

## **CABINET**

**19 NOVEMBER 2019**

### **MEDWAY CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S PLAN 2019-2021**

Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Mrs Josie Iles – Portfolio Holder for Children's Services (Lead Member)
Report from:	Ian Sutherland, Director of People – Children and Adults Services
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#### **Summary**

This report provides the Cabinet with the outcome of the consultation on the draft Children and Young People's Plan. The Plan has also been considered by the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Health and Wellbeing Board.

The 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". A copy of the updated Plan is attached at Appendix 1 to the report.

#### **1. Budget and Policy Framework**

- 1.1 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.
- 1.2 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.
- 1.3 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:
  - Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and Inclusion Strategy

- Looked after Children (LAC) Strategy
- Medway Safeguarding Children Partnership (MSCP) Arrangements
- Youth Justice Partnership Plan
- Early Help Strategy
- Skills and Employability Plan

## 2. Background

- 2.1 There are a number of areas 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 against both increasing demand and increasing complexity of need across the Council's service user cohort, the situation is requiring creative attitudes with regard to organisational change.
- 2.2 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”<sup>1</sup>. 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 to 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”<sup>2</sup>.
- 2.3 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.<sup>3</sup>
- 2.4 Following the 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, Medway Safeguarding Children Partnership will champion this Strategy.
- 2.5 The Plan 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 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.

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<sup>1</sup> Directors of children's services: roles and responsibilities (2013)

<sup>2</sup> Directors of children's services: roles and responsibilities (2013)

<sup>3</sup> Directors of children's services: roles and responsibilities (2013)

2.6 The Cabinet agreed to consult on a draft plan at its meeting on 9 April 2019. This was following consideration of the draft CYPP by the Health and Wellbeing Board and Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 19 February 2019 and 7 March 2019 respectively. The minutes of these meetings are included as Appendix 4 to the report.

### **3. Advice and analysis**

3.1 The new Plan, in Appendix 1, will be championed by the Medway Children Safeguarding Partnership, 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 updated CYPP is presented in Appendix 1 to the report.

3.3 The Plan covers the period 2019 to 2021 and takes account of the current national picture and evolving local challenges.

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

3.4.1 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 presents the Plan (including priorities) that has been updated following consultation. When the final version has Cabinet approval it will be taken forward as a high-level strategic approach for Children's Services in Medway. A plan on the page is also attached as Appendix 2 to the report.

3.7 A Diversity Impact Assessment is set out at Appendix 5 to the report.

### **4. Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 25 July 2019**

4.1 The Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered this report and the Plan on 25 July 2019. The comments of this Committee are as follows:

4.2 The Director of People – Children and Adults, introduced the report which provided the Committee with the outcome of consultation on the draft Children and Young People’s Plan (CYPP) and the updated draft CYPP was attached at Appendix 1 to the report. He explained that consultation was ongoing and confirmed that responses from Medway Youth Council had since been received and would be reviewed and incorporated into the plan before final approval by Cabinet in October.

4.3 Members then raised a number of comments and questions, which included:

4.3.1 **Representing the voice of children with additional need** – concern was raised about how consultation with children and young people with disabilities and additional needs would be carried out as it was felt these were unlikely to be represented by the Citizens Advice Panel. Officers confirmed that consultation was taking place with a group of young people with disabilities and had also taken place with the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Improvement Board, membership of which included two young people with disabilities. He also undertook to explore the representation on the Citizen Advice Panel.

4.3.2 **Children’s health issues** – in relation to a comment about the prominence of children’s health issues in the Sustainability and Transformation Plan, officers confirmed that this was an area of focus across all agencies and more strategic leadership on this had been a finding of both Medway’s and Kent’s most recent SEND Inspections.

