

2008



Lancaster City Council Children & Young People Strategic Plan



Contents

- Foreword – Cabinet Member Children & Young People
- Introduction – why we need a strategic plan
- National context- Every Child Matters, Youth Matters, Children Act 2004, Children's Trust Arrangements, Aiming High for Young People
- Lancashire context - Children & Young People Plan, key priorities, process priority how we contribute
- Local context - geography, demographics, economics, education, health, housing
- Lancaster City Council – how we contribute to the ECM agenda
- Future developments – youth engagement, young people into work, safeguarding, promoting positive
- Bibliography
- Appendices – play strategy, child protection policy

Welcome to Lancaster City Council's first Children & Young People's Strategic Plan 2008 – 2010

Welcome to Lancaster City Council's first children & young people strategic plan. The plan is a timely development in the council's commitment to improving the outcomes for children & young people across the district. The imminent introduction of Local Children's Trust Partnerships will pave the way for integrated planning and delivery of services focusing on the well being of our young people.

This plan 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 District Corporate Plan, the LSP priorities in the Community Strategy and the priority indicators in the new model Local Area Agreement (LAA). It will also outline future developments in both service delivery and future strategic planning.

Children and young people have never before been so prominent on the national agenda. The last 8, years has seen a host of legislation, guidance and policy, starting with the appearance of 'Working Together' published in 1999 providing guidance on how to keep children safe. If there is one key message to be heard it is 'ensuring the well being of children and young people'.

We have to consult and involve children and young people in the design and delivery of our services. We believe that for our services to be effective it is essential that children and young people have a range of opportunities available to them to shape and influence what and how it is delivered. Children & young people are at the centre of the plan, and their involvement in its development will be not because we have to, but because it is what we believe is the right way, and good practice.

A number of factors have affected the timing of this plan and this has meant that many of the related plans and strategies are being reviewed and that there has not been the involvement of children, young people and families that there should be. However, any good plan is not set in stone, and this document is the starting point for a more in depth process that will be on-going and the plan will develop organically to ensure that the needs of local children and young people are being met.

COUNCILLOR MAIA WHITELEGG

CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

The National Context – key legislation & policy



‘Every Child Matters’ 2003 has been the driving force for reforms and change in the world of children and young people’s services. The Laming Report after the Victoria Climbié case provided the impetus and framework for what we are now seeing come into being.

All our services are aligned under the 5 key themes of Every Child Matters:

- Being Healthy
- Staying Safe
- Enjoy & Achieve
- Making a Positive Contribution
- Achieving Economic Well Being

The overarching aim of all services for children and young people is ensuring their well being, and we can best achieve that by working co-operatively together.

Every Child Matters has produced a number of related, specific papers.

‘Care Matters’ restates the principle that children where ever possible stay with their families. However, that is not always practicable. Improving outcomes in terms of education, employment, leisure activities, health and housing and providing stability and emotional wellbeing are the focus of the paper.



‘Every Parent Matters’ sets out the role of parents and carers in improving the lives of their children. The government’s vision for parents is ‘to make confident and informed choices which they feel are right for their family; shape services and respond to the family’s needs; work in partnership with services to enhance the benefits for their children and access additional support when they need it.’ How services respond to the needs of families has a direct impact on the well being and future of children and young people.

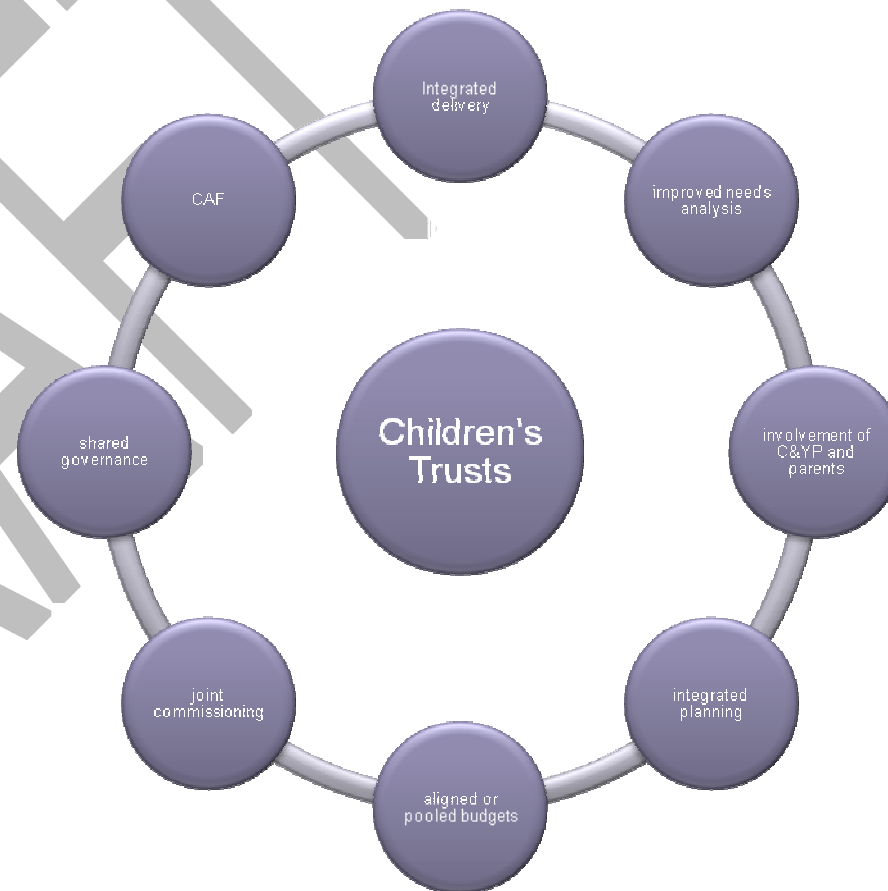


‘Every Child’s Future Matters’ June 2007 produced by the Sustainable Development Commission looks at the influence of environmental issues on children & young people emotional, social and healthy well being using the 5 ECM themes . This opens up the range of functions and policy areas that have an effect on the lives of children and young people other than generic Children’s Services. A range of public services such as local planning, housing, transport, environmental services can have a positive impact on the environmental wellbeing of children and young people by connecting up with children’s services to achieve targets and expectations in a SMARTer way. This provides a platform for district councils’ services to identify their contribution to the ECM agenda where previously they may not have seen the connections.

