

RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION

OXFORDSHIRE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLES PLAN 2010 – 2013

FROM OXFORD CITY COUNCIL
November 2009

Prepared on behalf of Oxford City Council by
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1. BACKGROUND AND SUMMARY

This response to the draft Oxfordshire Children and Young Peoples Plan (CYPP) has been prepared by Vic Citarella, Director of CPEA Ltd on behalf of Oxford City Council. CPEA have utilised the records of consultations with members of the council representing wards across the City. Views, opinions, experiences and data have been supplied by officers and the lead member for the City Council. The response has been informed by the Oxford City Council Housing Strategy, Homelessness Strategy and Regeneration Framework, Oxford Economic Observatory January 2009 briefing and the DPH Public Health Plan, June 2009, Chapter 3. The CYPPs from Herefordshire, Gloucestershire, Cambridgeshire, Lancashire, Hampshire and Buckinghamshire have been used as benchmark comparators.

Comments on the associated draft delivery plan are attached at Appendix A.

By way of key summary messages the City Council wish to emphasise:

- **The difference of the City and the impact of not dealing effectively with the City's needs on the outcomes for the County as a whole.**
- **Oxford City is a council that wishes to be involved and have recognition of what it already does**
- **An appreciation of income poverty and housing need are missing from both the draft plan and the delivery plan.**

2. OVERVIEW

The three priorities that shape the plan are the right ones. The City's consultation response will consider each of the priorities after it has introduced the complexity of the 'place' and identified a number of themes that run through the draft document. It is the latter that the City believes, if their tenor is a fair reflection of needs, will give particular beneficial emphasis in meeting national and local outcomes for children, young people and families.

Concerns have been raised about the underpinning financial direction of the County Council and of proposals to make £106m savings and an associated reinvestment of £75m. It is understood that the proposals include greater investment in children's social care, which is welcomed, but the value of prevention work must remain in focus. Any budget changes should be made cognisant of the negative impact that they can have on anti-social behaviour, crime and the promotion of citizenship. In this respect the response makes a number of pertinent points but critically that the intent of the CYPP and the County financial strategy should align to:

- respond to all consultation in the City which indicates the need for more youth work
- improve education attainment in the City which will not be helped by reducing support to schools,
- maintain the provision of outdoor education centres
- ensure the 'voice' of children and young people is heard

3. INTRODUCTION TO OXFORD CITY

Oxford is an economic hub not just in the Oxfordshire sub-region, but also in the South-East of England and beyond. In marked contrast to other parts of the County, Oxford is ethnically and culturally diverse, being home to the third-highest minority ethnic population in the south-east. It is not just diverse, but also - because it has the highest proportion of students in England and Wales - youthful, mobile and continually self-renewing.

The city is a densely-packed urban space - covering 29 square miles - with very high levels of housing density. There are severe pressures on housing: Oxford is the least affordable city in the UK in terms of housing, with large concentrations of houses in multiple occupation and significant levels of homelessness and overcrowding. Some areas of the City suffer multiple deprivations, including persistent low incomes, poor skill levels and high levels of crime. The areas of highest multiple deprivation are Blackbird Leys and parts of Greater Leys, Barton, Rose Hill, Northfield Brook and Littlemore.

Statistics show that there are specific areas of the City which experience poor school attainment, excessive ill health, higher crime rates, higher levels of teenage pregnancy, higher unemployment and, ultimately, an early death.

Table 1: Examples of challenges and inequalities in Oxford

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>The Office for National Statistics estimates that the population will grow from 134,000 in 2001 to 169,000 in 2016, yet current housing growth projection only allows for a population of 149,000 in 2016</i>• <i>House prices are ten times higher than average earnings are a barrier to social progress and leads to difficulties in recruitment, inward commuting and congestion</i>• <i>Citizens in the most deprived parts of the City are expected to live ten years less than those in wealthier parts of the City</i>• <i>In our key areas of deprivation low skills result in lower incomes, poor health and child poverty</i>• <i>Educational attainment of young people at GCSE in the city is 15 per cent lower than the national average and even further behind the regional average</i>• <i>Child poverty is a key concern – eight areas feature among the ten per cent worst-affected areas in England</i>• <i>Crime and the fear of crime has a greater impact in some areas – people living in the Cowley and South East Oxford areas feel least safe walking alone after dark in their local area</i>
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Tackling the problems of low income, child poverty, education and skills, health, housing and crime through additional public services adds to the drain on the public purse for the whole County and this is an issue of concern for everyone. Child poverty is a key concern in Oxford – eight Super Output Areas feature among the ten per cent worst-affected areas in England. 24% of children in Oxford – over 5,300 - live in deprived households, double the county average of 12%. The data in the table below ranks small areas in England using uptake of a variety of state benefits as a measure of child poverty.

Table 2: Deprived Small Areas within Oxfordshire in terms of income deprivation compared with All Small Areas in England: 2007

DISTRICT NAME	AREA NAME	DEPRIVATION RANK OF ALL AREAS IN ENGLAND (where 1 is most deprived and 32,482 least deprived)	RANK AS %age OF ALL AREAS IN ENGLAND
Oxford	Barton & Sandhills	1012	3.1% from bottom
Oxford	Cowley Marsh	2283	7.0% from bottom
Oxford	Northfield Brook	2440	7.5% from bottom
Oxford	St. Mary's	2579	7.9% from bottom
Oxford	Rose Hill and Iffley	2700	8.3% from bottom
Oxford	Churchill	2851	8.8% from bottom
Cherwell	Banbury, Grimsbury and Castle	3018	9.3% from bottom
Oxford	St. Clement's	3059	9.4% from bottom
Oxford	Blackbird Leys	3122	9.6% from bottom
Oxford	Northfield Brook	3334	10.3%

Analysis of the 2008 GCSE results at local authority district level shows an improvement in attainment levels in schools in Oxford City, although there is a continued lag behind the rest of Oxfordshire. The performance differential is slowly narrowing. Oxfordshire as a whole lags behind comparator areas.

