

Children and Young People's Plan 2016-19

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1. Summary

1.1. Somerset County Council has developed a three year Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) commencing April 2016 setting out the actions we and our partners are taking to continue and sustain improvements in children's services. The plan follows a multi-agency approach, overseen by Somerset Children's Trust. Seven improvement programmes, managed by the relevant Board for each improvement area are in place, as follows:

1. Supporting children, families and communities to become more resilient
2. Promoting healthy outcomes and giving children the best start in life
3. Improving emotional health and wellbeing
4. Building skills for life
5. Providing help early and effectively
6. Achieving effective multi-agency support for more vulnerable children and young people and developing an excellent children's social work service.
7. Embedding a 'Think Family' approach

1.2. Children and families are a key theme within the County Plan 2016-20, recognising the importance of providing the information and advice families need to help themselves and of focusing our help early and effectively when needed. The key priorities are to improve children's safeguarding services; to improve exam results, particularly for the most vulnerable pupils; and to improve children's health and wellbeing.

2. Issues for consideration / Recommendations

2.1. The Children and Young People's Plan 2016-19 is the strategic plan for Somerset Children's Trust, providing the focus for partners' actions and investment and the means by which the Department for Education will measure our improvement. The plan is reported upon on a quarterly basis and we are now reporting upon the activity of the second quarter (July to September 2017) of Year 2 which provides a summary of activity and progress, supported by each of the 7 programmes' Highlight Reports. During this quarter the CYPP has been promoted through each Improvement Programme's delivery board, partnership meetings, The Journey newsletter, the Practitioner Champions Yammer group and other events within Children's Trust partners and their staff.

This meeting therefore provides an opportunity for members to comment on the progress at the end of the second quarter and to consider the actions set to progress the Plan through its second year. Attached are the Quarter 2 Executive Summary (appendix 1) from the Somerset Children's Trust Executive group,

and the 7 Highlight Reports from each of the 7 delivery groups (appendix 2).

3. Background

3.1. On 6 November 2015 Somerset County Council received a Direction Notice from the Secretary of State for Education requiring us to develop and implement by April 2016, a three year Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) which the Department for Education judge likely to be effective in furthering and sustaining improvement of children's social care functions. This plan is now implemented and reporting upon second year progress.

3.2. The focus of the Joint Strategic Needs Analysis (JSNA) in 2016 was vulnerable children and young people and it has informed the priorities for inclusion in the CYPP.

3.3. The seven improvement programme action plans are developed annually and monitored within the nominated delivery groups. The Partnership Business team supports the delivery groups and the SCT Executive and Board by attending meetings, developing task and finish functions for areas of concern and supporting data collection and report writing across all 7 programmes to ensure the impact of the CYPP is realised and evidenced.

Quarter 2 of year 2 of the Children & Young People's Plan 2016 – 2019 (CYPP) reflects some actions completing ahead of target date and some slippages on key actions that are due to complete this quarter. Reporting this month has been against a background of senior staff changes and preparations for Children's Social Care and SEND Ofsted inspections. Notable achievements include improved transition progresses, progress with self-harm reduction, roll out of talent academies and some high quality social care training.

Areas of slippage include delay in the work around improving the Local Offer, delays to accessing funding for perinatal mental health services and more work needed in partnership working, recruitment and retention.

At the end of Quarter 2 the Improvement Programmes are all currently rated as being on track to meet their target dates by March 2018, and all show a status trend of Green.

3.4. Some of the key activities from quarter 2 that will require challenge and support from Scrutiny members include:

- Challenge whether the partnership is maturing as we approach the half way point of the CYPP
- Support the development of Year 3 planning and beyond
- The launch of the consultation on Family Support Services
- Consider how to mitigate against slippages that might mean actions do not complete to achieve the required outcomes
- Support the work in place to improve recruitment, retention and therefore lower children's social care caseloads
- Lack of active participation of scrutiny member champions

4. Consultations undertaken

4.1. In developing the new CYPP, all those organisations and groups including under the duty to co-operate as stipulated in the Children Act 2004 were consulted, as well as children, young people and their parents and carers and other key

partners.

4.2. Consultation undertaken includes:

- Somerset UK Youth Parliament Advisory Group
- The Unstoppables (SEND)
- CAMHS Participation Group
- Somerset In Care and Leaving Care Councils
- Young Healthwatch
- Young Carers
- Somerset Parent Carer Forum

The voice of children, young people and their families is regularly captured through the Children Trust's Participation Network which supports its members to consult, listen and feedback their views. Further work is underway in Quarter 2 to widen the scope and to ensure the voice of children and young people truly influences our developments and activity by producing a Participation Toolkit for partners to use.

5. Implications

- 5.1. Financial:** The CYPP has been implemented in a climate of continuing financial austerity for the public sector. The priorities outlined in the plan are to be met within the agreed budgets and staffing resources of SCC and its partners, taking into account anticipated reductions over the next three years.
- 5.2. Equality & Diversity:** Somerset Children's Trust seeks to deliver measurable improvements for all children and young people. This incorporates the need to tackle inequalities and narrow gaps, paying suitable regard to the 2010 Equality Act's General Duty.
- 5.3. Legal:** Local Children's Trust arrangements are underpinned by the 'duty to cooperate' (Section 10, Children Act 2004) and there are no plans to repeal this duty. The Children's Trust holds its individual members to account for delivering their agreed contributions to the shared plan, and has agreed to review progress against the Plan on a quarterly basis.

The Direction Notice referred to in para 3.1 above was issued under section 497A (4B) of the Education Act 1996.

6. Background papers

- 6.1. [Children and Young People's Plan 2016-19](#)**

Note: For sight of individual background papers please contact the report author.