4.3.3 **Measurable outcomes** – comment was made that the plan would benefit from an accompanying document that had more measurable outcomes to determine progress and achievements. Officers explained there would be a number of key performance indicators that would support the plan in terms of measuring progress, and these could be pulled together into a supporting document. In response to a further comment about the reality of achieving the ambitions within the plan, officers confirmed that the association of Directors of Children’s Services continued to lobby the Government for additional funding and in addition officers were looking with their strategic partners at how effectively resources were being shared to maximise the impact for children and young people of Medway.

4.3.4 **Thriving in Our Community** – in response to a question about what this meant for a child or young person in Medway officers explained it focussed on early identification of need and effective intervention to support families to be resilient.

4.3.5 **Children and young people friendly version** – following a suggestion, officers indicated their wish to work with the Medway Youth Council to assist in creating a version of the plan which was child and young person friendly.

4.4 Members agreed to forward their comments to the Cabinet for consideration.

## 5. **Comments from the Director of People – Children and Adults Services**

5.1 Following the meeting of the Scrutiny Committee, the following action has been taken:

- 5.1.1 **Representing the voice of children with additional need** – as part of subsequent consultation, officers met with a group of young people with disabilities and additional needs to get their view on the Plan. The views of the children and young people in this group were very positive. Comments were discussed with officers around the themes of Medway as a family friendly place, keeping young people safe when out and about in Medway, communication tools, healthy eating, hopes for the future and transport.
- 5.1.2 Regarding the request of exploring the representation on the Citizen Advice Panel. This is a panel weighted by gender, age and area to represent the Medway population as recorded in the 2011 census. All members are aged over 16 years old. The survey was sent to 318 members and 224 completed. Twenty per cent of respondents were the parents / carers of a child or young person aged up to 19 years or a young person with learning difficulties aged up to 24 years.
- 5.1.3 **The voice of the child** – Consultation has taken place with approximately 10 groups of children and young people between the ages of 8 and 19 years old such as Be Yourself, Monday Night Project, Wednesday Night Squad, WREC, SEND group, Children’s Disability Group and Medway Youth Council, as well as other stakeholders. Full information is laid out in section 7 of the report. This consultation has informed the final version of the Plan that accompanies this report and the measurables document at Appendices 1 and 3 respectively.
- 5.1.4 **Measurable outcomes and Young People friendly version** – We recognise the requests for two supplementary documents made by members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The ‘measurable outcomes’ document has been attached at Appendix 3. Work has begun on a young people’s version of the plan and it is hoped that this can be used alongside the main Strategy document once approved.

## **6. Health and Wellbeing Board – 5 November 2019**

- 6.1 The Health and Wellbeing Board considered this report and the Plan on 5 November 2019. The comments of this Committee are as follows:
- 6.2 The Health and Wellbeing Board considered a report which presented the outcome of the consultation on the draft Children and Young People’s Plan, which was reported to the Board in February 2019, prior to consultation. The Director of People – Children and Adults Services explained that since publication of the agenda, the lifespan of the plan had been reduced to two years, as opposed to five years, to align with the Council Strategy.
- 6.3 Board Members commented that the Plan was well structured, had taken account of engagement and generally proposed sensible measurements. Members highlighted some points for consideration as follows:
- With respect to Appendix 2 of the report, ‘Medway Children and Young People’s Plan on a Page’, it was noted that some of the measures which would determine how we would know if we had made a difference were unqualified. It was suggested that the direction of travel be included in these measures.

- With respect to Appendix 3 of the report, 'Medway Children and Young People's Plan: What does good look like', it was suggested that benchmarking data be included.

6.4 The Director of People – Children and Adults Services explained that progress updates would be presented to both the Medway Safeguarding Children Partnership as champions of the Plan and the Children's Improvement Board. He undertook to include comparable data from Medway's statistical neighbours within these progress updates to facilitate benchmarking.

6.5 The Health and Wellbeing Board agreed to send their comments on the updated draft Medway Children and Young People's Plan to the Cabinet.

## 7. Risk management

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Action to avoid or mitigate risk</b>	<b>Risk rating</b>
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 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

7.1 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.