There is a wealth of data with which to describe the City and in particular the Quarterly Economic Briefing from the Oxfordshire Observatory includes data on economic activity, growth and productivity, average earnings, new businesses and survivals, the labour market, unemployment and worklessness, educational attainment and the housing market. We draw attention to this data as it adds breadth and depth to that derived from the national performance data on health, social care, attainment and crime. Overall we see a picture of a vibrant and growing city but with many families experiencing income and housing poverty that is disadvantaging the current and future lives of their children.

Data and information, (including school results, indicators of health, well-being, safeguarding and public protection), must strongly shape the CYPP needs analysis. The analysis should then be used to target services and resources by all partners in the Children's Trust until matters improve. Our response to the draft CYPP is concerned whether needs analysis is converted into a credible delivery plan. We use the data in this response by way of illustration of how priorities should be established. A number of suggestions of how the plan can be improved using evidence are included.

4. THEMES

4.1. Difference

The plan includes welcome recognition of the challenges faced by children, young people and families living, learning and playing in the City. There remain, however, several places in the plan where the different needs in the City require a more targeted and focussed response from the Children's Trust. It is the different nature of the City (it is the urban heart of the County with significant deprivation together with associated housing and homelessness pressure, and a larger BME population) that demands greater differentiation in the plan to explicitly take account of those differences. Income, geography and ethnicity are key variables necessitating more sophistication in the plan to ensure strength in the 'golden thread' running from sustainable communities' strategy to local and personal delivery.

To this end we would like to propose that the Underpinning Principles (section 4 pages 8-9) are amended to enshrine the principle of difference. The principle could be varied to read:

"Work together to meet the needs of all children and young people in Oxfordshire ensuring that boundaries, difference and variety are harnessed as strengths rather than becoming obstacles"

And an additional bullet could be added that said:

- *Support children, young people and families in ways and at pace to suit their different needs*

Alternatively the second bullet could be amended to make this point about 'one size not fitting all' by adding... *supporting them to help themselves in ways and at a pace that suits their needs.*

The second principle has recognition that there is a need to: *provide a higher level of service for those who need it most.* An additional bullet could be added to show how to do this by:

- *Using the evidence from data to demonstrate and support the case for additional provision to meet different needs*

4.2. Partnership

The Children's Trust is predicated on concepts of statutory partnership and the draft plan meets the requirements of DCSF guidance in this respect. The draft states on page 3 that: *'this is no easy task but by working together we rise to the challenge'*.

In this context, we are disappointed that the contribution of the City Council as a partner is not adequately represented. It could undermine one of the basics of partnership work which is mutual recognition of valued contributions. We have two suggestions:

1. That housing, as a commonality across the districts and City Council, has a higher profile. One of the bullets on page 11 should be a housing one.
 - *Children and young people should have the right to grow up in safe adequate housing that is not overcrowded or in a poor state of repair.*

The re-commissioning programme for Supporting People funded services for young people offers a powerful example of the impact of the housing contribution. The point is developed further below in the section of 'Keeping all children and young people safe'

2. That the Children's Trust commits (on page 3) to producing a map of the partnership work that is producing good outcomes as a companion document to

the improvement plan. Thereby it will credit, encourage and disseminate best practice.

The plan and its delivery appear to rest on building a successful area partnership. There is a strong case for a City Area Children's and Young People's Partnership. Oxford City sits awkwardly for itself and its abutting districts in the central area. The lack of coterminosity, the potential dilution of officer time and energy and the exaggerated push and pull of differences seem destined to make boundaries a bigger obstacle than they need be. We would suggest that the boundaries of the area trust boards are refined so that there is one for the whole of Oxford City.

The partnership ethic will be further demonstrated by completing the empty box on page 29 regarding the expectations of the City and District Councils. The City expects to be champions with their children and young people. They will undertake this through their roles in commissioning and providing appropriate services to meet needs, by engaging with children, young people and families and through holding themselves and partners to account for delivery against the plan.

Partnership should encapsulate holistic and integrated approaches to achievement, safeguarding and narrowing the gap. On page 24 it says that it is difficult for the City and District Councils to single out specific budgets. This response maps City Council services against the five *Every Child Matters* outcomes and identified broad spending and contribution to the health and well-being of children, young people and, critically, families accordingly. As partners the City would like their investment to be recorded and the detail is attached at Appendix B. This shows a general fund contribution of £8.5m with £850,000 of annual grants to local organisations that support children, young people and families.

4.3. Leadership and Commissioning

Closely related to the theme of partnership is that of leadership and commissioning. Firstly the City Council has a key role in shaping civic society with and for its citizens. The role in leading the regeneration of the City should not be underplayed nor lead responsibility, where applicable, for achieving the five outcomes for children and young people be avoided. Oxford City intends to continue to be a partner in improvement.

We would wish to see an acknowledgement of the place of the City Council in assisting children and young people to make a positive contribution at 6c. This goes beyond volunteering and involvement into ensuring that young people play a major part in shaping the place in which they live. To be part of 'breaking the cycle of deprivation' young people will need to be equipped with all the appropriate skills and knowledge as well as having the practical support of local organisations.

The bullet at the bottom of page 16 seems to be inadequate in respect of both scale and practicality. The three areas mentioned should be broken down into wards. A more locally sensitive analysis of the causes of poverty is a practical way of working together.

Spending of the City Council does not compare in size to that of education social care, policing or health however the contribution to joint and strategic commissioning at both City and very local levels is significant. We believe that the role of strategic housing should be at the top table in the newly proposed area trusts – its contribution to safeguarding (prevention of domestic violence, mental ill-health and substance misuse being examples) and to narrowing the gap or alleviating the causes of poverty are often not maximized. To this end we would like to see the draft plan have a 'marker' about how

it sees area trusts operating particularly regarding strategic commissioning. Perhaps at the new area level housing issues can be better joined? At County level strategic housing is under the remit of the Spatial Planning and Infrastructure partnership and housing support provision (including the Supporting People programme) under the Health and Well-being partnership - boundaries which may be are not best suited to meeting the needs of children, young people and families. The onus will be on the Local Strategic Partnership, as well as the Children's Trust, to make sure that area trusts are in a position to apply joint and strategic approaches to commissioning that include housing resources.

Similarly better strategic joints could be constructed between play and early years, between leisure and sport on the one hand and arts and culture on the other (the omission of libraries from the plan stands out) and the various efforts to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour.

