

Somerset County Council
Scrutiny for Policies, Children and Families Committee

Children and Young People's Plan 2016-19

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Division and Local Member: All

1. Summary

1.1. The three year Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) commenced in 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 (SCT). 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 on a quarterly basis and we are now reporting upon the activity of the third quarter (October to December 2017) of Year 2 which provides a summary of activity and progress, supported by each of the seven programmes' Highlight Reports.

Work during this quarter was directed by the month long OFSTED single inspection of Children's Social Care and the subsequent activity to effect improvements ahead of the published report in January 2018.

This meeting provides an opportunity for members to comment on the progress at the end of the third quarter and to consider the actions set to progress the Plan through its second year. Attached are the Quarter 3 Executive Summary (appendix 1) from the Somerset Children's Trust Executive group, and the seven

Highlight Reports from each of the seven delivery groups; the exception being Programme 6 due to the OFSTED inspection (appendix 2).

- 2.2.** At the February SCT Executive meeting members discussed progress of the CYPP and key areas of concern for the partnership that children are presenting with. This included discussion around the use of social media, the role of parents and helping children to have greater self-esteem, aspiration and independence. The Executive have agreed to invite scrutiny to consider this area as part of their work programme.

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 seven programmes to ensure the impact of the CYPP is realised and evidenced.

At the end of Quarter 3 six of the seven Improvement Programmes are rated green as being on track to meet target dates for all actions by March 2018. The attached appendices outline the progress made.

Each delivery group are compiling their year 3 action plans which the SCT Executive will consider in January 2018. Work will also be starting on developing the next CYPP.

4. Consultations undertaken

- 4.1.** In developing the 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 3 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 lifetime of the plan.
- 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.