7.2 It is intended that there will be a short annual report to Cabinet and the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee on progress with the strategic Plan. The Children Safeguarding Partnership chaired by the Director of People – Children and Adults Services, will also receive six-monthly updates on the progress against the priorities.

## 8. Consultation

8.1 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.

8.2 Following Cabinet approval to consult on the draft CYPP, an 8 Week consultation took place between 6 May 2019 and 30 June 2019.

8.3 During that period, consultation occurred in a number of ways, which included:

- 8.3.1 A survey was sent to the Medway Citizens' Panel, which is a sample of local residents who have volunteered to regularly take part in local consultation. The panel is made up of a group of residents who are representative of the area by geographical location, age, sex and ethnicity. There were 224 responses to the survey;
- 8.3.2 The supply of a survey link asking opinions of the proposed children and young people priorities via social media pages, with reposts to raise awareness. 28 responses were received;
- 8.3.3 During the month of May 2019, Quality Assurance and Engagement Officers, visited parks and green spaces across Medway to ask a random selection of 100 young people:
- What is most important to them
  - What they worry about the most
  - What they hope for the future
- 8.3.4 The Medway Youth Council has been consulted with regard to the plan. Medway Children and Young People's Council have been approached and will be submitting a response as part of the consultation.
- 8.3.5 Officers have also spoken to 55 young people from various engagement and youth groups:
- Young mums' group – all saints family hub
  - Parkwood youth centre – Wednesday squad (disability group)
  - Woodlands youth centre Monday night project.
  - WREC – Be yourself project (employment group for young people)
  - WREC – Friday youth session (younger age group under 15s).
  - Children's Disability Group

#### **Outcome of Medway Citizens' Panel survey:**

- 8.4 In relation to the first key outcome, thriving in our community, the majority of respondents agreed that each of the three priorities were the right priorities for this key outcome and ranked them in importance as follows:
- Over half of respondents cited '*protect those at risk of harm*' (58%).
  - Almost a third felt that the priority '*empower families to be resilient and economically secure*' was the most important (30%)
  - Whilst 11% felt that, the priority '*have fun growing up and have a voice*' was the most important.
  - A further 1% gave no response to this question
- 8.5 In relation to the second key outcome, having a healthy start, the majority of respondents agreed that each of the three priorities were the right priorities to help children and young people have a healthy start and ranked them in importance as follows:
- Almost half of respondents cited '*improve social, emotional, mental health and resilience*' (49%)
  - Followed by the priority '*promote health and wellbeing through positive choices*' was the most important (30%)
  - 17% felt that, the priority '*reduce health inequalities*' was the most important.

- A further 4% gave no response to this question.

- 8.6 In relation to the third key outcome, learning well, the majority of respondents agreed that each of the four priorities were the right priorities to help children and young people to learn well and ranked them in importance as follows:
- Almost a third of respondents cited *'focused help to where it is needed earlier'* (32%).
  - Just over a quarter of respondents felt that the priorities *'ensure children have access to good provision'* and *'equip young people for life and work in a strong Medway economy'* were the most important (28% for both);
  - whilst 9% felt that the priority *'raise achievement and progress for all'* was the most important.
  - A further 3% gave no response to this question

#### **Outcome of social media feedback:**

- 8.7 Respondents via social media provided similar outcomes in terms of thoughts relating to the priorities underpinning each outcome and their importance.
- 8.8 Additional comments and suggestions that were also raised under the various priorities included:
- Providing families (particularly new parents) with support through children's centres, building peer support with skilled support in local community settings;
  - High quality youth provision
  - Access to medical care (including mental health support) that is prompt and accessible.