'The Children Act 2004' provides the legislative framework for the changes to services and how we deliver the Every Child Matters outcomes. It places a 'duty to co-operate' on key organisations, this includes district councils (section 10 of the Act). Partnership working, involving children and young people and parents in decision making, early intervention and preventative work form the basis for improved services and outcomes. A broader safeguarding focus including detailed guidance and acknowledgement of the role district councils already play and what is expected (section 11 of the Act) now extends to front line staff in a variety of district council services.

The major difference to how services will be delivered to children and young people to enable improved outcomes and ensure their well being in the broad sense is by service integration. One of the corner-stone of the Laming Report was to join up planning, information and delivery of services to safeguard children and young people from falling between the gaps. In response to this all local authorities will have a **Children's Trust** established by April 2008. The diagram opposite shows the key aspects of how we will be working together.

How the Children's Trust will look locally will be described in more detail in the ' Lancashire – the County context' section.





Youth Matters Green Paper July 2005 was introduced as the implementation function for the reforms described in the Children Act – from policy to practice.

There are 4 key challenges outlined in the paper:

- How to engage more young people in positive activities and empower them to shape the services

they receive

- How to encourage more young people to volunteer and become active in their communities
- How to provide better information, advice and guidance to help young people make informed choices
- How to provide better and more personalized support for each young person who has serious problems or gets into trouble



'Youth Matters – Next Steps' was published on 8 March 2006 and sets out the vision for empowering young people, giving them somewhere to go, something to do and someone to talk to. Young people will have more choice and influence over services and facilities that are available to them. It is also encouraging young people to volunteer and contribute to their local community. Youth

Matters: Next Steps forms part of the wider Government youth offer that includes better support for families, more youth friendly accessible health services and greater access to sports, culture and the arts.

Key to 'Next Steps' is the introduction of the Youth Opportunities Fund (YOF) and the Youth Capital Fund (YCF). Initially £115m was made available nationally. Applications have to come directly from young people and young people make the decisions on granting the funding.

Aiming High for Young People: a ten year strategy for positive activities July 2007 is produced by HM Treasury and the Department for Children, Schools and Families (previously DfES). As the title suggests, this strategy sets out the aspirations for services for children & young people over the next ten years. To fund this, unclaimed assets, funds that are in dormant bank accounts will be used. It is expected that the funds will be in excess of £100m.

The strategy aims to:

- Foster a more positive approach to young people across society & in particular within communities
- Increase their participation in high quality positive activities, which build resilience & social & emotional skills
- Empower young people to have greater influence over services for them, with parents & communities playing their part.

Three principles are central:

- Empowerment
- Access
- Quality

Lancashire - the County context

Lancashire County Council's Directorate for Children and Young People came into being in 2005.

Three groups headed by directors make up the new look directorate. A brief description of each with some example services is given below:

- **Children's Integrated Services (CIS)** which comprises the 'acute' end of the spectrum with services for children's social care, special educational needs (SEN), youth justice, education welfare and safeguarding.
- **Strategy and Resources** is the policy, ICT, performance, school finance group
- **Education & Standards** is where Sure Start, Early Years & Childcare Services, Strategy & Inclusion, School Effectiveness Services sit. Also in this group is the new **Integrated Youth Support Service (IYSS)** which is now starting to take shape. This new service is formed through the merger of the county council Youth & Community Service with Connexions Lancashire. Within this service there are three key delivery strands
 - **Open Access**
 - **Information Advice & Guidance**
 - **Prevention & Inclusion**

There is recognition that this new service will build on existing partnerships and develop others in order to achieve positive outcomes on these three strands which will contribute to ECM through the Children & Young People Strategic Plan and locality strategy and delivery planning.

This has been a period of extensive changes for the county council which at time of writing is still on-going. The changes have been as a result of the Children Act 2004 and the Change for Children programme which required the local authority, the county council in the case of two tier authorities, to be the lead in the following:

- Children's Trusts Arrangements
- Common Assessment Framework (CAF) – core for integrated assessment and joint work undertaken by CIS
- Information sharing and Assessment (ISA) – now known as ContactPoint – this will form the spine for details of all individual children and young people under 18 years, and will enable the various services and agencies to know who is or has been working with individuals.
- Workforce Development – ensuring that staff have the necessary skills and understanding to operate effectively in the new integrated services.

The county **Children & Young People's Plan – 'Improving the Lives of Children & Young People in Lancashire'** written in 2006 is a strategic, overarching plan for all services for children and young people in the county. The plan identifies the improvements the county council and its partners will make in relation to the Every Child Matters outcomes. The Lancashire Children & Young People Strategic Partnership (LCYPSP) has responsibility for overseeing delivery of the plan.