This section on resources seems to be underdeveloped and, given agreement is expected in January 2010, appears to be pressing if a way forward is to be identified that goes beyond whatever plans the County and PCT have. The plan should push for all partners to put their 'money on the table', be more ambitious about the benefits of joint strategic commissioning and be clearer about its vision for an area based model and the place of local communities within that concept.

4.4. Determined Delivery and Performance

Following what we have said about partnership, leadership and commissioning it should go without saying that the City Council is determined to play its part in successful delivery of the plan when agreed. Many of our comments are not about what is planned but about how, when and where it will be delivered. To this end we take a particular interest in the planks of delivery infrastructure – the commissioning strategy, the workforce strategy, area service delivery and performance management processes. None of these seem to us to feature to any depth in the draft plan. The tight timescales to put essential infrastructure in place are concerning to the City Council and people are looking forward to participating in discussions. The City would welcome a plan that said more in these respects and would be happy to assist develop these thoughts.

As an example a concept of area service delivery will have implications for the City and will be important in building a workforce strategy across all working with children, young people and families. The City Council is an employer and fund many organisations who are employers and supporters of volunteers. If we are to have a workforce strategy in place for March 2010 then this plan is going to have to say a little more than it does about the strategic intent behind joint and integrated working on an area level. The expressed intent between the County and PCT has to be extended across the Children's Trust to secure greatest benefit for children, young people and families.

On performance targets and the associated regime the City is concerned to see that there is no target around child poverty such as measurements of household income. There are also no targets to improve the adequacy of housing for families – not just young homeless. The City would like to see both the reduction of income poverty and the reduction of housing poverty explicitly set out as targets, and would be happy to discuss the form of these.

Table 3: Housing Poverty

Overcrowding

- 6,102 households in Oxford were classed as overcrowded in the 2001 census (11% of all households).¹
- Overcrowding disproportionately affects families from BME communities.
 - Only 3% of 'white' families are overcrowded.
 - 18.1% of 'Asian' families are overcrowded.
 - 11.6% of 'mixed' families are overcrowded.
 - 7% of 'black' families are overcrowded.²
- 4849 households are on the housing register with 759 of these overcrowded (15.7%). Disproportionately affecting BME communities (22.9% of overcrowded households compared to 12.9% of population).³
- Severe overcrowding affects BME families more, with 40.6% of those on the housing register requiring 2 additional bedrooms from BME communities.

Domestic Violence

- Number of homelessness acceptances where domestic violence cited as primary reason for homelessness:
 - 2006/07 = 20
 - 2007/09 = 15
 - 2008/09 = 14⁴

We ask that the performance monitoring system takes account of perverse incentives and the adverse effects of targets pulling against each other in a County as diverse as Oxfordshire. What appears to be beneficial for one part of the County can have a detrimental effect elsewhere. That the draft plan seems not to have taken the report of the Director of Public Health on board comes across when looking at aspirations and how these are translated into performance targets. Many are not concrete and miss the added value of certain inclusive regeneration approaches in the push for attainment or safety.

4.5. Risk

There is no consideration of risk either in the draft plan or the delivery plan. In our view this is an omission. At the strategic level a risk analysis of just the points we have made in this response about difference, partnership, leadership, commissioning, delivery infrastructure and performance would lead to a useful perspective on the probability and impact of various scenarios. By way of example the poorer results across all indicators in the City contribute to the overall County-wide indicators, and these overall indicators cannot be improved without explicit attention to the City. There is a win/win scenario in investing in improvement in the City. That the County is aligning its budgets to the three priorities and to an area based delivery structure is welcome news; however if it does this in a way that does not mitigate the risks of under investment in tackling the

¹ ONS 2001 Census

² Housing Requirements Study 2004/05

³ Oxford City Council housing register January 2009

⁴ Oxford City Council Homelessness 'PIE' statistics

challenges within the City then the priorities of the whole County are at risk of falling short on expectations.

The management and mitigation of risk is an important discipline to which all partners, including children and young people, can contribute. In our view the section of the draft plan on achieving best value should include a high level risk analysis and the delivery plan should embed risk management in the performance model at D2. If the feeling is that Outcome Based Accountability and 'turning the curve' does this then it should say so and that be reflected back into the draft plan where OBA does not appear. The performance section talks of a dashboard and there is a paragraph on annual review which requires further development. The draft plan is confused on performance and in itself that is a risk.

5. KEEPING ALL CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SAFE

5.1. Safe, healthy and supported environments

Whilst the City supports the plan of action laid out in this section, we are concerned that there are currently no objectives which aim to improve the situation of the 5,300 children growing up in inadequate or overcrowded housing. Reducing harm and risk to women from domestic abuse and prevent homelessness (See table 3 above) is an important objective. The City's intentions in addressing homelessness are fully set out their strategy.

We therefore suggest additional key objectives to:

- *Children and young people should have the right to grow up in safe adequate housing that is not overcrowded or in a poor state of repair.*
- *Improve safety for children and young people who live in households with domestic abuse.*
- *Reduce and prevent homelessness amongst families and young people.*

5.2. Prevention and early intervention

Oxford City Council is the only pathfinder authority in the County for the preventing violent extremism strategy. Therefore we find it strange that the contribution to this is not acknowledged. The delivery plan could be enhanced by reference to detailed strategy for the City

Children and Young People in Oxford are additionally the victims of violence that has its root in hate (disability and race), homophobia, 'honour' and lifestyle. Prevention, early intervention and protection should be applicable to all forms of violence against children.

5.3. Abuse and neglect

Whilst there is nothing in the plan to suggest this should be the case we are concerned that the emphasis of services that respond to instances of abuse and neglect is towards younger children. Experience and evidence from both housing and community safety initiatives is that it is frequently teenagers and young adults who are also in need of protection.

Emerging evidence from local area data is suggesting Oxford City either receives a lesser social work service than the rest of the County or that it performs less well. This applies to safeguarding referrals, assessments and services to Looked after Children. Concerns have been raised about how thresholds are being applied in the City and whether a timely and responsive service is available.

