

EXECUTIVE MEMBER ANNUAL REPORT – 2008/09

COUNCILLOR JANE FLETCHER, CABINET MEMBER WITH SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR ARTS, MUSEUMS, LEISURE, SPORT AND YOUNG PEOPLE



1 EXECUTIVE MEMBERSHIP:

- Cabinet
- Children and Young People Cabinet Liaison Group

2 EXECUTIVE APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES etc:

- Groundwork Lancashire West and Wigan
- Lancaster University Public Arts Strategy Committee
- LSP Children and Young People Thematic Group
- Museums Advisory Panel
- Cycling Demonstration Town Board

3 OVERVIEW OF PORTFOLIO RESPONSIBILITIES

Arts
Museums
Leisure
Sport
Young People

CORPORATE PLAN PRIORITY OUTCOMES:

Contribute to health improvement and reduce health inequalities through both delivery of our own services and our work with partners:

- *Improve the quality of activity for children and young people and raise the standards of delivery of PE and out of hours opportunities across the district.*

Work to maintain a cohesive community where respect for all is valued and celebrated:

- *Implement the Children and Young People Strategic Plan.*

4 PROGRESS MADE DURING 2008/9

Headline Issues for Cultural Services

Quarter 1:-

- Completion of pool changing rooms refurbishment
- Appointment of 2 new Play Rangers
- Successful school holidays arts and leisure activity programmes
- Alan Dix of "509 Arts" appointed to assist in the production of a new district wide Arts Strategy

Quarter 2:-

- Successful summer playscheme programme
- Volunteer "gardener" initiative launched for Happy Mount Park
- Dome, Platform and Key Cultural Partners (Dukes, Litfest, Storey, More Music and LUDUS) all record successful spring/summer programmes, whilst the Festivals & Events section enjoy a successful Festival and Events Programme – including "We do like to be beside the Seaside" festival , as well as assisted events such as the Sandcastle Festival and the Kite Festival.

Quarter 3:-

- Lancaster identified as the only district in Lancashire to record "significant" increase in sports and physical activity participation – Sport England "Active People 2" survey
 - Adult participation in sport – increased by 6.2%
 - Club Membership – increased by 5.1%
 - Organised Competition – increased by 5.2%
- Council adopt the free swimming for the over 60's from April 2009 at Salt Ayre Sports Centre and the 3 Community Pools

Children and Young People

This is the first year of working to the Children and Young People Strategic Plan that was approved by Cabinet in January 2008. The Action Plan for 2008/09 focuses on developing priorities specified in the Strategic Plan, described and monitored by working to the following 5 aims:

1. To Ensure that Lancaster City Council Fulfils its Duty to Co-Operate Under The Children Act 2004

The Children and Young People Manager has participated in district, county and regional groups in order to be able to advise and inform services and members of new developments and requirement; ensuring that local perspectives are included in county work and that improvements are made in council run/funded provision.

- **Every Child Matters (ECM) Leads Group** – representatives from the 12 District/Borough Councils in Lancashire meet to ensure that tier 2 councils are working coherently within the new Children's Trusts, are all aware of new developments/legislation, have the opportunity of offering support by sharing information and best practice examples.
- **Involving Children and Young People Steering Group** – a relatively new countywide group set up to embed the Lancashire Children and Young People's Charter in all organisations across the county. (More information regarding this later in Youth Engagement section) The Children and Young People Manager represents the council and also the other district councils on this group.
- The C&YP Manager sits in the **Lancaster District Children's Trust** and was involved in organising the launch of the Trust in January 2009 and led a task and finish group on assessing the levels of engagement/participation across the district. The council is the lead organisation for priority '*To increase the number of cultural and leisure opportunities for children and young people in order to increase their participation in positive activities*'

The **Children and Young People Officer Group** is a cross service group that has been made up from the 'old' ECM officer group and safeguarding group in the council. It was decided that it was more effective to have one group rather than duplicating some issues and having more than one representative from services. It has been further agreed that there will be an 'executive group' made up of service representatives who have the most contact or involvement with children and young people.

All services have a Children and Young People officer who has the responsibility of cascading information to their services and bringing issues back to the group and/or the Children and Young People team.

Work is continuing to ensure that services acknowledge the work they do with children and young people in their service business plans.

In order to monitor and bench mark the amount of work and the variety of work that different services do it is hoped to introduce a basic 'monitoring form'. This will provide the council with consistency and a comprehensive set of data.

