arrangements for integration and coordination of services from across other services and agencies;
  - commitment to the greater engagement of the voluntary, community and private sectors;
  - the focus in increasing access to play and recreational opportunities for children and young people;
  - the development of services through local children's centres and extended schools;
  - the development of a more flexible curriculum and vocational options for 14-19 year olds;
  - the strategy to improve multi-agency support to meet the needs of children and young people with behavioural difficulties.

9. Areas of concern included:

- the need to ensure a balance between the needs of all young people and the needs of those who are vulnerable;
- the need for a greater focus on engagement with the voluntary sector, as equal partners in the delivery of services;
- the need to strengthen the engagement of, and support for, families though-out the Plan;
- the need to provide support for particular groups of children, including asylum seekers and children in prison;
- the need to ensure that services are affordable and accessible across a rural county, including transport;
- the importance of adequate housing in ensuring children are healthy and achieve their full potential;
- the need to address environmental issues, including safe streets and neighbourhoods and safe places to play;

- the need to ensure adequate funding is allocated to implement the Plan;
10. There were 309 children and young people involved in the consultation process, aged between 5 and 20 years old. They came from across all parts of the county. Children were consulted through schools councils, youth centres and clubs, youth forums (including the Oxford City Youth Council), respite centres PCT children's panels and voluntary organisations.
11. Some of the main themes to emerge are:
- the paramount value of involving children and young people in decision making and finding solutions to difficulties and the need to maintain and strengthen this for the future development of services;
  - the need for better support to tackle the problem of bullying, including everyone taking it seriously and young people having somewhere safe to go and someone to talk to;
  - the importance of safe, well lit neighbourhoods, streets, parks, playgrounds and transport;
  - the importance of children and young people of relationships with adults based on mutual respect and with sufficient time to listen and understand each other;
  - the need to increase access to play, leisure and youth services, including youth clubs opening longer and with better facilities;
  - the need for practical support for children and young people when things start to go wrong e.g. young people to talk to with similar experiences, practical support for parents;
  - the need for better information in many different forms about support that is available;
  - the need to make lessons in schools more relevant, practical and fun and to give young people more positive encouragement and recognition for their achievements;
12. The Plan has been amended to take account of the feedback received throughout the consultation process.

### **Oxfordshire Local Area Agreement**

13. The Agreement has a clear focus on the outcomes to be achieved for children and young people in Oxfordshire and the actions required to achieve these. The Plan includes:
- an analysis of current performance in relation to the 5 outcomes for children and young people and also in relation to three particular vulnerable groups of young people;
  - the priorities for improvement in each area;

- the performance targets to be achieved to address these priorities.

14. The Agreement also includes Local Area Agreement targets for children and Young People, including include a number of stretch targets. These are as follows:

- Increasing the gross value added of the Oxfordshire Economy by providing skills to those without qualifications
- Improved achievement at GCSE \*
- Improved achievement of vulnerable groups \*
- Increased employability of young people
- 2Increased number of healthy schools
- Increased participation in sports and PE
- Reduced teenage conceptions
- Reduced young homelessness
- Increase early preventative support
- Increase positive activities
- Achievement of vulnerable groups
- Reduction of offending by young people
- To lower the incidence of domestic violence by promoting early disclosure, effective response to disclosure and ready access to increase the safety of victims
- Reduce the rate of re-offending by adult and juvenile Prolific and Priority Offenders
- Reduce the harm caused to young people under 18 from illicit drug use and alcohol use
- To increase the effective participation of children and young people and ensure that it is well coordinated

\* indicates stretch target

### **Resource Implications**

15. The Plan describes in detail the resources that will be allocated to implement the proposals in the Plan. A key focus of the Plan is to bring about improved use of resources by realigning services and working together across departments and agencies more effectively. There are other areas where the County Council has already allocated additional resources to implement the Plan from April 2006 in relation to:

- the development of an integrated ICT system for children;
- establishing local multi disciplinary teams;
- increasing resources for youth service and youth activities;
- addressing pressures in children's social care budgets;
- maintaining and strengthening the work undertaken on engaging children and young people.

16. The City Council has mainstream funded activities which will contribute to the delivery of the Plan in the following areas:

- Leisure activities
- Play and out of school provision
- Support through the grants for voluntary and community sectors for children and family support
- Activities aimed at engaging children and young people e.g. the Youth Council.
- Safeguarding children e.g. through licensing enforcement and community safety activities
- Planning activities e.g. ensuring adequate play space
- Supported housing

17. It is difficult to quantify the real value of these contributions and further work will be done on identifying where the District Councils add value to the delivery of the Plan. To this end it has been agreed that each of the District Councils will produce it's own Plan. A workshop has been arranged on 9th June, facilitated by the IDeA and hosted by the City Council with the aim of getting this process underway.

18. The Council does have a statutory responsibility within the Children Act 2004 relating to a duty to cooperate with the County Council as the Children Service Authority. These have been further developed by the publication of statutory guidance relating to safe guarding children and promoting 'well being'. The workshop mentioned above will also review how the council meets these requirements and will identify what further actions need to be taken if necessary.

### **Recommendations**

19. It is recommended that the Executive Board:

- a) note the feedback from the consultation on the Children and young People's Plan;
- b) endorse the County Council's Children and Young People's Plan
- c) receive a further report setting out the details of the City Council Children' and Young People's Plan in the autumn.

### **Name and contact details of author:**

Val Johnson, Business Manager, Neighbourhood Renewal

e-mail [vjohnson@oxford.gov.uk](mailto:vjohnson@oxford.gov.uk)

Tel: 01865 252209



**Background papers:**

The Oxfordshire Children and Young People's Plan April 2006

Consultation responses and summary papers

Working Together for a Better Oxfordshire – Oxfordshire's Local Area Agreement 2006-09

Executive Board Report ' The children's Act 2004 and the Oxfordshire Children and Young People's Plan and Change for Children Programme – 16<sup>th</sup> January 2006.