6. RAISING ACHIEVEMENT

Educational attainment of young people in state schools is relatively poor. In 2006/07, only 36% of children attained five or more GCSEs including English and Mathematics which were graded A* to C – this compares to a national average of 46%. There are certain groups of children who do particularly poorly in terms of education outcomes. These include children of black ethnic origin, boys and children in receipt of free school meals. In 2006/07, only 15% of children in receipt of free school meals attained 5 A* to C grades at GCSE (including English and Mathematics). 28% of children of Black ethnic origin attained this standard.

The concern here is the evidence from OFSTED is that school improvement is not happening consistently in the City. Views have been expressed that a lack of sustained focus from the local authority denies schools in deprived areas the attention and support to improve. It has been said that stratified catchment areas that direct certain children to certain schools, a perception of unfavourable funding formulae and the strength of the private education sector all combine to disadvantage children in the deprived parts of City – those from ethnic minorities and on lower incomes.

The range of pupils achieving 5 or more GCSEs A* - C, including English and Mathematics, in 2008 varied widely across the County. A familiar picture of lower levels of attainment in schools in deprived areas, particularly in Oxford City, is apparent. For example, in 2008 almost 73% of pupils at Bartholomew's School in Eynsham achieved 5 or more GCSEs A*- C, including English and Mathematics, compared with only 18.5% at Peers School in Oxford City. In 13 (38%) schools less than 50% of pupils achieved 5 or more GCSEs A*-C. 12 schools (35%) were below the national average and 14 schools (41%) were below the County average for achievement.

Therefore we have no problem with the key objectives and strongly support the targeting of resources towards those with greatest need and paying particular attention to meeting the needs of vulnerable groups.

7. NARROWING THE GAP

We understand this priority to be about disadvantage and vulnerability – how this is defined, measured and changed. As a priority the aim should be to *narrow the gap* in outcomes between vulnerable and excluded children and others, against a context of improving outcomes for all. It is about reducing inequality between vulnerable and excluded children and their peers.

As such the City supports this priority as it goes to the heart of their contention that the plan should target resources, focus early intervention and seek to reduce differences caused by income, place of abode or ethnicity. It implies a sophisticated understanding of:

- Data analysis and benchmarking
- Systems of leadership and change
- Impact and outcome

The draft plan offers little to share about the case being made of which gaps need narrowing, what progress has and has not been made and how to prioritise and tackle the problem. There is evidence to support the claims that:

- The gap widens as age increases
- NEETs have been growing
- Older children are less engaged in school and *feel* less healthy and safe

The practical experience of the City Council supports the gap that is identified to be narrowed, but require further clarification about who it is to be narrowed for, the type of activity which will work and how the approach is to be applied. On the face of it this is a priority that will benefit the children young people and families of Oxford City.

We make three overarching comments here and many more in our response to the delivery plan below

1. The approach to NEETs (older young people) cannot be more of the same. The fact that the gap is widening indicates a need to change tack with for example the deployment of youth workers
2. The mention of learning disability, and disability generally, is welcome but comes across as a bit of an 'add on'. The key objectives are not well targeted on children with disabilities or any other vulnerability (with exception of mental health and autism). As a consequence the priority and its objectives may be diminished. More specificity on the causes of vulnerability and how they can be addressed is called for. For example if caused by poverty or ethnicity how the risks are ameliorated?
3. The key objective which lists *our areas of greatest deprivation* as Banbury, Oxford City, Abingdon/Berinsfield and small pockets of rural deprivation does not reflect a true picture. The plan should contain more relevant information for example – how many wards (See table 2 above regarding small area deprivation). The recognised measure of geographic deprivation is the Indices of Deprivation 2007. There are 12 'Super Output Areas' in Oxfordshire which are among the 20% most deprived areas in England. These are in the wards of Rose Hill & Iffley, Littlemore, Northfield Brook, Blackbird Leys, Barton & Sandhills and Banbury Ruscote. Five of these six wards are in Oxford City. Putting 'Oxford City' as one priority area in a list of four does not adequately reflect the scale of deprivation in Oxford compared to the rest of the County.

Abingdon Caldecott ward has a Super Output Area in the 30% most deprived areas in England; whilst Berinsfield has one Super Output Area in the 40% most deprived areas in England. On the latter measure, one-third of all 85 Oxford Super Output Areas could be considered deprived. It should also be noted that there are small pockets of urban deprivation not reflected in the Indices of Deprivation, just as there are in rural areas.

It would also be valuable to say something about the children and young people involved and some information about the nature of the deprivation. Not to do this means that plan does not give the reader any real picture of the gap to be narrowed.

8. DELIVERY PLAN

Our initial response to consultation on the Delivery Plan follows at Appendix A

Appendix A: Children and Young Peoples Delivery Plan - Response from Oxford City Council November 2009.

Reference Number and Outcome	Comment
A. Keeping all Children and Young People Safe	
A1 Children and Young people grow up in a safe, healthy and supported environments	
A1.1	Reduce the numbers of children and young people who are bullied or feel unsafe at school or college.
A1.2	Reduce avoidable hospital admissions for children and young people, including increasing safety in the home, communities and on the roads and reducing incidents of self-harm
A1.3	Increase the life chances for children and young people in care by ensuring they are safe, healthy and well-educated
A1.4	Reduce the number of children and young people in custody, in order to reduce the known risk of harmful outcomes.
	Oxford City Council is a key partner in reducing offending behaviour through the Positive Futures Programme.
A1.5	Reduce harmful risk taking and behaviour including substance misuse
A1.6	Work better together to keep children and young people safe from dangerous individuals whether they are living in the community or accessed by the Internet
A1.7	Increase police engagement in primary and secondary schools, linking safer schools partners to local neighbourhood policing teams
	Oxford City Council is a key partner for reducing crime and anti-social behavior in Oxford City
A1.8	Insert new: Reduce the number of children and young people growing up in adequate and overcrowded accommodation
	Decent homes and housing are an essential part of growing up in a healthy, safe and supported environment. The Delivery Plan should have more linkage into strategic housing plans. In setting targets and measuring outcomes, evidence on over-crowding, poor conditions and need is available from Distinct Council housing strategies, housing needs assessments, stock condition surveys (social and private) and the county-wide housing market assessment.