It provides both the county council services and 'relevant partners' as described under section 10 of the Children Act, with **28 county wide key priorities and 9 process priorities.**

The relevant key priorities and process priorities related to the 5 ECM themes for partners are listed below:

Key priorities:

- **Develop communication strategies so that partners can share information about the positive contributions made by children and young people with the communities** (positive contribution)
- **Improve provision of places to go and things to do for children and young people** (positive contribution)
- **Increase the number of children who are engaged in positive and diversionary activities (LAA)** (positive contribution)
- **Ensure that children and young people choose not to take illegal drugs, smoke or misuse alcohol** (be healthy)
- **Ensure that children and young people are safe from accidental injury and death** (stay safe)
- **Reduce fear of crime and anti social behaviour (LAA)** (stay safe)
- **Ensure that children and young people are safe from crime and anti-social behaviour in and out of school, including bullying and discrimination** (stay safe)
- **Reduce number of children and young people living in low income households – District Councils** (economic well being)

Process priority:

- **We will develop integrated processes underpinned by timely information sharing**
- **All partner organisations will consider ways and means of improving their involvement and engagement with children and young people in service monitoring and planning and in doing so must apply the principles of the Charter for Engagement**
- **All partner organisations will ensure that their service plans reflect the strategic direction set out in the CYPP**
- **Work will be carried out to improve the data available to allow more accurate targeting of services to meet need.**

Some of these priorities are coterminous with the services that the city council already delivers as its contribution towards ECM from local need analysis.

From January 2008 **Children's Trust Arrangements** in Lancashire will come into being. The model that has been agreed is that there will be the strategic Lancashire Children's Trust and a Local Children's Trust Partnership in each of the twelve districts.

The County strategic trust arrangements will:

- Define the vision
- Shape the strategy
- Build the climate
- Develop a robust needs analysis
- Plan for outcomes
- Ensure that appropriate accountabilities are secured
- Set the financial parameters
- Develop a world class workforce
- Listen to and act upon the views of children, young people and their families
- Commission for outcomes

Local Children's Trust Partnerships will:

- Contribute to the delivery of the vision and aims of the county trust
- Contribute to the Children and Young People's Plan
- Engage with children and young people
- Support the engagement of parents, carers and families
- Support the integration of key processes
- Support the integration of front line delivery

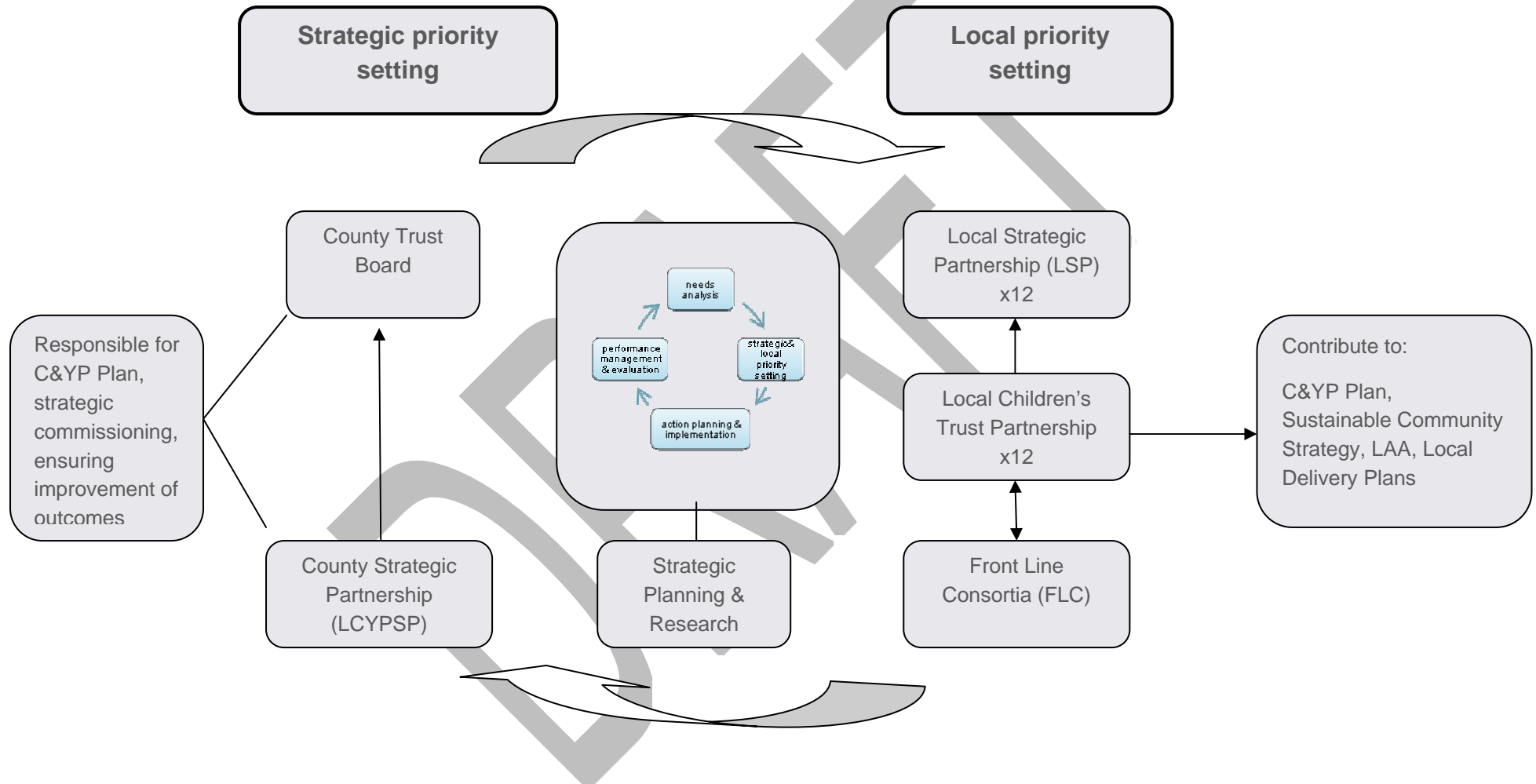
Strategic planning and research will:

- Develop excellent needs analysis and intelligence
- Manage performance and evaluation
- Commission for outcomes

What are the benefits of children's trust arrangements?

