

Extract from Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 24 February 2021

Agenda Item 7 - Children and Young People's Partnership Plan 2021 – 2024

The Independent Chair of the Children and Young People's Partnership Board (C&YPPB) presented a report, a copy of which had been circulated to each Member and a copy of which appears as Appendix 'A' to these Minutes in the Minute Book.

The draft BCP Children and Young People's Plan had been developed by the BCP C&YPPB, the successor body to the previous Learning Partnership Board. The difference was to focus on all issues for children, not just education and to a lesser extent, children's social care.

Having a plan in place was a requirement placed on BCP by the Local Government Reorganisation process so in that sense it is a plan required by Government of us. The draft Plan sets out the proposed strategic priorities for partnership action to improve outcomes for BCP's children and young people and to help them achieve their potential. It was consistent with existing BCP policy about improving child outcomes

Central to this was that the Council played its part in the Partnership to help BCP's children and young people to be "fulfilled, happy, included, and resilient".

A copy of the draft plan could be found at Appendix 1 to the report.

The draft Plan had been subject to public consultation during the month of January 2021.

This Plan, when finalised, would be championed by the multi-agency BCP C&YPPB. An action plan would be an integral part of the final document. This would be monitored through the Board.

The Committee discussed the Report and comments were made, including:

- The Committee was generally very positive about the Plan, the content, format, its accessibility, and ambition were all really welcomed
- A Member of the Youth Parliament (MYP) advised that they had considered the Plan and felt it was very accessible to young people however, felt that some of the actions highlighted under the four priorities could be better positioned under other priorities. The Chair of the C&YPPB requested a meeting with the MYPs to go through the Plan in more detail to gain their insight further. **Action. (This meeting is taking place on 2nd March)**
- In response to a query about whether consideration had been given to a longer term plan, say ten year, the Chair of the C&YPPB highlighted that it was felt a three year plan was appropriate at this time and especially in relation to Children and Young People where the context for their lives can change so fast.
- In response to a query about where the four priorities had come from and in particular whether they were relevant from a child or young person's

perspective, the Chair of the C&YPPB advised that they had consulted with as many children as they could given the current pandemic and capacity issues and those were the four words that had been decided to be most appropriate based on the feedback.

- A Committee Member referred to the different summaries and in particular the reference that 'it would be targeted at the disadvantaged', it was highlighted that that was not considered a protected characteristic and so should read instead that 'it was addressing inequalities'
- A Committee Member welcomed the links demonstrated between the high number of exclusions to the 16/17-year olds young people currently in care and felt that some input from the Police and youth work could be linked in at that point.
- A Member welcomed the longer-term priorities and enquired how it was proposed that these would be achieved? In response the Chair of the C&YPPB advised that the Children's Services Improvement Plan highlighted apprentices for Care Leavers as a priority with the Chief Executive taking the lead. The Committee was also advised that the Council would be taking a leading role and offering in house apprenticeships where appropriate. Exclusions were also being targeted by seeking to secure an agreement with all local schools to reduce them across BCP, with a multi-agency conference being planned to get all of the agencies on board to provide as much support as they could to schools to achieve this ambition.
- In response to a concern that the levels of bullying highlighted seemed high, the Committee was reassured that there were already a number of anti-bullying policies in place, but the plan aimed to use multi-agency provision to help target interventions by considering what had been successful and what hadn't
- A Member queried the figures relating to a child who would be living with a family with abuse detailed in the Plan and that there were two different figures which needed checking. **Action. Explanations will be added to the Plan**
- There was a large amount of discussion surrounding the references to the Economy within the Plan with a Member advising that new research had suggested that there was not a strong correlation between high levels of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and child happiness. Following the discussions, the Chair of the C&YPPB advised that the reference within the Plan was focusing on preparing children and young people for work, helping them to become productive and creative adults by working closely with the colleges, schools and businesses
- The Chair of the Committee referred to the mental ill health reference within the Plan and requested it be amended/softened so it did not look like mental health was being blamed
- The Committee appreciated the opportunity to contribute towards the Plan and acknowledged that it detailed some large pieces of work which needed to be undertaken. The Committee stressed the importance of ensuring that the work was carried out by building links with other agencies and strategies to ensure all the aspirations within the Plan were achieved and delivered.
- The Chair of the Committee referred to the dashboard being created to monitor progress and advised that the Committee would welcome the opportunity to consider it at an appropriate time. **Action: the dashboard to be produced as part of the action planning process by the summer.**

- The Portfolio Holder with responsibility for Covid Resilience, Schools and Skills as well as her role as Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board concluded that all the strategies were linked and the Board would be responsible for delivering some of the aspirations once adopted.

The Chairman summed up as follows:

- The Committee thoroughly enjoyed considering and providing input into the draft Plan
- The Chair of the C&YPP was going to meet with the MYPs to consider the actions detailed under the four priorities
- A request to ensure protected characteristics were given consideration/highlighted
- The aspirations surrounding Apprenticeships
- Discussions surrounding the local economy and links with children and young people
- The Importance of ensuring close links to other BCP strategies.

RECOMMENDED that the views and considerations of the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee be taken into account when the plan is considered by Cabinet and supported by Full Council.