<p>A2. Children, young people and families are able to access stronger preventative and early intervention services before problems get worse.</p>	<p>The Delivery Plan refers to Children’s Centres. It would be more useful to refer to them throughout as Sure Start Children’s Centres, which is the national brand, to ensure that national advertising is applicable to Oxfordshire, thus increasing their visibility.</p>
<p>A2.1 Provide more targeted support at an early stage for vulnerable children, young people and families.</p> <p><i>P7 'Support the growing role and capacity of Children's Centres, home-school link workers etc, to provide ongoing support to vulnerable children and families</i></p> <p><i>Provide 28 newly furbished exciting inclusive play areas”.</i></p>	<p>There needs to be a further action point to develop the Family Group Conference process. This programme does exist in the County but is a small team and not well advertised. However it is a very effective way of involving the whole family on an equal footing with professionals in identifying and resolving their problems.</p> <p>There should be a fuller list of support roles to include school counsellors and school nurses, as these may also liaise between home and school and have an impact on family life.</p> <p>The number of play areas in the county to be refurbished is an underestimate. Oxford City Council alone will refurbish more than 35 by the end of 2010.</p> <p>There needs to better co-ordination with regards priorities for play areas, linked to deprivation and standards for play areas.</p>
<p>A2.2 Continue to build upon the common assessment framework and the team around the child approach.</p>	
<p>A2.3 Improve safety for children and young people who live in households with domestic abuse through more consistent and child-centred assessment and improve responsiveness of domestic abuse support services</p>	<p>There is no mention of Domestic Violence Support Services as having a role to play. Children and young people are victims of violence with various root causes: the City Council has a role in ensuring the adequacy of refuge provision</p> <p>Links to Oxford City Homelessness Strategy 2008 - 2013 and target to “Develop and implement sanctuary Scheme to protect victims of domestic violence and help them avoid becoming homeless”</p> <p>Evidence is available from Supporting People operational and outcomes data for relevant services.</p>
<p>A2.4 Prevent violent extremism by early identification of children and young people vulnerable to radicalisation, working in partnership to protect them and build their resilience and promote inclusion</p>	<p>The City Council is the only PVE pathfinder within the County. The work done by the PVE partnership needs to be noted, especially given the priority placed in the national strategy on working with young people and families. The Oxford City strategy has all the necessary references and information.</p>

A2.5	Target resources where they are most needed and will have the greatest impact, by keeping vulnerable groups, identified in section 6c of this plan, safe and paying particular attention to meeting their needs.	There needs to be a further action point to include the differentiation by vulnerable group and by geography.
A3	Children and young people who suffer abuse or neglect receive the best possible service. This means that children at risk of harm or suffering harm will be a top priority for all agencies.	Please reference the Oxford City Council Homelessness Strategy 2008-2013, which contains a number of linked actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and strengthen the Families at Risk of Homelessness (FAROH group). Link work to Tenants at Risk and the Accommodation Panel groups to strengthen activities and outcomes. • Develop and implement sanctuary Scheme to protect victims of domestic violence and help them avoid becoming homeless. • Develop a Homechoice style service for intentionally homeless families to find accommodation in the private sector.
A3.1	Keep children and young people safe by ensuring practice, across all agencies working with children at risk of harm and/or in care, is of the highest standard, complies with national and is consistent across the County	We have a concern about the capacity of the family social work teams particularly in Central Oxfordshire. Annually around 3000 contacts and over 1600 referrals are made to each of Oxford City, North Oxfordshire and South Oxfordshire - this figure will have increased greatly since the death of Baby Peter. (Figures from Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board.). The statistics presented to the Central Oxfordshire Trust Board show higher referral rates per 10,000 (447 compared to 387 in the county as a whole) and significantly poorer performance in completing core assessments. We also have reason to believe that getting adequate support for families where there are concerns about children's welfare is very difficult. Getting a social worker to keep a case on beyond the initial assessment stage is even harder, even (especially) in the rare instances when it is the parent asking for help.
A3.2	Provide improved and more joined up inter-agency responses to children and young people whose distress causes them to pose a high level of risk of harm to themselves or to others	
A3.3	Strive to prevent any child or young person remaining in a chronically neglectful environment without effecting positive change.	The emphasis is far more on very young children at risk of neglect than on teenage children. Both need protection.
A3.4	Respond quickly to protect when there are signs that a child or young person may be suffering sexual abuse	
A3.5	Children and Adult Services working together to break	Actions to do with providing parenting programmes are needed. Family

	<p>the cycle of deprivation, improve parenting, and ensure the most vulnerable children are identified and not left in harmful situations.</p>	<p>Links is reasonably well embedded in some areas but it is for parents of younger children. Strengthening Families is a new, government-approved programme, which is good for some families of older children but not for those with more complex needs, as its structure is quite rigid. Parent-Talk is for parents of teenagers who are causing problems, but is not widely enough available. The Parent-Talk 121 programme supporting parents in the home is only available to parents of 8-13s in rural areas. These sources of support can transform families and are therefore cost-effective.</p> <p>Needs more formal language. Why is the Family Intervention project only available for families where one parent is in prison? A much wider group of families could benefit from it – and tenancy sustainment should be a key concern.</p>
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<p>B. Raising Achievement for all Children and Young People</p>		
	<p>B1 Children and young people to achieve their full potential by accessing outstanding learning opportunities</p>	
<p>B1.1</p>	<p>Improve assessment and examination results by ensuring that the county council supports and challenges schools, colleges and other educational settings so that all obtain “good” or “outstanding Ofsted inspections. We will ensure that good practice is shared and encourage partnership and collaborative working. We will introduce creative models of leadership. Resources will be targeted at those most in need.</p>	
<p>B1.2</p>	<p>Ensure the Primary Capital Programme and Building Schools for the Future initiative transform the environment for learning for everyone and raise achievement.</p>	
<p>B1.3</p>	<p>Implement the raising of the age of participation in learning to 17 by 2013 through successful transfer of responsibility for 16-19 year olds from the Learning and Skills Council to Oxfordshire County Council</p>	<p>As the school leaving age rises there needs to be more attention paid to young people who are excluded. The plan needs to convey a sense of being ambitious for all. For example, not all excluded children are non-academic, so Meadowbrook needs to offer more than vocational courses and sports activities.</p>
<p>B1.4</p>	<p>Ensure that children and young people have access to high quality extended services in and around schools. This will ensure</p>	<p>Services will have to reflect local need and there will be differentiation.</p>