- Closer working between people that work directly with children and young people
- Better communication between the organisations that work with children and young people
- Joined up thinking, planning and acting by organisations in districts and across the county
- Organisations that work together as partners and are accountable for making sure that children and young people are: healthy, safe, achieving, having fun, involved and economically sound.

The model below shows the relationship between county and Local Children's Trust Partnerships



Local Context – what's it like in Lancaster District ?

Geography People

Lancaster District is one of the twelve districts in Lancashire. We occupy an area of 576sq km situated at the northern tip of the county and have a mix of urban, rural and coastal settlements. Wyre district is to the south, South Ribble to the south east, the Irish Sea forms the western boundary, the Cumbrian district of South Lakeland is to the south and Craven to the east.

The rural area of the district is extensive with two Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the Forest of Bowland and Arnsdale & Silverdale AONB.

The main areas of population are the historic city of Lancaster, the resort of Morecambe, Heysham with its port and the market town of Carnforth

Total population of 134,000 of which 33,650 (25%) are aged 0-19 (2001 census)

Mid year estimates 2006 show that the black and minority ethnic population of the district at 3.8% is significantly lower than the national average of 11.7%, and that the population has increased to a total of 143,000. This percentage increase is more than double the county, regional and England & Wales figures.

The district has a larger proportion of 15-24 age group than the rest of the county, this is due to the student population of the two universities, Lancaster University and the University of Cumbria (previously St Martin's College).

Transport links in the district with the region and nationally are good. The M6 connects the district with the rest of the county and with other major road networks. There are junctions with Lancaster in the south and Carnforth in the north of the district, both within a couple of miles from the town centres. The main line West Coast railway links our district with London and Glasgow and Edinburgh. The Port of Heysham provides a passenger and freight service with Ireland and the Isle of Man. Manchester and Liverpool airports are approximately 60 miles from the district. The district has a good network of cycle-ways and has recently been designated as a Cycle Demonstration Town. The cycle-ways provide an excellent alternative to car travel for both travel to work and for leisure.

Education

There are 53 primary, 10 secondary and 4 special schools in the district. Lancaster has 2 single sex selective schools - Lancaster Girl's Grammar School and Lancaster Royal Grammar School for boys that also takes boarders.

There is also the privately run Muslim Girl's School which takes its pupils from across the country.

Lancaster & Morecambe College has approximately 1,500 students aged 16 - 18 as well as a large number, 6-7,00 of adult students and part time learners.

The 2 universities also provide excellent opportunities for local young people to experience short learning opportunities in a higher education setting before reaching 18.

Health

Dental health of 5 year olds (2005-06) is shown to be better than the national average, Lancaster being one of three districts in the county where this occurred. However the dental health of older children and young people, 10-11 and 14 year olds showed to be worse than the national average.

Childhood obesity in Lancashire is slightly below the national average, with around one in nine children in Lancashire being obese, compared to more than one in eight nationally.

There is limited information currently on the frequency and effects of alcohol consumption by young people in the district, regionally the North West is seen to be average, but this is not to say that there are no health risks to young people.

Under 18 conception rates have consistently fallen in the district since the 1998 baseline figure of 46.9 per 1000 young women to 36.1 in 2005. This represents a positive 22.9% change.

The rates of sexually transmitted infection in the 16-19 age group in the North West in 2005 were the second highest of any region behind Yorkshire and Humberside. A national screening programme for Chlamydia has recently been launched with a target of screening 50% of all 15 – 24 year olds. In the quarter to the end of June 2007, approximately 2,000 people under 24 were screened in Lancashire, this represents less than 3% of the sexually active population.

Housing

Across the district there are 55,840 households of which:

7% are rented from the local authority,

3% rented from housing associations,

13% privately rented

73% owner occupied.

(2001 census figures) – need updating

The level of local authority housing stock is low and mainly centred in Lancaster, the highest level being in **Skerton West ward in Lancaster where 26% of households rent from the local authority. In the same ward there are only 3% of households that rent privately.** Compare this with similar wards in Morecambe and Heysham where the figures are reversed, **Poulton 1% local authority rented and 28% private rented, Harbour 1% local authority rented, 27% private rented, and Heysham North 0% local authority rented and 32% privately rented.**

(2001 census)

Social & Economic Deprivation

The district has not only a marked geographic mix of environment, but also significant differences economically, with areas of great affluence and areas of multiple deprivation. Lancaster district ranks 6th of the twelve county districts in terms of deprivation, but there are eight Super Output Areas (SOAs) in the district that rank in the 10% most deprived areas in England, approximately 12,500 people live in these areas, 4% of the population. Almost a third of the top fifteen most deprived SOAs fall within the **Poulton** and **Skerton West** wards, which are shown to have the highest levels of children living in workless households, approximately 580 according to 2001 census.