In addition to the information to services through the officer group there has been an article in News 'n' Views in October 2008 about the work done on the Local Democracy Campaign, an article in First Brief and information sessions delivered to the Consultation Champions group and Council Housing staff and a training session for members.

The Children and Young People page on the intranet has been reviewed and renewed with links to minutes and external websites included. The page on the council's website has also been revamped to include more information. This is regularly up-dated.

2. To Ensure the Council Fulfils its Duty in Safeguarding and Contributing to the Wellbeing of Children and Young People

Safeguarding children and young people continues to be a priority for the council. Child protection training sessions have been offered, but there has been a low uptake to the corporate training. A reminder will go to services for this EDPA round.

The summer play-schemes had information packs and leaflets at each venue (funded by C&YP budget) alongside internal training for the play leaders

The council's current Child Protection Policy was used as an example of good practice through a presentation made to the ECM Leads group by the Children and Young People Manager. It was subsequently used to form the basis of Hyndburn's policy.

Under current legislation 'safeguarding' includes more than 'child protection'. It has a wider remit in ensuring the safety and wellbeing of children and young people, and using preventative measures as well as interventions. Nationally there is a new framework that all organisations need to sign up to – **Common Assessment Framework (CAF)**. The council was the first district council in county to sign up to the CAF.

The CAF uses Lancashire Continuum of Need to indicate the level of support a child and/or family will require. Using the CAF referral system has replaced the system that staff have been using for a long time. Therefore training sessions have been organised by the Children and Young People Team for all relevant services delivered by the locality CAF Support Officer

A new **Safeguarding Children Policy and Guidance** document has been drafted and sent to all council services and external colleagues for consultation. This new policy will safeguard staff as well as children and young people by giving clear guidance on behaviour and code of conduct, training and recruitment and selection guidance. Children and young people will benefit from the addition of an anti-bullying and positive behaviour guidance.

The council has not had consistency in processes or procedures for young people who are short work experience placements. This new policy provides clear guidance on how to organise and operate a safe experience for young people.

The new child protection and CAF processes are clearly laid out for staff to follow. The processes have changed considerably since the previous Child Protection Policy was written, so it was important that this new policy reflected the most up to date systems.

3. To Develop Local Democracy Activities

The Children and Young People Manager has taken the responsibility for co-ordinating the Local Democracy activities that take place during October. A group of officers from services who deliver the activities met to discuss and plan activities for 2008. Evaluation forms for participants are now used for each event with the results collated and used to inform improvements to the activities.

It was agreed that in future years the council would provide activities throughout the year rather than just during the National Democracy Week, having a **Local Democracy Campaign**. A 'menu' of activities and opportunities will be devised and go to Business Committee.

New banners for displays have been bought, giving a corporate feel to all Local Democracy publicity and information.

The 'Mock Council' event at Morecambe Town Hall was enjoyed by 28 year 7 pupils from Morecambe High School and 28 pupils from Heysham High School. This is the first year that secondary age pupils have participated.

There were two days of activities based on 'environment' and the roles of council services attended by year 6 pupils from four primary schools in the district – 29 from

Moorside Primary, 42 from Bolton-le-Sands Primary, 16 from St Bernadette's Catholic primary and 7 from Stepping Stones School.

New this year was a 'Working for the Council' session where 11 year 10 pupils from Skerton High School learnt about application forms, interview techniques and the variety of opportunities in the council.

4. To Develop a Youth Engagement Strategy (YES)

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

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 'Youth 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.

Special Council in October 2008 provided the platform for starting the process of developing such a strategy.

There were 37 young people from 12 secondary schools, colleges and organisations participating in the day which was based on 'localising' the '**Lancashire Children and Young People's Charter**' a document written by young people describing how services should engage with children and young people to make it possible for them to have meaningful participation.

The aim of the day was '*To provide a forum for dialogue between elected members and young people from across the district. It is envisaged that this will be the beginning of regular exchanges of views and ideas.*'

The evaluations of young people, facilitators and members will provide the framework for the YES. This will be going to consultation in April 2009.

A DVD of the day's events will be available for organisations, schools, participants, services and members before the end of March 2009.

5. To Improve Access and Take up of Positive Activities, Including Sports, Cultural and Leisure Activities

Please see information from Cultural Services.

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