	that our most disadvantaged and vulnerable children and young people receive focused support, tailored to meet their needs including one to one provision when required	
B1.5	Target resources where they are most needed and will have the greatest impact, by focusing on raising achievement of vulnerable groups (identified in 6c), and paying particular attention to meeting their needs.	Clear and targeted action should be included about raising the achievement of BME young people.
B2	Children and young people to feel happy and safe and strive to do the very best they can	
B2.1	Improve attendance at school by maximising opportunities of children and young people to enjoy learning in school and beyond.	
B2.2	Increase the number of positive and fun activities available, at times when children and young people most want them, including having access to safe open space, play grounds and sports facilities. Target the most resources at areas of significant deprivation across the County and particularly at those who have the least opportunities for play and leisure time.	This aspiration is commendable. Although public transport is a significant barrier to accessing provision – mainly for reasons of high cost within the City - there are others, not least around cost and territoriality. One of the actions should include weekend and evening youth activity in areas of deprivation.
B3	Children and young people to become confident to support themselves and actively contribute to their local community and beyond.	
B3.1	Ensure that children and young people have opportunities to make a positive contribution to their local community and become involved citizens, through enhanced provision of volunteering and community involvement.	p.20 - 21The plan must not conflate ABCs (Acceptable Behaviour Contracts) and ASBOs (Anti-Social Behaviour Orders). The former is voluntarily entered into and is an agreement between the perpetrator and either the police or local authority. The latter is a court order with potentially severe consequences for a breach. Note that very few young people receive ASBOs in Oxfordshire and that the compliance level is extremely good. This is because of the earlier work done around prevention and intervention, which includes ABCs, and which aims to keep young people out of the criminal justice system. This information really needs to be in section C, Narrowing the Gap, as it is to do with deprivation.
B3.2	Engage business to contribute to the preparation of children and young people in their transition from school to work and in suitable work based learning opportunities including apprenticeships for young people who have left full time education.	There is no recognition of the role of Oxford City Council or the Economic Partnership in economic development.

C. Narrowing the gap for children and young people from our most disadvantaged and vulnerable groups		
C1	To narrow the gap in achievement by providing for vulnerable children and young people who are missing out with greater access to high quality provision and services.	
C1.1	Make sure that all children and young people are engaged in full time education programmes that have been tailored to meet their personal needs and ensure that those who are in education, employment or training gain the skills, knowledge and interest to support their progress in employment and training.	Page 25 ' <i>Prioritise action for young people who are or in danger of becoming NEET and reduce amount of time NEET</i> ' This has an action date of March 2013. This neither informs of the action intended nor is of sufficient priority.
C1.2	Ensure that children and young people from vulnerable groups can access and engage with the same level of play and positive activities as their peers	<p>The equalities impact assessment needs to take account of socio-economic disadvantage. There are many tools to assess the impact of disadvantage. Again the City Council has a role to play in developing positive activities.</p> <p>An action here would be to promote the Oxfordshire Youth Mentoring Scheme, which supports vulnerable young people into participating in activities and building their confidence. This service has a long waiting list and has just had its budget cut by the County, but it still exists and is valued by the young people who use it. We find it especially supportive for young people who have been getting involved in antisocial behaviour.</p> <p>We would like to see the deployment of outreach workers on some estates in the areas of disadvantage.</p>
C1.3	Raise aspirations and life opportunities for children and young people from vulnerable groups	
C1.4	Encourage children and young people who are persistently choosing not to attend school to re-engage in learning and engage with positive activities and support services that promote re-integration.	P.27 ' <i>Develop a more relevant personalised curriculum offer...</i> ' It needs to be specified that the curriculum is full-time, as a lot of problems currently stem from 'personalised' part-time programmes which reduce the young person's sense of structure and belonging and do not occupy them for full-time hours, leaving them vulnerable to being drawn into anti-social behaviour.
C1.5	Work together to reduce the number of exclusions by building capacity in schools to support children and young people at risk of exclusion.	
C1.6	Ensure that our alternative education for children and young	One of the major problems with alternative education provision is

	people with challenging behaviour is locally available and judged to be outstanding.	that it offers very few hours so that young people get into trouble on the streets when otherwise they would be in school. The importance of the diversionary role of such alternatives is not appreciated.
C2. Ensure that children, young people and families benefit from effective, early and targeted support when they face additional challenges and in particular those with learning difficulties and disabilities.		
C2.1	Extend the intensive targeted work with families during their children's early years to older children and their families from vulnerable groups.	Which document will cover the additional actions for non disabled children?
C2.2	Increase the number of Children's Centres so that every child from vulnerable groups in both urban and rural areas has access to Children Centre services which provide access to prevention and early intervention initiatives.	See previous point - they should be referred to as Sure Start Children's Centres.
C2.3	Ensure that children and young people with mental health needs are adequately and promptly supported to prevent conditions from becoming worse.	<p>P.32-3 There is no mention of the counselling service Face 2 Face, which has a long waiting list and is the only service of this kind for young people in the county. It is valuable because it is outside school and because young people may be seen for as long as a year. Its funding has just been reduced by the county and its reliance on volunteer counsellors increased, but the service does still exist and should be in the plan.</p> <p>P.33 It would be good to see other parenting programmes cited as well as Strengthening Families. One size does not fit all and more chaotic families need more focused interventions.</p>
C2.4	Provide children and young people in and at risk entering the youth justice system with targeted advice and support regarding their education, health and care needs.	<p>Pages 33, 34 and 35. There is no mention of Oxford City in the provision of diversionary activities.</p> <p>The youth centres in the most deprived areas of the city need to have weekend opening hours.</p> <p>Consider introducing a system of managing unauthorised school absences for young people particularly over the ages of 14.</p>
C2.5	Ensure that, where appropriate, young people who are offending or have been in custody can be safely supported in their local community and achieve positive outcomes.	
C2.6	Increase access to positive activities for the most vulnerable young people through provision of targeted support including: tailored preventative programmes for children and young people	

