

**CABINET**

**Lancaster City Council  
Children and Young People Strategic Plan.**

**22 January 2008**

**Report of Corporate Director (Finance and Performance)**

|   |                                     |                  |                              |
|---|-------------------------------------|------------------|------------------------------|
| <b>PURPOSE OF REPORT</b>  |                                     |                  |                              |
| To seek Cabinet approval of a Children and Young People Strategy. |                                     |                  |                              |
| Key Decision  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Non-Key Decision | <input type="checkbox"/>     |
|   |                                     |                  | Referral from Cabinet Member |
| Date Included in Forward Plan                                     | 29 November 2007                    |                  |                              |
| This report is public   |                                     |                  |                              |

**RECOMMENDATIONS OF COUNCILLOR MAIA WHITELEGG**

- (1) That the Children and Young People Strategic Plan be approved and that the growth bids be considered as part of the 2008/09 budget process.

**1.0 Introduction**

1.1 *Every Child Matters*, the Government's vision for children's services, was published in September 2003. It proposed reshaping children's services to help achieve the five outcomes for children and young people that are the key to well-being in childhood and later life.

- Staying safe
- Enjoying and achieving
- Healthy
- Contributing positively
- Achieving economic well being.

1.2 Although district councils do not undertake the range of statutory functions associated with Lancashire County Council such as children's social care and education, there is a duty placed upon on the City Council, under the Children Act 2004:

- To co-operate (as one of the “key agencies”) with their children’s services authority (the County Council)
- To safeguard and promote the well-being of children

The Council also has statutory duties under the Housing Act 1996 and the Homeless Act 2002. Priority need categories of applicants include, amongst others, applicants aged 16 or 17 and applicants aged 18 to 20 who were previously in care.

## **2.0 Proposal Details**

2.1 A Children and Young People Strategic Plan has been developed which sets out what the Council is currently doing to ensure the wellbeing of children and young people in the district.

2.2 To date there has not been a requirement for a strategic ‘joined up’ approach to work that involves and/or impacts on children and young people, but the new duties put on district councils and the ethos of partnership work and delivery of integrated services through Children’s Trusts arrangements means that it is important to be able to quantify our contribution and have a robust needs analysis, planning and delivery framework.

2.3 We need to be able to identify our key priorities and where we fit within the wider County Children & Young People Plan. No one organisation operates without links to a range of other strategies, priorities, indicators and quality standards. We need to implement this strategy to ensure a comprehensive and cohesive district approach to deliver a joined up service for children and young people.

2.4 This strategic plan therefore describes the services that the council currently delivers under the five key themes of the Every Child Matters (ECM) agenda, linking with the priorities stated in the Lancashire Children & Young People’s Plan (LCYPP), the Council’s (current<sup>1</sup>) Corporate Plan, LSP priorities as set out in the (current<sup>1</sup>) Community Strategy and the priority indicators being developed in the new model Local Area Agreement (LAA). It also outlines future developments both in service delivery and strategic planning. It should be noted that this is a document that will be under regular review as policy and strategy in this area is developed both within and outside of the Council.

## **3.0 Details of Consultation**

3.1 The Lancashire Children & Young People’s Plan, Corporate Plan and the Community Strategy have been the subject of extensive consultation prior to their publication. All relevant Council Services have been consulted with during the development of this strategy.

## **4.0 Options and Options Analysis (including risk assessment)**

4.1 To Approve the Strategic Plan and refer the growth bids to the budget process.

### **Operational Risk**

There is a statutory duty to co-operate with named agencies that are involved with children and young people. 2008 will see the emergence of a local Lancaster District Children’s Trust.

As well as not complying with legislation, not having such an integrated documented strategic approach to these issues puts at risk our ability to ensure the well being of children

and young people in our district as well as diluting the Council's impact and influence on the development of a local children's trust.

#### Financial Risk

It should be noted that a number of growth bids have been submitted to assist in delivery of elements of the plan, most notably a bid in support of the recommended re-designation of the Children and Young People Manager post from part time to full time. In addition further smaller bids have been submitted to provide a small operating budget for the CYP team (none exists at present), funding to support development of our responses to the emerging local children's trust and Year 1 funding to support establishment of the Young Advisors Scheme (referred to in the Plan). Failure to support these bids will hinder delivery of the Plan in terms of what is achievable within reasonable timescales with the resources available.

4.2 To recommend amendments to the Strategic Plan prior to its approval recognising the operational and financial risks identified above.

Both of these documents are currently under revision and this strategy, if adopted, will be revised to take account of the Council's Corporate Plan for 2008/09 and the new Lancaster District Sustainable Community Strategy, as well as the outcome of the budget process.

### **5.0 Officer Preferred Option (and comments)**

5.1 That the Strategic Plan be approved as drafted and thereafter widely disseminated across the Council and regularly updated as and when future policy and operating arrangements are developed.

### **6.0 Conclusion**

6.1 A Children and Young People Strategic Plan has been developed which sets out what the Council is currently doing to ensure the wellbeing of children and young people in the district. It is one of the means by which we will be complying with our statutory duty to co-operate with those agencies involved with children and young people.

#### **RELATIONSHIP TO POLICY FRAMEWORK**

Corporate Plan – Medium Term Objective – “To support sustainable communities” – Priority Outcome 19 – Develop a comprehensive approach to children and young peoples issues- Develop and implement a Children and Young People's Strategy.

#### **CONCLUSION OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

**(including Diversity, Human Rights, Community Safety, Sustainability and Rural Proofing)**

Will have a positive impact upon the well being of children and young people in the district.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

Implementation of a number of the corporate actions identified in the plan is the subject of a number of growth bids amounting to £21K in 2008/9 rising to £25K in 2010/11. Alternatively, an Every Child Matters Reserve (£50K p.a. from 2008/09 onwards) was established during last year's budget and could be used to support such growth, including development of our responses to the emerging local children's trust. Any further financial implications arising from implementation of the strategy will need to be considered as future years budgets are developed.

## **SECTION 151 OFFICER'S COMMENTS**

Members are advised to consider the growth requests alongside other competing spending pressures, and in context of the budget forecasts and Council Tax targets.

## **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

Under section 10 of the Children's Act 2004, the City Council has a duty to co-operate with named agencies (including Lancashire County Council) which are involved with children and young people. The duty to co-operate is the key provision that underpins children's trust arrangements.

## **MONITORING OFFICER'S COMMENTS**

The Monitoring Officer has been consulted and has nothing further to add.

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Children Act 2004  
"Working in partnership to deliver improved outcomes for children and young people".  
Audit Commission.  
Lancashire County Council's Children and Young People's Plan

**Contact Officer:** Richard Tulej  
**Telephone:** 01524 582079  
**E-mail:** rtulej@lancaster.gov.uk