

CABINET

9 APRIL 2019

DRAFT MEDWAY CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S PLAN 2019-2024

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Andrew Mackness, Children's Services –
Lead Member

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Summary

The draft Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) sets key strategic priorities for partnership action to improve outcomes for Medway's children and young people and help them achieve their potential. It maintains Medway Council's momentum in promoting good practice as well as its commitment to ensuring a child-focused future for Medway. Central to this is that the Council helps Medway's children and young people to be "Thriving, Healthy and Learn Well". This report provides a copy of the draft plan at Appendix 1 to the report.

1. Budget and Policy Framework

- 1.1 The Medway Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) previously formed part of the Council's Policy Framework for its previous two iterations. There is no longer a statutory requirement to produce a Children and Young People's Plan. This latest iteration has been produced in compliance with the Council's Budget and Policy Framework. Approval of the CYPP is a matter for Cabinet.
- 1.2 Elements of the CYPP are drawn from the Council's Council Plan, as well as the family of strategies that form the existing policy framework for Children's Services such as:
- SEND and Inclusion Strategy
 - LAC Strategy
 - MSCB Strategic Plan
 - Youth Justice Partnership Plan
 - Early Help Strategy
 - Skills and Employability Plan
 - Education Strategy

2. Background / Context

- 2.1 The CYPP was launched in 2009 and refreshed once in 2011 before the Government revoked the regulations for Local Authorities to be required to produce a CYPP unless they wish to do so. The revoking of these regulations meant that when the latest iteration lapsed in 2014, the plan was not renewed. However, this provides Medway with an opportunity to create an innovative new approach with this CYPP.
- 2.2 In this current environment, there are a number of key challenges that require a whole-system approach, across social care, health, police and education to ensure the best possible outcomes for children and young people. With increased financial constraints on budgets, against rapidly increasing demand in some areas and increasing complexity of need across the Council's service user cohort, the situation is requiring creative attitudes with regard to organisational change.
- 2.3 Delivering improved outcomes for children and families requires an approach where the Council leads a multi-agency approach to planning and delivery – ensuring the provision of “strong, strategic local leadership and development of an increasingly autonomous and diverse education and children’s services sector”¹. We have sought to draw together key leaders from health, care, police and education services across the Children’s sector into the Medway Children and Young People’s Strategic Transformation Board (“The Board”) to ultimately improve outcomes for children and young people in line with the Council’s duty under Section 10 of the Children Act 2004 to “co-operate to improve children’s wellbeing”².
- 2.4 Section 10 of the Children Act 2004 places a duty on local authorities and certain named partners (including health) to co-operate to improve children’s well-being. The Director of Children’s Service DCS and Lead Member for Children’s Services (LMCS) must lead, promote and create opportunities for co-operation with local partners (for example, health, police, schools, housing services, early years, youth justice, probation, higher and further education, and employers) to improve the well-being of children and young people. Local authorities must also establish local co-operation arrangements to reduce child poverty, prepare and publish a local child poverty needs assessment, and prepare a local child poverty strategy.³
- 2.5 Following the Wood Review in 2016 and subsequent revision of the ‘Working Together’ Guidance, the Council, along with the Police and the Clinical Commissioning Group now have a statutory duty to create a safeguarding partnership. In Medway, the new safeguarding partnership will also report into the Board.
- 2.6 The Board will strengthen joint working for both planning and delivery ensuring that key partners across the whole Medway system for children’s services through a strong partnership approach. This will improve communication and engagement not only between organisations, but also

¹ Directors of children’s services: roles and responsibilities (2013)

² Directors of children’s services: roles and responsibilities (2013)

³ Directors of children’s services: roles and responsibilities (2013)

with key stakeholders. This will enable partners to speak collectively with a shared vision that has been developed together with key agreed strategic priorities that can be taken forward through an annual business plan.

3. Advice and analysis

- 3.1 The new Plan will be championed by the Medway Children and Young People's Strategic Transformation Board, to improve outcomes for Medway's children and young people. It will also allow the Council to identify and maximise its individual and collective organisational resources and commission jointly where appropriate to get the best value for each pound spent.
- 3.2 The CYPP is the shared vision for everyone working with children and young people in Medway. It sets out the vision for Medway to have a child-focused future in which all children and young people are 'thriving, healthy and learning well'. The draft CYPP is presented in Appendix 1 to the report.
- 3.3 The new Plan covers the period 2019 to 2024 and takes account of the current national picture, and evolving local challenges. Changes to the previous priorities and indicators from the 2011-2014 Plan reflect the Council's renewed commitment to the children and young people of Medway.
- 3.4 The Plan focuses on three key outcomes for children and young people in Medway:
 - Thriving in Our Community
 - A Healthy Start
 - Learning Well

This will provide a high-level framework for helping children and young people in Medway to achieve their potential. The Plan will be used to inform commissioning in the children's services system. Achieving these high level outcomes form strategic objectives.