	at risk of offending; and intervention programmes and diversionary activities for young people who have committed offences and been diverted from the criminal justice system.	
C2.7	Improve the capacity of schools, colleges and services to work holistically to cater for and improve the outcomes for children and young people with learning difficulties and disabilities and in particular those with autistic spectrum conditions (ASC).	
C3.	Organisations to work together, in partnership with children, young people and families to break the cycle of deprivation and low expectation and particularly for children living in or on the fringe of poverty.	<p>Links need to be made with the Regeneration Framework for Oxford to 2006 particularly page 35 "Increased targeted interventions in areas of deprivation, building on existing knowledge and good practice.</p> <p>This section needs an additional target around reducing child poverty.</p>
C3.1	Reduce the level of health and other inequalities by targeting our resources more effectively on those that need them most, particularly in our areas of greatest deprivation – Banbury/Oxford / Abingdon / Berinsfield.	It is not sufficient to state Oxford, which is a city with a wide variation in the outcomes of children and young people. Please state the targeted areas within Oxford. If the threshold for targeted action to reduce deprivation is "more deprived than Abingdon" then the areas targeted would be nearly the whole of East Oxford, plus South Oxford and Cutteslowe, but it would be useful to state SOA numbers within wards to ensure additional clarity. The resource premium needs to be clearly defined.
C3.2	Continue to improve the outcomes and life chances for children and young people in the County Council's care, so that they group safe, happy, and achieving well, contributing to the continual improvement of services and with the same opportunities as those with strong family networks	Links to Oxford City Homelessness Strategy 2008 -2013 target to increase the standard of accommodation for young asylum seekers and care leavers.
C3.3	Reduce the rate of teenage conceptions.	This broader strategy to reduce the rate of teenage pregnancy is welcome. We are particularly pleased to note the importance placed on raising aspirations t and helping young women develop the confidence to demand the use of condoms and take control of their own contraceptive planning.
C3.4	Reduce the of young people becoming NEET or NIL, particularly seeking an improvement in these outcomes for vulnerable young people by intensively tracking all who receive free school meals offering them additional information, advice and guidance that will encourage them to take up an appropriate offer of learning or	Youth outreach work should actively seek out those who are disengaged rather than passively tracking them, which is felt to be frequently the case with too much of the youth work available in the County presently.

	training at the age of 16 and continue in at least part time learning to the age of 19.	
C3.5	Prevent ill health later in life by increasing rate of breast feeding and immunisation, reducing exposure to smoking and reducing levels of obesity.	
C3.6	Provide good quality housing standards (in social housing, private, rented sector and supported housing) for vulnerable adults.	P.42 Point needs making that vulnerable homeless 16-17 year olds need housing in their local areas near to their school, extended family and friends and support networks. They should be housed by their home local authority, and wherever possible not moved to a new area. Too often young people in vulnerable housing situations are removed from their own local authorities and placed in provision in Oxford City. This disrupts their networks and education, and in many cases leads to the young people becoming the responsibility of services in the city. Except in rare cases, district councils should make appropriate provision for young people in their own area.
C3.7	Reduce the number of children and young people experiencing income poverty	The actions should include services for parents to be available in Sure Start Children's Centres such as ESOL, Job Centre Plus, training and access to learning and provision of childcare. There should be an action to financially support independent advice by a variety of providers in local centres (particularly deprived areas) to maximise the incomes of low income families (e.g. help with debt, tax credits, and benefits) In order to future-proof this plan, actions arising from the draft Child Poverty Bill, currently at committee stage, should be incorporated.

D. Improving Service Delivery		
D1 Financial resources		
D1.1	Seek to align partners' planning and resource allocation frameworks to deliver the key priorities of the Children and Young People's Plan.	Oxford City Council looks forward to being part of these discussions.
D2 Performance management		There is some confusion between the main CYPP and the Delivery Plan around the model of performance management – particularly the relationship between the 'dashboard', outcomes based accountability and 'turning the curve'. Children's Trust partners would benefit from a programme of developmental support here.
D2.1	Performance – to deliver the Plan's aim to improve outcomes for children and young people	
D2.2	Develop strong performance management processes that support and inform decisions.	
D2.3	Improved outcomes informed via use of data, including survey and use of Turning the Curve exercise	It is necessary to do some early work on benchmarking and setting of outcomes related to the key objectives if this approach is going to be of use in the priority of say 'narrowing the gap'
D3 Workforce development		There is a need to ensure that there is a 'One Workforce' approach using CWDC support and materials. This should be inclusive of volunteers.
D3.1	Continuously improving outcomes for children and young people through a skilled, trained, competent workforce.	The Commissioning Strategy (see below) should make the joins between demand, as represented by the priorities and key objectives in the CYPP, and the supply of a competent workforce.
D3.2	Improved outcomes through more integrated and multi-agency approaches underpinned by relevant multi-agency training approaches and opportunities	
D4. Strategic Commissioning		This is a real test for the Area Delivery model adopted by the Children's Trust. There is an opportunity to join up aspects of commissioning that are not well linked at county level – especially around housing
D4.1	Implement a Children's Trust Commissioning Strategy	The strategy should remember to include training and development for the commissioners themselves across agencies and at a local level. This should include

		familiarisation with Outcomes Based commissioning and approached like 'Turning the Curve'
D5 Systems ICT		
D5.1	Fully integrated children's information systems and processes, which help to reduce bureaucracy and maximise contact time for children and families with professionals.	The delivery plan requires an action to make this happen.
D6 Communication		
D6.1	To deliver the plan's underpinning principle to provide open channels of communications to children and young people, their families and the wider public, to ensure that they are aware of our intentions, progress and outcomes. We will actively seek feedback to inform further development of this and other supporting plans.	If Outcomes Based Accountability is to be used then it has to be bought into as an approach by all Children's Trust partners as well as children and young people themselves. Exercise like 'Turning the Curve' will have communication and consultation built into their thinking. Officers and members of the City Council would welcome the opportunity to be part of developing OBA for the new central area trust.