The level of lone parent families in Lancaster, 7.3%, is higher than Lancashire and England. The percentage of lone parent households is highest in **Skerton West, 12%, Skerton East, Harbour and Poulton have 11%, Heysham North 10%**. The income of single parent families is usually lower than families with two parents. The lower the income, the more likely that these families will be housed in poorer areas with higher levels of deprivation.

Current figures (*Revenue Services Dec 2007*) show that:

- 2595 families with one child or more are currently claiming either Housing Benefit (HB) or Council Tax Benefit (CTB) or both
- Of the 2595, 1,782 are in receipt of Income Support or Jobseekers Allowance (income based), 107 in receipt of JSA contribution based, 706 in receipt of other income (working but on low wage)
- 593 lone parents are claiming HB/CTB
- 62 young people under the age of 19 are claiming HB
- 619 young people between the ages of 19 & 25 are claiming HB

Lancaster City Council – what we do

An Overview

Children and young people are part of our communities and are members of families. How our services impact on families and wider communities also have an impact indirectly on children and young people. So, when we look at how we are contributing to the wellbeing of children and young people in our district it's necessary to look at both direct and indirect impact on their lives. In particular council housing, benefits, health and strategic housing have an indirect impact on children and young people who live in low income families by providing a range of support and improvements for the family. Planning and economic development have an impact on the environment that we live in, for both commercial and private developments and initiatives.

'**Supporting Parents & Families**' an integrated approach was developed by the LCYPSP in May 2007. There is a very clear message within the paper to the relationship between parents and families and the role that they play in design and delivery of services and also of their need for support and information. Therefore when we look at what we do in relation to services for children & young people we need to recognize that parents and families are an important part of the picture take their needs into account too.

Partnership work is not a new concept that has come with the inception of the Children's Trust, it is something that we having been involved in and are working to extend and improve upon. Some council services have developed multi agency groups to ensure cohesion in delivery and planning to avoid duplication and gaps, others work closely with other organisations in expanding direct delivery, other organizations are in receipt of grant funding from the council.

The commitment of the council towards engaging with and improving services for children & young people is clear. The core values in the current Corporate Plan specifies, '**to improve the quality of life for children and young people – we will adopt the five outcomes from Every Child Matters as guiding principles in the design and delivery of our services to young people in the district**'. Whilst not aimed at children and young people specifically the other stated values also include children and young people implicitly, as they are members of the wider community. So, we have a very clear mandate. This strategy is included in priority outcome 19 – '**develop a comprehensive corporate approach to children and young people's issues – develop and implement a children & young people's strategy**'.

One of the challenges for council services is to recognise the relationship between practice and the effects that it can have on children and young people and so how they are contributing to the children and young people agenda but more importantly how they contribute to our own strategic and corporate plans. To help this process a group of officers from across the council services meets bi-monthly (ECM Officers Group) to ensure that services are kept up to date on developments to children's services in the district, and have a forum to discuss how to best deliver their services in line with the Corporate Plan, Children &

Young People Strategy and other key strategies that relate closely to this plan, in particular, the Play Strategy, Cultural Services Strategic Plan, Homelessness Strategy and the forthcoming Domestic Violence Strategy.

The Cabinet Member for Children & Young People is kept informed of developments and issues by the Children & Young People Manager via fortnightly briefing meetings. A Cabinet Liaison group, comprising members of council and relevant officers meet regularly in order to keep updated and advised on matters relating to the council's roles and responsibilities in the ECM agenda, particularly in the emerging Children's Trust

As part of the council's commitment to meeting its duties under the Children Act 2004, a Children & Young People Manager and administrator are placed in Corporate Strategy with a remit of advising members and officers of their responsibilities and duties. The new agenda for children and young people will mean a culture shift for many services, and some new ways of operating will inevitably have to follow.

In order to get a view on what the council's contribution to ECM is the Children & Young People Manager asked every service to complete a simple pro-forma with activities, future developments and success criteria. This is the first time that a council-wide view has been sought. The following tables show the extent of work that is currently provided through a variety of services, this is a positive first step. It is expected that more evidence of related activities will be forthcoming and for the following tables not to be taken as a complete picture, it will be added to and revised regularly.

However, there are gaps, both in activities that some services deliver and also in the success criteria, where most activities are judged through feedback or participant evaluation. More work needs to be done on developing quantifiable and qualitative success criteria. There are also gaps in the column looking at how the activity links to other plans. Many strategic plans and indicators are currently under review, the LAA, the Community Strategy being most apparent. Once these have been agreed then it will be easier to link to.

As stated in the introduction, this is the first time that we have tried to get a comprehensive view of how all our services contribute to the ECM agenda. It is acknowledged that there is an amount of work still to do, but we now have a bench mark from which to work from. Subsequent plans will demonstrate progress.

Stay Safe

Action	Success criteria/ future developments	Lead	Contributing to
Safeguarding			
The council's Child Protection Policy accessible to all staff.	Staff know where to find the policy Staff have basic understanding of the policy	C&YP – Corporate Strategy	
The Child Protection Policy is regularly updated.	Review and revision once a year New rules taken into account	C&YP – Corporate Strategy	
Training is provided on Child Protection at the appropriate level	Uptake on training across all services	C&YP – Corporate Strategy & HR	
Referral arrangements in place with Children's Social Care if housing officers have concerns about the wellbeing of a child	Number of staff completed the training on Case Conference protocols (training arranged for Jan 08)	C&YP – Corporate Strategy	
All relevant staff across all council services have current CRB checks	CRB checks up to date Relevant posts identified as needing CRB	C&YP – Corporate Strategy & HR	
Provide advice on CRB checks internally & externally		C&YP – Corporate Strategy	
All council services have a designated Safeguarding officer responsible for cascading information and identifying training needs	Officers identified Training needs analysis Staff better informed	C&YP- Corporate Strategy & service heads	
Regular Safeguarding meetings with designated officers to update on new developments and address concerns.	Attendance at meetings	C&YP Corporate Strategy	

