

# Annual Report

Councillor Joyce Taylor, Champion for Children and Young People

I am delighted to present my second Annual Report as Champion for Children and Young People.

## **Children and Young People's Trust**

The council continues to support the Lancaster District Children and Young People's Trust (LDCYPT), working closely with a wide range of partners to develop priorities and identify opportunities for projects and commissioning. The LDCYPT is one of the key partnerships the council has identified to support, and in particular the council is working with Lancashire County Council to ensure that the joint co-ordination arrangements continue to work well.

In April, through consultation events with trust members and young people living in the district, priorities were selected concentrating on five key issues taken from the countywide Children and Young People's Plan. These formed the basis of the 2013/14 action plan that the Trust has delivered on.

## **Working Together With Families**

In 2013/14 Lancaster City Council continued to support the 'Working Together with Families' project in the district. Together with early support and the roll out of the revised Common Assessment Framework and Continuum of Need, the project helps to provide a support network for those families, children and young people that require extra help.

This partnership approach is focused on better outcomes for the families involved, and also on reducing the financial burden on public organisations. A key element is the single 'lead professional' for each family, with whom they can build a trusting relationship and who acts as a gateway to services. This project is also benefitting from government financial rewards for successfully supporting families with issues around crime, worklessness and educational attainment.

## **The Summer Holiday Activities Programme**

The Summer Holiday Activities Programme was produced with funding from Lancashire's Children and Young People Trust and combined activities for children and young people provided by the City Council, along with those being offered in the district by partner organisations. The result was a comprehensive brochure which was an asset to families in the district, providing a central resource on available activities during the summer holidays.

## **The Children and Young People's Multi Agency Forum**

This forum was held five times over the year, with administrative support provided by the council's Children and Young People's Administrator. It continues to provide a valuable opportunity for people working with children and young people in the district to share

information and ideas, and keep in touch with what other organisations are providing in the way of activities and services for particular need and client groups.

This forum is a successful example of agencies and individuals working together practically and effectively.

### **Safeguarding and Child Protection**

The council's Safeguarding arrangements for children and young people have been updated and refreshed during 2013/14 to meet current requirements. The Safeguarding Policy is now easy to read and follow should an incident arise, and includes an online reporting form designed to simplify the process by which staff can report safeguarding concerns or queries.

Training has been provided for service 'Safeguarding Leads', who continue to be key contacts for sourcing advice for supporting staff and members who have safeguarding concerns. Further awareness sessions are planned for other key staff within the council.

The authority continues to give particular attention to the Lancashire Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) Section 11 Audit, which ensures that Safeguarding is at the forefront of all council activities and that such procedures and practises are an integral part of our business.

### **Local Democracy Campaign**

During October 2013 Morecambe Town Hall hosted a 'Pupil Power Day' attended by sixty year 6 Primary pupils from six schools across the district. This provided an excellent opportunity for young people to meet councillors and officers, and find out how a district council works, and how decisions are made about budgets and service provision.

During the afternoon the young people and councillors took part in a mock election and mock council in the council chamber, allowing the pupils to experience how the voting process works and how decisions are made in council meetings, and provide a small taste of what it is like to be a councillor. Outstanding feedback was received from everyone who took part.

### **Career Events**

The council have continued to participate in school careers events, with visits including Central High, Carnforth, Morecambe, Our Lady's and Lancaster and Morecambe College. The aim is to inform pupils and their parents about the variety of job roles performed by the council, to give advice on careers within the council, and to promote us as an employer. These events always generate lots of interest from pupils and their parents.

### **Apprenticeships**

The council are well into the second year of apprenticeships, creating opportunities for local young people to train and learn in a working environment. Apprenticeships have been provided them in many different areas of the council, for example:

- We were the first organisation to start an apprenticeship on the Business Administration Legal Pathway and currently have a young person studying this course.
- In ICT, our apprentice recently successfully completed the IT, Software, Web and Telecoms qualification.
- In Grounds Maintenance two apprentices are close to completing a year and a half placement with the council.
- In Vehicle Maintenance our apprentice is close to completing a course in vehicle maintenance, and has won prizes with his training provider due to the high standard of his work.