

Report of: Neighbourhood Renewal Business Manager

To: Executive Board

Date: 18th December 2006

Item No:

Title of Report : Oxford City Council Children and Young People's Plan



Summary and Recommendations



Purpose of report: To provide an Oxford City Council Children and Young People's Plan



Key decision: No

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Van Zyl

Scrutiny Responsibility: Community Scrutiny Committee



Area(s) affected: All

Report Approved by:

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Caroline van Zyl

Legal: Jeremy Thomas

Finance: Andy Collett



Policy Framework: The Oxford Plan through meeting the following priorities: reduce inequalities through social inclusion; reduce and prevent crime and social behaviour; ensuring better, more efficient services; being an open and responsive organisation.

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



Recommendation(s):

1. To comment upon and endorse the Oxford City Council Children and Young People's Plan

2. To receive a further updated report on progress in Autumn 2007



Introduction

1. In May 2006 the Executive Board received a report on the draft Oxfordshire Children and Young People's (C&YP) Plan for endorsement. The Plan was endorsed at the meeting, although a number of concerns were noted. These were that:
 - Accessible and affordable services in the more deprived areas were not reflected in the priorities in the Plan
 - Resources allocated to implement the proposals within the plan were inadequate to meet the needs of young people in Oxford
2. A copy of the Oxfordshire Children and Young People's Plan is available on the County Council's web site along with all the supporting plans (www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cypp). Hard copies can be obtained on request from the author of this report. A draft of the Oxford City Children & Young People's Plan is attached at annex 1.

Developing a City Council Children and Young People's Plan

3. The City Council has mainstream funded activities which will contribute to the delivery of the Oxfordshire Children and Young People's Plan in the following areas:
 - Play, leisure and cultural services
 - Housing services included supported housing
 - Planning services
 - Licensing enforcement
 - Community safety activities
 - Support to youth initiatives
 - Family support
 - Informal crèche and toddler groups
 - Community cohesion and work with ethnic minority groups
 - Community learning initiatives
 - Healthy eating initiatives
 - Home safety initiatives
 - Support to voluntary and community organisations working with children and families through the grants process
4. It is difficult to quantify the real value of these contributions. The City Council Children and Young People's Plan is an attempt to start the process of identifying the City Council's contribution to the Oxfordshire Plan and also to identify gaps in service provision for the City and priorities for the City Council to take forward.
5. A workshop took place on 9th June for all the Districts within Oxfordshire, facilitated by the IDeA and hosted by the City Council with

the aim of getting this process underway. Since the workshop Officers from across the City Council have contributed to the Plan.

6. The partnership arrangements for the new Children's Trust are in their infancy and are therefore likely to evolve quickly.

Priorities contained within the Plan

7. The Plan proposes that the following areas should be the priorities that the City Council focuses upon over the following year. These are:
 - Ensuring that the Council's policies and practices fulfil its duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people
 - Improving the participation of children and young people and their parents in decision making regarding service design and delivery
 - Ensuring adequate housing for children and young people, whether social or private sector housing
 - To continue to support affordable holiday play activities, sports, leisure and cultural activities, in line with the City Council Social Inclusion, Healthy Living and Community Safety Strategies

Future developments

8. In addition further work will need to be done to develop a clearer picture as to how other agencies contribute to children's services within the City and how the City Council can best promote the needs of the City within the Oxfordshire Children and Young People's Partnership and Board.
9. This work may become clearer with the proposed locality teams being established in the City, although at the time of writing the terms of reference of these teams is still under discussion.

Statutory requirements

10. The Children Act 2004 places a duty upon the City Council to ensure that its functions are discharged with regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, whether provided by the Council or another body by arrangement with the Council. The Act also requires the Council to be represented on the Local Safeguarding Children Board, and to cooperate with the County Council in its establishment and operation.
11. There are also related duties upon the Council from the pre-existing Children Act 1989. These include a duty to co-operate with requests for help in the interests of children in need (s27), and a duty to assist in carrying out enquiries into whether or not a child is at risk of significant harm (s47).

12. Statutory guidance on the duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children (*Working Together to Safeguard Children*) has been published to support agencies in fulfilling this role. *Working Together* states that all organisations which directly affect children should have certain procedures in place to fulfil the duty to safeguard their welfare.

Consultation and comment

13. Separate consultation of children and young people and their families has not taken place during the development of this Plan. The City Council is contributing towards a coordinated method of consulting and involving children and young people as part of the Oxfordshire Plan. A key aspect of this is a Children and Young People's Survey to take place during 2007.

14. The Plan has been endorsed by Strategic Management Board (7th November) and Community Scrutiny Committee (23rd November).

15. This Plan has been sent for comment to Oxfordshire County Council, Thames Valley Police and Oxfordshire Primary Care Trust.

Recommendations

16. The Executive Board is recommended:

- To comment upon and endorse the Oxford City Council Children and Young People's Plan
- To receive a further updated report on progress in Autumn 2007

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Background papers:

The Oxfordshire Children and Young People's Plan April 2006

Consultation responses and summary papers

Executive Board Report 'The Children's Act 2004 and the Oxfordshire Children and Young People's Plan and Change for Children Programme' – 16th January 2006