Stay Safe

Action	Success criteria	Lead	Contributing to
<u>Health & Safety in play and activities</u>			
All activities offered to children & young people are risk assessed	No preventable injuries	Cultural Services. Neighbourhood Management . Williamson Park	
Ensure parental consent and photographic consent for all activities	All young people have consent forms	All services	
Provide safe spaces for C&YP to play and stay active – sports, leisure and play facilities and supervised play schemes and after school clubs	Children & young people participate safely	Cultural services	
Provide learn to swim programmes	Numbers of young people able to swim	Cultural services	
Improve playgrounds as part of a 4 year capital programme	25 improved by 2010 to ROSPA standards	CC(D)S	
Maintain play equipment in the Park	Well maintained equipment	Williamson Park	
Liaison with county council regarding prevention of risk to children at work	Low levels of preventable accidents	Health & Strategic Housing	
Inspection of child care & leisure facilities to ensure minimum legal standards of H&S are met	Reduction in levels of accidents	Health & Strategic Housing	
Home Safety Quiz for year 6 pupils	feedback	Health & Strategic Housing	

Stay Safe

Vulnerable & Housing needs

Homelessness advisory service and help in re-housing, particularly 16-25 yr olds	Reduction in number of homeless young people	Strategic Housing team
Provision of secure accommodation & on-going support to vulnerable families	Number of families re-housed	Council Housing
Provision of housing to young people under 18yrs	Number of YP under 18 housed	Council Housing
Supporting the provision of specialist housing for young homeless people	Formal nomination agreement in place with the Foyer (future development)	Council Housing
Support for care leavers	Number of young care leavers offered supported housing as a result of referral from LCC Social Care	Council Housing
Multi-agency working to support vulnerable families in their homes	Numbers referred to panel for intervention	Council Housing
Representation on Domestic Violence forum	Access to information to inform practice	Community Safety Council Housing
Produce a Domestic Violence Strategy	Training programme agreed and staff participating have understanding and skills to deal with those experiencing domestic violence (future development)	Community Safety Domestic Violence Co-ordinator
Administer funding for the Community Safety Partnership	Reports on spend	Community Safety
Funding and planning activities for Prolific & other Priority Offenders (PPOs)	PPOs attendance. Reduction in levels of offending behaviour	Community Safety & Cultural Services

Be Healthy

Action	Success Criteria	Lead	Contributing to
Alcohol, drugs smoking			
Promotion of smoking cessation and damage from smoking	Extend service to primary schools as well as secondary (future development) Feedback from schools and students	Health & Strategic Housing	
Licensing of premises selling alcohol taking into account effects on C&YP	Reduction in numbers of young people being able to access alcohol from these premises	Legal & HR	
Health & Safety			
Basic food handling Mission Impossible programme and hand washing	Reduction in food poisoning, feedback from schools and students (currently only done by request, plan to make more widely available)	Health & Strategic Housing	
Housing			
Priority given to households with children in most housing need –using allocation system	A revised housing allocation scheme in place 2008/09 (current allocation schem to be reviewed 2007/08)	Council Housing	
Provision of Disabled Facilities Grants	Up take in grants	Strategic Housing	
Fitness			
Encourage provision of open spaces & recreation facilities in new developments	More spaces available	Planning Services	
Create opportunities for outdoor recreation through AONB partnerships	Numbers of young people participating	Planning Services	
Grants available for young people's activities	Increase level of take up	Democratic Services	
Football for all programme	Numbers of young people attending	Neighbourhood Management	
Summer sports academy at Salt Ayre	Numbers of young people attending. Evaluations	Neighbourhood Management	

Be Healthy

Developing a programme of activities through the summer encouraging sport and fitness – with the YMCA	Numbers of young people attending. evaluations	Williamson Park YMCA
Promote healthy lifestyles as part of programmes – playscheme, fitness gym and after school clubs	Numbers of children and young people accessing facilities Improvement in health	Cultural Services
Promote cycling and support the Cycling Demonstration Town Initiative	More young people cycling	Cultural Services Economic Development & Tourism

Enjoy & Achieve

Action	Success Criteria	Lead	Contributing to
Develop links with agencies providing facilities for young people with special needs	Needs are met, facilities are equally accessible	Williamson Park	
Develop links with schools to create visitor experience that meets the needs of National Curriculum	Activities fit with National Curriculum Feedback from students and schools	Williamson Park	
Provide training for young people 10-19 in sports leadership	Numbers of young people gaining qualification	Cultural Services	
Provide funding to enable targeted support through community engagement & development via Cultural Services & YMCA	Number of outcomes received	Council Housing	
Support to enable Youth games participation	Youth games successful	Democratic Services	
Provision of breakfast clubs and after school clubs	Children & young people attending. Improvement in school performance	Neighbourhood Management	
Provide learning mentors at Morecambe High School	Improvement in young people's performance	Neighbourhood Management	