#### **Outcome of feedback provided by the random selection of 100 young people**

- 8.9 During the month of May 2019, officers visited parks and green spaces across Medway to ask a random selection of young people. Over the period, officers managed to speak to 100 young people. The places they visited were:
- The Strand (Gillingham)
  - Maidstone Road Sport Ground (Chatham)
  - Jackson's Field (Rochester)
  - Hook Meadow (Chatham)
  - Walderslade Village (Chatham)
  - Parkwood Play Area (Rainham)
  - Darnley Road Play Area (Strood)
  - North Cote Road Recreation Ground (Strood)
  - Shorts Way Park (Rochester)
  - Beechings Way Park (Gillingham)
  - Cozenton Park (Rainham)
  - Hoo Village (Hoo Peninsula)

- 8.10 The following summarises the main responses that were obtained from the young people that were surveyed at random in the community:



\*\*The young people were able to provide more than one answer so percentages are based on overall responses.\*\*

8.10.1 When asked what is important to young people, the most common answers included:

- 30% family
- 22% feeling happy
- 19% feeling safe and looked after
- 16% things to do and places to go
- 12% friends
- 9% having enough money

Twenty-four young people gave various other answers.

\*\*The young people were able to provide more than one answer so percentages are on overall responses.\*\*

8.10.2 When asked what young people worry about the most, top answers included:

- 30% crime
- 15% dying young
- 13% said they did not know
- 12% family in general
- 11% family members dying
- 9% not worried about anything

Other concerns that raised included not having enough money passing exams.

8.10.3 When asked what young people's main hopes for the future were, answers included:

- Feeling safe
- The environment
- Health
- Friends and family
- Education, training and employment
- Money and being successful
- Housing
- Things to do

### **Changes to the Plan as a result of Consultation**

<b>Change</b>	<b>Description</b>
Design	It was felt that the design of the document was not bright and appealing enough and not representative of Children and Young People. The document design has been updated and brought in line with the new Council Strategy, so the look and feel are similar.

<b>Change</b>	<b>Description</b>
Reordering document and Separating Measurables	The measurables at the end of the original version of the Plan has been separated into another document (Appendix 3). This allows the main strategy to articulate the vision.
Redesigning content	Content needed rewording and removing to make it more appropriate and easily understood.
Rewording and amending priorities	Priorities were deemed too interlinked, and in some cases being achieved by achievement of an earlier priority. This has been identified and key priorities highlighted throughout the consultation such as 'physical activity and healthy eating' and 'health in early years'.
The voice of young people	Responses to the consultation from young people were aggregated and used within the Plan to create a specific section under each outcome ('thriving', 'healthy' and 'learning').
Lifetime of the Plan	We have made this version of the Plan end in 2021 to align with the next iteration of the Council's Strategy, thus ensuring a clear and consistent vision.

Following consultation, the main Plan document is attached at Appendix 1.

## **9. Governance Pathway for agreeing the CYPP:**

<b>Committee / Board</b>	<b>Meeting Date</b>
CYP Overview and Scrutiny Committee	25/07/2019
Health and Wellbeing Board	05/11/2019
Cabinet	19/11/2019

## **10. Financial implications**

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

## **11. Legal implications**

11.1 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 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.

11.2 A Diversity Impact Assessment has been completed and is attached as Appendix 5.

## **12. Recommendations**

12.1 The Cabinet is asked to:

12.1.1 note the comments made by the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Health and Wellbeing Board and the responses from the Director of People – Children and Adults, as set out at sections 4 – 6 of the report;

12.1.2 approve the Medway Children and Young People’s Plan, as set out at Appendix 1 to the report and the accompanying documents attached at Appendices 2 and 3 to the report.

## **13. Suggested reasons for decision**

13.1 The 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”.

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### **Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Medway Children and Young People’s Plan

Appendix 2 – Medway Children and Young People’s Plan on a Page

Appendix 3 – Medway Children and Young People’s Plan: What does good look like

Appendix 4 – Previous comments of the Health and Wellbeing Board and Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Appendix 5 – 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](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](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/271429/directors_of_child_services_-_stat_guidance.pdf)