- 3.5 The 10 priorities within the Plan, with a number of associated key actions, reflect those areas where the Council and its partners need to work together to achieve real progress on behalf of children and young people in Medway.
- 3.6 Appendix 1 to the report contains the proposed draft Plan (including priorities and indicators) that will be consulted on (details regarding engagement are set out in section 5 of the report). When the final version has Cabinet approval it will be taken forward as a high level strategic approach for Children's Services in Medway. The draft Plan has re-focused the priorities from its 2011 counterpart, coalesced the previous 14 priorities into ten, and attached a set of indicators to measure the impact of these priorities.
- 3.7 A Diversity Impact Assessment is set out at Appendix 2 to the report.

4. Risk management

Risk	Description	Action to avoid or mitigate risk	Risk rating
The Children and Young People's Sector does not engage with the Strategy	The Children and Young People's Sector is not responsive to the needs of the community or influencing the planning of services by statutory agencies	Establish strong communication arrangements (primarily through the Children's Strategic Transformation Board) to ensure delivery of the outcomes in the Strategy	D1
Inadequate Resourcing	The Children and Young People's Sector is unable to achieve the outcomes of the Strategy due to lack of resources.	Clear and Robust action planning to ensure proper use of resources targeted to achieve the agreed priorities with in the strategy.	C2

4.1 Regular reporting is the key to ensuring that outcomes are improving and that challenges are swiftly identified and remedial action is taken to mitigate the negative impact of those challenges.

4.2 It is intended that there will be a short annual report to Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny Committee on progress with the strategic Plan. The Medway Children and Young People Strategic Transformation Board, chaired by the Lead Member, will also receive six-monthly updates on the progress against the priorities.

5. Consultation

5.1 The CYPP has strategic priorities that will ultimately affect a wide range of stakeholders. This includes children, parents, professionals, providers, regulators/Ofsted/CQC/HMIP, and politicians.

5.2 The draft CYPP is the strategic plan developed by members of the Children and Young People's Delivery Board. Those members have overseen the development of the Plan through strategic workshops. This brings together voices from across the children's sector and beyond, including elected members, education and public health. This Plan, when finalised, will be championed by the multi-agency Medway Children and Young People's Strategic Transformation Board.

5.3 It is recognised that at this time young people, parents and carers and other stakeholders have not yet been fully consulted on this draft Plan. There is a plan in place to ensure that the voice of children and young people, along with parents/carers and partners is at the centre of the approach through engagement and a full consultation period will take place for a minimum period of six weeks. After this, a finalised Plan will be reported back to Cabinet for final approval.

6. Health and Wellbeing Board – 19 February 2019

- 6.1 The Health and Wellbeing board considered the draft Children and Young People's Plan 2019-2024 at its meeting on 19 February 2019. The draft minutes of this meeting are set out below.
- 6.2 The Deputy Director, Children and Adults Services introduced the report which presented, at Appendix 1, the draft Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) 2019 to 2024. She explained to the Board that the Plan was considered to be a vehicle to maintain Medway's momentum in promoting good practice and ensuring a child focused future for Medway. The Plan focussed on three key outcomes for children and young people, these were: "Thriving in our Community", "A Healthy Start" and "Learning Well". More generally, the Plan took account of the current national picture and evolving local challenges and was split broadly into two sections, namely "what is driving us" and "where we want to be".
- 6.3 The Deputy Director, Children and Adults Services drew the Board's attention to paragraph 4.2 of the report, which set out the proposed reporting lines to the Cabinet and the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee, in addition to the Children and Young People's Strategic Transformation Board, which would champion the Plan.
- 6.4 A Member expressed his support for the Plan and in particular the key themes set out in the section on education. The Member highlighted a series of points for consideration, as follows:
- Referring to page 259 of the agenda (page 25 of the Plan), it was highlighted that the objective "Increase the uptake of high quality early education" was not supported by a specific success factor.
 - Referring to page 260 of the agenda (page 26 of the Plan), it was noted that the success factor "Progress 8 score at key stage 4" was a measure of value added by the secondary schools but not a measure of achievement of the education sector.
- 6.5 On this basis, the Deputy Director, Children and Adults Services undertook to review the success factors.
- 6.6 The Health and Wellbeing Board:
- a) commented, as set out within the minute, on the draft Medway Children and Young People's Plan set out at Appendix 1 to the report;
 - b) noted the planned consultation with children and young people and other stakeholders as outlined in section 5 of the report; and
 - c) agreed to add consideration of the final Medway Children and Young People's Plan, post consultation, to the Board's work programme for 2 July 2019.

7. Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee

- 7.1 The Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the draft CYPP at its meeting on 7 March 2019. The draft minute setting out the discussion on this item is set out below.
- 7.2 The Deputy Director introduced the report which set out the draft Children and Young People's Plan, including the key strategic priorities for partnership action to improve outcomes for Medway's children and young people and help them achieve their potential. She highlighted the three key outcomes detailed in the plan, along with key priorities and actions, which were all detailed in the plan, attached at Appendix 1 to the report.
- 7.3 Members then raised a number of questions and comments, which included:
- **Attendance at Children and Family hubs** – in response to a comment made about attendance at the hubs, officers confirmed that work was underway to capture data about attendance and usage of the Children and Family Hubs to measure success.
 - **Deliverability of the plan's ambitions** – in response to a concern raised about the deliverability of the aims and priorities in the plan, particularly those relating to 0-5 year olds, the Deputy Director confirmed that the plan was for all partners and that the universal offer was delivered across organisations, including the community and voluntary sector. Signposting to ensure people get the service they need was paramount.
 - **Participation of Children and Young People in the Plan** – in response to a question about participation, officers confirmed that this was a draft plan which would be consulted on in a meaningful way and would run for a minimum of six weeks. Officers also undertook to strengthen in the plan the voice of children and young people and its impact.
 - **Youth Service Offer** – in response to a question about how young people from low income families could be supported to access and engage in youth services and activities, officers confirmed that the Youth Service was very successful and played a key role in engaging young people and occupying them, which helped prevent them from engaging in gangs and crime. It was added that Looked After Children received free access to leisure centre facilities.
 - **Community and Voluntary Sector** – building on from the role the community and voluntary sector play in youth service provision, comment was made about the wide range of support services available in the community and voluntary sector for families, including those more vulnerable or harder to reach communities and it was important to be inclusive with all organisations to work in partnership to deliver the best outcomes for all children and young people.
- 7.4 The Committee noted the planned consultation with children and young people and other stakeholders as outlined in section 5 of the report, which would be reported back to the Cabinet when it considers a final CYPP for approval.

8. Governance Pathway for agreeing draft CYPP for consultation

Committee / Board	Meeting Date
Health and Wellbeing Board	19/02/2019
CYP Overview and Scrutiny Committee	07/03/2019
Cabinet (agree draft plan for consultation)	09/04/2019

9. Implications for Looked After Children (LAC)

9.1 The Medway LAC Strategy and its priorities feed into the CYPP. This is a Plan for all children and young people.

10. Financial implications

10.1 There are no specific financial implications as a result of this report.

11. Legal implications

11.1 The statutory requirement for a Children and Young People's Plan was revoked in 2010 and statutory guidance requiring Local Authorities to have a Children and Young People's Plan was removed by the Government in 2011. Whilst, there is no longer a requirement for Local Authorities to have such a document, they may choose to do so where it makes sense locally in order to identify and formalise commitments. Approval of the CYPP is a matter for Cabinet.

12. Recommendations

12.1 The Cabinet is asked to:

12.1.1 Note the comments of the Health and Wellbeing Board, as set out in section 6 of the report;

12.1.2 Note the comments of the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee, as set out in Section 7 of the report; and

12.1.3 Agree that the draft Children and Young People's Plan, attached at Appendix 1, be consulted on as set out at Section 5 of the report, before being reported back to the Cabinet for final approval.

13. Reasons for decisions

13.1 The CYPP will provide a high-level framework for helping children and young people in Medway to achieve their potential and be used to inform commissioning in the children's services system.

13.2 Consultation of the draft plan will ensure that the voice of children and young people, along with parents/carers and partners is at the centre of the approach.

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Appendices

Appendix 1 – Medway Children and Young People’s Plan

Appendix 2 – Diversity Impact Assessment

Background Papers

Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) -

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/729914/Working_Together_to_Safeguard_Children-2018.pdf

Directors of children’s services: roles and responsibilities (2013) -

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/271429/directors_of_child_services_-_stat_guidance.pdf