Make a Positive Contribution

Action	Success Criteria/future development	Lead	Contributing to
Provide Positive Activities for young people			
Diversionsary projects in targeted areas – Ridge, Marsh & West End	Reduction in anti-social behavior Feedback (Future development -new areas to be identified through MAPS)	Leisure/Arts Development	
Play schemes provided in 8 targeted areas for 8-11 year olds	Attendance – feedback	Leisure Development	
Provide school holiday activities 5 times a year aimed at all young people 6-16	Feedback (Future development – free sessions in targeted areas)	Leisure Development	
Provide sports facilities, parks and open spaces for young people to access	This is a future development for more community play spaces at Regent Park, Highfield and Palatine	Leisure Development	
Provide festivals, competitions and events for young people	Events delivered – (future development – more co-ordination with partners)	Leisure/Arts Development	
Promote recreational facilities for young people on our council estates – either by direct provision or by supporting community groups seeking funding	Number of additional facilities provided Branksome Tenants & Residents Assoc funding application agreed	Council Housing	
Engage with young people			
Offer training opportunities on tenant involvement to young people	Young people participating in training. Young people active as tenants. Number of tenant groups engaging with young people	Council Housing	
Involve young people using innovative methods	Article published in Impact Newsletter Texting competition successful	Council Housing	
Local democracy – engagement with children & young people in primary schools, secondary schools and colleges	Number of schools wanting to participate Increased programme	C&YP – Corporate Strategy	
Engage with young people regarding provision of facilities on an estate	Young people's views acted upon	Council Housing	

Achieve Economic Wellbeing

Action	Success Criteria	Lead	Contributing to
Benefits inter-agency partnership group- to improve service delivery, seek innovative and collaborative ways of overcoming barriers to accessing benefits, establish links with hard to reach groups.	'hard to reach groups' benefiting. Agencies working together	Benefits & Customer Services	
SLA in place with Youth Offending Team – includes fast tracking system for benefit claims for vulnerable young people	Numbers of vulnerable young people benefiting	As above	
Benefit visiting officers contact with families with children, and young people to ensure they are claiming right amounts and identify gaps in benefit entitlement	Appropriate benefits claimed	As above	
HMP Lancaster Castle Visitor Centre – to deal with benefits queries from families of prisoners	Number of queries resolved	As above	
SLA in place with Health & Strategic Housing – includes fast tracking system for benefit claims from homeless/vulnerable young people	Numbers of homeless young people benefiting	As above	
Liaison with Leaving Care Co-ordinator and Strategic Housing regarding care leavers and HB and or CTB	Care leavers accessing correct benefits	As above	
Provide work experience placements across services, currently CC(D)S, Williamson Park, planning, tourism, HR & Legal, Democratic Services	Numbers of pupils accessing council placements Policy in place and guidelines for all services	HR & C&YP Manager	

Lancaster City Council – future developments

So far we have documented what we are currently doing in the city council to ensure the wellbeing of children and young people in Lancaster district. This is the first time that there has been a cross service picture. There has not been a strategic 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 integrated services through the Children's Trusts means that it is important to be able to quantify our contribution and have a robust needs analysis, planning and delivery framework. We need to be able to identify our key priorities and where we fit with the wider Children & Young People Plan to be developed for the district through the Local Children's Trust Partnership. As previously stated no one organisation operates without links to a range of other strategies, priorities, indicators and quality standards. We need to do this to provide a comprehensive and cohesive district approach to deliver a joined up service for children and young people.

At the time of writing the 35 LAA priority indicators for the county are still being negotiated, as is the LSP's Sustainable Community Strategy.. One informs the other and in turn informs the local and county strategic plans for children & young people. Once priorities and indicators are agreed we can align our plan accordingly, remembering to take account of locally identified need.

This section is looking to subsequent years, defining what the council needs to develop to be a major participant in providing services and also in developing strategic and management policies and protocols.

Key priorities for development.

Children & Young People Engagement Strategy (Making a Positive Contribution)

***'all children and young people have the right to say what they think should happen, when adults are making decisions that affect them and to have their opinions taken into account'* (article 12 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989)**

Currently we do not have any guidelines, protocols or cohesion in how or if we involve children and young people in any of our services. There are a number of factors that need consideration when deciding what is needed, hence a comprehensive 'Children & Young People Engagement Strategy' will provide clarity in the who, why, what and how of involving children and young people. As a council we need to have a consistency and quality in our approaches to involving children and young people meaningfully. This is not to say that everyone/every service has to do everything the same way, quite the opposite. By developing a shared understanding of what 'engagement', 'involvement', 'participation' means we can then move onto developing a menu of opportunities for children and young people's involvement. In all our developments and discussions regarding children and young people's engagement we have to look at the

'**Lancashire Children & Young People's Charter**' a document written by young people describing how services should engage with children & young people to make it possible for them to have meaningful participation.

As briefly mentioned in the introduction to this strategy, children and young people's involvement in the planning, design and delivery of services is not only expected but essential in ensuring that services meet their needs and expectations and those of their families. The principles of engagement are prominent in government thinking, the Green Paper '**The Governance of Britain**' highlights the move to making public involvement central to creating better communities. A Children & Young People Engagement Strategy will inevitably be part of a wider Community Engagement Strategy that is also being developed within the council.

Any engagement strategy has to take account of what is already provided by other agencies and organizations in the district. Currently there are school councils, a district youth council, members of the youth parliament, stakeholder groups, ad hoc groups, student bodies etc. So, there are a number of existing means of getting young people's views and for the young people to effect elements of change within their host organization.

With the co-operation of potential partners such as County Council IYSS, YMCA, Signpost, YOT, schools and colleges along with others, we can investigate how to move engagement forward in the district, developing existing groups and starting new initiatives.