Appendix B:

HOW OXFORD CITY COUNCIL CONTRIBUTES TO POSITIVE OUTCOMES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Be healthy

Countywide 'priorities for improving outcomes' to which Oxford City Council contributes include:

- To reduce health inequalities for children and young people in Oxfordshire
- To promote healthy and active lifestyles for all children and young people

Oxford City Council services contributing to this outcome include:

- Provision of sports and leisure facilities
- Holiday Play Schemes
- Free swimming for under-17s
- Premises licensing for alcohol and entertainment
- NightSafe
- Rough sleeping outreach team
- Supporting people – hostels and supported housing
- Home Choice Scheme
- HMO licensing
- Health promotion
- Positive Futures project
- Adopted Local Plan policies on open spaces & cycling
- Health promotion work with PCT
- Developing joint referrals
- Healthy Living and Healthy Eating
- Community Energy Programme
- Reduced fees for environmental health services to low income families

Stay safe

Countywide 'priorities for improving outcomes' to which Oxford City Council contributes include:

- To ensure that young people feel safe from bullying, crime and anti-social behaviour in and out of school
- To improve the local environment to make it feel safer for young people
- To improve early, practical support for vulnerable families to prevent abuse, violence, neglect and family breakdown

Oxford City Council services contributing to this outcome include:

- Holiday Play Schemes
- Football Foundation projects
- Positive Futures
- Design out crime in parks
- Park Rangers
- Street Wardens & Police Community Support Officers
- CANAcT
- Premises licensing for alcohol and entertainment
- NightSafe

- Adopted Local Plan policies on designing out crime
- Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board
- Community cohesion and interfaith group work events and projects
- Asylum Welcome (grant aided)

Enjoy and achieve

Countywide 'priorities for improving outcomes' to which Oxford City Council can contribute include:

- Raising standards of educational achievement and enjoyment at all ages
- Increasing the number of children and young people accessing sport, play, leisure, youth, out of school, community, cultural, music and arts activities

Oxford City Council services contributing to this outcome include:

- Sports and leisure facilities
- Grant funding to sports groups
- Free swimming for under-17s
- Cultural events
- Virtual college
- Family Support Initiative
- Adopted Local Plan policies on school provision, recreation and community centres
- Community cohesion and interfaith group work events and projects
- Dance Development work

Make a positive contribution

Countywide 'priorities for improving outcomes' to which Oxford City Council contributes include:

- To increase the effective participation of children and young people in decision-making at all levels and ensure that it is well coordinated across the agencies. This needs to include children of all ages, backgrounds and ability levels.
- To support the development of children and young people as active citizens, making a positive contribution within their communities, thereby reducing levels of young offending, particularly in areas of high need

Oxford City Council services contributing to this outcome include:

- Positive Futures programme
- Football Foundation projects
- Holiday Play Schemes
- Crime and Nuisance Action Team
- Community Centres
- ABC contracts and ASBOs
- Family Support Initiative
- Street Wardens
- Adopted Local Plan involving consultation with children and young people
- Youth Council

Achieve Economic Wellbeing

Countywide 'priorities for improving outcomes' to which Oxford City Council can contribute include:

- Increase access to affordable housing for families and reduce the number of families in temporary accommodation
- Reduce the number of young people who are homeless or in temporary accommodation and ensure that all care leavers have access to accommodation
- Reduce the percentage of young people not in education, employment or training or in jobs with no training

Oxford City Council services contributing to this outcome include:

- Community Housing services
- Reduced leisure charges for low income families (BONUS Slice)
- Adopted Local Plan policies on economy, transport and affordable housing
- Grants for projects aimed at supporting families and children
- Rough sleeper outreach team

RESOURCES (Estimated)

City Council budgets that contribute support to children, young people and their families

(General Fund: net controllable expenditure)

Chief Executive's Office	£
Social Inclusion	38,890
City Regeneration	
Cultural Development	459,465
Spatial Development (Economic Development)	34,038
Environmental Development	
Public Health	554,859
Health Development	606,109
Community and Housing Development	
Community centres and management	399,692
Community grants and commissioning	1,694,344
Community housing	378,895
Community safety	1,402,690
Housing Advice	129,264
Single Homelessness	84,786
Sustainable Communities	93,093
Leisure Services	
Leisure Management (Sports centres/pools etc)	1,697,481
Active Sports Partnership	17,403
Sports development	134,286
Landscape and Play	392,452
Parks management and Administration	357,111
Total:	8,474,858

See some examples of specific leisure projects below:

Examples of community safety projects aimed at children and young people

Positive Futures Activities

Rose Hill Youth Project

Holiday Play schemes

Barton Girls Project

Support of Oxford Sexual Assault and Rape Crisis work in schools

Looking After Yourself

Personal attack alarms for vulnerable children

Coordination of the knife crime project

Family Support Project (Home Office Funded)

Examples of what the leisure facilities include:

Blackbird Leys Pool and activities

Blackbird Leys Leisure Centre and activities

Ferry Sports Centre and activities

Hinksey Outdoor Pool

Oxford Ice Rink and clubs

Temple Cowley Pool and Fitness Centre

Free swimming for under 17's

Street Sports Programme

Annual grants 2009 -10

Grants to projects that contribute support to children, young people and their families

Dominion: Domestic Abuse Worker	£33,000
Asylum Welcome	£8,000
Barton Community Association projects	£3,450
Blackbird leys Adventure Playground	£19,000
Blackbird leys CDI	£1,509
Blackbird leys Credit Union	£5,000
Agnes Smith Advice Centre	£72,554
Cowley Road Carnival	£11,900
Cotteslowe Community Development	£3,750
Donnington Doorstep Family Centre	£20,000
Fusion	£9,502
Kids Enjoy Exercise Now	£4,000
Lake Street Play Group	£14,900
Leys Fair	£2,000
Oxford CAB	£186,750
Oxford Community Work Agency	£93,250
Oxford Credit Union	£20,000
Oxford Sexual Abuse and Rape Crises Centre	£10,000
Oxford Wheels	£4,000
Oxfordshire Chinese Advice Centre	£49,703
Oxfordshire Youth Arts Project	£4,400
OXRAD	£9,600
Parasol	£10,000
Pegasus Theatre	£26,459
Phoenix Sports Club	£1,150
Relate	£5,000
Rose Hill & Donnington Advice Centre	£77,743
South Oxfordshire Adventure Play Ground	£11,000
The Bridge	£42,992
The Gap	£95,938
Trax	£5,000
Total:	£852,550