The focus for the in the next year is to look at the feasibility of a **Young Advisor** scheme which would be an innovative move forward, providing an opportunity for a number of partners to share resourcing to build a team of young people who would :

- Raise awareness of young people's issues
- Link decision makers and young people
- Support adults in engaging with young people
- Break down barriers
- 'youth proof' documents
- Have a young person perspective
- Be role models for other young people in their communities

Involving children and young people has to be more than general consultation. There has to be a mean for young people to be pro-active in raising issues rather than being a passive respondent to issues raised by others, usually councils and other large organizations. By the city council initiating the concept of Young Advisors and the engagement strategy in the district there is a very clear message as to our commitment to the real involvement and contribution that children & young people make to council services.

Enabling Young People to be Ready for Work (Achieve Economic Wellbeing)

Employers are still questioning the 'employability' skills of many young people, particularly those young people who are looked after and in the children's social care system, and those from low income, economically deprived areas and families.

There are a number of ways to help young people gain skills, access information and make decisions about what direction they want to take relating to the world of work. Through this priority we will be focusing on the role that the city council can take in:

- offering work experience placements,
- assessed college related placements and apprenticeships
- better publicising the roles and functions of the various services within the council.

How does this priority fit the wider picture? Getting young people into education, employment or training means a reduction in the NEET figures (not in education, employment or training) which is a current LAA (Local Area Agreement) stretch target, with Lancaster district having 10.9% NEET in July 2007 against a Nov 07-Jan08 target of 6.4%. '**Building Brighter Futures**' the government's Children's Plan sets out the goals that the government expects to be achieved by 2020 one of which is '*employers satisfied with young people's readiness for work*'.

Many young people do not have sufficient information about jobs to be able to make a choice based on anything other than supposition and second-hand information. Many of the services that the city council provides are not recognised by the public, so it is in our best interests to provide some kind of publicity that would achieve positive outcomes – informing young people and their families of the range of diverse roles that are available in the council and give young people an insight for what they might like to try as part of their work experience.

A corporate policy with guidance on how we engage with schools, young people and other agencies in regard to work experience will form the central tenet of this priority area. Additional to this there will be research and relevant proposals for increasing the numbers of young people either employed or employed on apprenticeship schemes.

Currently Lancaster City Council has only one apprentice (Nov 2007) this is from a workforce of 950 (850 FTE). By having more young people on apprenticeship schemes the council would be setting an example for other businesses to encourage young people into the workforce.

We can build on our relationship with Lancaster & Morecambe College by offering assessed placements (where appropriate) and also by offering to do periodic inputs to the student body on various job roles and functions within the council.

We can also work more closely with Lancashire Education Business Partnership (LEBP) who work directly with schools to ensure that our provision matches district demand and that placements are created where reasonably necessary. By engaging with LEBP we can also offer 'mock interview days' and sessions where pupils are given clear information of the subjects required to pursue a specific career.

Schools will be introducing diplomas in a range of occupational sectors from 2008. Phase 3 by 2010 includes diplomas in **public services, retail, travel & tourism, sport & leisure**. This is very clearly our core business, and we need to have the appropriate systems and processes in place to be able to offer quality placement opportunities to any young people studying these subject areas, therefore we need to start developing this area as soon as possible.

Safeguarding (Stay Safe)

We have made considerable progress in the area of safeguarding. There is a Lancaster City Council Child Protection Policy, training has taken place for appropriate staff, staff are CRB checked and there are designated child protection officers in each service. Regular quarterly meetings between the designated officers and the Children & Young People Manager offer the opportunity for updated information to be disseminated and issues to be discussed across the table.

However, there is more work to be done and this is a definite priority area as safeguarding is a duty for district councils under section 11 of the Children Act 2004 – ***‘to make arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children’***.

The following are points that will be considered when developing our safeguarding responsibilities:

- The council's Child Protection Policy will be reviewed in May 2008. At this time young people will be involved in any re-writing to ensure that the document is appropriate and accessible to young people as they need to have an awareness of what processes are in place to protect and safeguard them. This links with how we engage with children and young people and involve them meaningfully in developing services.
- The policy will also have to take account of the changes introduced by new **Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA)** scheme that will be introduced nationally in autumn 2008. The **Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006** provides the legislative framework for the new ISA scheme.
- Work with HR on identifying new processes to comply with ISA scheme as the council as an employer has a legal obligation to recruit ISA registered staff, both paid and unpaid. This will mean developing a matrix type system to identify job roles that would require registration for consistency across all council services; system developed that will ensure the need for ISA registration is clear on all job advertisements, job descriptions and person specifications. Not complying with this new scheme can result in fines and/or imprisonment.
- There needs to consistency in dissemination of the policy to all staff, currently there is variance on how effective this is. One possible solution is to have child protection included in induction processes.
- Ensure safe working practices for both council employees and customers, linking particularly with policy on supervising work experience with either vulnerable young people and/or vulnerable adults.

Promoting Positive Activities (Make a Positive Contribution & Enjoy and Achieve)

We have a full programme of activities and events for children and young people in the district, most of which is delivered by our Cultural Services staff. There is an element of targeting diversionary activities to specific groups and geographic areas as well as providing a universal service. This is certainly an area of work where we excel. However, there are aspects that will benefit from further development:

- ❖ Development of systems that will identify numbers of young people accessing the services, not the number of attendances
- ❖ Extending activities to more identified areas of need
- ❖ Using intelligence from a range of sources to target groups/areas more effectively
- ❖ Continue to increase levels of participation
- ❖ Develop new ways of involving young people that will link to the engagement strategy
- ❖ Involving young people to design innovative publicity as part of the wider Publicising Positive Activities that has to be complied by the county, but also for local use

DRAFT